

Dam Removal: “is not just about dam removal”



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Geoffrey M. Goll, P.E.
ggoll@princetonhydro.com
Mobile: 609-915-9425

HEADLINE....

“Removing dams, weirs and culverts is hugely beneficial to river-dwelling species and the environment as a whole – but there may be risks in a densely populated, flood-prone country.”

Sarah Wild, Reporter for The Guardian, April 7, 2024

Rivers

‘Working with the landscape is a more sensible way of managing our rivers’: should we dismantle the UK’s dams?

Removing dams, weirs and culverts is hugely beneficial to river-dwelling species and the environment as a whole - but there may be risks in a densely populated, flood-prone country

Sarah Wild

Sun 7 Apr 2024 06.00 EDT

**The
Guardian**

.....But letting a river choose its own path is a risky business, especially in flood-ravaged parts of England.”



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<https://amp-theguardian-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/amp.theguardian.com/environment/2024/apr/07/removing-barriers-dams-rivers-run-free-britain-waterways>

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....versus CONTENT

We can't keep building giant concrete walls and structures in our rivers to control the water – that's impossible.
Hannah Cloke, University of Reading.

A significant reason [the UK is falling behind the rest of Europe, particularly England is that it is] much more densely populated. "It is much easier to restore rivers when few people live around,"
Dr. Carlos Garcia de Leaniz

"Money is the obvious [obstacle]," to barrier removals, but communities and anglers are often vocal opponents.

Dr Perikles Karageorgopoulos, England Environmental Agency

All the scientists the Observer contacted agreed that it is possible to predict the outcomes of taking away a culvert or weir. - Wild

"Should we be building on floodplains? No. Should we be polluting our rivers? No. Those are the giant questions that need careful thinking from government," - Cloke



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Five Stages of Grief (of dam removal opposition)

1. DENIAL

2. ANGER

3. BARGAINING

4. DEPRESSION

5. ACCEPTANCE

Environment, Energy and Transportation

Paradise lost? Copco Lake residents brace for dam removal

Jefferson Public Radio | By Juliet Grable, Erik Neumann

Published June 18, 2023 at 8:25 AM PDT



Juliet Grable / JPR

Danny Fontaine and Francis Gill live in the Copco Lake community and recently purchased the Copco Lake store. They worry about the dramatic change that dam removal will bring to their community.



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Cultural and Community

Historic resources

Archeological resources

Local connection to community

Recreation

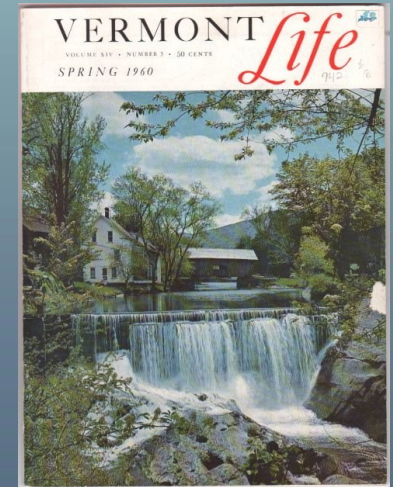
Energy security

Resist change

Politics



Burlington Free Press, Jan. 2015



WARREN DAM (2006)
Painting by Candy Barr



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Cultural and Community

Historic resources



Archeo

Local c

Recrea

Energy

Resist

Politics



WILKINSON DAM (2009)
Painting by Candy Barr

Geoff Goll, 2019



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“You can please some of the people all of the time, you can please all of the people some of the time, but you can’t please all of the people all of the time”.

John Lydgate (c. 1370 – c. 1451)

“Empty vessels make the most sound.”

“My well will dry up”
“The river will dry up”
“Non-native, invasive fish will take over”
“I will not be able to walk right up to the water.”
“The river will dry up”
“My property values will drop”
“You’re gonna hit the fishing”
“It’s been there forever”
“This dam is important to the history of the town.”
“It will look terrible afterward!”
“Why would you want to take away the centerpiece of our community?”
“The exposed lakebed will be a mud pit and stink!”
“It’s a government conspiracy”
“The pond is owned by the public”
“The ‘waterfall’ sound will disappear”
“How will we fish?”
“The pond is owned by the public”
“Striped bass will eat all of the trout”
“Who is paying for this?”
“We are concerned about contaminated sediment”
“There’s drums of toxic chemicals under there”
“We are going to flood out downstream!”



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COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION

- Understand the community and their values.
- Take the time and answer all the question, regardless of what you believe which are valid.
- Public meetings either at the local governing office or other accommodating large space. Can be webinar, but preferably in-person.
- Consistent and available methods to keep stakeholders apprised, including email blast updates, social media site, webpage updates.
- Keep on alert for misinformation and correct as soon as possible, depending on the response need.



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FINESVILLE DAM REMOVAL MUSCONETCONG RIVER, NJ

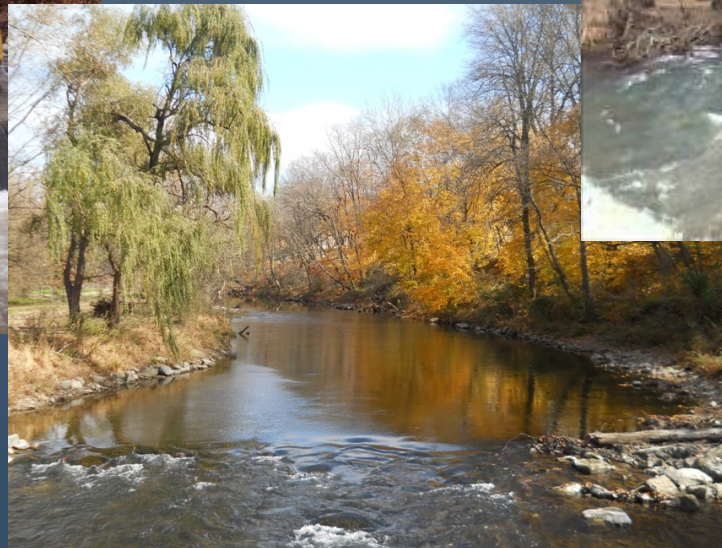
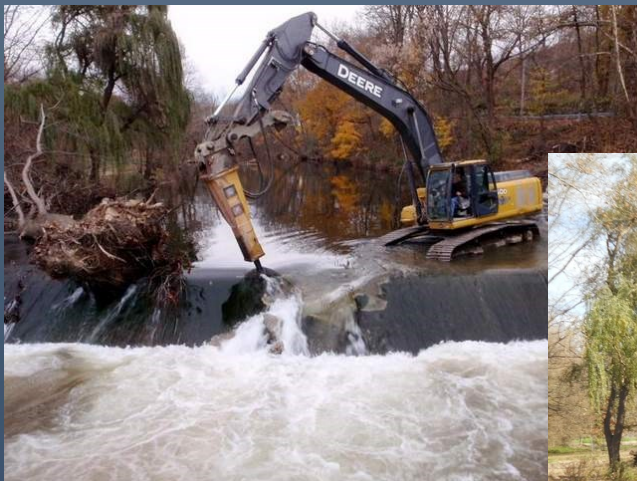
- Community Resistance due to being central component of community
- Issues that gained “acceptance”:
 - Prior drownings and near drownings
 - Owner’s liability
 - Available funds



VICTIM OF DROWNING AT FINESVILLE
DAM IDENTIFIED

By **The Morning Call**
THE MORNING CALL

MAY 24, 1989



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COLUMBIA LAKE DAM REMOVAL PAULINS KILL, NJ

- Community Resistance due “lake” recreational fishing and wildlife watching
- Issues to gain “acceptance” were:
 - Hydroelectric was not profitable
 - Costs to maintain the dam in compliance with regulations
 - Provision of fishing access
 - Available grant funds



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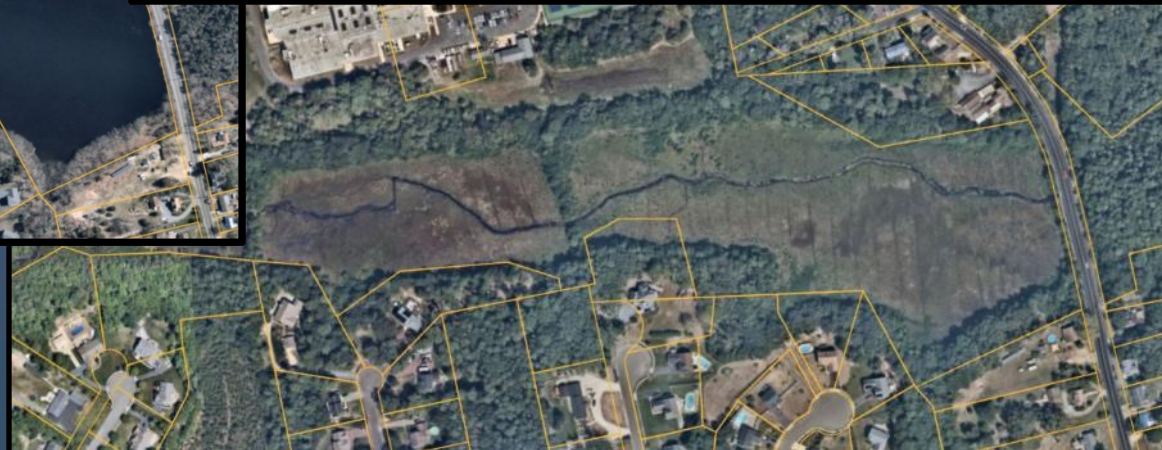
GIFFORD MILL DAM REMOVAL TUCKERTON, NJ

Owned by local school district, neighbors not owning dam wanted waterfront property
Issues to gain “acceptance” were:

- Costs to maintain the dam and maintain regulatory compliance
- Available grant money for removal/bog restoration/public access
- Opportunity for science programs at the school district



Ashley N. Stoop, Rutgers University



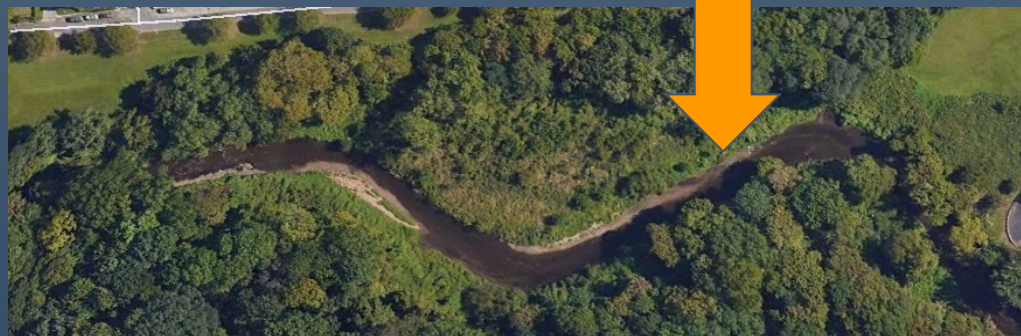
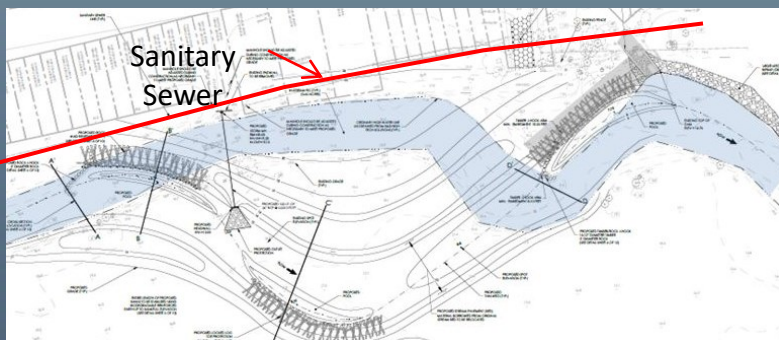
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DARBY CREEK DAM REMOVALS DELAWARE COUNTY, PA



Four blockages owned by various governmental entities: ALL WERE FOR REMOVAL

- Costs to maintain the dams and maintain regulatory compliance
- Available natural resources damages monies.
- Flood mitigation
- Key infrastructure protection



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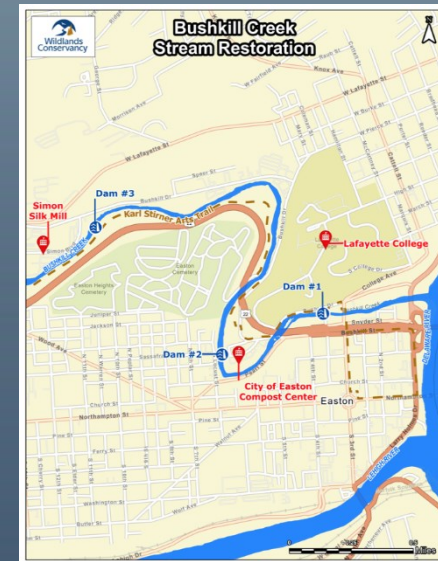
BUSHKILL CREEK DAM REMOVALS

Easton, PA



Four blockages on a high-quality trout stream and direct tributary to the Delaware River

- Costs to maintain the dams and maintain regulatory compliance
- Dams failing and in need of significant repairs/upgrades
- Flood mitigation
- Key infrastructure protection
- Enhanced trophy trout fishing opportunities



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With dams gone American shad return to Musconetcong River

Dan Radel, @DanielRadelAPP

Published 12:29 p.m. ET June 20, 2017 | Updated 8:52 a.m. ET June 21, 2017



Fishermen casting for trout made a huge discovery on the Musconetcong River in early June.

While working the river's banks they found small schools of American shad swimming above the site of the former Hughesville Dam in Warren County.

Their report was quickly followed up by biologists from New Jersey's Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries who captured shad at the base of the Warren Glen Dam in Holland Township.

Wildlife officials noted that this is the first time in at least a 100 years that American shad have returned to the Musconetcong River in Hunterdon and Warren counties.

Musconetcong River, next migratory season after dam removal, 2017

The screenshot shows the Princeton Hydro website with a navigation bar (HOME, OUR FIRM, SERVICES, PROJECTS, BLOG, CONTACT) and a blog post. The post title is "AMERICAN SHAD DISCOVERED JUST MILES UPSTREAM OF FORMER COLUMBIA DAM" by phadmin, dated April 22, 2019. It features a photo of a man in a "PAULINS" shirt holding a large shad fish. Below the photo is a caption: "STRUGGLING FISH SPECIES RETURNS TO SPAWNING GROUNDS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OVER A CENTURY, JUST MONTHS AFTER DAM REMOVAL COMPLETED". The right sidebar includes a search bar, a subscribe form, and a categories list.

Paulins Kill, three (3) weeks after removal of the dam structure

“I would love to live like a river flows, carried by the surprise of its own unfolding.”

- John O'Donohue

Irish poet, author, priest, environmental activist



Thank you!