

News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Dam Decommissioning Work Begins at Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working to decommission the Lower Peverly Dam, which is located on and discharges to Peverly Brook, within the Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) in Newington, New Hampshire. With assistance from State partners, the Refuge began planning for breaching the dam embankment and removing the spillway after the structure failed a safety inspection more than a decade ago. Construction activities began in November 2020 and the restoration project is expected to take eight months to complete (i.e., June 2021).

Upper Peverly Pond (12 acres), Lower Peverly Pond (6.2 acres), and Stubbs Pond (44 acres) are part of the 888-acre Peverly Brook watershed fed by several springs and small tributaries. Upper and Lower Peverly ponds are impoundments that were created in the early 1900's as an auxiliary water supply for the City of Portsmouth by the construction of several dams along the brook.

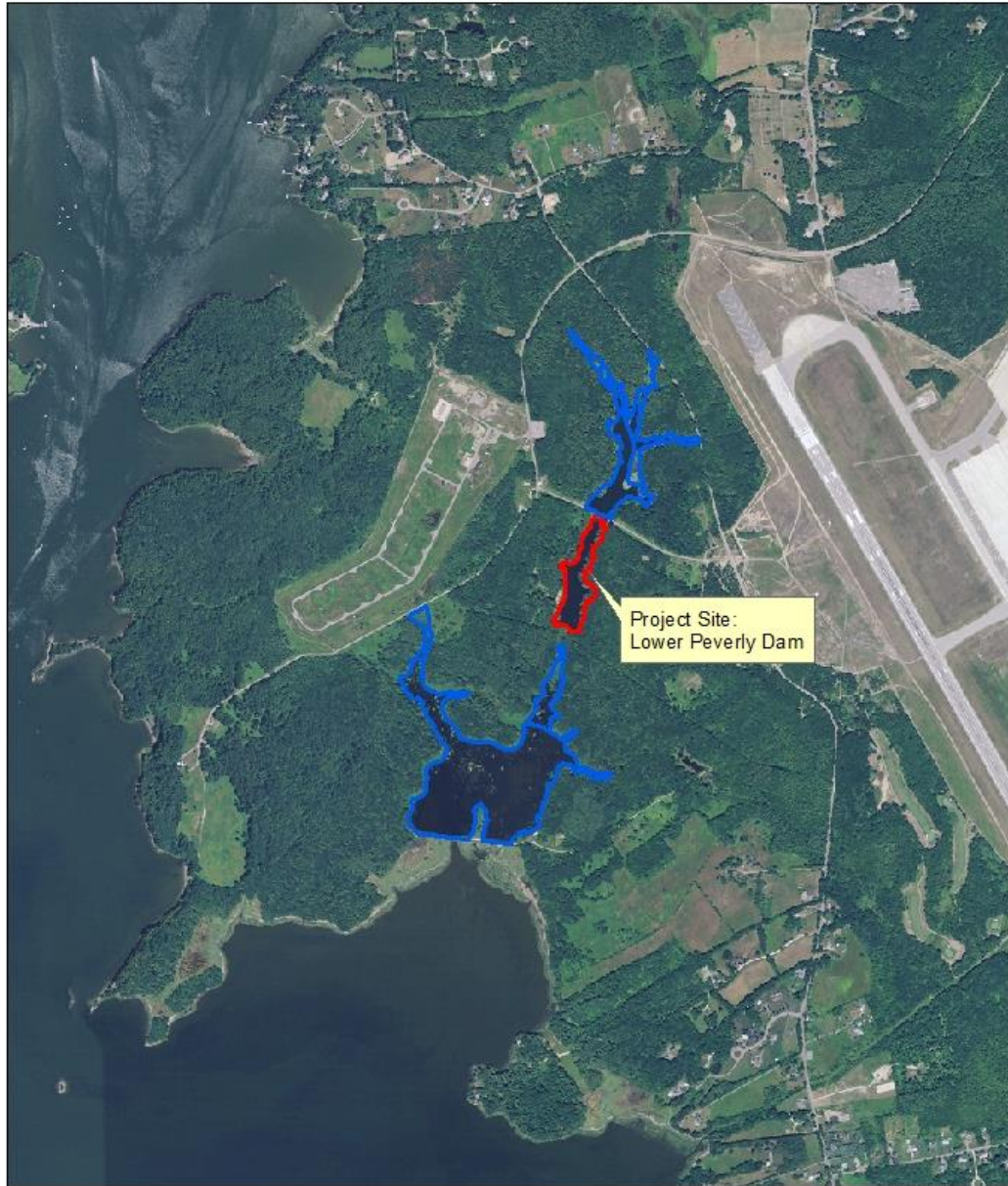
During the 1950s, the area became part of the Pease Air Force Base. The dike between the two ponds was improved with a new dam in the late 1950s and the ponds were used by the Air Force for swimming, fishing, and boating until 1992, when the Refuge was established. The reservoirs are now managed as open water habitat for wildlife.

This project has been designed as an ecological restoration intended to minimize impacts to wetlands and perennial waterways to the greatest extent possible. The overall design was constrained from a more natural restoration by the need to minimize mobilization of contaminated sediment present in Lower Peverly. The reservoir will be restored to a series of wet meadows that pass water from Upper Peverly to Stubbs Pond, while restoring functional wetland habitat that supports aquatic species and filters contaminants from the sediment over time.

The project eliminates risk of dam failure and associated release of contaminated sediment to Stubbs Pond (another impoundment) and Herods Cove. It will improve wetland function by establishing a diverse emergent meadow, wetland shrub complex that will better filter and trap contaminants coming from Upper Peverly Pond.

SUMCO Eco-Contracting, LLC, of Peabody, MA, is doing the dam decommissioning work. The contract amount for the project is \$1.8 million.

Great Bay National Wildlife Refuge
Lower Peverly Dam Restoration
Project Location Map



Background Image NAIP 2006.

