



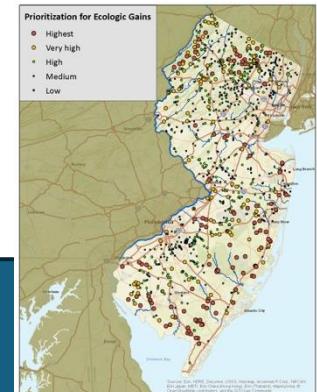
LOCAL GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP *and* DAM REMOVAL in NJ

Presented By

**NJ STATEWIDE DAM REMOVAL PARTNERSHIP
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2026**

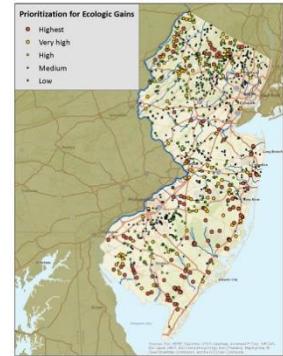


akrf





Presentation Outline



- ❖ **Introduction of NJ SDRP team**
- ❖ **Dams 101** *Jessie Thomas-Blate, American Rivers*
- ❖ **Dam Ownership in New Jersey** *Beth Styler Barry, The Nature Conservancy*
- ❖ **SDRP / Voices of Dam Removal** Video *Michelle DiBlasio, The Nature Conservancy*
- ❖ **Municipal Case Studies** *Robert Lucas, Raritan Headwaters Association*
- ❖ **Dam Removal and MS4 Requirements** *Steve Tuorto, The Watershed Institute*
- ❖ **Upcoming: Resources Workshop/Training** *Laura Craig, AKRF, Inc.*
- ❖ **Contact SDRP:** *Bill Leavens, Musconetcong Watershed Association (Trustee)*
- ❖ **Q&A**



Michael Tranchitella

Dam Basics

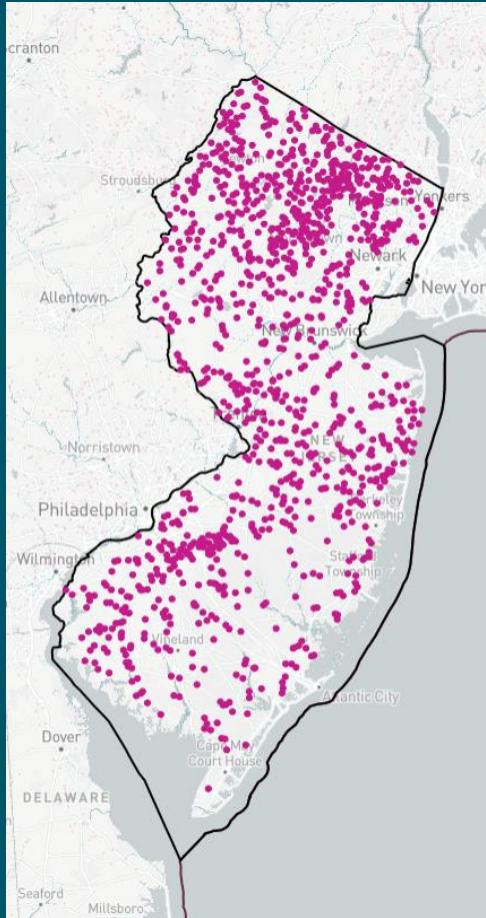
Jessie Thomas-Blate

New Jersey Local Government Webinar

January 2026



AMERICAN
RIVERS



U.S Dams

The National Inventory of Dams (NID) includes 92,584 dams

<https://nid.sec.usace.army.mil/#/>

Current inventory by SARP includes 558,168 dams

New Jersey Dams

New Jersey has at least 1,826 dams (830 in NID)

<https://aquaticbarriers.org/>





Hydropower
3% of NID



Flood
Management
14.6% of NID



Water Supply
8% of NID

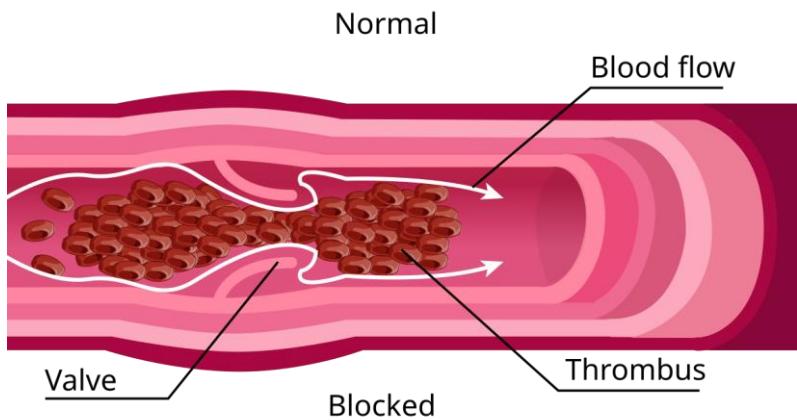
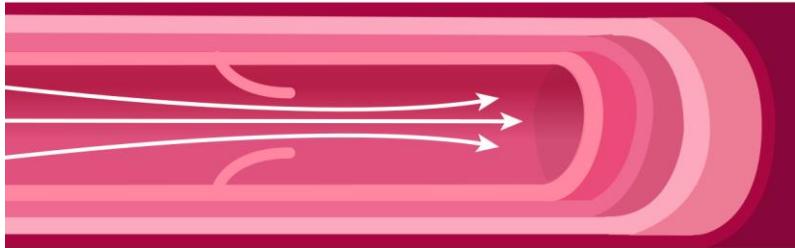
Dam Basics

Many dams serve important socioeconomic purposes

(But the number is surprisingly small)

At some point, dam owners with uneconomical dams may decide they are no longer worth maintaining





Rivers = Arteries
Dams = Clots



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Benefits of Dam Removal Projects

Healthy rivers support everyone

Helping Fish and Wildlife

- Restore natural function of the river
- Reconnect habitat and passage for aquatic species
- Improve ecosystem's ability to withstand storms and drought
- Improve water quality and temperature



Helping People and Communities

- Eliminate maintenance costs
- Eliminate liability for owners
- Improve public safety by removing drowning and flooding hazards
- Reduce conflicts with downstream infrastructure
- Prevent crumbling infrastructure from failing

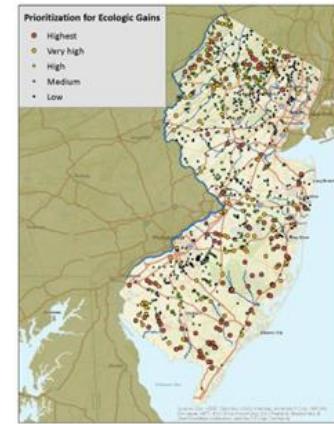


Dams in New Jersey

Dam Safety Laws and Regulations

N.J.A.C. 7:20-1.2 Definition

"Dam" means any artificial dike, levee or other barrier, together with appurtenant works, **which is constructed for the purpose of impounding water**, on a permanent or temporary basis, **that raises the water level five feet** or more above the usual, mean, low water height when measured from the downstream toe-of-dam to the emergency spillway crest or, in the absence of an emergency spillway, the top-of-dam.



NJ Safe Dam Act

N.J.S.A. 58:4

NJ Dam Safety Standards

N.J.A.C. 7:20

dep.nj.gov/wlm/drec/dam-safety/

Dam Ownership in New Jersey

| Dam Size/Type | Regular Inspection | Formal Inspection |
|---|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Class I Large Dam High-Hazard Potential | annually | once every 3 years |
| Class I Dam High-Hazard Potential | once every 2 years | once every 6 years |
| Class II Dam Significant-Hazard Potential | once every 2 years | once every 10 years |
| Class III Dam Low-Hazard Potential | once every 4 years | only as required |
| Class IV Dam Low-Hazard Potential | once every 4 years | only as required |

All dam owners are required to develop and use a Department-approved Operations & Maintenance Manual.

Decision Making: Dam Removal in New Jersey

- **Relief from costs of inspection, maintenance and repair**
- **Decreased costs for insurance**
- **Reduction in local flooding**
- **Increased community resilience** against increasingly intense storms
- **Removal of a public safety hazard**
- Increased opportuni

Considerations of Return on Investment

- Ongoing operation and maintenance
- Deferred maintenance backlog
- Major capital repairs and upgrades
- Regulatory and compliance requirements
- Risk of failure and emergency response
- Downstream liability and damages
- Staff time and opportunity costs

Dam Removal in New Jersey

- 1) Initial Site Reconnaissance
- 2) Feasibility Studies – Early Engineering
- 3) Information from the feasibility studies is used to produce a Conceptual and/or Preliminary Design
- 4) Additional Studies, Regulatory Coordination and Permitting
- 5) Final Design
- 6) Project Implementation and Construction



Partnering With Local Governments to Remove Dams in New Jersey

For the full “Voices of Dam Removal” Series, visit njdams.org
OR the Statewide Dam Removal Partnership's YouTube channel

NEW JERSEY DAMS

HOME FAQ DAMS 101 WHY REMOVE DAMS? HOW TO REMOVE A DAM CASE STUDIES RESOURCES IN THE NEWS

VOICES OF DAM REMOVAL

In this short video series, *Voices of Dam Removal*, we explore the vital role that local and county governments, homeowners, recreational users, federal agencies, and non-governmental partners play in restoring rivers through dam removal. Each episode highlights the collaborative process that brings together government agencies, conservation organizations, and community members to remove outdated dams and revitalize freshwater ecosystems.

You'll hear directly from local leaders navigating funding, permitting, and public engagement challenges. Whether you're a municipal official, a conservationist, a community advocate, or a homeowner, this series offers practical insights and inspiration to help you take the next step toward a healthier, more resilient river.

N Helping Homeowners Remove Privat... Watch later Share

Watch on YouTube

N Dam Removal Assistance for Privat... Watch later Share

Watch on YouTube

Visit njdams.org for
more Webinars,
Videos, and Tools
for Dam Removal

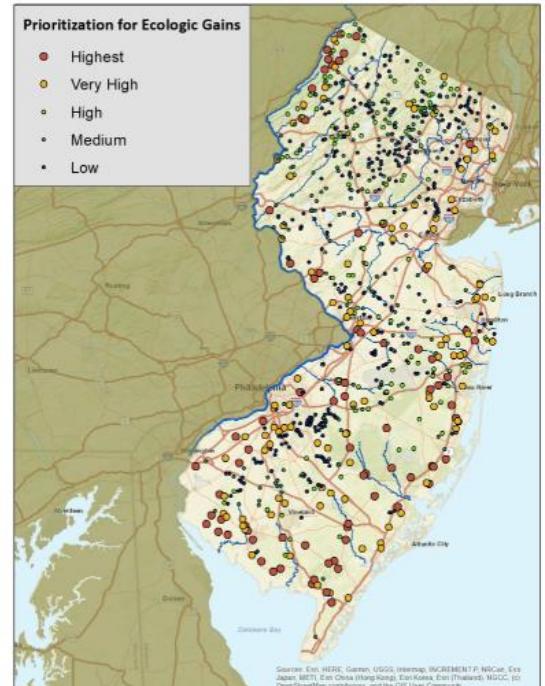


WELCOME TO THE NEW JERSEY STATEWIDE DAM REMOVAL PARTNERSHIP

The New Jersey Statewide Dam Removal Partnership (SDRP) is a collaboration of nonprofits and government agencies that seeks to advance the removal of antiquated, dangerous or ecologically detrimental dams. Its members meet quarterly to discuss beneficial dam removal projects and to exchange information regarding policy, regulatory issues, funding and the practical considerations of dam removal. The SDRP also provides information to the public about how dams and dam removal may affect their communities and their lives.

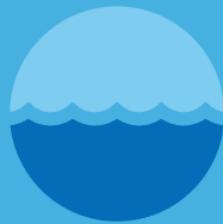
Partners include: American Rivers, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Sustainable Raritan River Initiative, Raritan Headwaters Association, Musconetcong Watershed Association, The Nature Conservancy of New Jersey, The Watershed Institute, North Jersey RC&D, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), Trout Unlimited

Our website is still being populated with information. If you find something is missing and you would like more information please use the contact us tab to let us know!



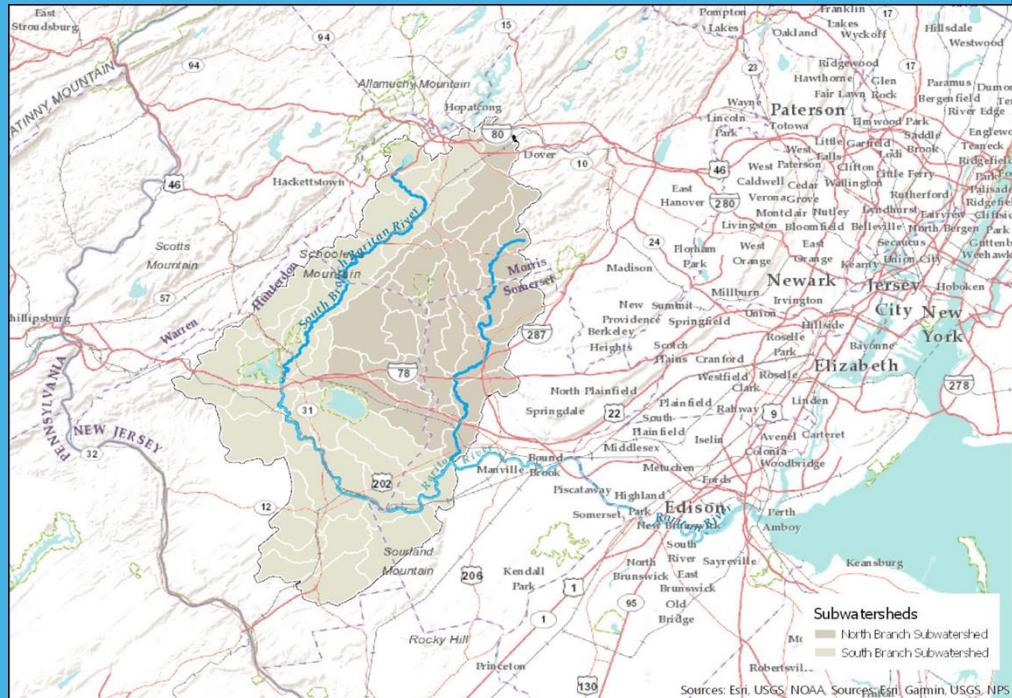
New Jersey Statewide Dam Removal Partnership

Dam Removal in the Upper Raritan Watershed



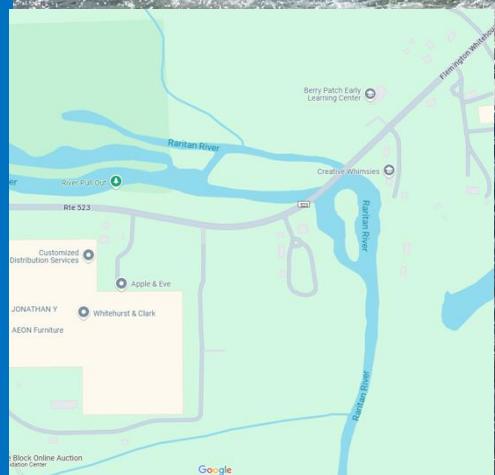
**Raritan
Headwaters**

Your water is our mission.



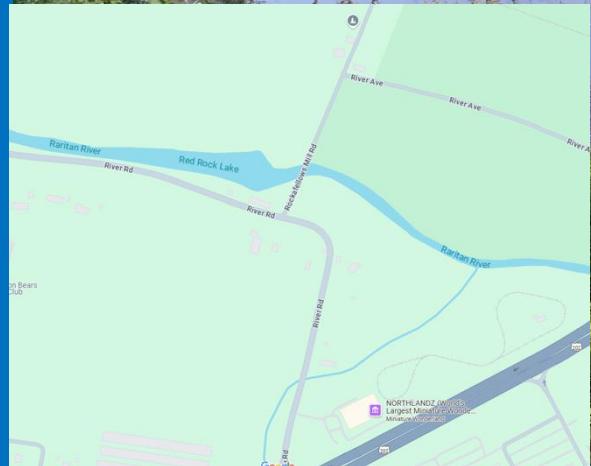
Dart's Mill Dam

- Improved Water quality
- Improved Public Safety
- Historic Preservation



Rockafellow's Mills Dam

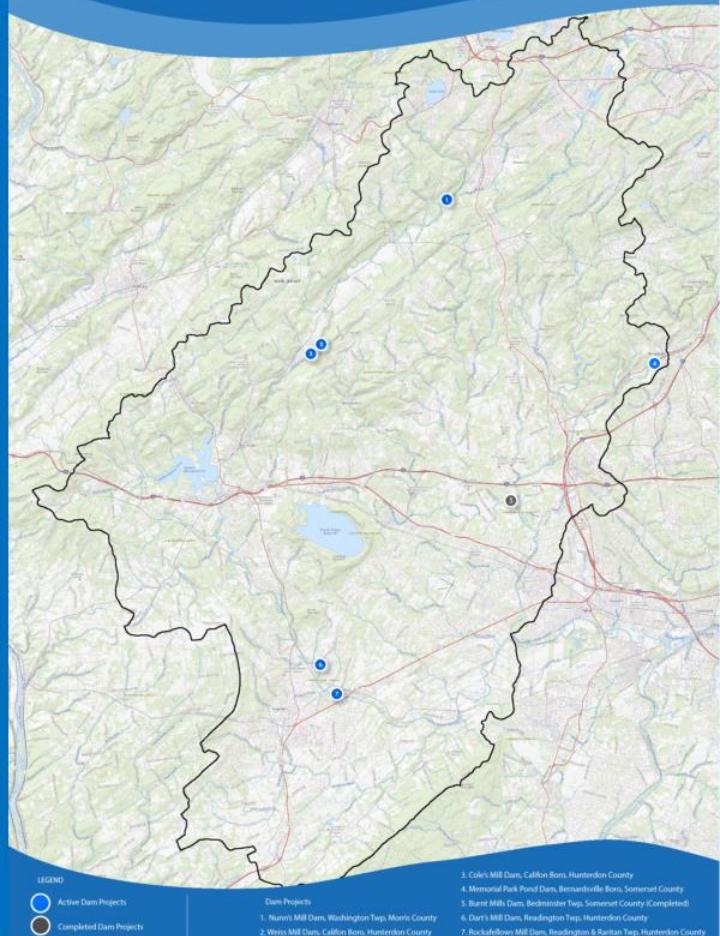
- 18+ acres Open Space Preservation
- Improved Water Quality
- Improved Public Safety



Township of
Readington
New Jersey



Raritan Headwaters Dam Removal Projects



Dam Removal Projects In the Upper Raritan

- **7-8 active projects**
- **1 completed project**
- **201+ upstream miles**
- **Improved Public Safety, Water Quality & Recreation**



NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION



The Nature
Conservancy



Township of
Readington
New Jersey

Califon
NEW JERSEY



RARITAN
TOWNSHIP
New Jersey



HUNTERDON
COUNTY *nj*



Hunterdon Land Trust



**Raritan
Headwaters**

Robert Lucas
Restoration Coordinator
rucas@raritanheadwaters.org

Dam Removal to Meet MS4 Requirements

PHASE 1: Watershed Inventory Report

PHASE 2: Watershed Assessment Report

PHASE 3: Watershed Improvement Plan (WIP)

The WIP: A plan describing what municipalities will do to:

1. Improve water quality of water bodies that have TMDLs.
2. Improve water quality of water bodies that are listed as impaired (303d listed).
3. Reduce or eliminate flooding

Dam Removal to Meet MS4 Requirements

Improve Water Quality

Increase Upstream Flood Storage Capacity



Existing



Construction



1-2 yrs Post Construction



10 yrs Post Construction



Example from Peninsular Papermill Dam removal project

website/presentation: <https://cityofypsilanti.com/804/Peninsular-Dam>

Interested in learning more?

Dam Removal Workshop (Virtual)

March 25th 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Workshop is free, registration is required.

- For those interested in further investigating dam removal



Dam Removal Project Manager Training

April 15th and 16th

Location is TBD

- Course topics include:
 - Planning and Project Implementation
 - Introduction to Managing a Dam Removal Project
 - Basics of Engineering and Construction Design
 - Permitting
 - Community Engagement



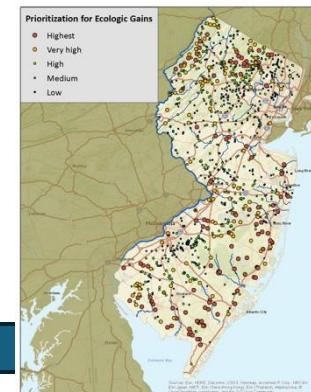
Here is all you need to know:

NJdams.org

info@njdams.org

beth.stylerbarry@tnc.org

**Or you can use the information in the letter
or postcard that you received.**





Thank you for listening.

It's time for questions.