

Mio Dam Re-Licensing Decommissioning Information

Supervisors Letter

First of all, a lot of people believe that Consumers energy wants to decommission the dams and that these meetings are a sham. I have attended several public meetings and some private meetings with Consumers Energy and I believe that Consumers Energy is truly evaluating everything about the dams and trying to make the best decision for them moving forward.

The cost to maintain the 100 plus year old structures is significant. Especially since the Midland County dam failures. There have been increased requirements for them to comply with. When the dams were last relicensed approximately 30 years ago they were made to operate at run of river, This, means that they have to release as much water out of the impoundments as flows in. The fishing has greatly improved but they can only generate about half of the electricity that they used to.

The State of Michigan Public Service Commission will not allow them to pass the increased costs of operation on to all of their rate paying customers. The cost to produce solar electric is supposedly 15 times cheaper.

The State of Michigan has not included hydro facilities as part of the green energy plans that they have supported.

The Michigan DNR and EGLE have already begun raising issues about water quality to try and have the dams removed. We have included letters on our website from both agencies that they have sent to FERC. If FERC requires any new owners to adhere to the water quality standards listed Consumers Energy will not be able to sell the dams to a different operator. If the dams are not relicensed the likely hood is that they will not be able to stay in place as lake control structures. Because any permits to operate lake control structures would require permits from the agencies that are already opposing the dams. When the dams were last re-licensed the State of Michigan DNR opposed the license application and tried to get the dams removed then. Strong public opinion and many comments sent to FERC in support of the hydro operations helped to sway them to relicense the dams.

The best way to keep the dams is to start contacting all of our state and federal representatives and agencies and voice our concerns to them directly.

James Randy Booth Supervisor Big Creek Township