



This provides key points from the FLTF informational webinar held Wednesday, July 8, 2026. We encourage you to listen to the entire 1 hour 40-minute webinar, which includes Q&A at the link below:
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/recording/2844829563295020630>

FLTF provides construction updates by dam. At the 17-minute mark of the webinar FLTF shares more on timing, and construction for Secord Dam.

As this was a robust session, we will summarize key Secord points in sections with each providing more information:

- Section One: Construction Cost Update**
- Section Two: Secord Dam Construction Update**
- Section Three: Secord Dam to be completed in Sept 2026 / Lake fill to begin April 2027**
- Section Four: What can I do to prepare my lake shore for April 2027 fill?**
- Section Five: Secord Summer Lake Level**

Section One: Construction Cost Update

FLTF reports costs for the construction project is coming in lower than the “not to exceed” budget shared in December 2023 and there are \$13.8 million pending in additional grants. This lower cost includes the \$20 million in cost of delay due to legal actions.

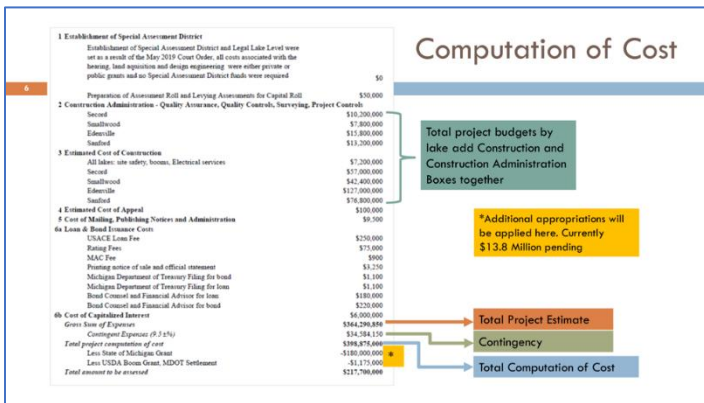
Recall the current capital assessment amounts were generated from the approved “not to exceed” budget less any grants received at the time.

Good News! FLTF reports, if the numbers hold, there could be a capital assessment reduction of up to 15% for property owners after the construction project is completed.

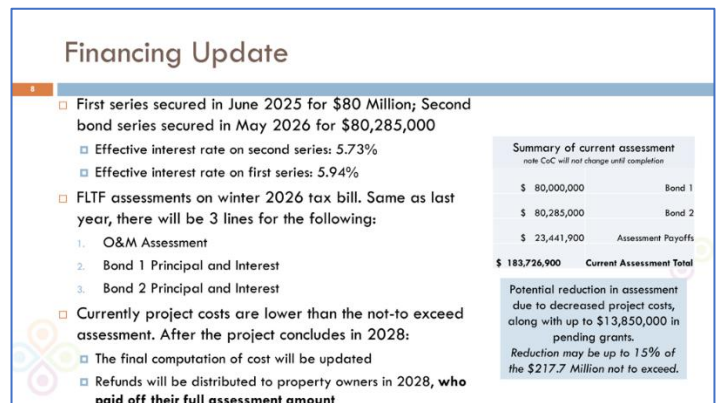
For a property that paid off the assessment, a refund to the property will be available. For those making annual payments, those payment amounts will be reduced appropriately.

More to come with 2028-29 mentioned as timing for clarification of final costs.

To learn more, we encourage you to listen to this section at the beginning of the webinar.

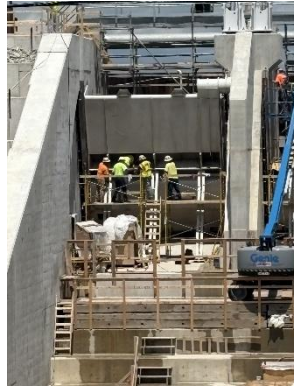


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Section Two: Secord Construction Update



Gates are being installed.

Once gates are operational, water will begin to flow through the primary spillway. This will allow the temporary gap currently passing water in the auxiliary spillway to be closed.

FLTF indicates a temporary barrier, or small coffer dam will be used. There will be little impact on the current water level at that time.

Section Three: **Secord Dam to be Completed in Mid to Late September 2026.** **Secord Lake to Return to Summer Legal Lake Level in Spring 2027 Due to Regulations and Forecasted Rainfall.**

Estimated Substantial Completion Dates Update

- Lakefill cannot happen after October 1 or before April 15
- Estimates for Secord and Smallwood are based the current 90-day weather forecasts
 - Assuming there is no major deviation from these forecasts
- Edenville/Wixom remains the same

Dam	Estimated Substantial Completion Date	Lake Refill Duration
Secord	September 2026	Refill will begin in spring 2027, it could be 1-4 weeks.
Smallwood	Late July 2026	Should take approximately 2-3 months to get to summer level.
Edenville	September 2027	If refill starts spring 2028, minimum time to refill is 47 days. If it's refilled after spring flows, it could take 2-3 months.

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FLTF confirms the substantial completion date for Secord is September 2026.

Lakefill cannot happen between October 1 and April 15 due to wildlife hibernation and to avoid ice damage to boat lifts, docks, and seawalls. MI DNR will not deviate on these dates.

Secord Lake will fill to normal summer legal lake level beginning April 2027.

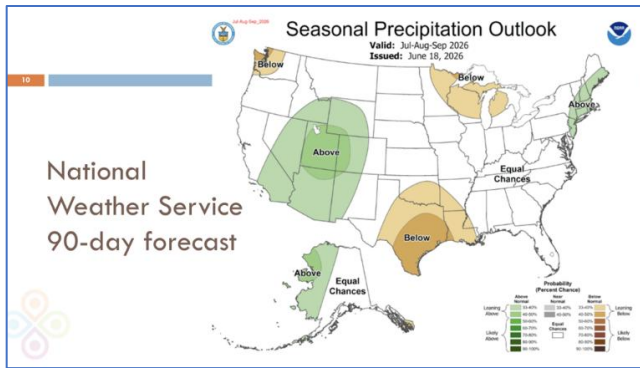
FLTF understands there are hundreds of pieces of property owner equipment (hoists, lifts, piers) stranded on the lakebed.

When fill begins, the lake is required to be brought to summer legal lake level (about 4-1/2 feet higher than current level) and then lowered to legal winter level (about 1-1/2 feet higher than current level) in mid-December. It cannot be raised to summer legal lake level and then lowered to the current drawdown level.

FLTF is not confident fill to legal lake level can be accomplished to meet the EGLE / DNR requirement of October 1st to allow for removal of the stranded hoists, lifts and piers which could result in hundreds of thousands of dollars of damage to property owner equipment due to shifting ice.

FLTF will leave Secord at the current level to avoid the risk of ice damage of private property on the lake bottom. Meaning the lake will not be raised in 2026 and will remain at its current drawdown level representing about 1-1/2 feet below past / future normal winter level. (Lifts will be in ice at winter level).

Secord Lake will fill to normal summer legal lake level beginning April 2027 to be lowered to normal winter level in mid December moving forward.



FLTF shared current weather models do not support rainfall in late September / early October that would fill Secord to summer legal lake level by October 1. Past webinar indicates 31 to 100 days with normal rainfall.

Secord Lake Refill: April 2027

- ❑ Estimated substantial completion date is September
- ❑ We will not refill to summer level this year and will wait until the spring of 2027
- ❑ Will not fill to winter level to avoid risk of ice damage to stranded equipment on the lakebottom
- ❑ Refill will begin in April 2027 and will take 1-4 weeks to reach summer level

We are disappointed lake filling is delayed until Spring 2027; however, it does provide additional time to prepare Secord for normal summer lake levels while avoiding ice damage to stranded hoists, lifts, and piers. ***Recall the June 2024 suspension of construction at Secord Dam due to legal actions caused this delay of over one year.***

Section Four: What can I do to prepare my lake shore for April 2027 fill?

Please prepare your property for summer legal lake level this coming Spring. Complete the clean up of your shore, lakebed and surrounding areas. The [Secord Lake Association Restoration Plan](#) provides information of what you can do.

Help your neighbors as we are all in this together. Remember anything that can float should be removed from the lakebed.

This Fall, remove temporary piers, docks and anything on the lakebed. If you marked stumps, remove the marker(s).

If you have a hoist, lift or pier now is the time to repair, stabilize and secure your property to reduce the likelihood of it floating away during higher Spring lake levels. Move boats, paddle boats, canoes, kayaks to higher ground. Remember, this Spring the lake will fill to summer level and it may happen quickly.

Section Five: Secord Summer Lake Level

To understand the Secord Summer Legal Lake Level, we must first address how surveyors measure height above “sea level.” Since sea level is not the same around the world, surveyors, engineers, and mapmakers use a vertical reference datum that uses a specific location to establish standard zero-elevation across the United States, Canada, and Mexico. While National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929 known as NGVD 29 was the national standard for most of the 20th century, the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD 88) has officially superseded it, as being more accurate and consistent. **FLTF and the Court used both to avoid potential confusion when the court order was issued.**

The chart below shows the measurements using the old 1929 standard and new established in 1988. Notice for Secord the old NGVD 29 measurement of 750.8 vs. the updated NAVD 88 measurement of 750.3. Though different because of different reference location, each measure represents the exact same height to a surveyor. In other words, a mountain or lake's elevation does change just because a difference reference is used.

**Table 2
Recommended Normal Legal Lake Levels**

Lake	Summer Level (NGVD 29)	Winter Level (NGVD 29)	Vertcon Conversion	Summer Level (NAVD 88)	Winter Level (NAVD 88)
<i>Sanford</i>	630.8	627.8	-0.568	630.2	627.2
<i>Wixom</i>	675.8	672.8	-0.558	675.2	672.2
<i>Smallwood</i>	704.8	701.8	-0.541	704.3	701.3
<i>Secord</i>	750.8	747.8	-0.512	750.3	747.3

Past Lake Levels Manipulated to Operate Hydro:

Since at least 1998 when Wolverine owned the dams, FERC regulated the normal summer lake level at 750.8 NGVD 29 plus allowed for .3 ft higher and .4 ft lower to allow for more hydro power over DNR request to run natural river flows. As Secord is the highest lake in the system (120 feet higher than Sanford), lake level could be manipulated usually in the morning to release water for production of hydro that would move down the entire four lake system. It was not uncommon for higher early morning lake levels than afternoon. Morning water released followed by late afternoon or early evening regiments used to refill all lakes.

Legal Lake Level Court Order issued May 2019:

The 2019 recommendation is that the Circuit Court order State of Michigan legal lake elevations match the elevations in FERC licenses, as outlined in Table 2 [above]. In other words, the recommendation is no change to historically observed water elevations. The establishment of legal lake levels is in the best interest of property owners surrounding the lakes.

On May 28, 2019, Circuit Court Judge Stephen Carras issued an [Order Setting Normal Lake Levels for Sanford Lake, Wixom Lake, Smallwood Lake, and Secord Lake](#). For Secord, the judge issued the following order:

The summer level for Secord Lake shall be set at **750.3 NAVD 88** (750.8 NGVD 29) and winter level for Secord Lake at 747.3 NAVD 88 (747.8 NGVD 29) but subject to the jurisdiction of FERC and license issued by FERC for the Secord Dam until such time the license is revoked or terminated.

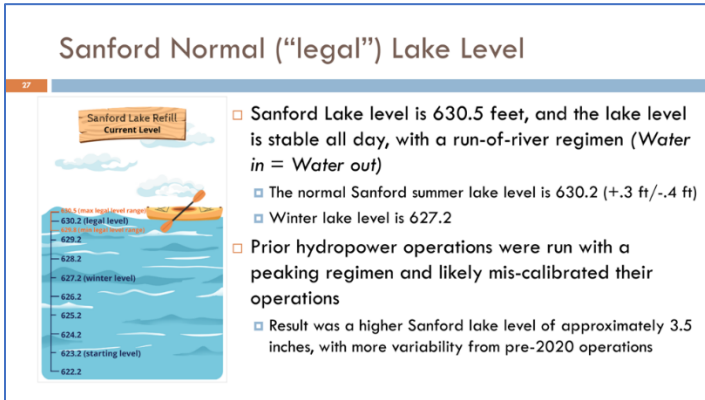
The summer water operation may fluctuate the level(s) of the lakes no more than within 0.3 feet [3.6"] above and 0.4 feet [4.8"] below of the normal legal lake level as set forth in this Order.

FLTF Management of Lake Level:

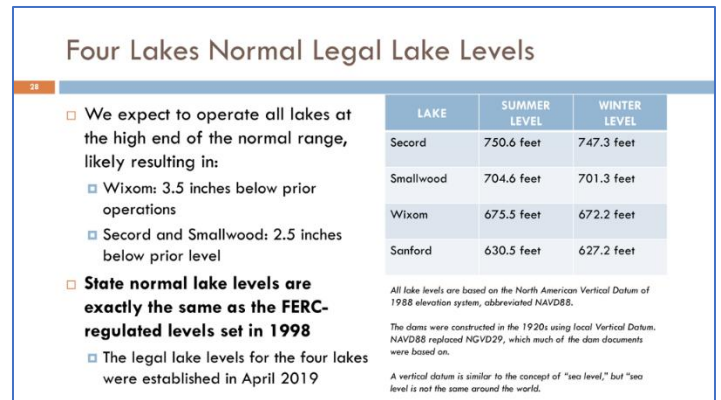
As part of obtaining the EGLE permits, it was agreed that FLTF would run the dams at a run of the river regimes that would maintain a steady level all day. FLTF will operate the lake level at all 4 Lakes, to include Secord, at the high range of the legal lake levels as ordered by the court in 2019. FLTF indicates the water level will be more consistent throughout the day than prior hydro operations.

FLTF will be operating Secord consistently at the high end of the normal range, meaning 750.6 NAVD 88. (Court order normal summer level 750.3 plus .3 above = 750.6 NAVD 88).

Recognizing past summer lake levels were manipulated for hydro and fluctuated, FLTF indicates the summer lake level at Secord will be about 2-1/2 inches lower than pre-2020 levels experienced.



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FLTF mentioned it is possible a conversion error from the 1929 standard to the 1988 standard was made during prior private ownership. It is possible the private owner(s) mis-calibrated their operations. FLTF indicates once the entire 4 Lake system is operating that will create the appropriate time to investigate options to negotiate with the State to amend the legal lake levels via the Court to account for the inches mentioned.

Reference materials:

In April 2019, the FLTF published for the public and submitted to the court a 332-page document entitled [Four Lakes Lake Level Study](#). This also includes the FERC license order for Secord dated October 1998.

On May 28, 2019, Circuit Court Judge Stephen Carras issued an [Order Setting Normal Lake Levels for Sanford Lake, Wixom Lake, Smallwood Lake, and Secord Lake](#).

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 If you have questions, you can email FLTF at info@fourlakes taskforce.org or you can drop us a line at SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com

Member meetings are open to all - -please join us at Secord Township Hall at 10 AM →
 Saturday, July 18
 Saturday, August 15
 Saturday, September 12
 Saturday, October 12

Save the Dates
SLA Golf Outing – Saturday September 19th
SLA Chili Cook Off – Saturday October 17th

Individual Membership is just \$25 a year or \$35 for a Family Membership. We welcome you to join the SLA TEAM! Join [HERE](#).

www.SecordLakeAssociation.org Email SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com

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