



MINUTES

Pen Dam Public Engagement Committee Meeting

7:00 PM - Wednesday, July 21, 2021

Virtual

The Pen Dam Public Engagement Committee of the City of Ypsilanti was called to order on Wednesday, July 21, 2021, at 7:33 PM, in the Virtual , with the following members present:

PRESENT:

ABSENT:

1 CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:33pm

2 ROLL CALL

Beth Gibbons-Sustainability Commissioner - Present, City of Ypsilanti Washtenaw County

Bryan Foley-Sustainability Commissioner - Present, City of Ypsilanti Washtenaw County

Ila Coltas-Ward 3 resident, Digital Marketing expert- Present, Ypsilanti Township Washtenaw County

Sally Lusk-Ward 2 resident, impoundment property owner - Present, City of Ypsilanti Washtenaw County

Corey Haselhuhn-Sales Manager, Schultz Outfitters - Absent

Christopher Jacobs-Community Development Manager, City of Ypsilanti - Present, City of Ypsilanti Washtenaw County

Jennifer Symanns-Ward 2 Council Member - Present, City of Ypsilanti Washtenaw County

Steve Wilcoxon-Ward 2 Council Member - Present, City of Ypsilanti Washtenaw County

3 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Symmans motion to approve, Jacobs second. Motion passed unanimously

4 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5 PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS

1. Bill Knolting name not identified - Comments on his birding recreation experience with his wife at peninsular park. Curious about the impact of dam removal on the water fowl.

2. Deborah - Resident downriver of the Pen Dam. Wants to know the implications of dam removal on property line.

6 NEW BUSINESS

- a) Future Meetings Discussion
 - a. Public Engagement Committee meetings:
 - i. Proposed dates:
 - i. August 4, 2021, 7:30pm-9:00pm, Zoom.
 - ii. August 18, 2021, 7:30pm-9:00pm, Zoom.
 - iii. September 1, 2021, 7:30pm-9:00pm, Zoom.
 - b. Public Meetings:
 - i. Location: Ypsilanti Freight House, hybrid meeting: in person and Zoom.
 - ii. Focus Group workshops:
 - i. August 11: Landowners
 - ii. August 25: Recreationists
 - iii. September 8: General public, residents and non-residents
 - iii. Summary report of findings is due September 29, 2021. This will be reviewed by committee then published prior to the townhall.
 - iv. Community Townhall:
 - i. October 6, 2021.
 - ii. Note: the date for Technical Work for DNR grant work to be done is October 8.

Discussion among the committee regarding the proposed calendar. The proposed changes were made tentatively to the following:

August 4th and August 11th and September 1 committee meetings
August 18th proposed focus group landowners
August 25th proposed focus group recreation
September 8th General public meeting

- b) Presentations:
 - 1. Steve Wilcoxon: scope and current status of Technical Studies funded through the DNR. Also scope and current status of Restoration Committee

Link to presentation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEVv446FE8w>

- c) Steve Wilcoxon provided presentation from HRWC on the scope and current status of Technical Studies funded through the DNR. Also scope and current status of restoration committee.

Communication Strategy:

- 1. Contacts for stakeholder groups
- 2. Collateral
 - i. Web material and routes of distribution.
 - ii. Printed material and routes of distribution.
- 3. Content and format for Focus Group workshops
 - i. Landowners:

- iii. General Public
- iv. Amenities: childcare, food, etc.

The committee decided now to address these agenda items for the sake of time.

- d) Committee proposed business

7 ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:54pm

Pen Dam Project Status Update for Engagement Committee

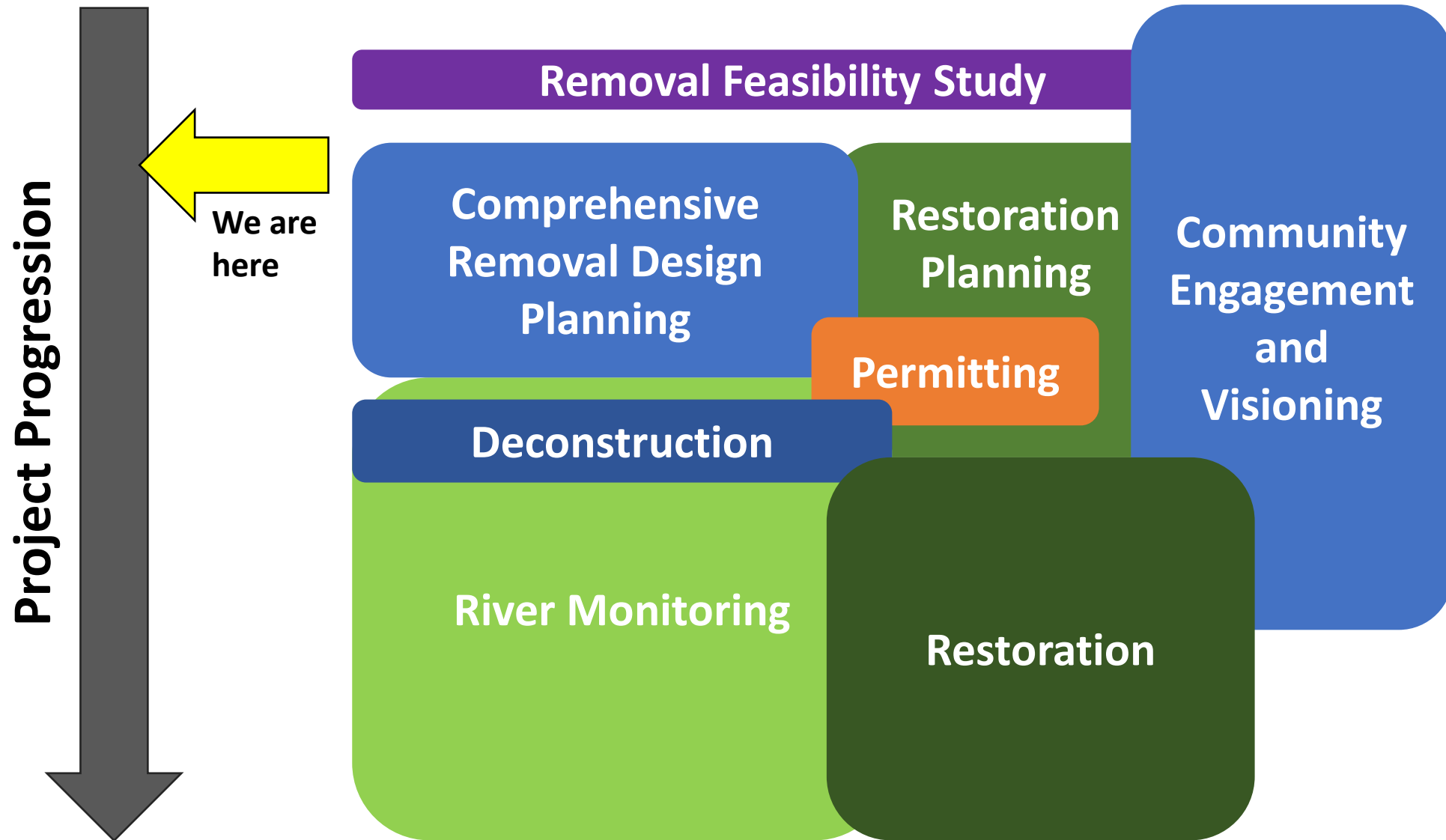
7/21/2021



Current Project Status and Background

- Feasibility Study completed September 2018
- Ypsilanti decided to remove Pen Dam in early 2019.
- HRWC and Ypsi applied for funding from MDNR FHGP (2019 cycle).
 - State and federal experts provided helpful guidance
 - COVID-19 delayed proposal review, \$330K awarded September 2020.
 - FHGP grant cycle ends October 2021. (No-cost extensions likely)
- LimnoTech contracted for removal design and analysis
- Applied for and received next round of FHGP funding for balance of 2019 proposal in 2020 cycle (2021-2022).

Generic Dam Removal Project Phases



Note: This is a graphical depiction only. The boxes are not to scale. Deconstruction typically takes weeks or months. Restoration of the impoundment will likely take 3+ years.

Key Updates for Area Residents

- **We are in the comprehensive removal design planning phase.**

This phase will:

- Help answer questions raised by the feasibility study
- Plan the **restoration of the impoundment**, design a removal, identify any additional issues, and incorporate Ypsi's vision for the park
- **There will be no deconstruction of the dam in this phase.**
- **There will be opportunities for residents to comment or help with planning before we see changes to the landscape.**

Project Site Overview

Superior Dam

Railroad Bridge

Superior Road
(auto) Bridge

Pen Park

Pen Dam



Conclusions of Dam Removal Feasibility Study

Sediment Quantity & Quality

- Sediment amount: lower than expected, still needs to be managed
- Sediment quality: better than expected. Most samples within human health and ecological criteria, more analysis needed to inform management.
- State officials and independent experts provided guidance for sediment analysis.

Infrastructure: The two bridges that cross the impoundment require additional analysis

Riverfront Landownership

- No property owners expected to lose land area.
- Assessment needed for proportional property realignment and property-specific issues.

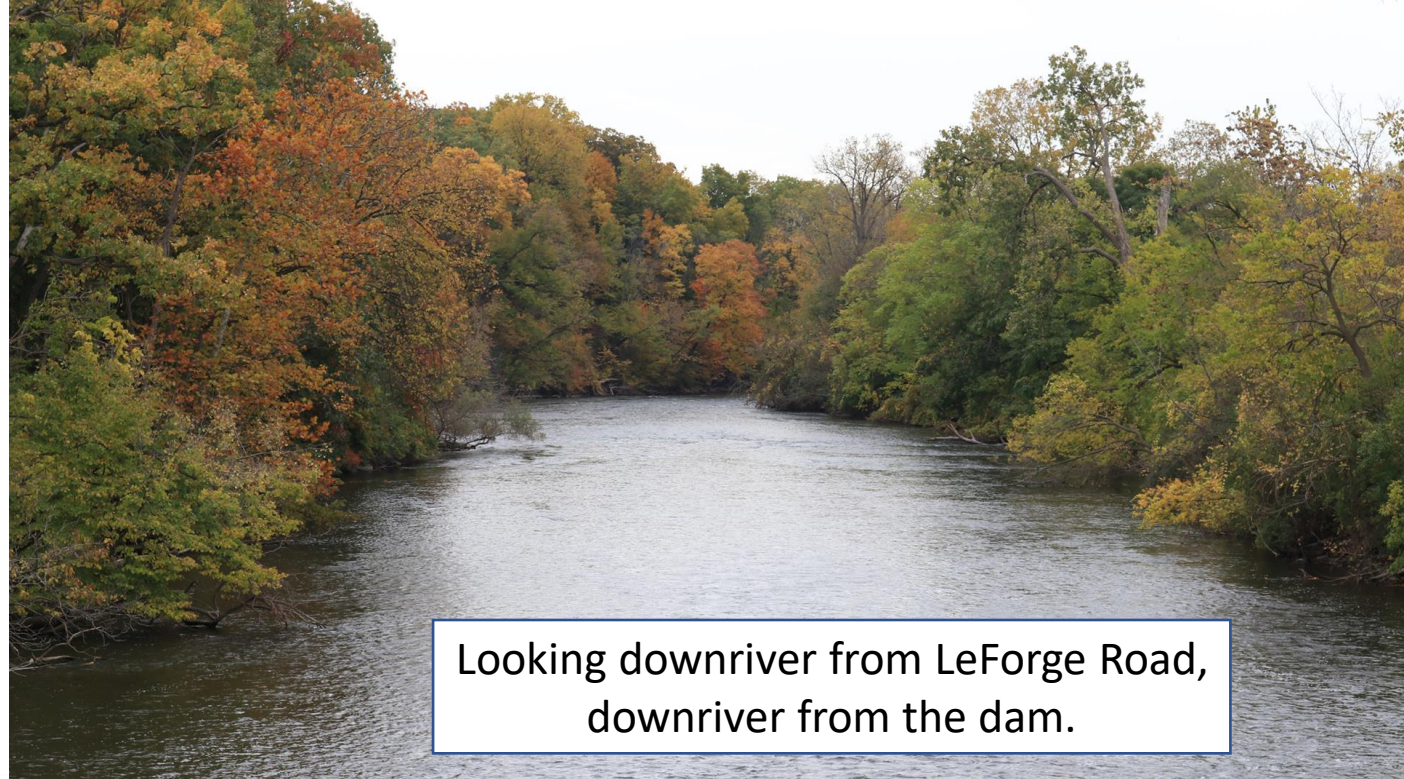
Goals of this Phase (2020-2022)

- **Removal design and analysis**
 - Sediment analysis
 - Measurement of impoundment and likely river path
 - Hydraulic analysis
 - Complete intermediate report to inform next steps
 - Geotechnical/Structural Analysis
- Complete* a restoration plan before dewatering of the impoundment
- Complete* a Pen Park vision and restoration plan before dewatering of the impoundment



Anticipated Landscape Change

- Exposed land will revegetate rapidly.
- View will transition to a river meandering through a floodplain meadow.
- Could mature, **eventually** into forested river corridor
- Sediment erosion should be limited and manageable



Looking downriver from LeForge Road, downriver from the dam.

Many residents have expressed interest in preserving and refurbishing the old powerhouse adjacent to the dam.



Sensitive Aquatic Species and Fisheries

- Significant benefits to fisheries, especially Ford Lake
- Some sensitive mussel species will require survey, consideration and management
- We will need to address concerns regarding:
 - Indiana Bat
 - Northern Long-eared Bat
 - Eastern Massasauga
 - Snuffbox Mussel
 - Mitchell's Satyr Butterfly
 - Poweshiek Skipperling
 - Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid



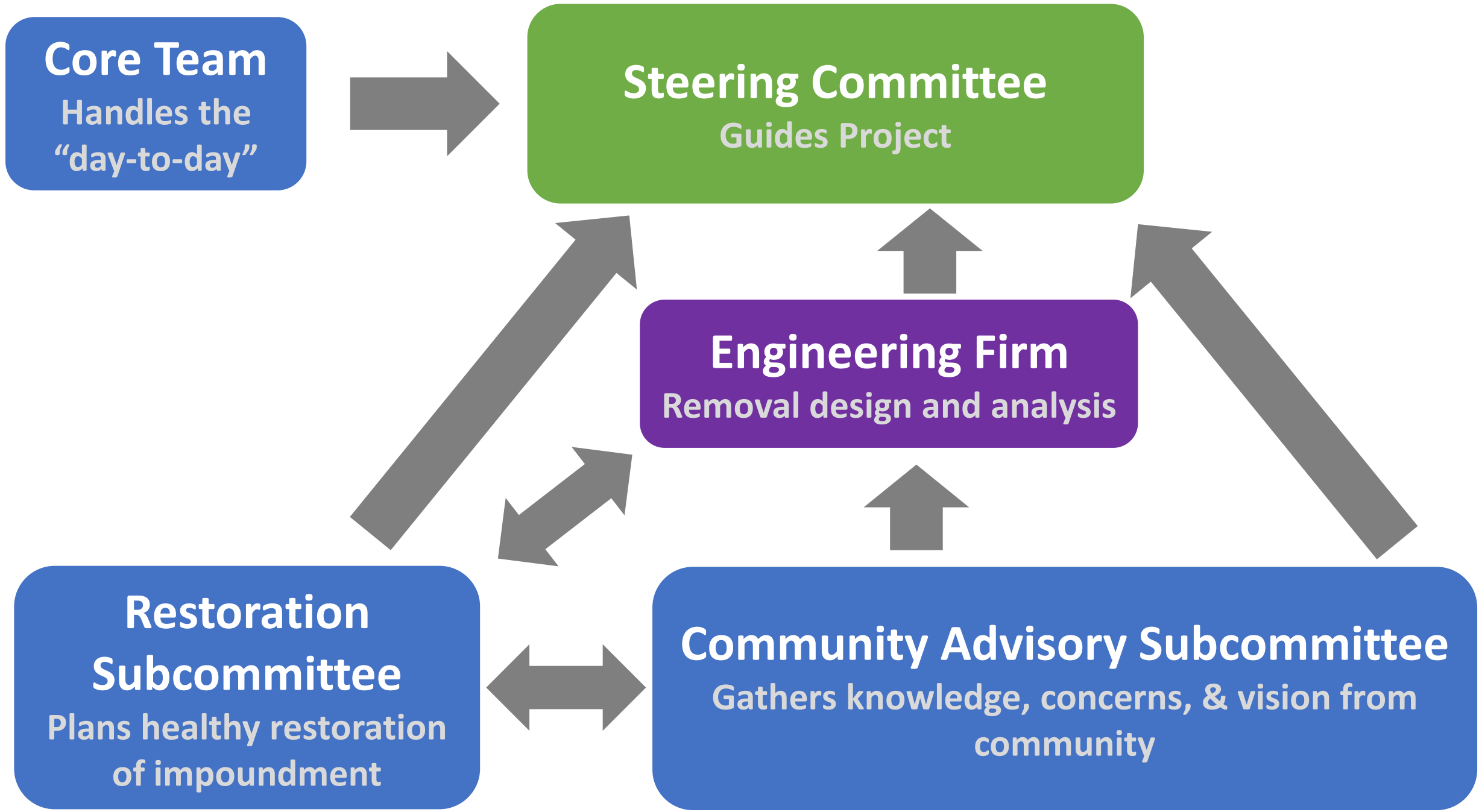
Freshwater mussels in the Huron River



Fisheries in Ford Lake will benefit

Project Management Structure Community Engagement Options

Group	Composition	Key Tasks
Core Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Ypsilanti • HRWC • Washtenaw County 	Project administration, logistics. Manage firm contracts
Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Team • Ypsilanti Township • Superior Township 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide overall project direction • Engage outside experts and integrate project dimensions
Restoration Subcommittee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Team • Federal and state officials • Subject matter experts • Waterfront owners • Area residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Steering Committee • Develop plan for restoration/revitalization of the impoundment and Pen Park. Complete before dewatering of impoundment
Public Engagement Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ypsilanti leads (staff, commissioners, councilmembers) • Area residents • HRWC supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform Steering Committee and Restoration Subcommittee • Identify, needs, concerns, strengths of park and restoration Inform future revitalization and use of park



Core Team
Handles the
"day-to-day"

Steering Committee
Guides Project

Engineering Firm
Removal design and analysis

Restoration Subcommittee
Plans healthy restoration
of impoundment

Community Advisory Subcommittee
Gathers knowledge, concerns, & vision from
community

Restoration Plan Outline

1. Land Use History of the Project Area, as described in the Feasibility Study - HRWC
2. Physical Setting: Local Topography and Geology, Conditions Prior to Inundation
3. Education Opportunities and Community Engagement
4. Developing landowner access and support for planting
5. Ecological Setting, Native Vegetation Communities, Invasive Vegetation
6. Sensitive Species of Interest, includes mussels specifically
7. Summary of Expected Conditions for vegetation
8. Revegetation Periods and Outlook
9. Restoration Goals and Objectives
10. Invasive Species Management
11. Revegetation Logistics, Strategies, Native Plant planting and upland preservation
12. Project Timeline
13. Estimate of Costs