



Four Lakes Task Force

The Four Lakes of Gladwin and Midland Counties

Fact Sheet

Four Lakes Background Information

Currently **8,442** parcels,
6,520 waterfront parcels,
estimated economic
value of **\$800 million**

2 counties,
9 townships,
1 village

4,500 acres,
nearly **40** miles of lakes,
over **220** miles
of shoreline

Significant
economic engine
for the region



May 19, 2020

On May 19, 2020, after days of steady rain, the Edenville Dam in Gladwin County, Michigan, failed. The resulting surge overwhelmed the Sanford Dam in Midland County, causing it to fail. The upstream Secord and Smallwood dams were also damaged by the flood and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) ordered the private dam owner, Boyce Hydro Power (Boyce), to the lakes for dam inspection and repair. Ten thousand people were evacuated, the area was declared a national disaster by the President of the United States and the community was left with extensive economic, environmental and property damage. The community has rallied and we have made significant progress since the 2020 dam failures. We have acquired the dams and lakes, conducted emergency repairs and clean-up, completed flood studies, and begun restoration engineering. We have a plan of finance and recovery is underway. This is significant progress less than two years after the disaster. Full restoration is in our future.



Sanford Dam – May 2020



Edenville Dam – May 2020

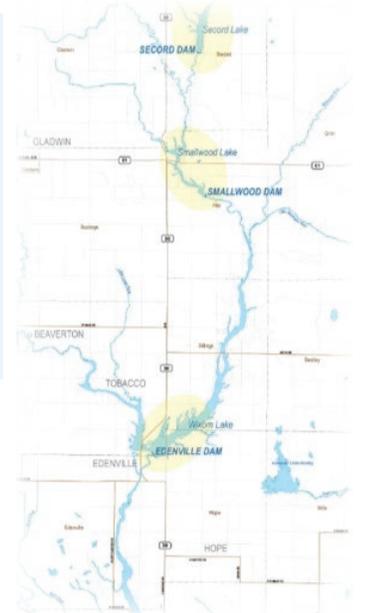
FLTF is committed to restoring Secord and Smallwood legal lake levels by summer 2024, Sanford by summer 2025 and Wixom by summer 2026.

Four Lakes Task Force (FLTF)

Four Lakes Task Force (FLTF) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization led by volunteer lake residents. It serves as a “Delegated Authority” for Midland and Gladwin counties to restore and oversee the maintenance and operations of Secord, Smallwood, Wixom and Sanford lakes and their dams, so the lake communities can enjoy the water long into the future.

Looking for the long-term stability of the Four Lakes, in 2018 representatives from lake associations began the process of transitioning the four hydroelectric dams from private ownership to public ownership. In 2019 the counties of Midland and Gladwin requested this citizen task force to explore the process of acquiring, financing and managing the dams and lake water levels per Part 307 “Inland Lakes Levels” of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act.

FLTF MISSION: Lessen the burden of local government in restoring and maintaining the lake levels of the Four Lakes for a sustainable future for the property owners around the lakes, the environment, local economy, recreational lake use and the general welfare of Midland and Gladwin counties.



Four Lakes Special Assessment District

The Four Lakes Special Assessment District (SAD) offers a method of financing the acquisition, operations, maintenance, repairs and improvements to the dams. It is an established boundary of waterfront properties along or near the Four Lakes, and backlot properties with dedicated (private easement) access. The properties within the SAD share in the financial responsibility by paying an annual assessment.

Properties share the cost based on benefit factors such as front lot, backlot, amount of frontage, lake view, water depth, land use, etc. The SAD will be funded by local, state and federal government dollars and private donations.

Part 307 Authority

The lake levels are established under Part 307 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) 451 of 1994. The purpose of Part 307 is to provide for the control and maintenance of inland lake levels for the benefit and welfare of the public.

- FLTF is the delegated authority of the counties to provide for and maintain the lakes
- Part 307 allows counties to make policy decisions as to the levels of their inland lakes, and to finance, build and maintain dams as necessary
- Costs in connection with the maintenance of the normal levels of the Four Lakes shall be defrayed by special assessments on both public and privately owned property in the Four Lakes Special Assessment District for the benefits derived from the lakes

Governmental Agencies Engaged with FLTF Restoration

The block contains logos for four governmental agencies: USDA (United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, EGLE (Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy), and Michigan DNR (Department of Natural Resources).

Recovery Phase 2020-2023

Erosion, Stabilization and Debris Removal

The Edenville Dam failure left miles of shoreline along the Tittabawassee River eroded. Immediately following the dam failure, Four Lakes Task Force compiled initial damage assessments for FEMA and identified, at the planning level, that a \$20 million of investment would be needed to stabilize bank erosion and \$4.5 million to remove debris within the Four Lakes. FLTF was able to complete this work because of a grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which provided 75% of the funding for a 25% match. Stabilization and debris removal are continuing along the lakes to protect properties and ensure safety.



Second Lake



Smallwood Lake



Wixom Lake



Sanford Lake

Design Flood and Precipitation Studies

FLTF precipitation and flood studies have confirmed capacity design.

- Design is based on Inflow Design Flood (IDF) guidelines issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Each of the four dams must and will have greater spillway capacity than prior to the May 2020 flood
- FLTF studies are being shared with EGLE, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, FERC and other agencies

Estimated Design Capacity of Dams Stated in Flood Frequency (CFS)				
	Second	Smallwood	Edenville	Sanford
Pre May 2020 - Capacity	7,695	10,185	20,670	29,690
May 2021 Design Estimate	21,150	24,550	52,275	47,470
Current State Requirement	12,700	15,600	44,600	44,900
60% Design	17,500	25,500	TBD	TBD
Dam Design Estimate in Flood Frequency	>10,000 Years	>10,000 Years	>5,000 Years	>5,000 Years

Estimates from August 3, 2021 "Critical Issue #4 Flood Studies and Design Capacity"

Restoration Phase 2022-2026

Estimated Dam Restoration Costs

The estimated repair and restoration amount is \$250 million, with a planning range of between \$230-\$270 million. All construction and permitting factors have been built into the estimates. The table at right shows the estimated breakdown by dam.

	Restored In	Total Cost
Secord Dam	2024	\$33.9 million
Smallwood Dam	2024	\$36.2 million
Edenville Dam	2026	\$96.5 Million
Sanford Dam	2025	\$70.8 million
TOTAL		\$237 million

Reconstruction Financing

Operations and Maintenance Assessment

FLTF will use a special assessment as the funding mechanism for operations and maintenance costs, which are estimated to be \$4.7 million over three years.

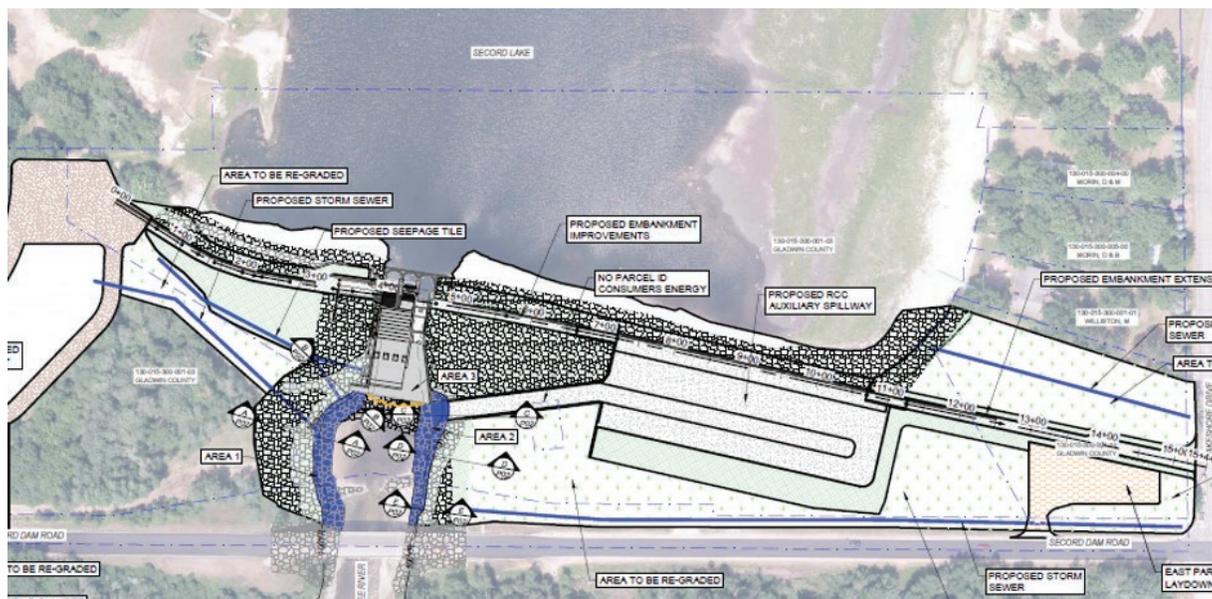
This assessment will be used for the operations and management of the lakes during the transition to their normal levels, for the development of operational plans and for long-term, ongoing operations. On average, the cost for lakefront owners will be \$180/year and below \$120 for backlot owners.

The costs for this assessment will be shared by property owners via the SAD and counties/townships via an at-large assessment (this is not a tax on property owners). The assessment will begin in 2022.

Capital Assessment

The primary source of repair and reconstruction will be the \$200 million State of Michigan grant appropriated in March 2020. This grant does not cover the total project cost and has a 20 percent match requirement, therefore, a Capital Assessment will be needed to cover a portion of the construction and repair costs. Property owners will not be assessed for these costs until the engineering design is final, all permits are in, and construction bids have been received. The current estimated timeframe to levy a special assessment for the capital improvement projects is 2024, with the first payment in 2025. The estimated cost for a waterfront lot will range between \$250-\$460 per year, and a back lot will range from \$115-\$230 per year.

Hydraulic Model of Wixom Lake Dams



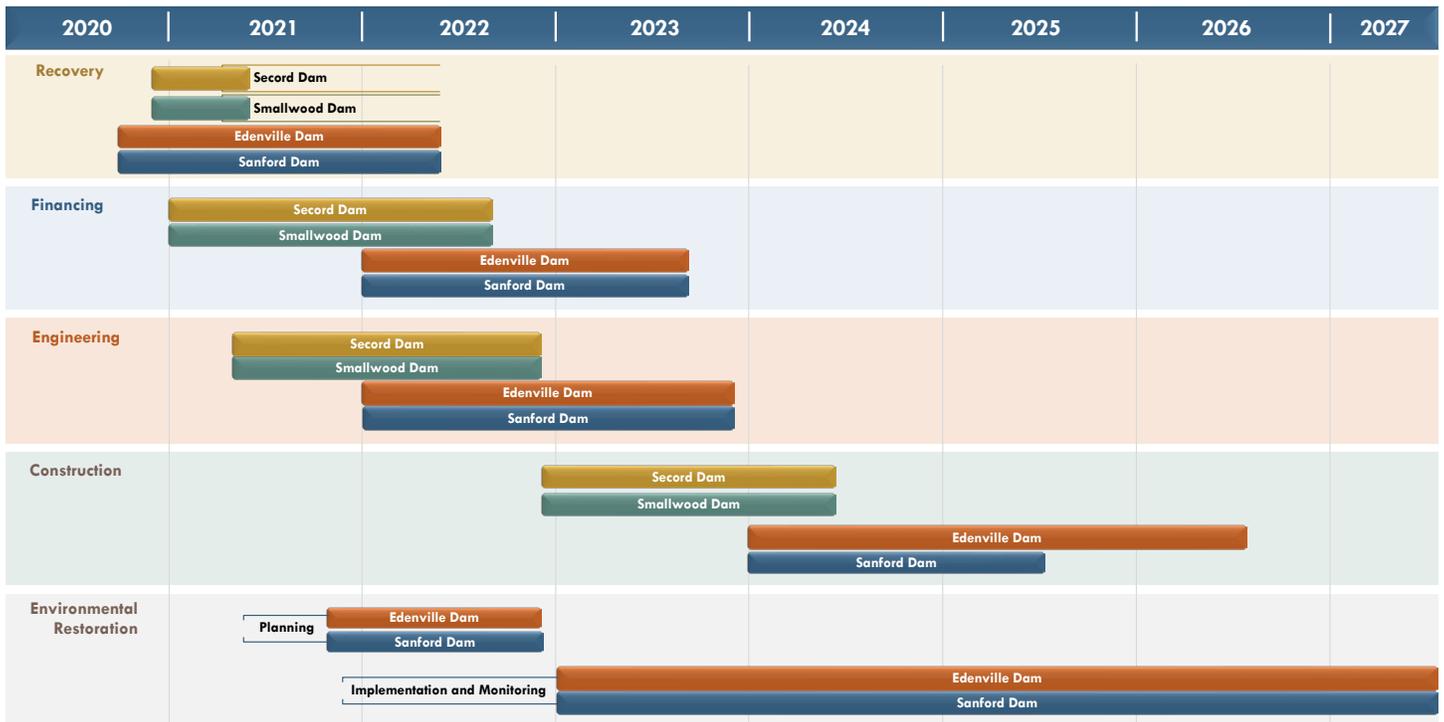
This image shows a drawing of Secord Dam upgrades.

Environmental Restoration

FLTF is engaged with EGLE in developing plans for environmental restoration and the long-term management of the lakes. The key factors for restoration include restoring the lake ecosystems, including the environment, natural resources and recreation of the lake system. The scope, funding and implementation of the plan will need agreement with EGLE, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and other stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement is expected as the environmental restoration planning efforts continue to evolve.



Lake Restoration Progress



Four Lakes Task Force

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