

Public hears update on Scoby Dam project in Springville

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SPRINGVILLE – In order to try and help with fish habitats in Cattaraugus Creek, the United States Army Corps of Engineers held a public meeting on Jan. 29 at the Concord Town Hall to discuss upcoming work at the Scoby Dam in Springville through the Great Lakes Fishery Ecosystem Restoration project.



Project Manager Geoffrey Hintz speaks to the crowd at the public meeting for the Scoby Dam project.

Partnering with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and Erie County, the project's main goal is to restore ecological connectivity between the upper and lower Cattaraugus Creek watersheds while also maintaining a barrier to invasive sea lamprey. The project would lower the spillway of the dam to approximately 13 feet and install a fish ladder with trap and sort capability to allow steelhead and other fish species to access upstream parts of Cattaraugus Creek.

Representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, DEC and others involved in the project were in attendance at the public meeting to discuss the design of the project, timeline moving forward and answer questions from the community. Village of Springville Mayor William Krebs also spoke at the meeting about the project and its importance to Springville, tourism and helping the Cattaraugus Creek.

"The Village of Springville has been interested in this project since ... around 2013. We believe it's in the best interest of Springville for tourism and for historical reasons," Krebs said. "For us in the Southern Tier and in northern Cattaraugus County, this is a real destination for fishing."

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With the Scoby Dam splitting the Cattaraugus Creek watershed, many fish and other aquatic species are forced to live in lower quality habitats downstream of the dam and isolated from high quality habitats in the upper watershed, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The fish ladder would help maximize passage of the aquatic species and help reconnect approximately 572 miles of tributary stream in the upper watershed with the lower watershed and Lake Erie.



The Scoby Dam in Springville.

“We’ve put a lot of effort into this, I think we got a great project going forward, we got great partners and our interest is to make this a better thing for the community,” Project Manager Geoffrey Hintz said.

Community members in attendance voiced their opinions and questions at the end of the public presentations. One concern brought up by the community that was discussed at the public meeting was the former **Western New York Nuclear Service Center upstream in West Valley** and the possibility of nuclear contamination within sediment in the creek. Geologist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers William Frederick spoke to those concerns, stating sampling and testing has been done with the sediment in Cattaraugus Creek and the levels of contamination are within or below safe levels and is safe for the public.

Design for the project is set to be completed by March, with construction to be completed by Dec. 2021.

EM site completes deactivation of fuel receiving and storage facility



Photo provided

An operator, inside the fuel receiving and storage facility at the **West Valley Demonstration Project**, pumps a fogging agent inside a pipe to fix suspected contamination. This work was part of the deactivation of the FRS, along with the removal of asbestos-containing material.

A deactivation and decommissioning crew recently completed the safe removal of asbestos-containing material from inside the fuel receiving and storage facility. The piping and insulation inside the building contained ACM, which needed to be removed in preparation for future demolition. A total of 700 linear feet of piping was removed from the FRS over a period of five months, and the job was completed safely and compliantly. The FRS was used from 1965-1972 to receive and store spent nuclear fuel before it was reprocessed to recover reusable plutonium and uranium.

“This team used their combined knowledge and lessons learned from previous ACM work activities to safely complete this project,” DOE-**WVDP** Federal Project Director Steve Bousquet said. “The safe and compliant disposition of asbestos-containing material is another important step in the progress towards the future demolition of the FRS.” D&D Crew Foreman Bill Freaney, commended his crew for their hard work and dedication to safety during the project.

“Working with asbestos-containing material is the most physically-challenging work at the site when you include radiological and industrial hazards, layers of protective clothing and limited mobility. This crew used lessons learned to enhance safety, improve efficiency and reduce exposure to job-related hazards. They put their collective knowledge into practice.”