

Zone A Workshop

How to determine Base Flood Elevation (BFE) (100-year flood)



**New Hampshire Office of
Energy and Planning**

**U.S. Geological Survey
Water Science Center
New Hampshire - Vermont**

Zone A Workshop Outline

- I. Sources of Flood and Watershed Information
- II. How to Determine BFE: **Simple Methods**
Detailed Methods
- III. Example of Determining Zone A BFE
- IV. Questions and Answers

Sources of Flood and Watershed Information

Previous Flood Studies

- Draft flood studies (new or re-study)
FEMA
- Flood control projects
USACE, NRCS, Dam Bureau (NHDES)
- High flow design analysis (e.g. bridges)
FHA, NHDOT, County Highways, Public Works

Sources of Flood and Watershed Information

Federal Agencies

FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
FHA	Federal Highway Administration
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Sources of Flood and Watershed Information

State / Regional Agencies

NHOEP N.H. Office of Energy and Planning

NHDOT N.H. Department of Transportation

NHDES N.H. Department of Environmental Services

RPCs Regional Planning Commissions

NERCC Northeast Regional Climate Center

Sources of Flood and Watershed Information

Local Agencies

County Highway Department

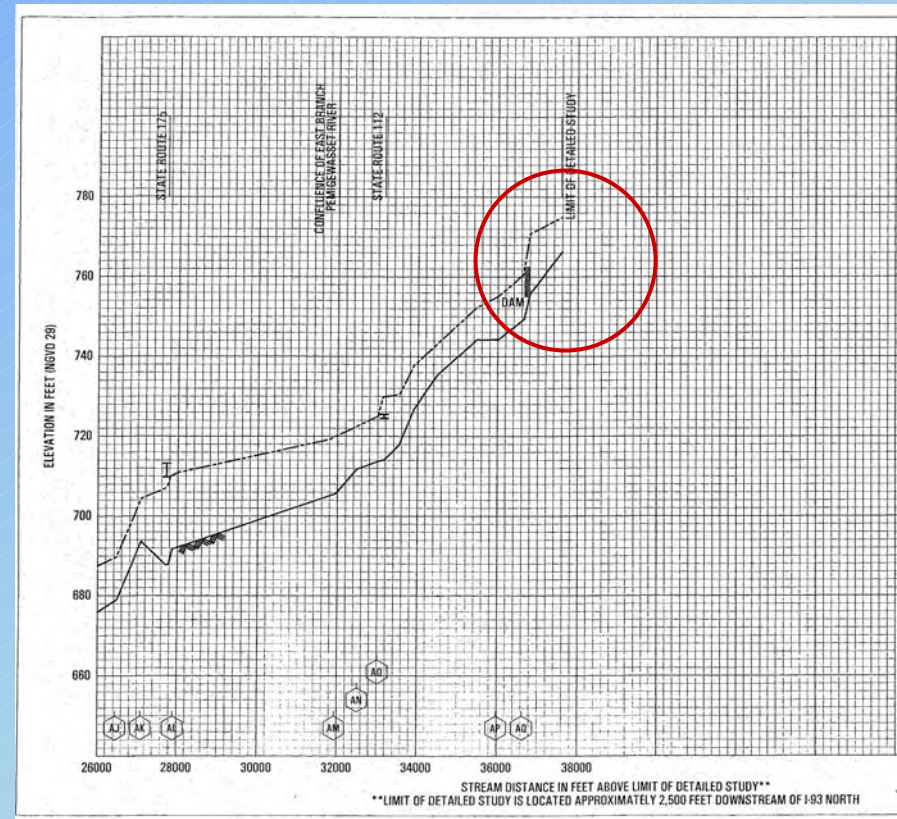
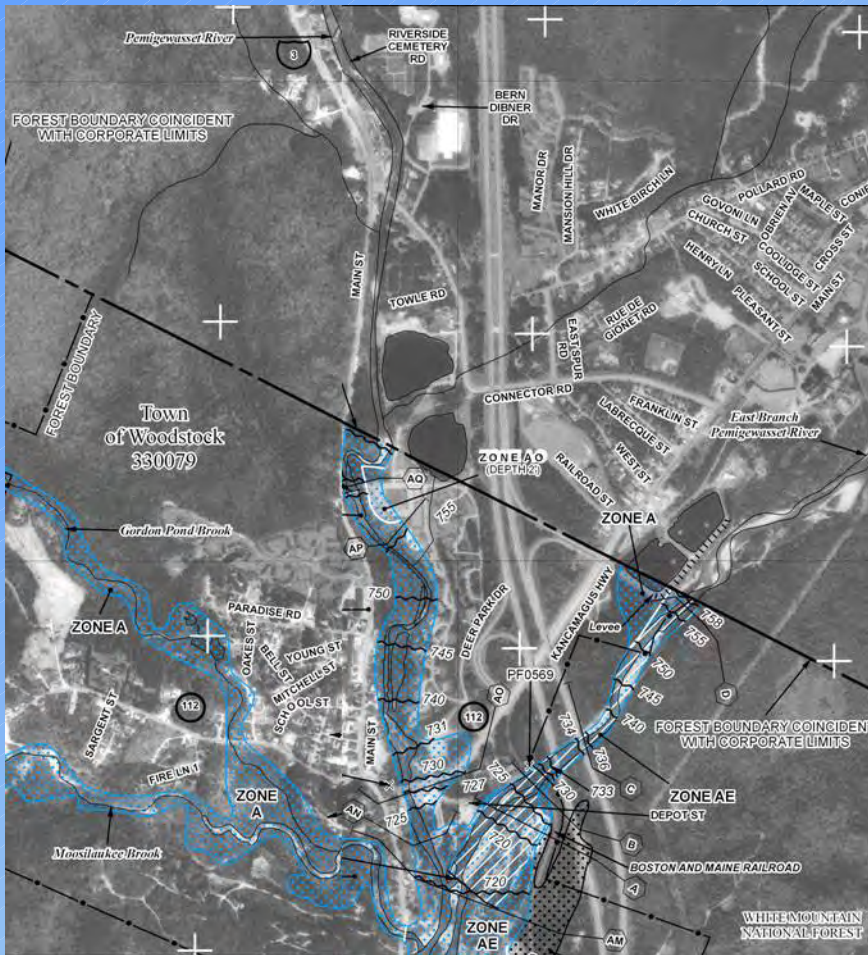
City / Town Engineer

Department of Public Works

Zone A Workshop Outline

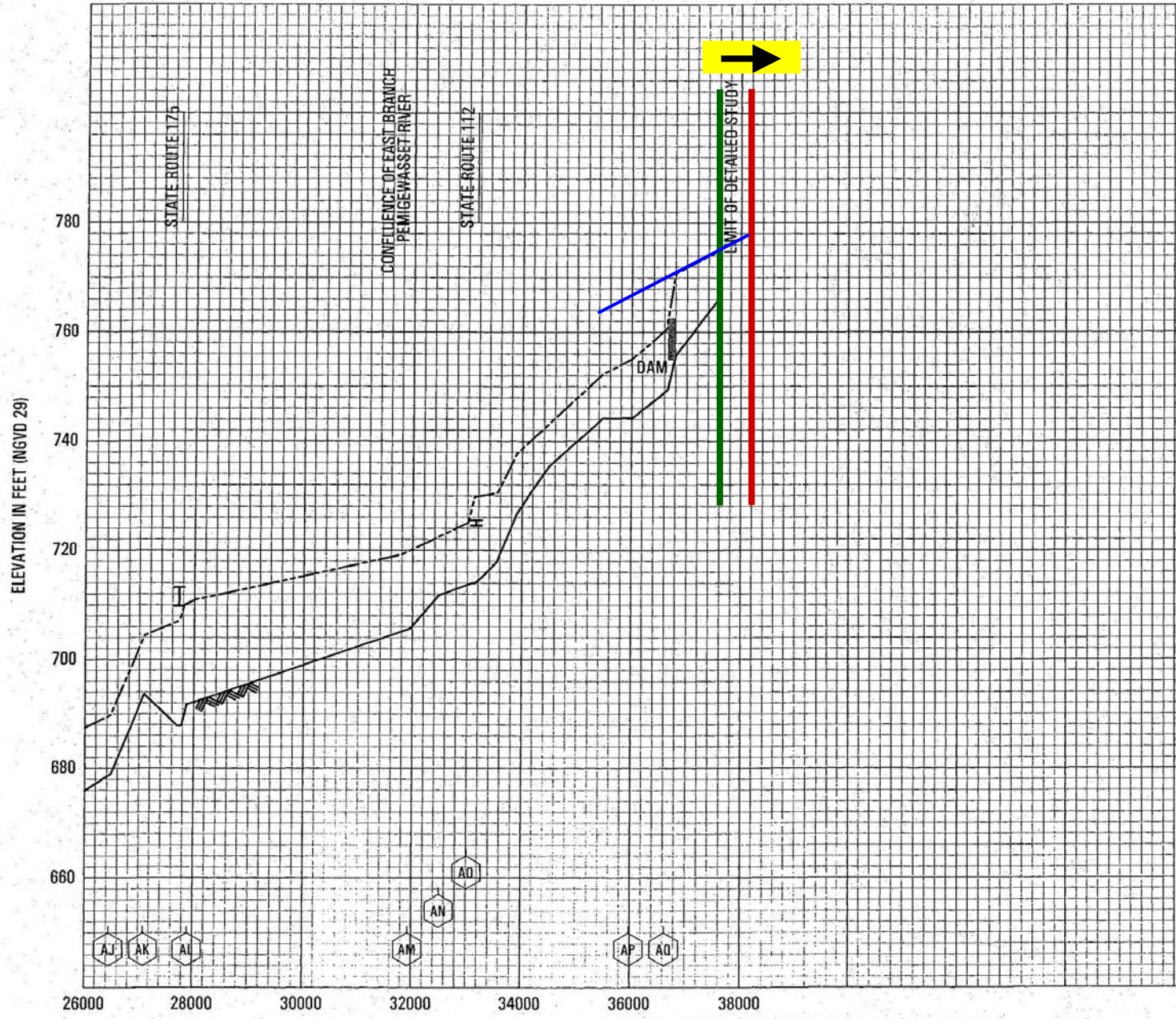
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Extrapolation upstream from existing study



River profile

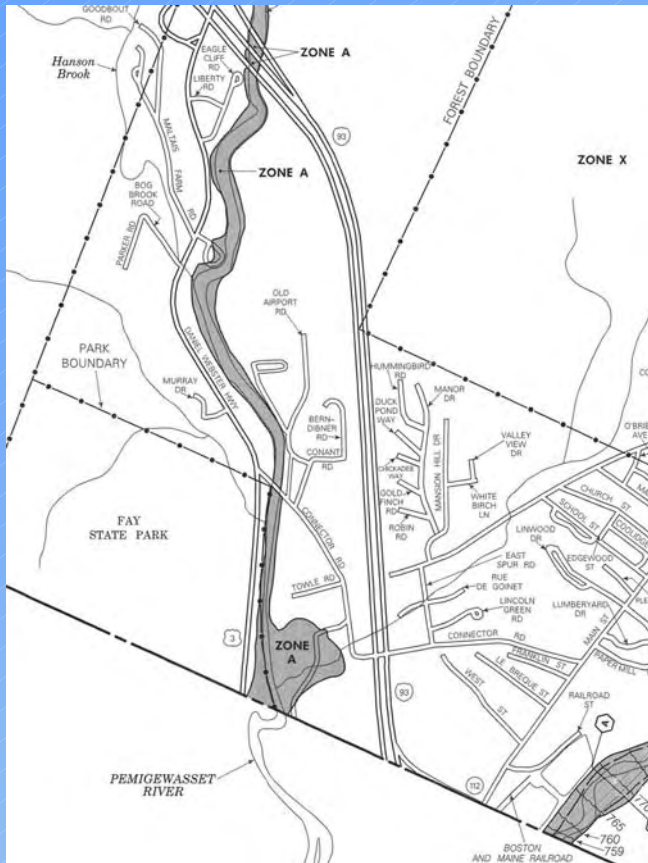




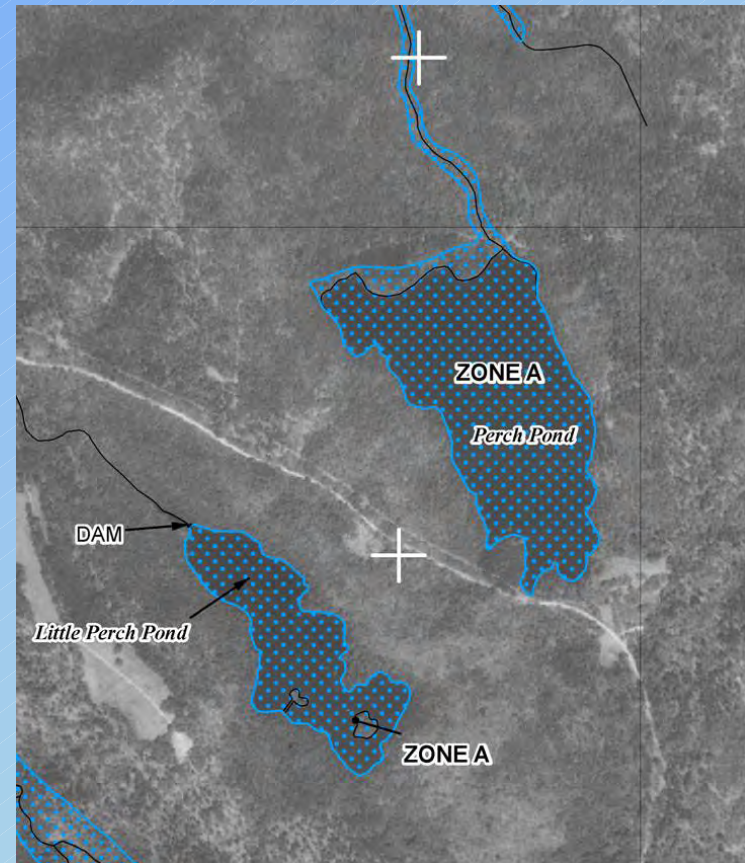
STREAM DISTANCE IN FEET ABOVE LIMIT OF DETAILED STUDY**
 **LIMIT OF DETAILED STUDY IS LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 2,500 FEET DOWNSTREAM OF I-93 NORTH

Contour Interpolation

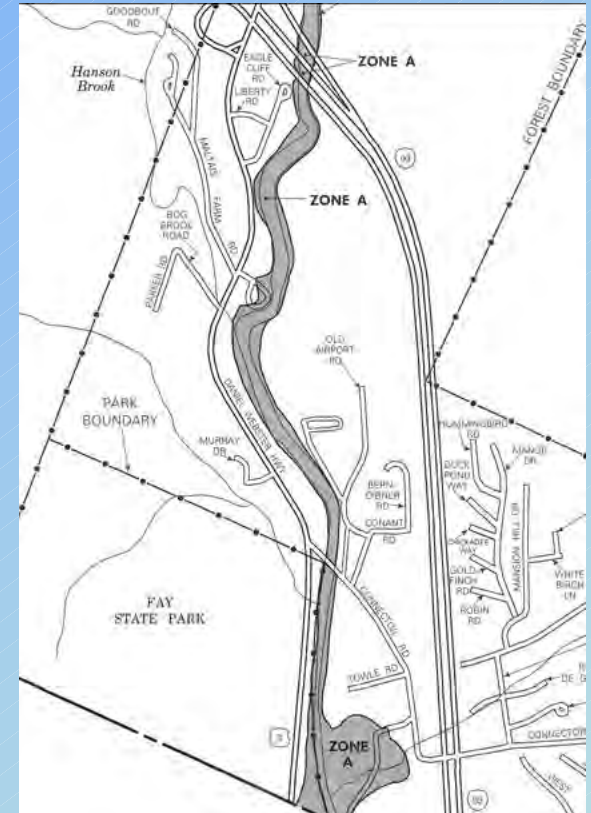
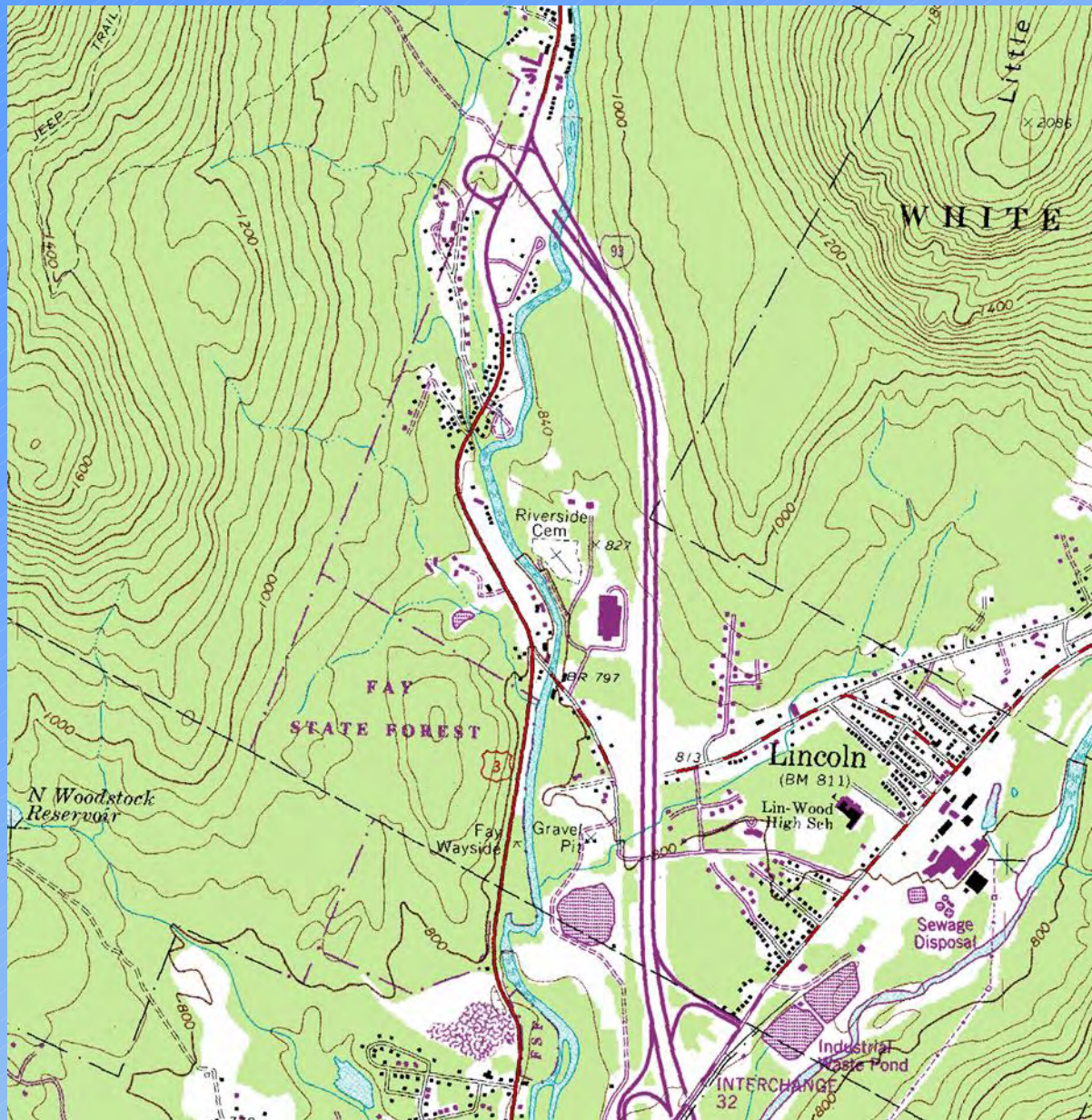
using topographic and Zone A maps

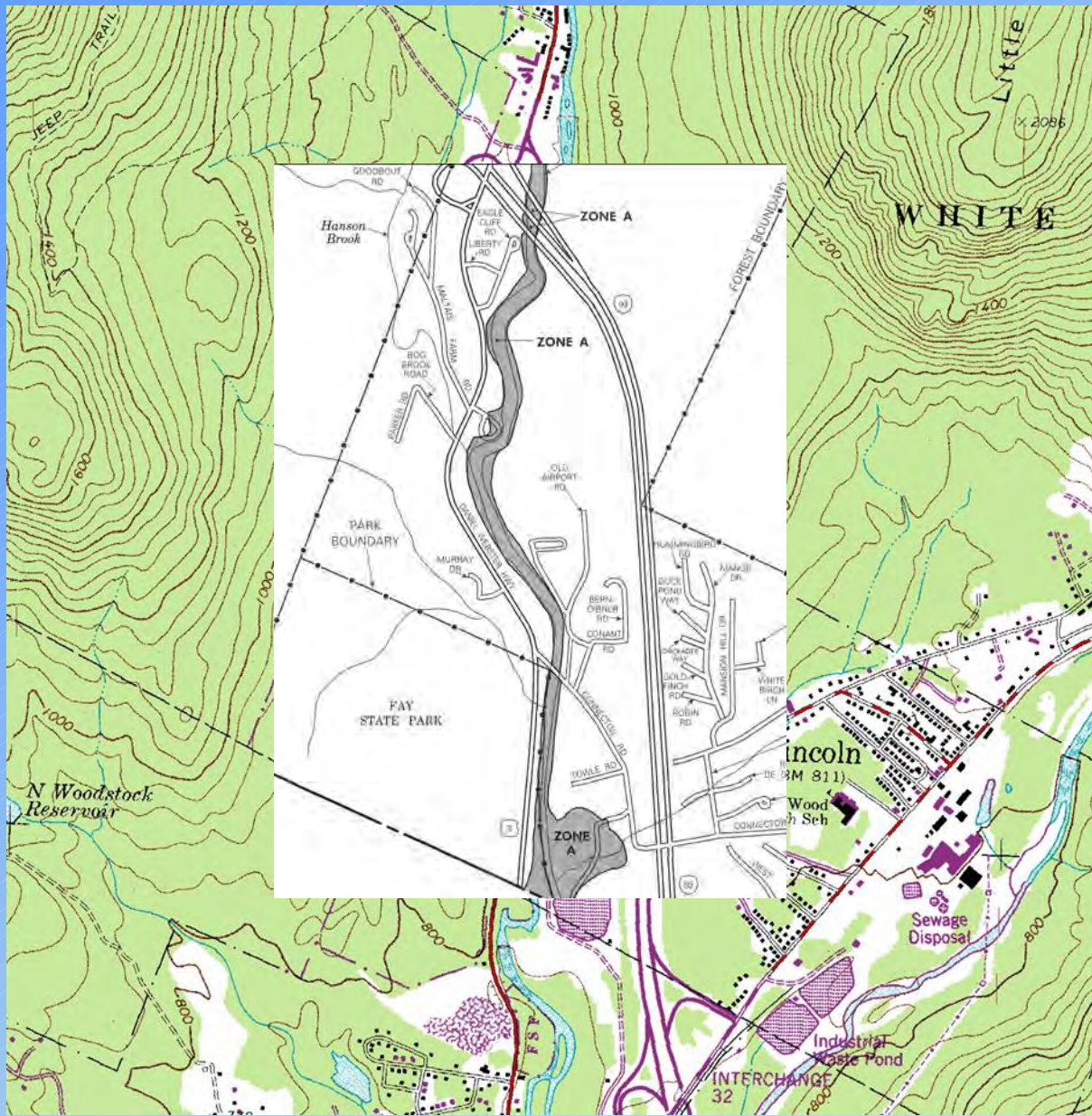


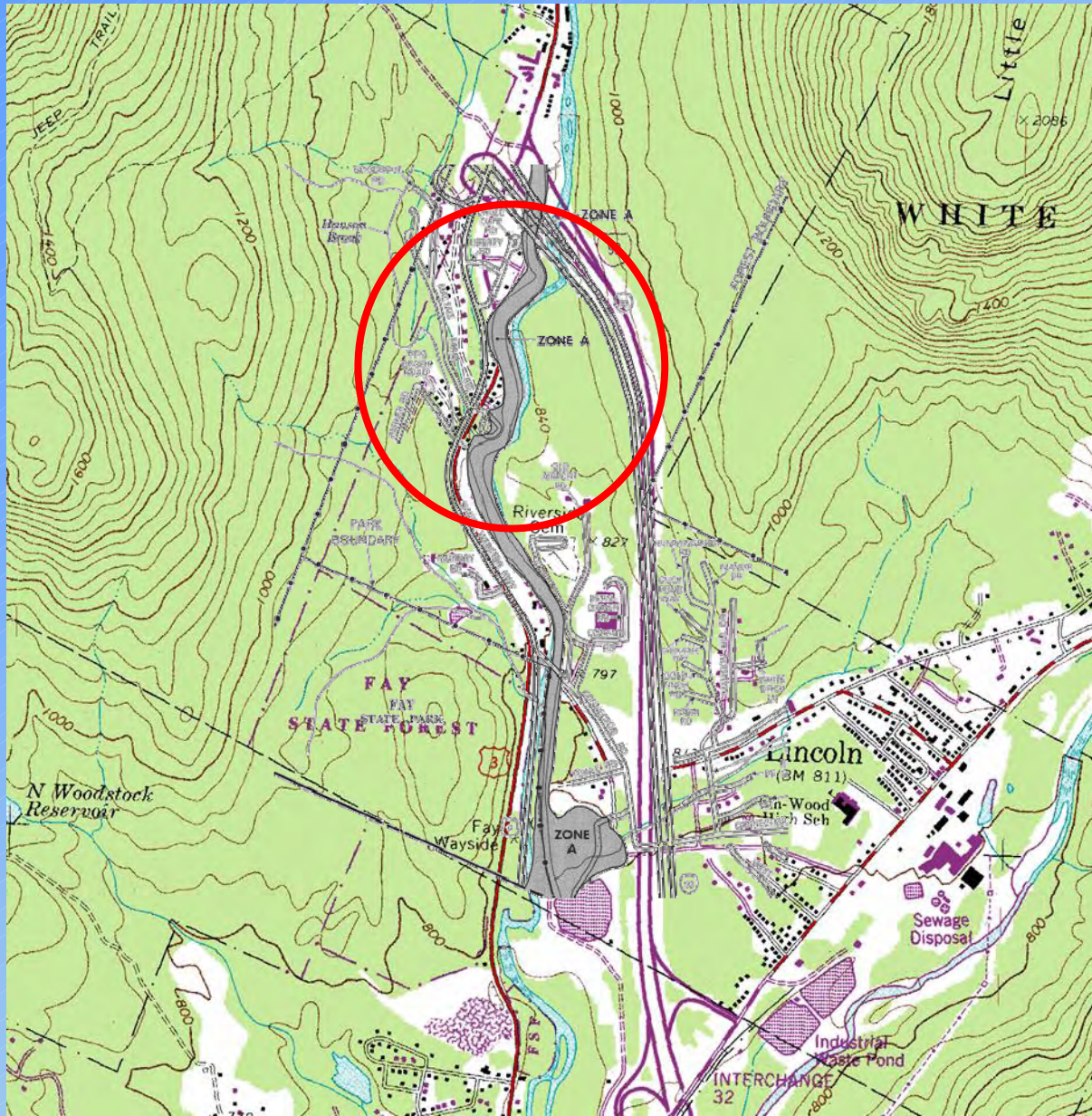
River Zone A

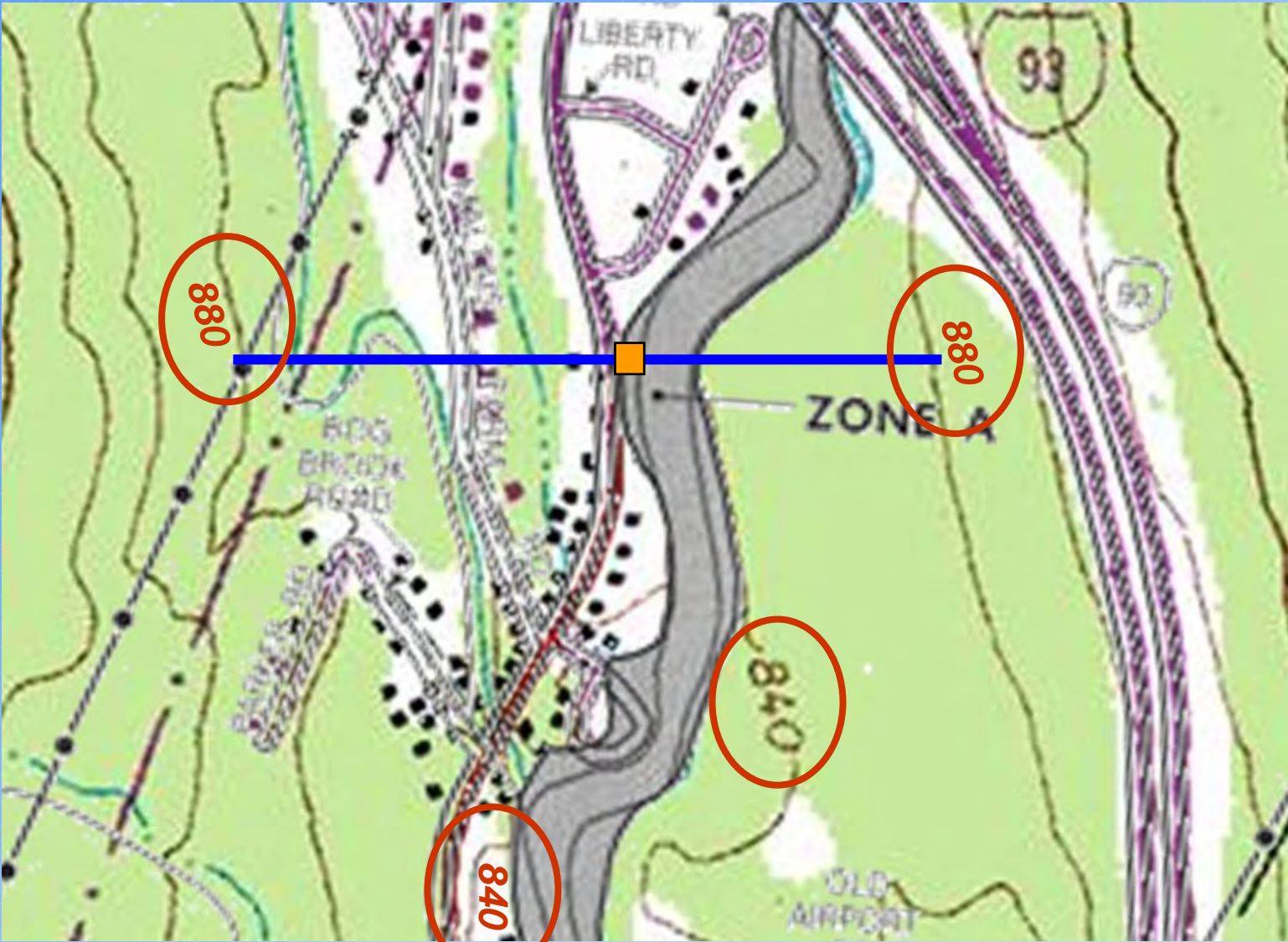


Lake/Pond Zone A

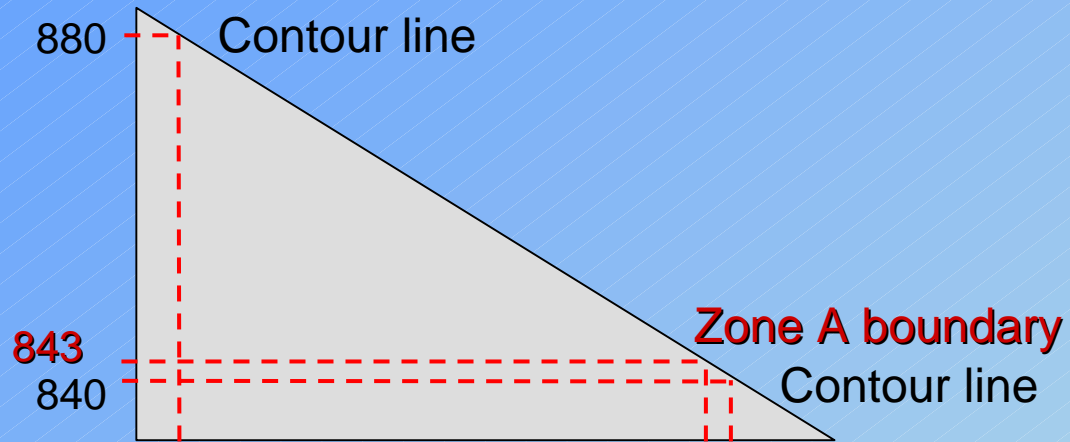




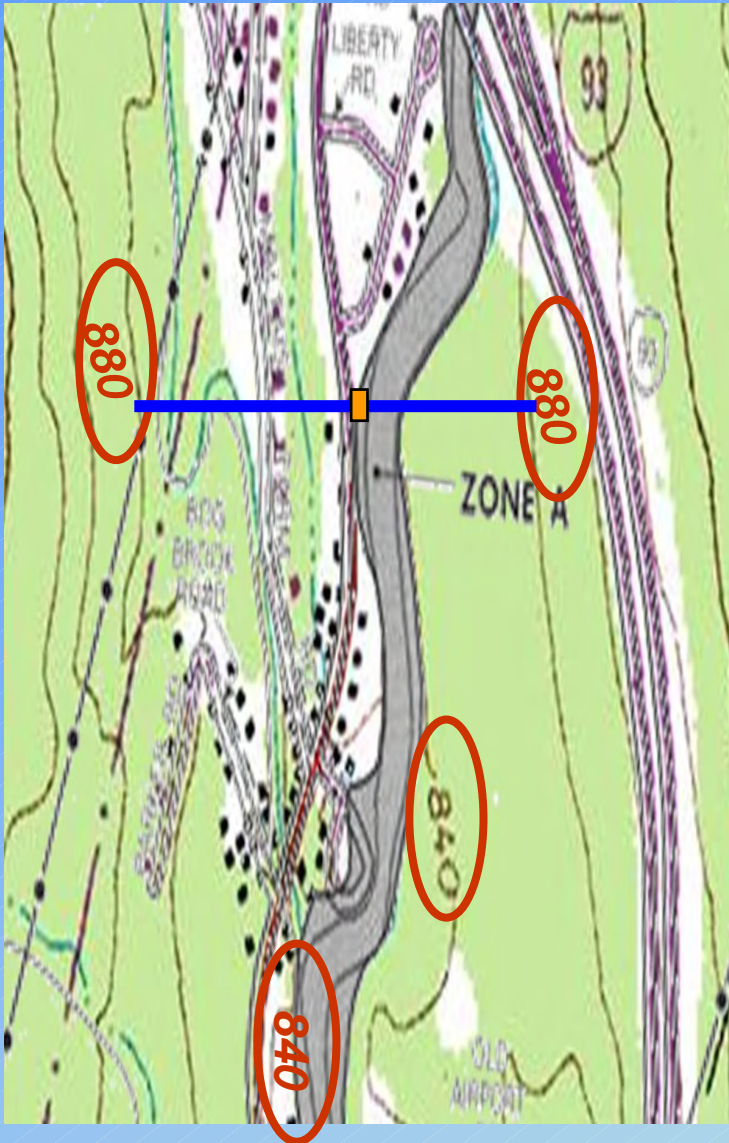




Contour Interpolation



Contour Interpolation



Contour interval = 40ft

Left Bank:

Zone A Boundary = 843 ft

Right Bank

Zone A Boundary = 837 ft

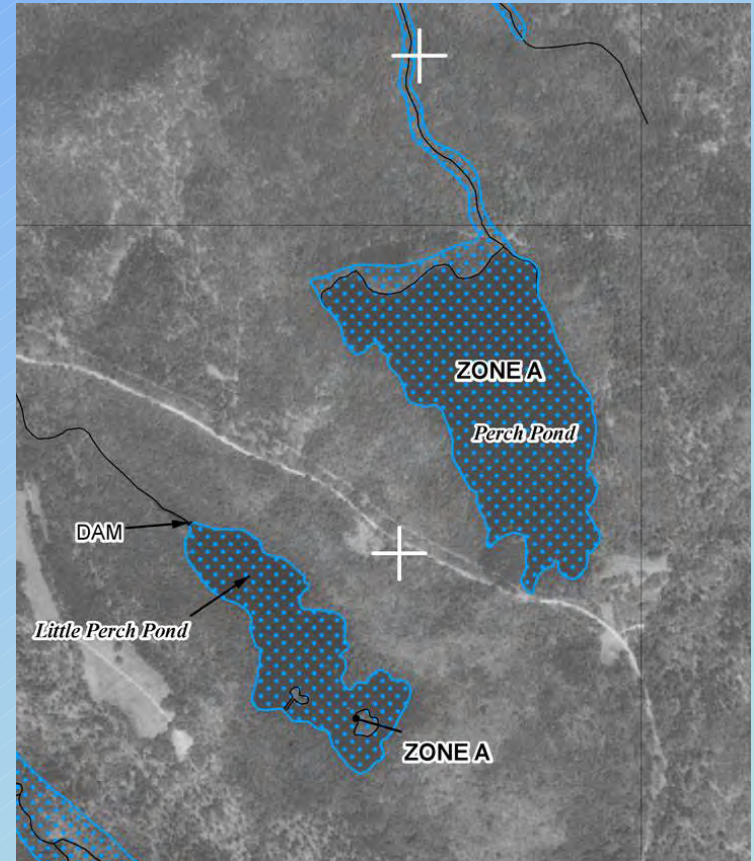
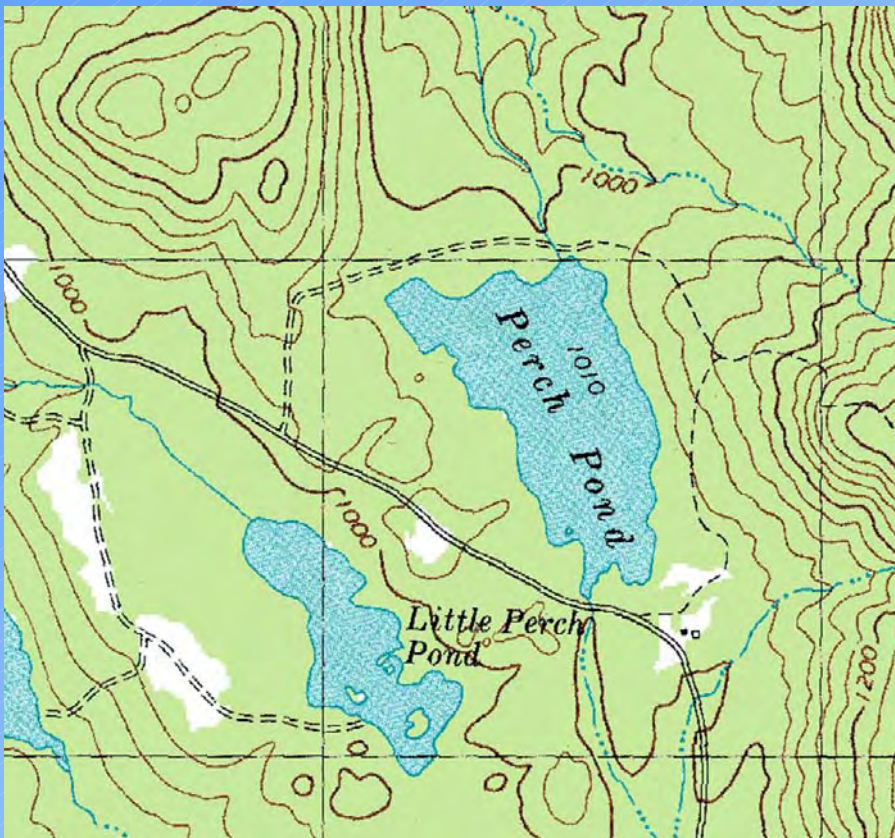
$843 - 837 = 6 \text{ ft}$

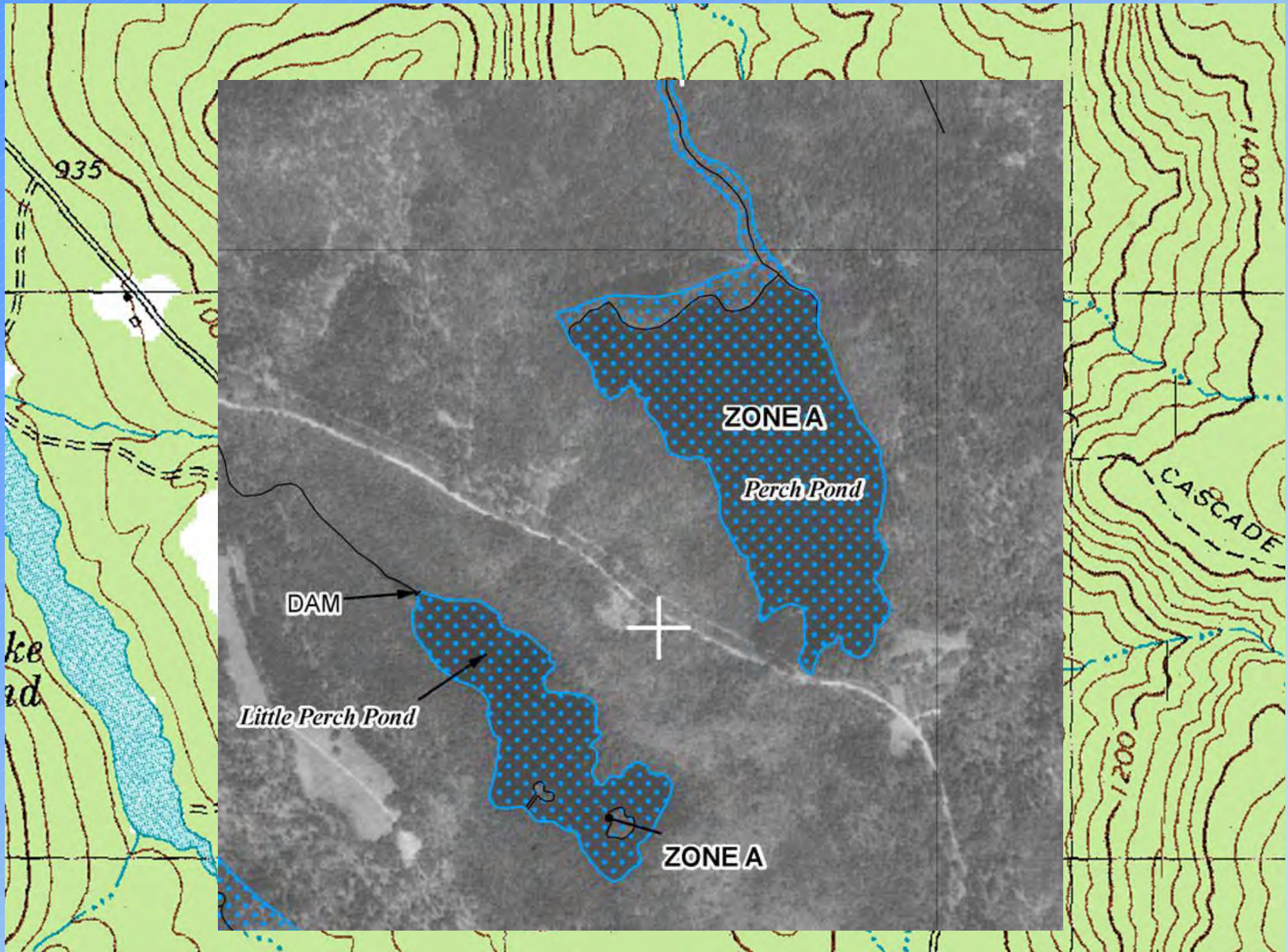
OK ($6 < 40/2$)

BFE = $837 + 40/2 = \underline{857 \text{ ft}}$

Contour Interpolation

using topographic and Zone A maps







935

1000

1000

1000

Perch Pond

1010

CASCADE

DAM

1000

ke
ad

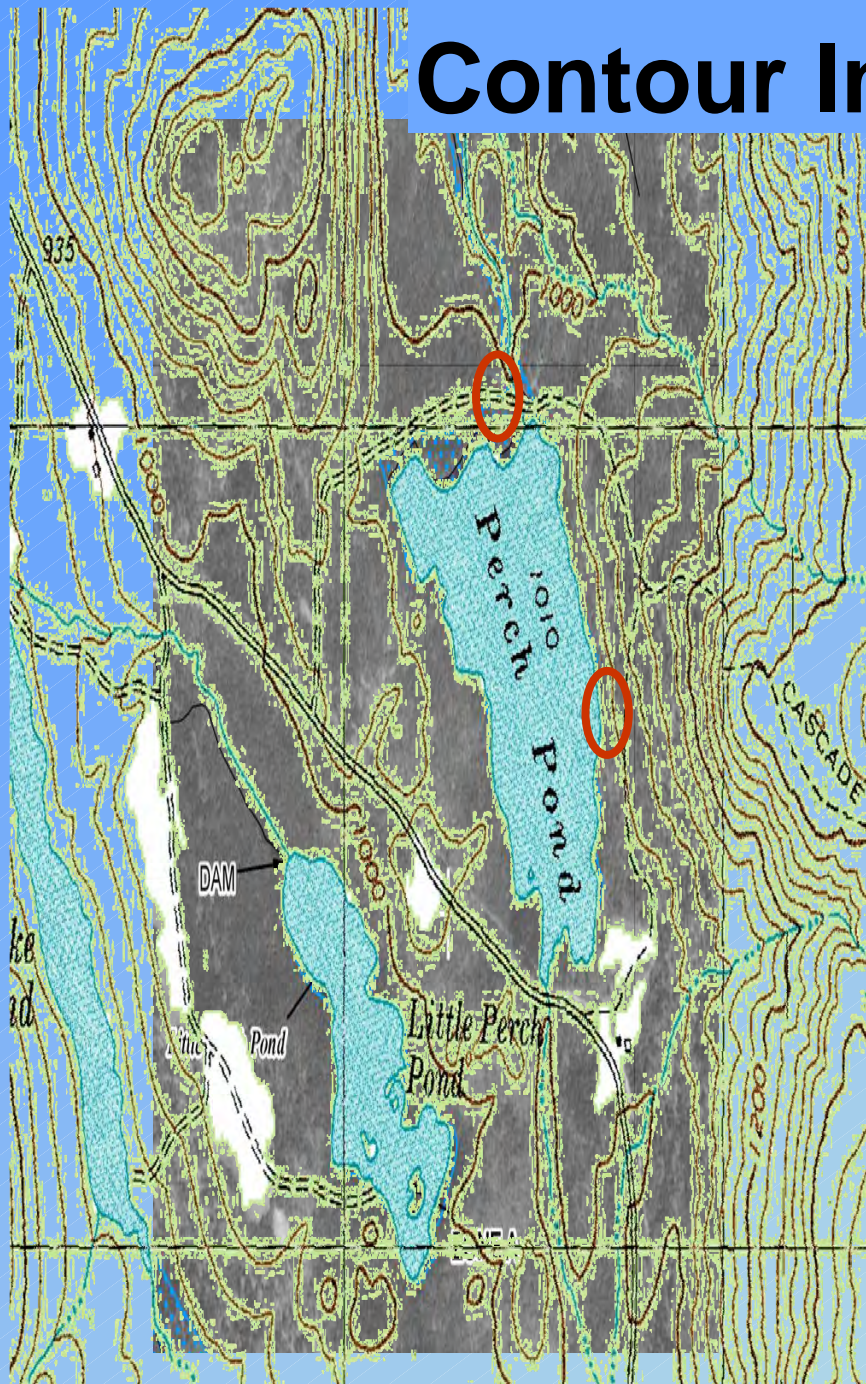
Pond

Pond

Little Perch
Pond

1200

Contour Interpolation



Contour interval = 40ft

Lowest perimeter point:
Zone A Boundary = 1010 ft

Highest perimeter point:
Zone A Boundary = 1021 ft

$1021 - 1010 = 11$ ft
OK ($11 < 40/2$)

BFE = $1010 + 40/2 = \underline{1030}$ ft

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Steps to Determine BFE

1. **Hydrology:** 100-year discharge (flow, ft^3/s)
2. **Survey:** river and structures
3. **Hydraulics:** compute water elevation (BFE)

Hydrology: 100-yr flow



Rivers and streams may be:

← **Regulated** or **Unregulated**

↙ **Gaged** or **Ungaged**



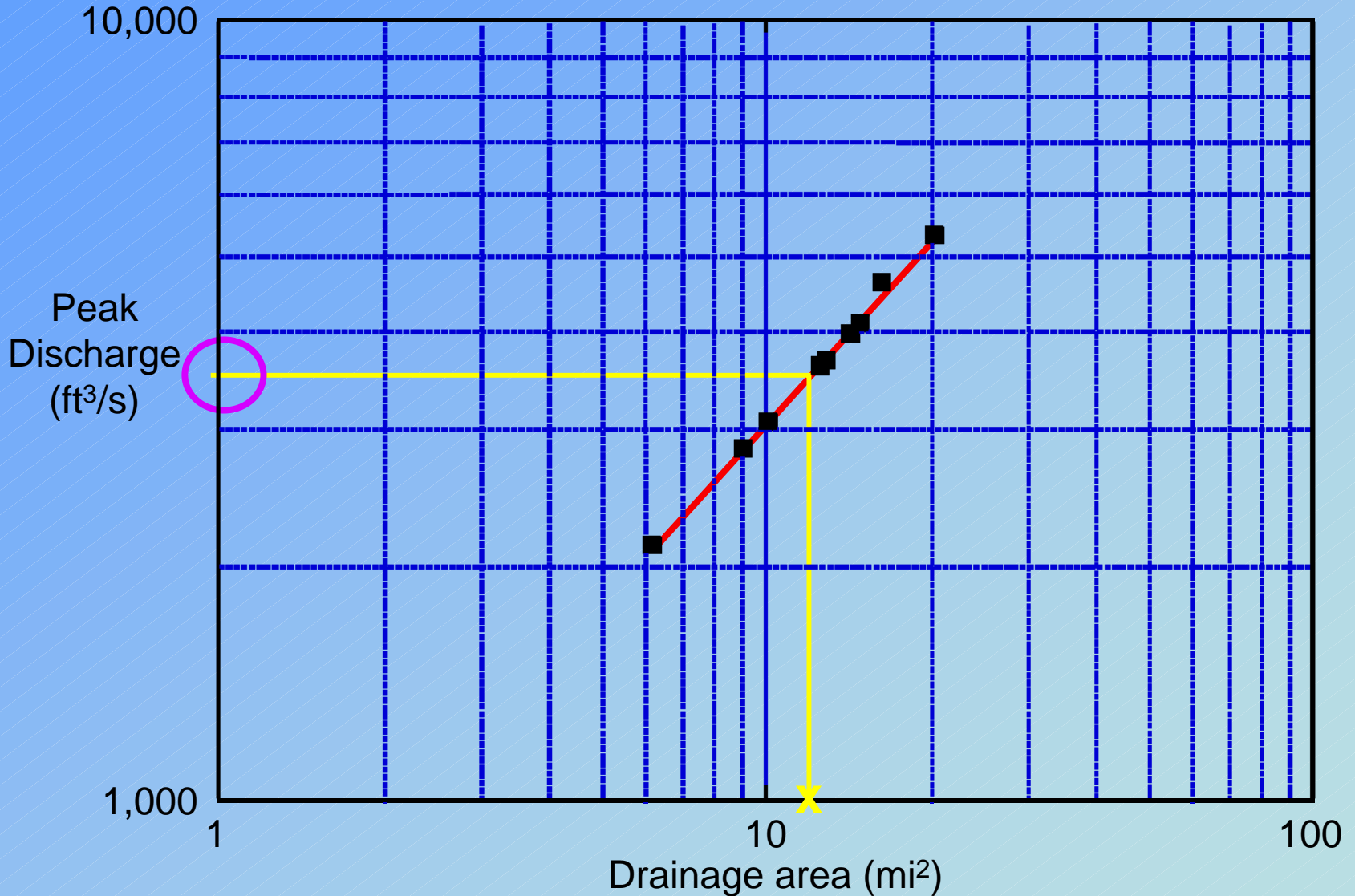
→ USGS *Streamstats*

Hydrology: 100-yr flow

Three common approaches:

- **Discharge / Drainage area**
- **Generalized equations**
(USGS Streamstats)
- **Computer models**

Discharge / Drainage Area



Generalized Equations

➤ Rational Formula

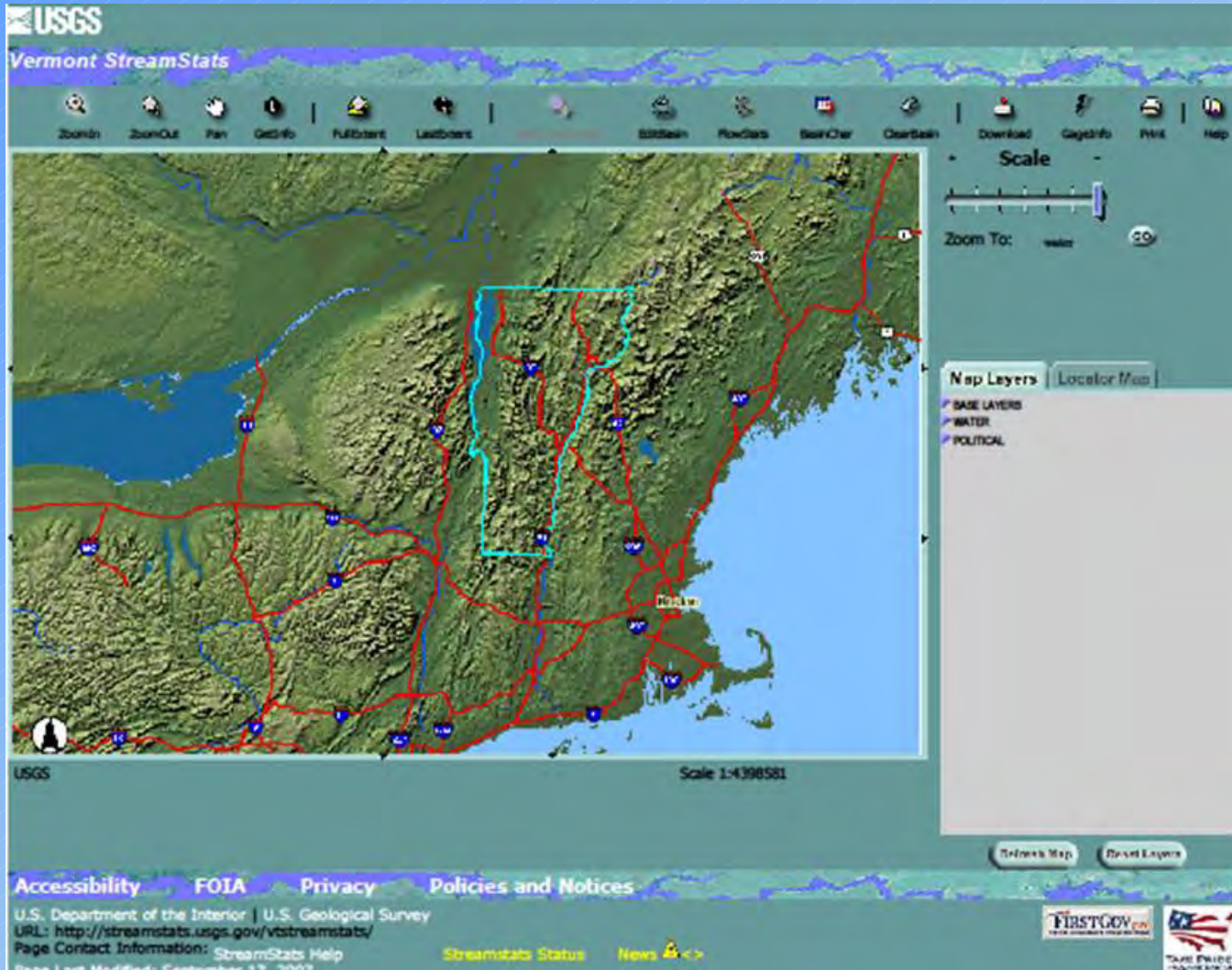
$$Q = C * i * A$$

➤ Regression Equation

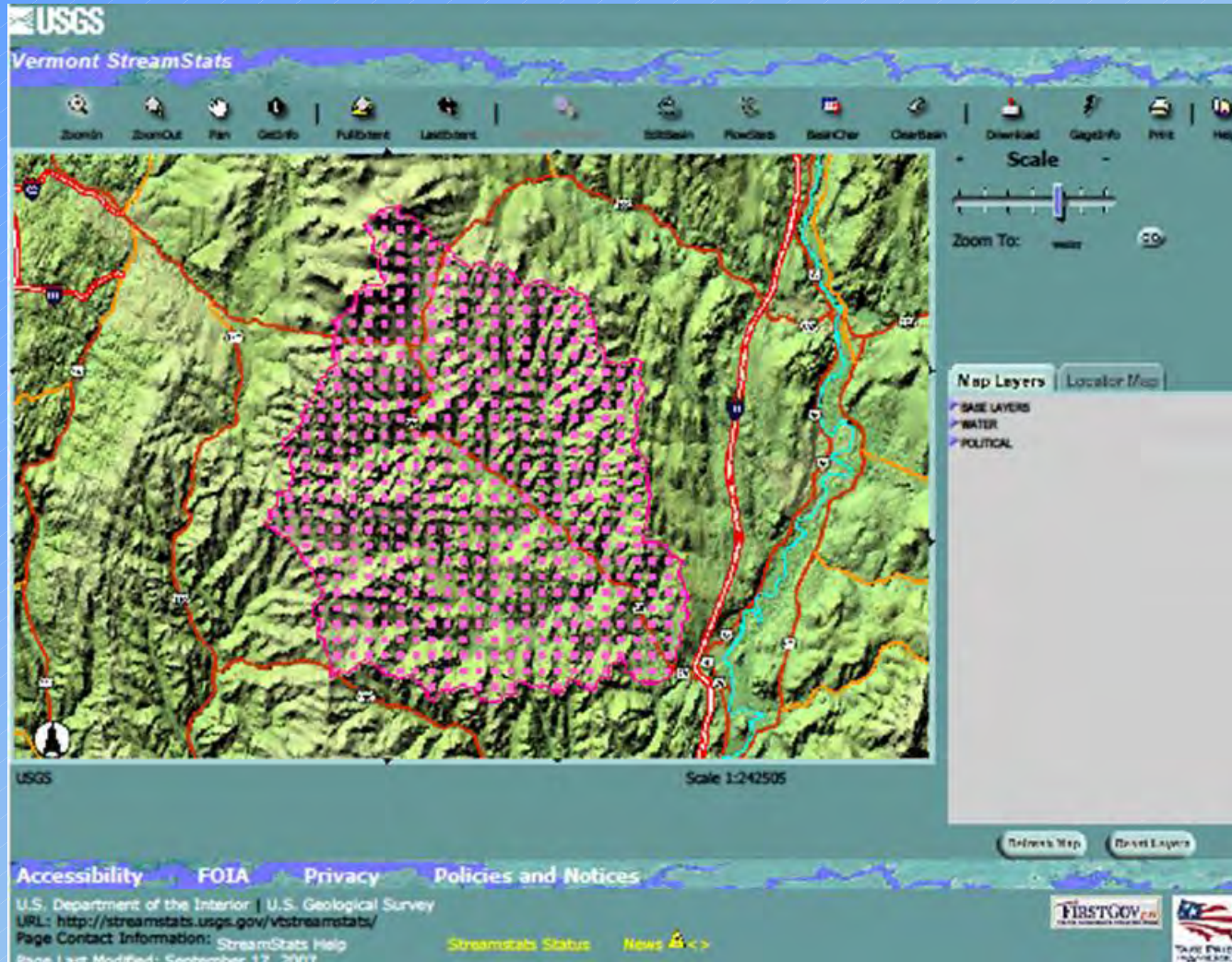
$$Q = 153A^{0.865} L^{-0.336} E^{0.125} Y^{-0.420}$$

Q = discharge, C = coefficient, i = rainfall intensity, A = drainage area
L = % lakes/ponds, E = % elevation >1200ft, Y = latitude factor

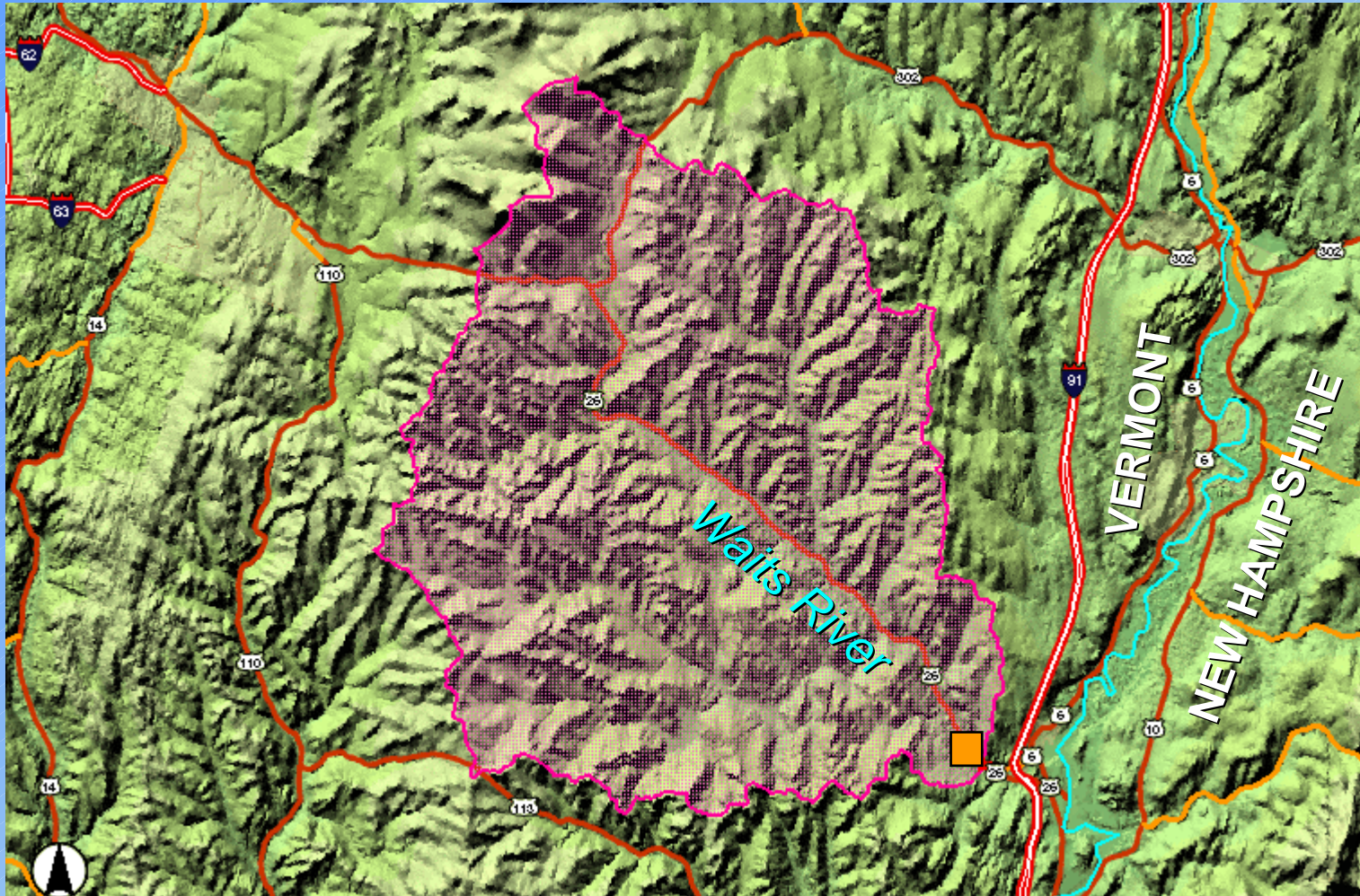
Hydrology: 100-yr flow



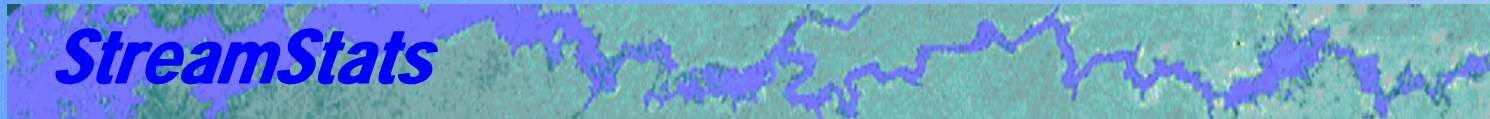
Hydrology: 100-yr flow



Hydrology: 100-yr flow



Hydrology: 100-yr flow



Basin Characteristics Report

Date: Fri Sep 12 2008 09:03:29

Latitude (NAD83): 43.9886 (43 59 19)

Longitude (NAD83): -72.1495 (-72 08 58)

<u>Parameter</u>	<u>Value</u>
Area in square miles	145
Mean annual precipitation in inches	40.4
Y coordinate of the centroid in map coordinates	174949.7
Percent of area covered by lakes and ponds	0.15
High Elevation Index - Percent of area with elevation > 1200 ft	67.1

Hydrology: 100-yr flow

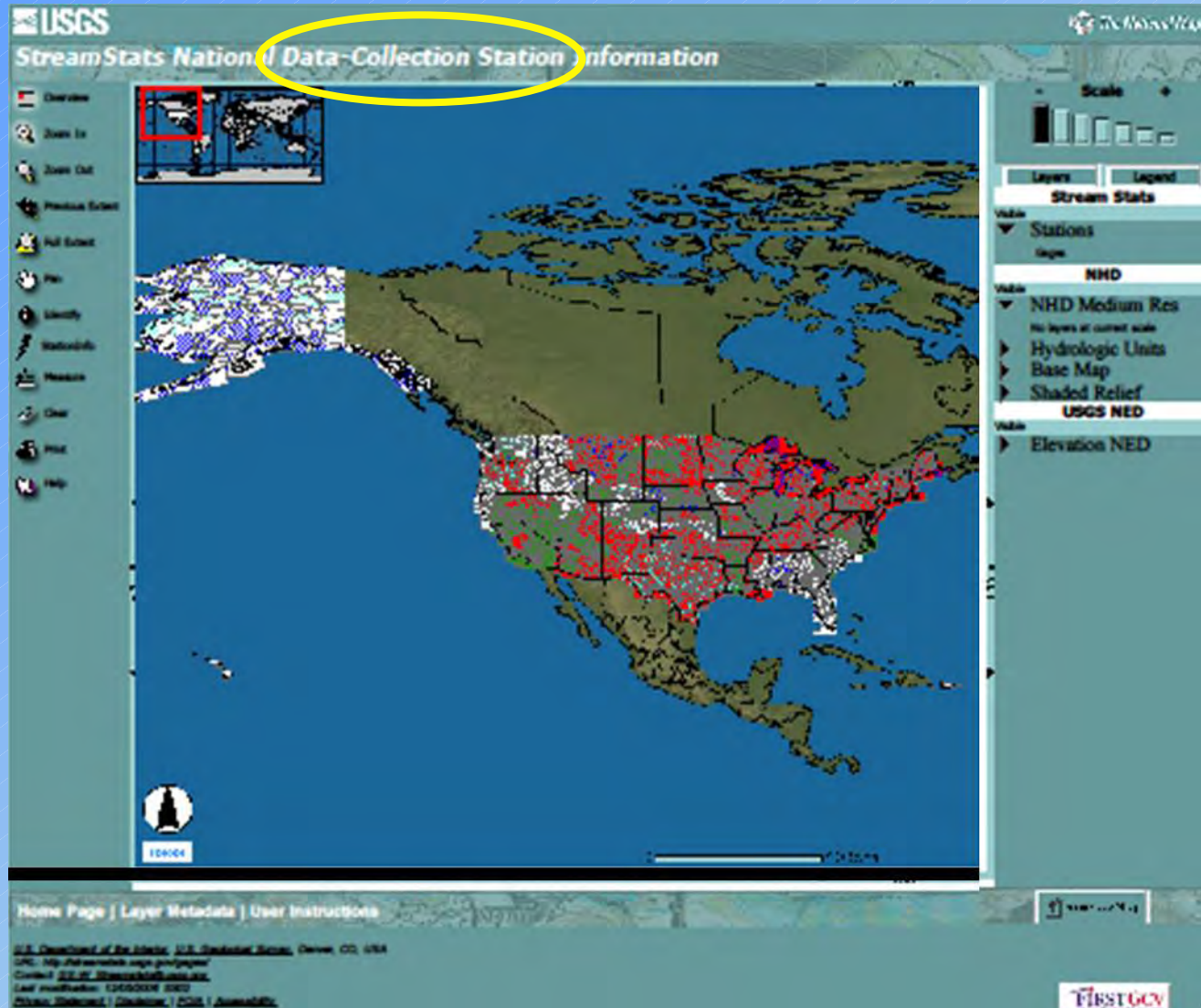


Streamflow Statistics Report

Site Location: Vermont
Latitude: 43.9886
Longitude: -72.1495
Drainage Area: 145 mi²

Streamflow Statistics					
<i>Statistic</i>	<i>Flow (ft³/s)</i>	<i>Prediction Error (percent)</i>	<i>Equivalent years of record</i>	<i>90-Percent Prediction Interval</i>	
				<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Q2	4000	42	1.4	2080	7680
Q5	5810	40	2.3	3070	11000
Q10	7150	41	3.2	3740	13700
Q25	8990	42	4.6	4680	17300
Q50	10400	43	5.5	5360	20300
Q100	11900	44	6.3	5990	23800
Q500	15700	49	7.6	7360	33600

Hydrology: 100-yr flow



Hydrology: 100-yr flow at USGS gaging station



StreamStats Data-Collection Station Report

USGS Station Number 01064500
Station Name Saco River near Conway, NH

Descriptive Information

Station Type Gaging Station, continuous record
Regularity? Undefined
Period of Record
Latitude (degrees NAD83) 43.9904187
Longitude (degrees NAD83) -71.09047778
Hydrologic unit code 01060002
County 003-Carroll

Physical Characteristics

Characteristic Name	Value	Units
24_Hour_2_Year_Precipitation	3.3000	inches
Contributing_Drainage_Area	385	square miles
Drainage_Area	385.000	square miles
Main_Channel_Length	35.100	miles
March_Snow_Water_Equivalent	0.6700	inches
Mean_Annual_Precipitation	50.570	inches
Mean_Annual_Snowfall	101.000	inches
Mean_Basin_Elevation	1860.00	feet
Mean_Min_January_Temperature	9.0000	degrees F
Percent_Forest	94.800	percent
Percent_Lakes_and_Ponds	0.4200	percent
Percent_Storage	0.4800	percent
Soil_Infiltration	5.6000	inches
Stream_Slope_10_and_85_Method	50.990	feet per mi

Streamflow Statistics

Statistic Name	Value	Units
Peak-Flow Statistics		
10_Year_Peak_Flood	30400.0	cubic feet per second
100_Year_Peak_Flood	87600.0	cubic feet per second
2_Year_Peak_Flood	15200.0	cubic feet per second
200_Year_Peak_Flood	67600.0	cubic feet per second
25_Year_Peak_Flood	40300.0	cubic feet per second
5_Year_Peak_Flood	23000.0	cubic feet per second
50_Year_Peak_Flood	48500.0	cubic feet per second
500_Year_Peak_Flood	83200.0	cubic feet per second
Log_Mean_of_Annual_Peaks	4.1800	Log base 10
Log_Skew_of_Annual_Peaks	0.0020	Log base 10
Log_STD_of_Annual_Peaks	0.2300	Log base 10
Mean_Annual_Flood	9850.00	cubic feet per second
Systematic_peak_years	56.000	years
WRG_Mean	4.1910	Log base 10
WRG_Skew	0.2140	Log base 10
WRG_STD	0.2323	Log base 10
Flood-Volume Statistics		
7_Day_10_Year_Maximum	8650.00	cubic feet per second
7_Day_2_Year_Maximum	5400.00	cubic feet per second
7_Day_50_Year_Maximum	12000.0	cubic feet per second
Low-Flow Statistics		
7_Day_10_Year_Low_Flow	96.700	cubic feet per second
7_Day_2_Year_Low_Flow	138.000	cubic feet per second
7_Day_20_Year_Low_Flow	88.300	cubic feet per second
Low_flow_years	54.000	years
Flow-Duration Statistics		
1_Percent_Duration	6880	cubic feet per second
10_Percent_Duration	2170	cubic feet per second

20_Percent_Duration	1250	cubic feet per second
25_Percent_Duration	996	cubic feet per second
30_Percent_Duration	824	cubic feet per second
40_Percent_Duration	595	cubic feet per second
5_Percent_Duration	3340	cubic feet per second
60_Percent_Duration	458	cubic feet per second
60_Percent_Duration	365	cubic feet per second
75_Percent_Duration	297	cubic feet per second
75_Percent_Duration	270	cubic feet per second
80_Percent_Duration	242	cubic feet per second
90_Percent_Duration	183	cubic feet per second
95_Percent_Duration	150	cubic feet per second
99_Percent_Duration	107	cubic feet per second
Annual Flow Statistics		
Daily_flow_years	55.000	years
Mean_Annual_Flow	921.000	cubic feet per second
Stand_Dev_of_Mean_Annual_Flow	207.000	cubic feet per second
Monthly Flow Statistics		
April_Mean_Flow	2580.00	cubic feet per second
April_STD	801.000	cubic feet per second
August_Mean_Flow	312.000	cubic feet per second
August_STD	182.000	cubic feet per second
December_Mean_Flow	750.000	cubic feet per second
December_STD	550.000	cubic feet per second
February_Mean_Flow	463.000	cubic feet per second
February_STD	317.000	cubic feet per second
January_Mean_Flow	527.000	cubic feet per second
January_STD	314.000	cubic feet per second
July_Mean_Flow	440.000	cubic feet per second
July_STD	286.000	cubic feet per second
June_Mean_Flow	840.000	cubic feet per second
June_STD	442.000	cubic feet per second
March_Mean_Flow	898.000	cubic feet per second
March_STD	961.000	cubic feet per second
May_Mean_Flow	2340.00	cubic feet per second
May_STD	937.000	cubic feet per second

November_Mean_Flow	622.000	cubic feet per second
November_STD	628.000	cubic feet per second
October_Mean_Flow	541.000	cubic feet per second
October_STD	488.000	cubic feet per second
September_Mean_Flow	393.000	cubic feet per second
September_STD	345.000	cubic feet per second
General Flow Statistics		
Average_daily_streamflow	937.562	cubic feet per second
Maximum_daily_flow	33900	cubic feet per second
Minimum_daily_flow	66	cubic feet per second
Std_Dev_of_daily_flow	1408.912	cubic feet per second
Base_Flow_Statistics		
Average_BFI_value	0.537	dimensionless
Number_of_years_to_compute_BFI	80	years
Std_dev_of_annual_BFI_values	0.065	dimensionless



StreamStats Data-Collection Station Report

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Station Name Saco River near Conway, NH

Descriptive Information

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Regulated? Undefined
Period of Record
Latitude (degrees NAD83) 43.99084167
Longitude (degrees NAD83) -71.09047778
Hydrologic unit code 01060002
County 003-Carroll

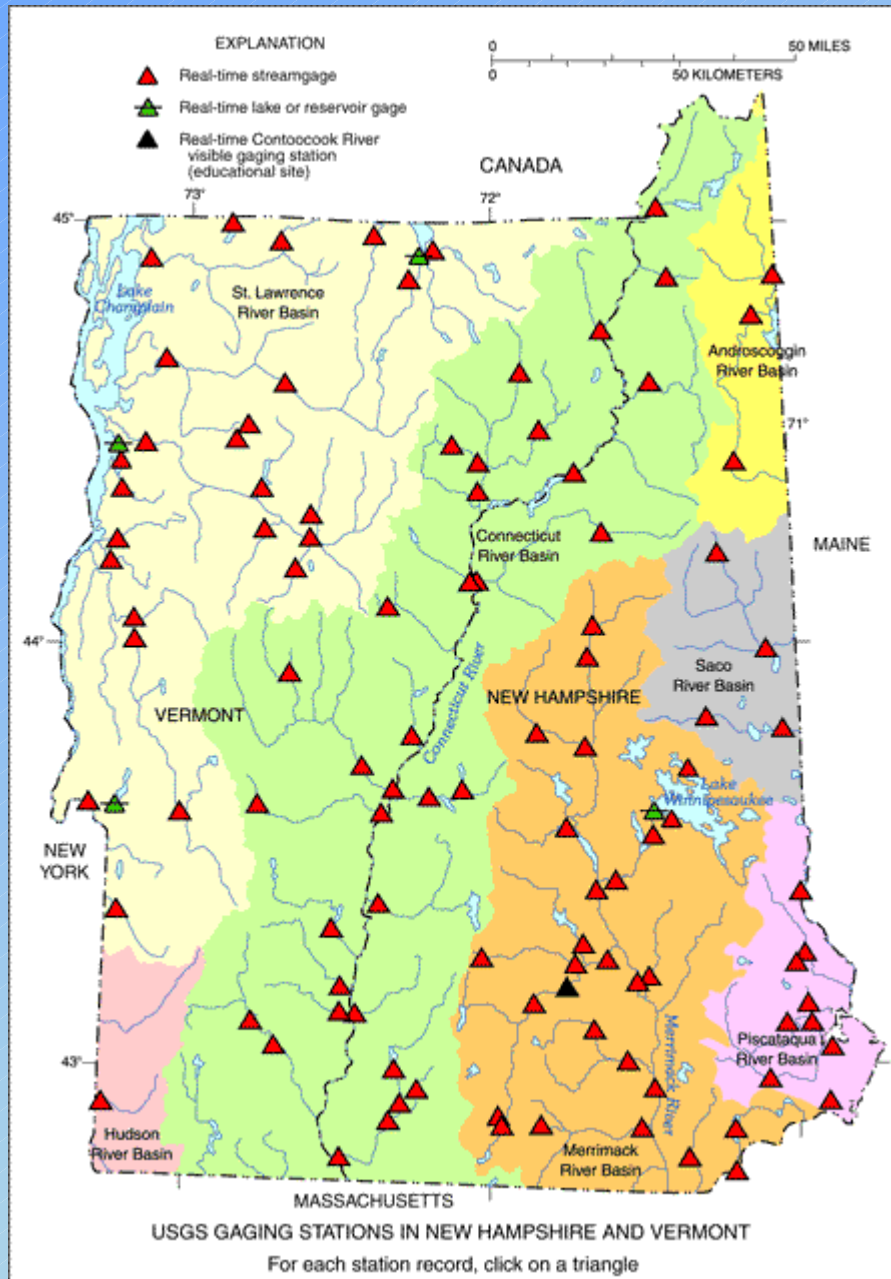
Physical Characteristics

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24_Hour_2_Year_Precipitation	3.3000	inches
Contributing_Drainage_Area	385	square miles
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Mean_Basin_Elevation	1860.00	feet
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Percent_Lakes_and_Ponds	0.4200	percent
Percent_Storage	0.4800	percent
Soil_Infiltration	5.6000	inches
Stream_Slope_10_and_85_Method	50.990	feet per mi

Streamflow Statistics

<u>Statistic Name</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Units</u>
<i>Peak-Flow Statistics</i>		
10_Year_Peak_Flood	30400.0	cubic feet per second
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7_Day_50_Year_Maximum	12000.0	cubic feet per second
<i>Low-Flow Statistics</i>		
7_Day_10_Year_Low_Flow	96.700	cubic feet per second
7_Day_2_Year_Low_Flow	138.000	cubic feet per second
7_Day_20_Year_Low_Flow	88.300	cubic feet per second
Low_flow_years	54.000	years
<i>Flow-Duration Statistics</i>		
1_Percent_Duration	6880	cubic feet per second
10_Percent_Duration	2170	cubic feet per second

USGS Gaging Stations in New Hampshire and Vermont



Watershed Models

- **NRCS:** TR-55, TR-20
- **Corps of Engineers:** HEC-1

Input data needed include:

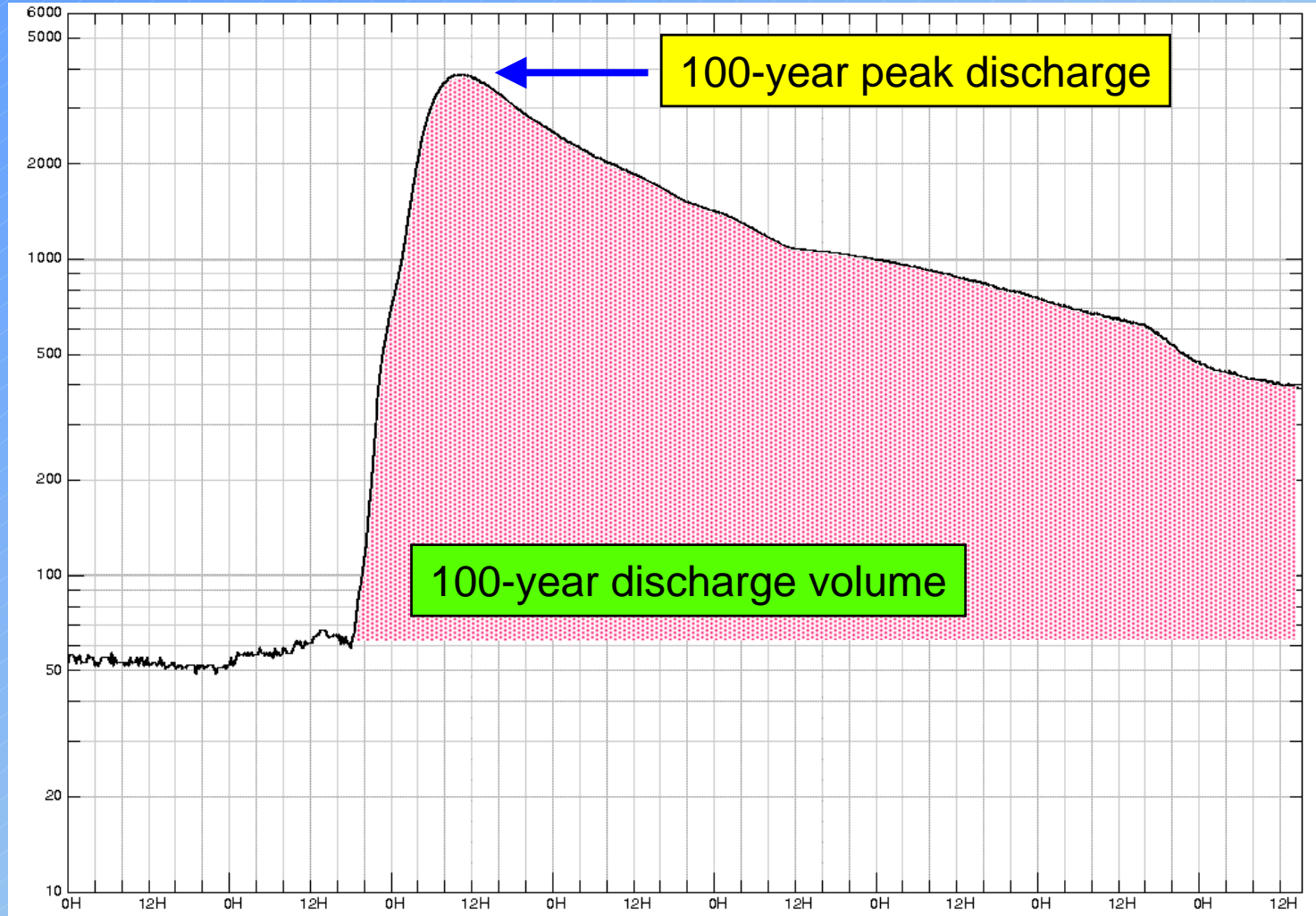
- Watershed characteristics (area, slope, land cover, soils)
- Channel conveyance (slope, shape, roughness)
- 100-yr rainfall intensity
- Flood storage
- Structures (dams, bridges)

Output data is:

- Flood hydrograph (peak = 100-yr discharge)

Flood Hydrograph

↑
Flow



Time →

Steps to Determine BFE

1. **Hydrology:** 100-year discharge (flow, ft^3/s)
2. **Survey:** river and structures
3. **Hydraulics:** compute water elevation (BFE)

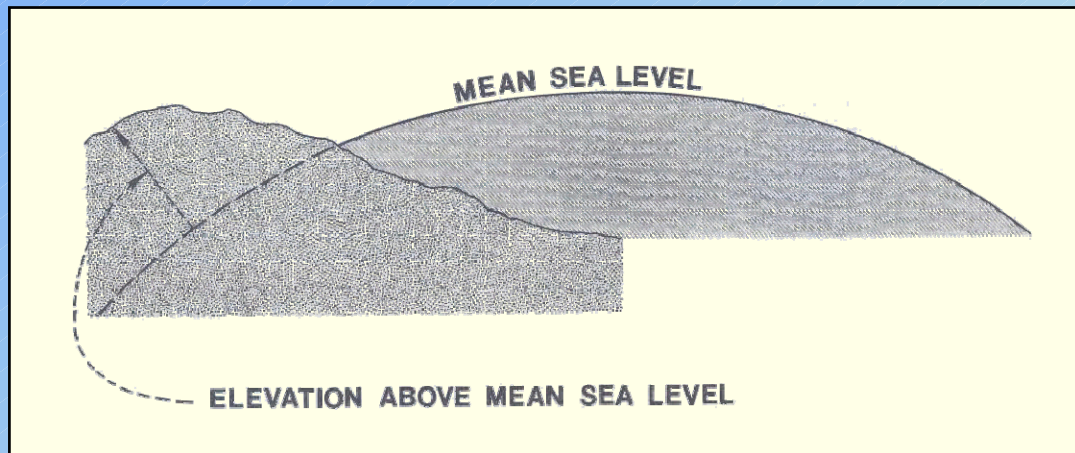
Field Survey



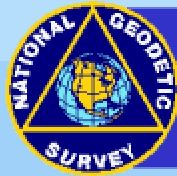
- **Vertical datum**
- **River cross sections**
Number, elevations & distances
- **Roughness coefficient**
Manning's " n "
- **Structures**
Dams, bridges, culverts

Vertical Datum

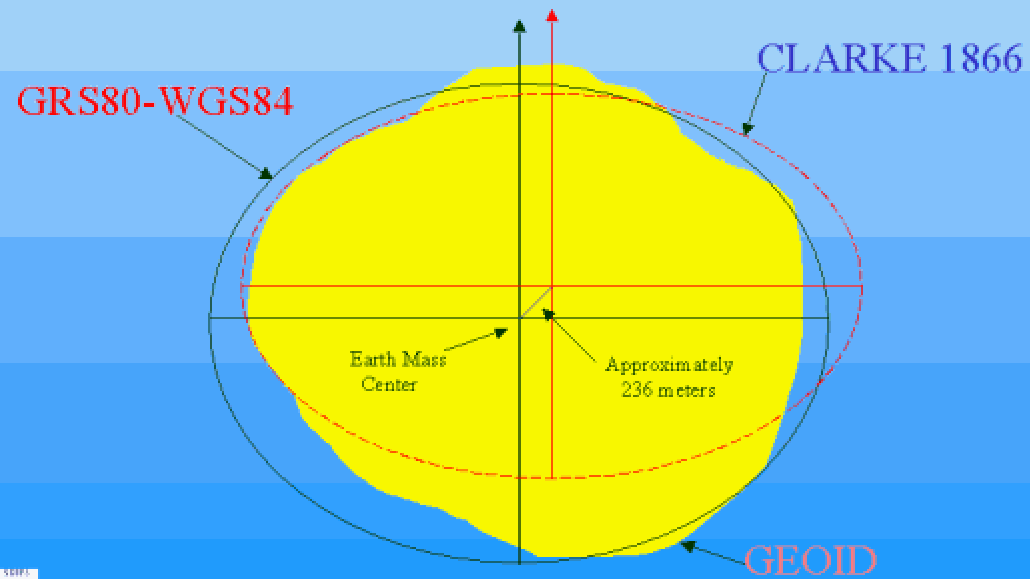
- **NGVD29**
National Geodetic Vertical Datum of 1929
- **NAVD88**
North American Vertical Datum of 1988
- Tie all survey points to known Reference Mark (RM)



Vertical Datum

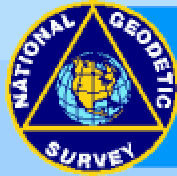


THE GEOID AND TWO ELLIPSOIDS



NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE

Vertical Datum



COMPARISON OF VERTICAL DATUM ELEMENTS

NGVD 29

NAVD 88

DATUM DEFINITION

26 TIDE GAUGES
IN THE U.S. & CANADA

FATHER'S POINT/RIMOUSKI
QUEBEC, CANADA

BENCH MARKS

100,000

450,000

LEVELING (Km)

102,724

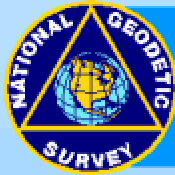
1,001,500

GEOID FITTING

Distorted to Fit MSL Gauges

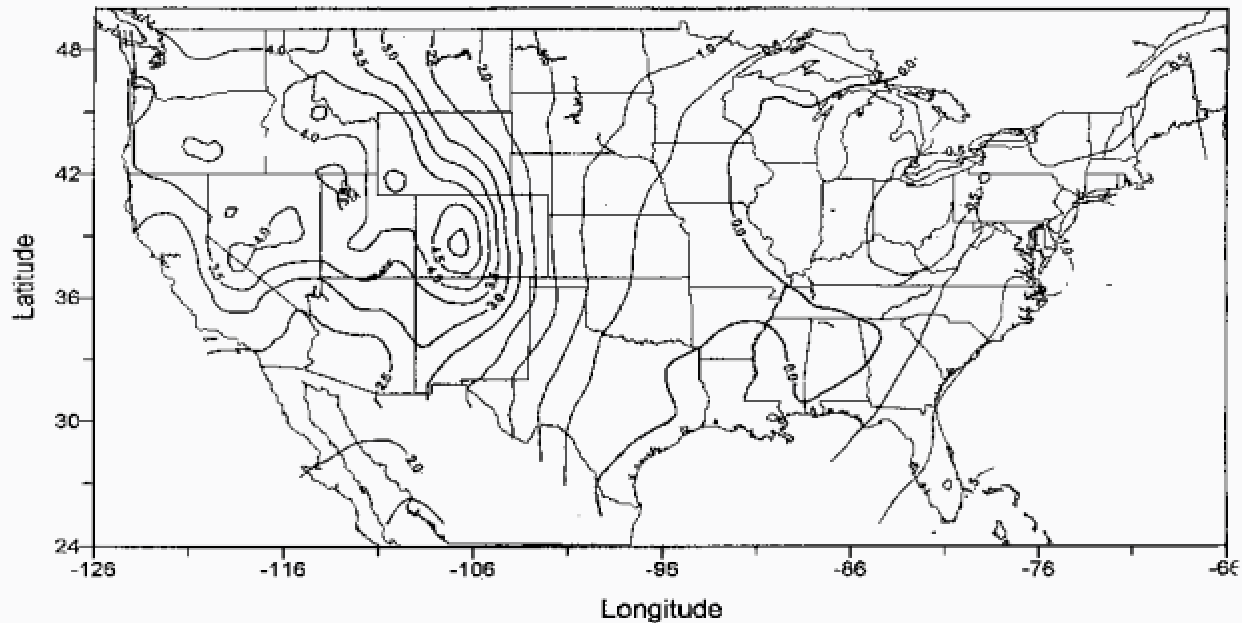
Best Continental Model

Vertical Datum



NGVD 29 and NAVD 88

NAVD88 - NGVD29 (feet)



Vertical Datum on FEMA's County DFIRMs in NH

- **National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) of 1929**

- Grafton
- Rockingham
- Strafford

- **North American Vertical Datum (NAVD) of 1988**

- Cheshire
- Sullivan
- Hillsborough (prelim)
- Merrimack (prelim)

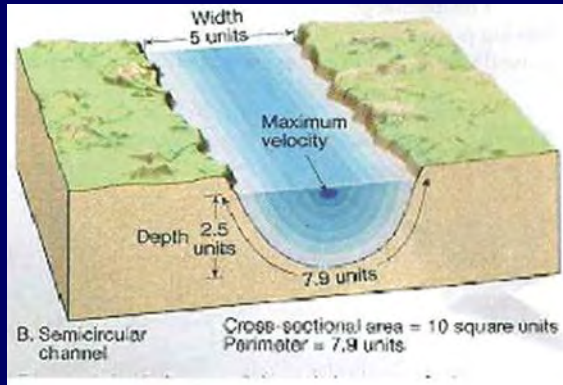
Field Survey



- Vertical datum
- River cross sections
Number, elevations & distances
- Roughness coefficient
Manning's " n "
- Structures
Dams, bridges, culverts

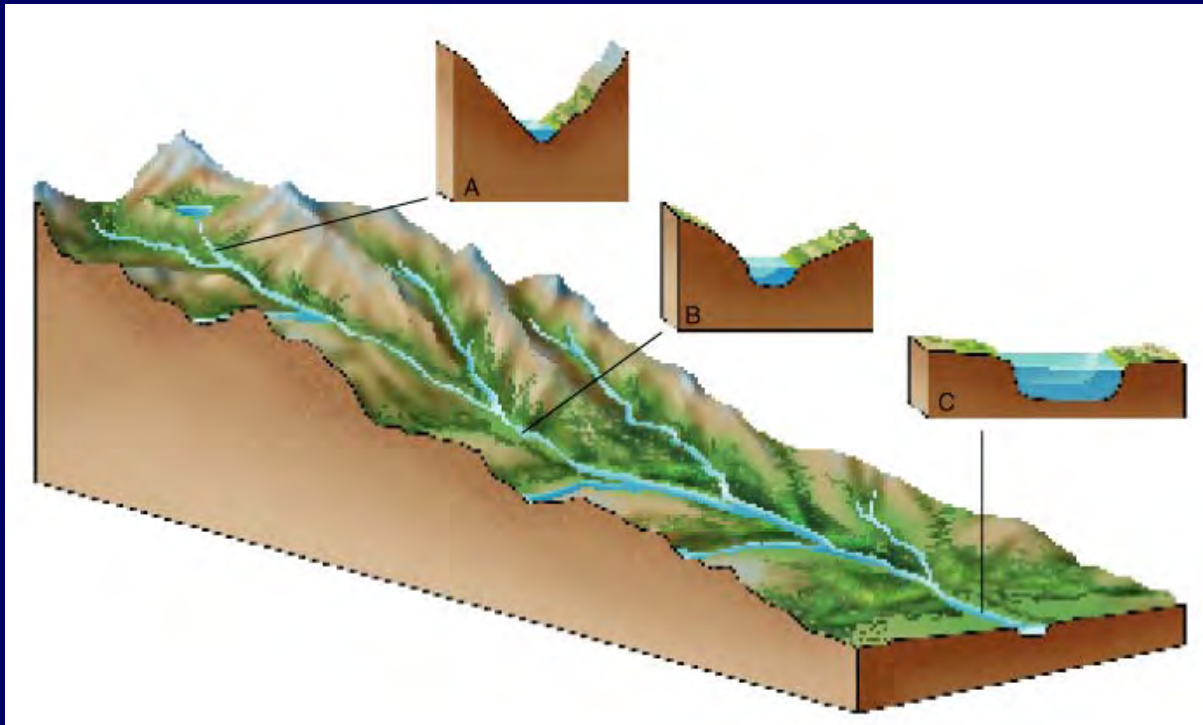
River Cross Sections

- **Minimum 1 x-sec for small lot**
Uniform flow, no obstructions
- **Minimum 2 x-secs for large lots**
< 500 ft between x-secs if $\Delta WSE > 1$ ft

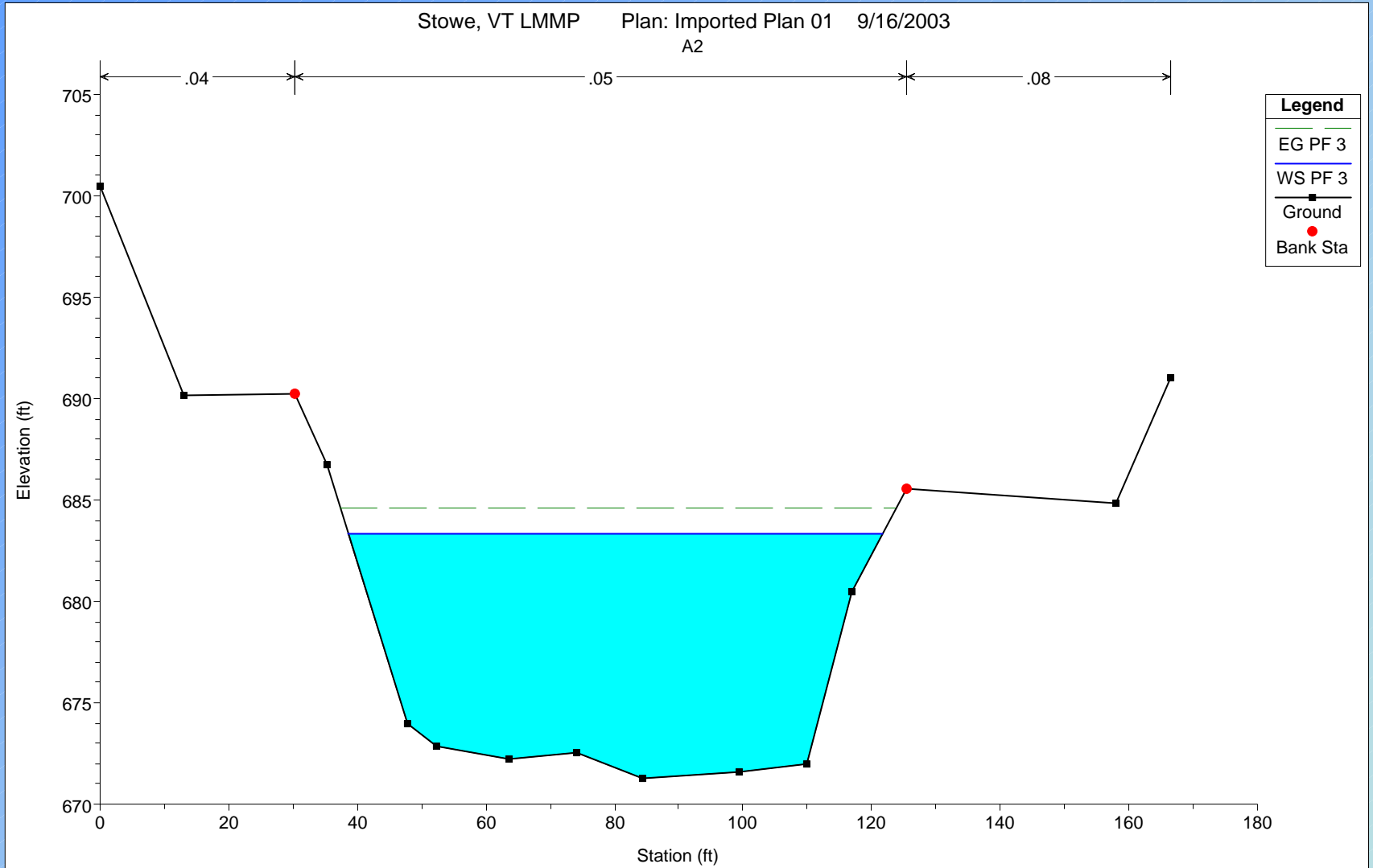


River Cross Sections

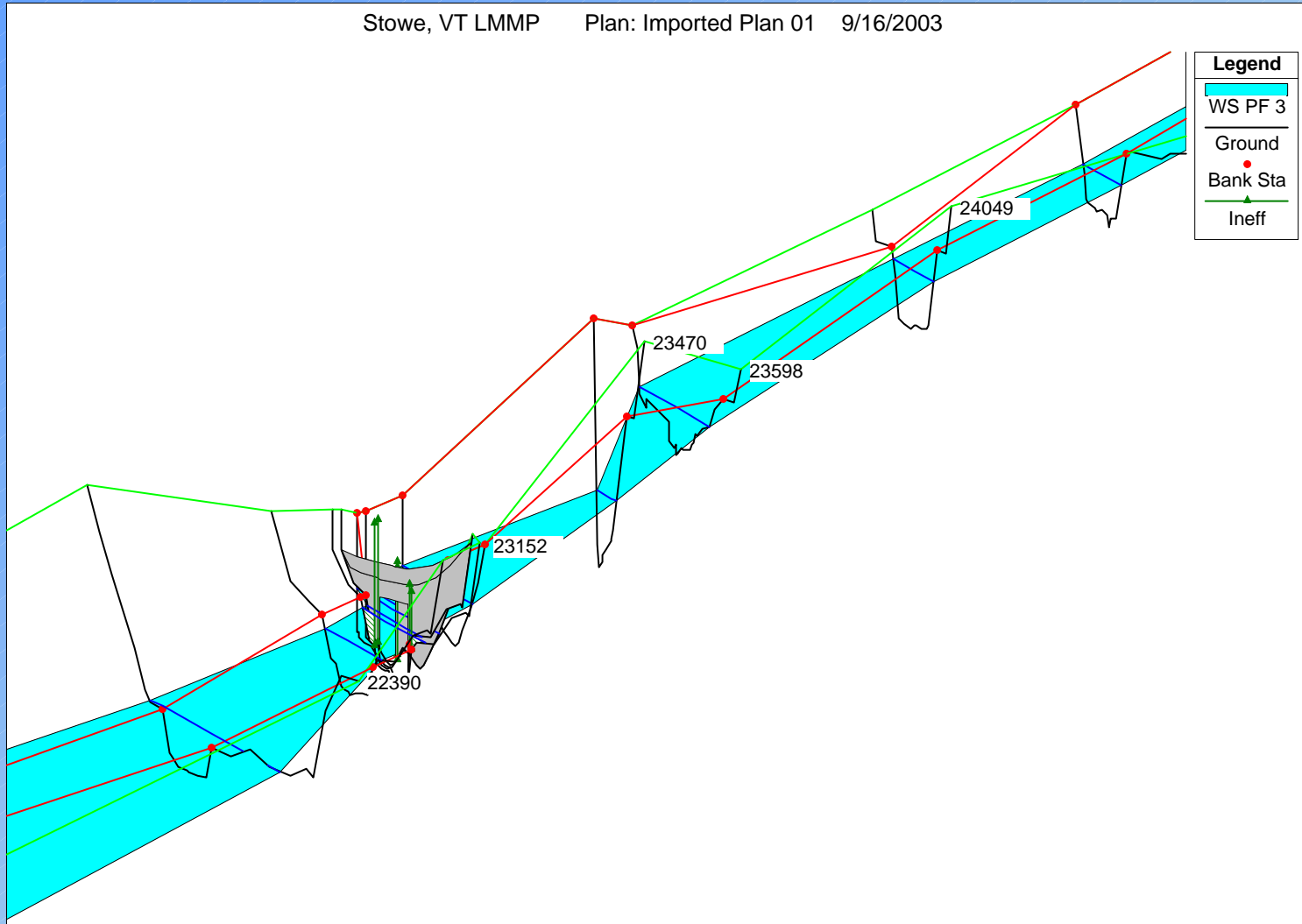
- **Represent channel changes**
Slope, shape, roughness
- **Show discharge changes**
Tributary inflow



River Cross Section



River Cross Sections



Field Survey



- **Vertical datum**
- **River cross sections**
Number, elevations & distances
- **Roughness coefficient**
Manning's "*n*"
- **Structures**
Dams, bridges, culverts

Field Survey: n values



- Take photos and notes

Lined channels	n [s/ m ^{1/3}]	kst [m ^{1/3} /s]
Cement Plaster	0.011	90.91
Wood planed	0.012	83.33
Wood unplanned	0.013	76.92
Concrete, troweled	0.012	83.33
Concrete, wood forms	0.015	66.67
Rubble in cement	0.020	50.00
Asphalt smoth	0.013	76.92
Asphalt rough	0.016	62.50
Natural Channels	n	kst
Gravel beds, straight	0.025	40.00
Gravel beds plus large boulders	0.040	25.00
Earth, straigh with some graee	0.026	38.46
Earth winding no vegetation	0.030	33.33
Earth winding	0.050	20.00

Field Survey: n values



Field Survey

$n = 0.026$

$n = 0.026$



No. 327 upstream from right bank below section 3,
Indian Fork below Atwood Dam, near New Cumberland, Ohio.

Field Survey

$n = 0.033$

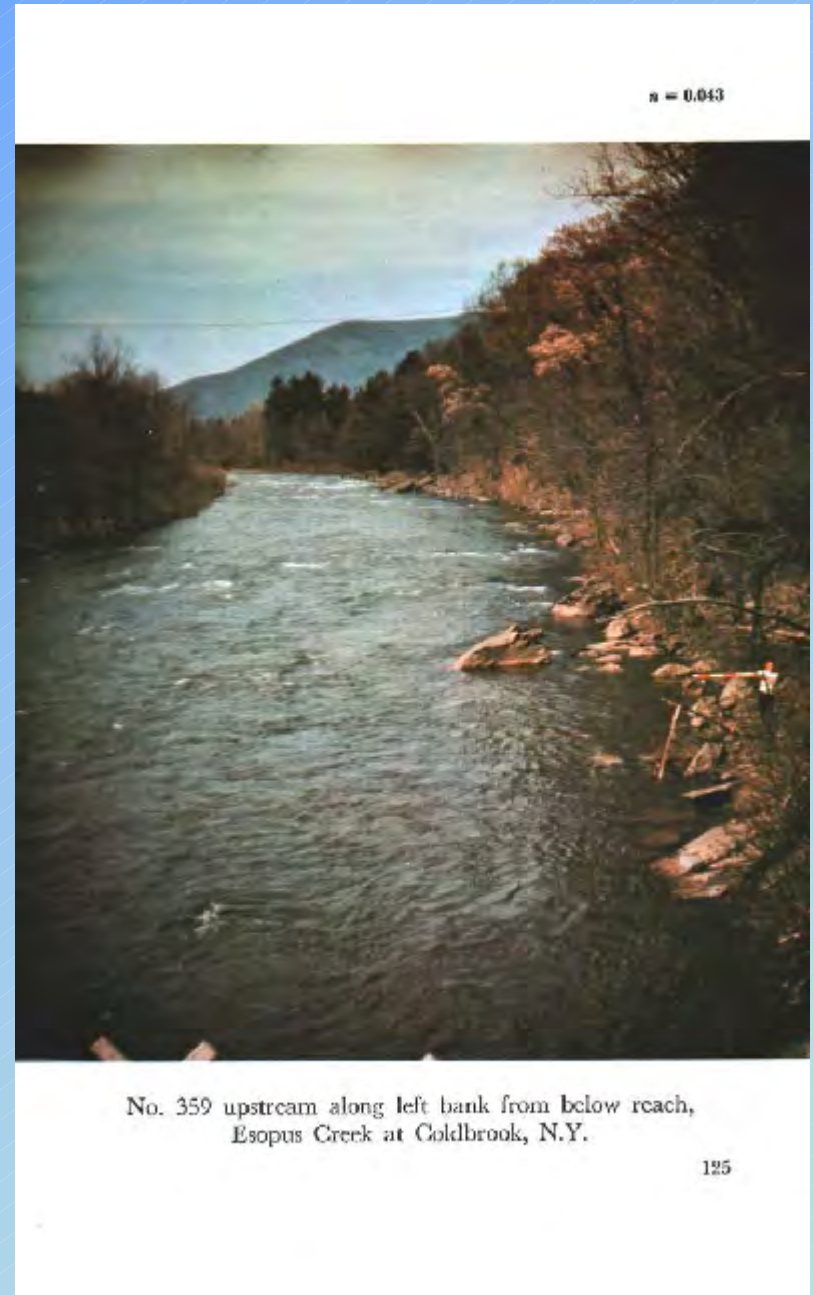
$n = 0.033$



No. 366 upstream toward right bank from section 7, Beaver Kill at Cooks Falls, N.Y.

Field Survey

$n = 0.043$



Field Survey

$$n = 0.052$$



Field Survey



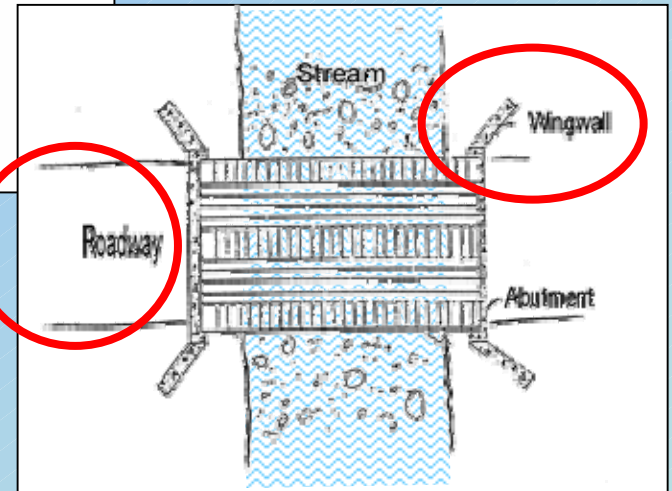
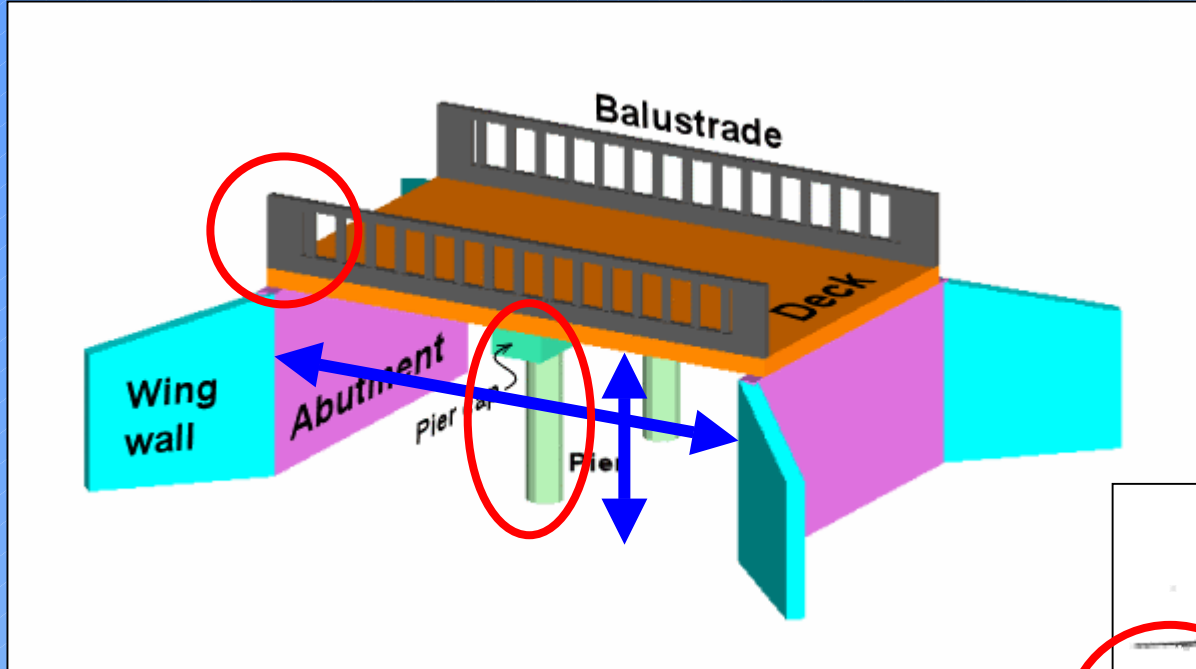
- **Vertical datum**
- **River cross sections**
Number, elevations & distances
- **Roughness coefficient**
Manning's " n "
- **Structures**
Dams, bridges, culverts

Field Survey: Bridges

- **Cross sections**
Approach & Exit
- **Bridge geometry**
Dimensions
Roadway
Wingwall
Piers, Skew



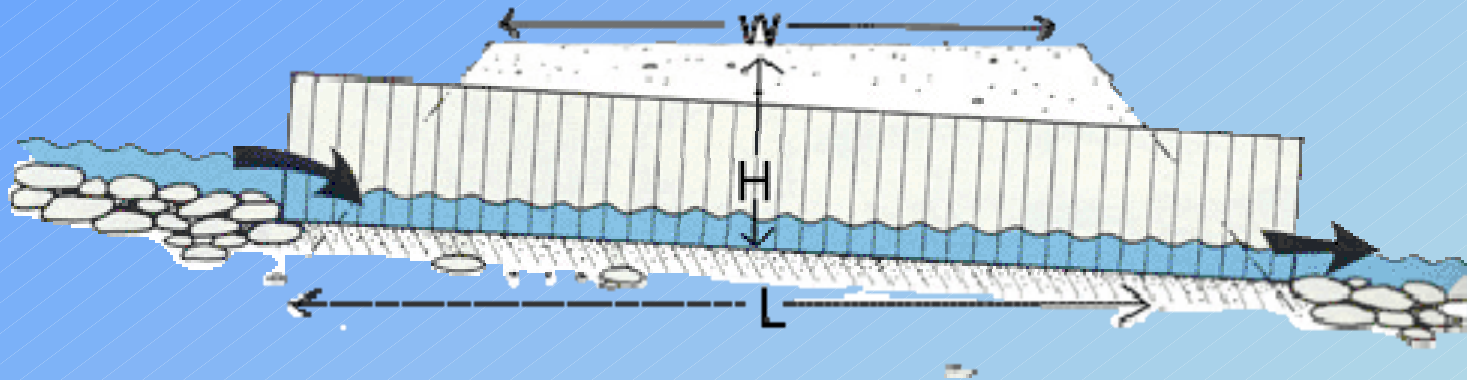
Field Survey: Bridges



Field Survey: Culverts



Field Survey: Culverts



Field Survey: Culverts

- **Cross sections**
Exit (& approach)
- **Culvert geometry**
H x W x L
Material & Type
Slope (elevations)
Entrance shape
wingwalls, mitered, rounding
Roadway



Field Survey: Dams



- **Sluice gates, Flashboards, Spillway, Turbines**
- **Flow Regulation**
- **Standard Operating Procedures**

Steps to Determine BFE

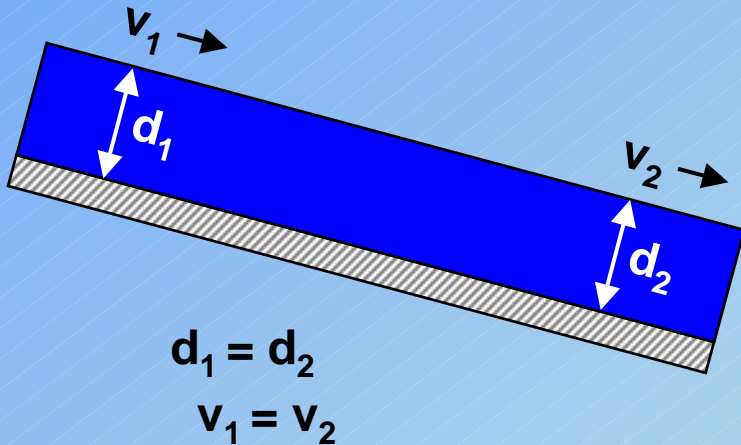
1. **Hydrology:** 100-year discharge (flow, ft^3/s)
2. **Survey:** river and structures
3. **Hydraulics:**
compute water elevation (BFE)

Hydraulics: Base Flood Elevation

- **Normal & Critical Depths**
- **Step Backwater**
Quick2, HEC-RAS
- **Structures**
Weir and Conduit Flow

Hydraulics: Normal Depth

- Uniform, Steady Flow
- No Obstructions
- Water Surface *parallel* to Bed Slope



Manning Equation:

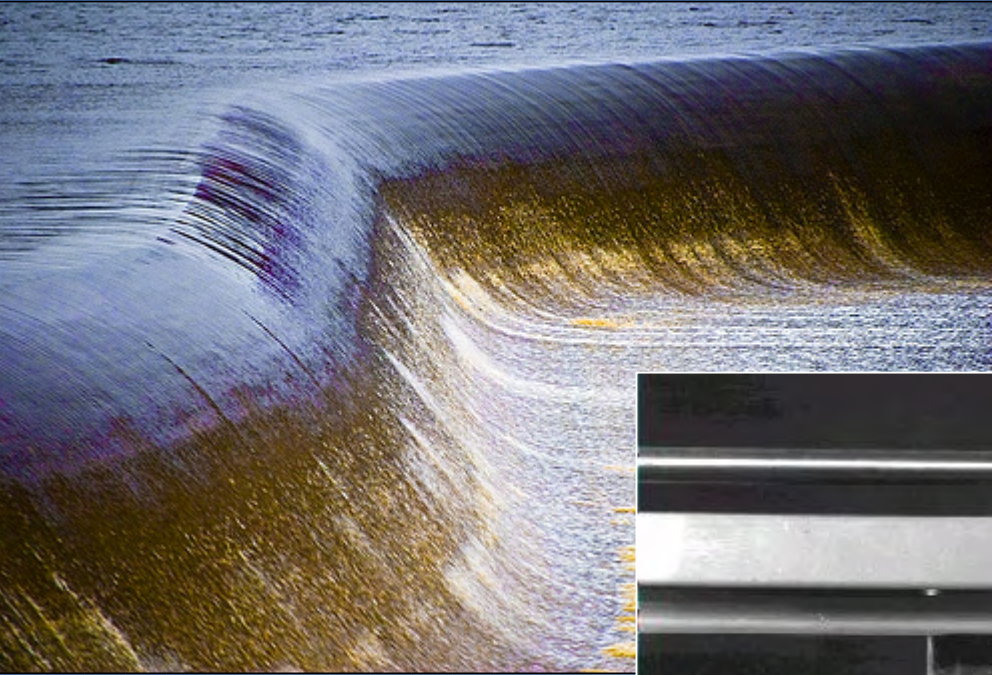
$$Q = \frac{1.49 A R^{2/3} S^{1/2}}{n}$$

Hydraulics: Critical Depth

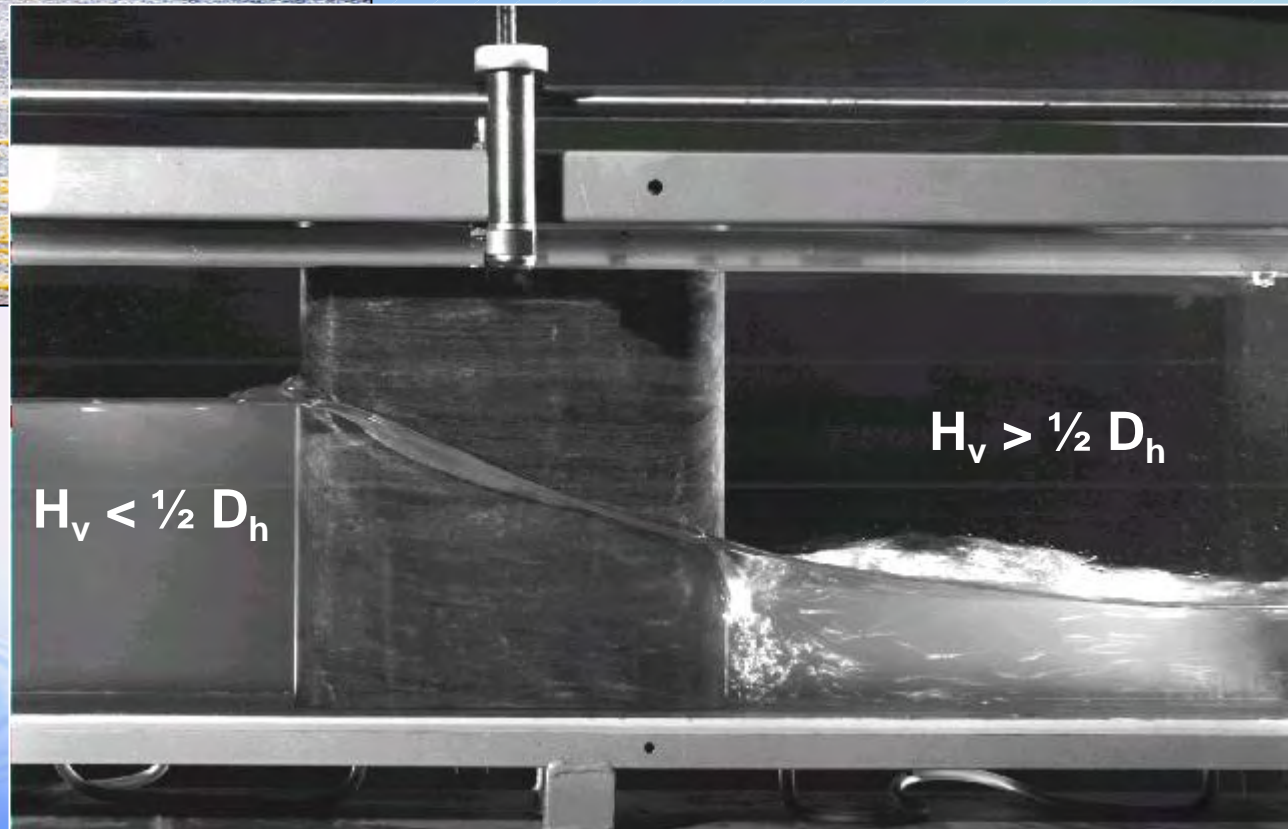
- Minimum specific energy
- Deeper is sub-critical flow (slow)
- Shallower is super-critical flow (fast)



Hydraulics: Supercritical Flow



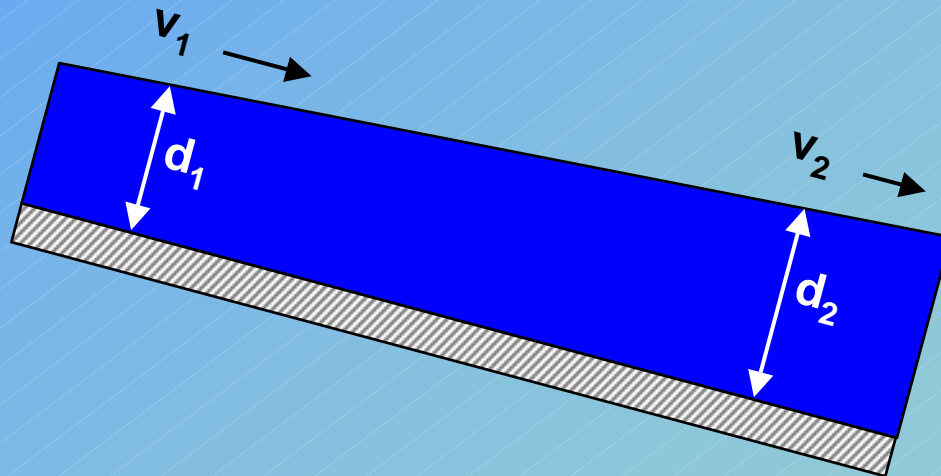
$BFE \geq \text{Critical Depth}$



Hydraulics: Step Backwater

- Steady, **Non-Uniform** Flow
- Water Surface *not parallel* to Bed Slope

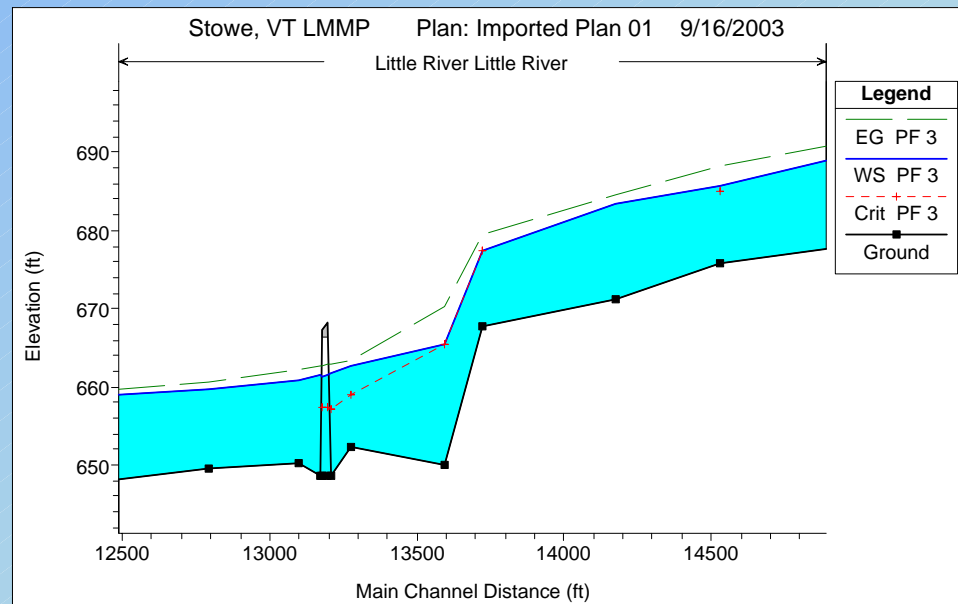
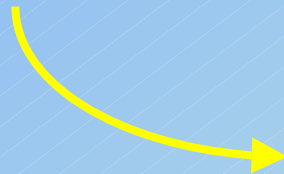
$$d_1 \neq d_2$$
$$v_1 \neq v_2$$



Hydraulics: Step Backwater

- Start with known depth downstream
normal depth, weir flow, etc.
- Then work upstream **step-by-step**
compute energy & depth at each cross section
- Based on energy losses between cross-sections
 f (distance, slope, roughness, etc.)

- Computer models
Quick2, HEC-RAS



Hydraulics: Base Flood Elevation

- Normal & Critical Depths

- Step Backwater

Quick2, HEC-RAS

- Structures

Weir and Conduit Flow

Hydraulics: Bridges



Hydraulics: **Bridges**

Flow over roadway and/or bridge deck



$$Q = k C b H^{1.5}$$

K = submergence factor

C = weir coefficient

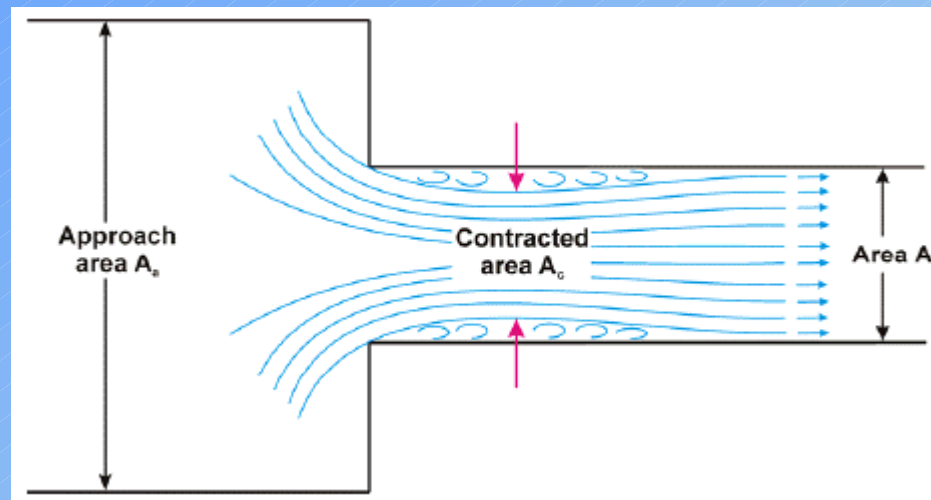
b = weir width

H = water height
above weir crest

Weir Flow

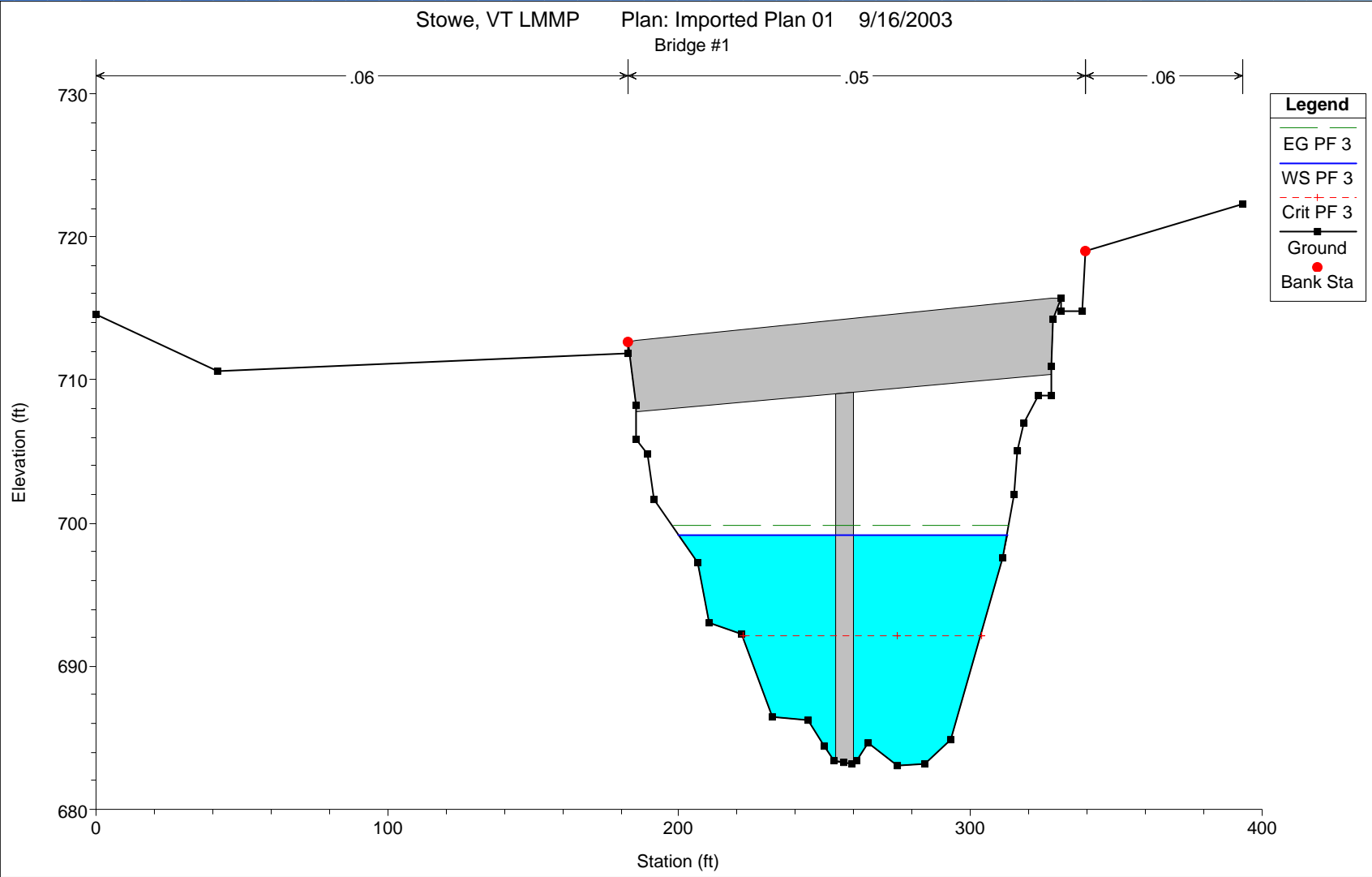
Hydraulics: Bridges

Flow through opening

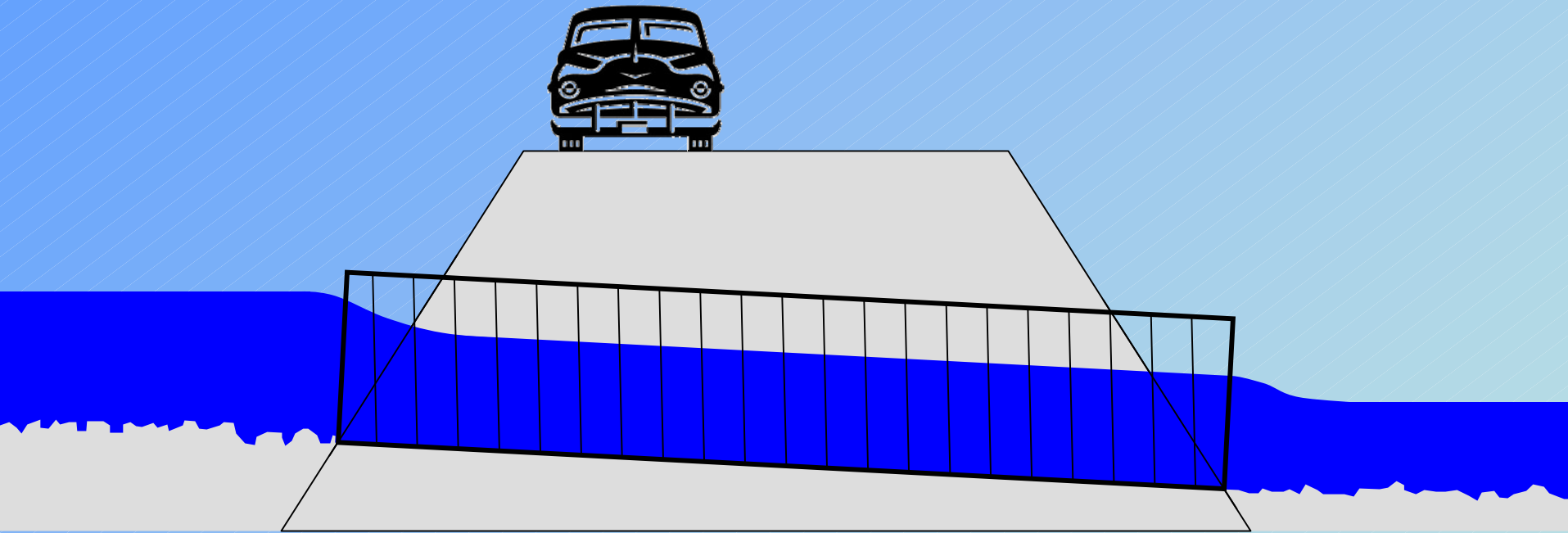


- Energy Losses from **Contraction & Expansion**
- Wingwall design, channel cross sections
- Computer model (e.g. HEC-RAS)

Hydraulics: Bridges



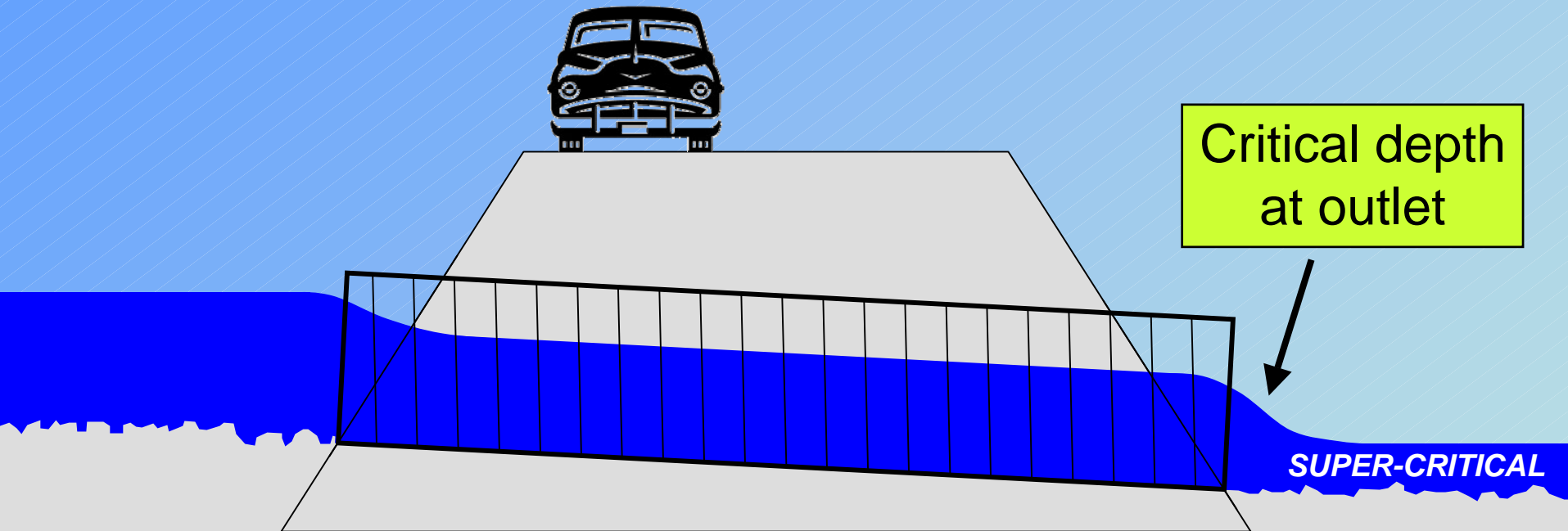
Hydraulics: Culverts



Tranquil flow throughout

$$Q = CA_3 \sqrt{2g(h_1 + \alpha_1(v_1^2/2g) - h_3 - h_{f_{1.2}} - h_{f_{2.3}})}$$

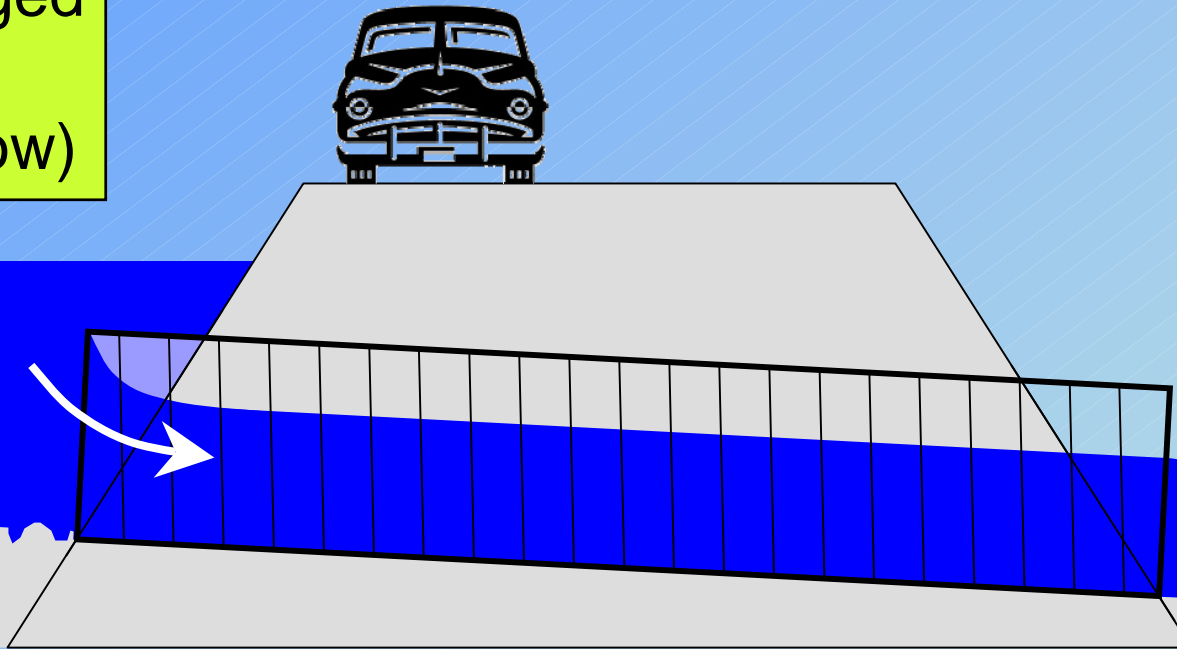
Hydraulics: Culverts



$$Q = CA_c \sqrt{2g(h_1 + \alpha_1(v_1^2/2g) - d_c - h_{f1.2} - h_{f2.3})}$$

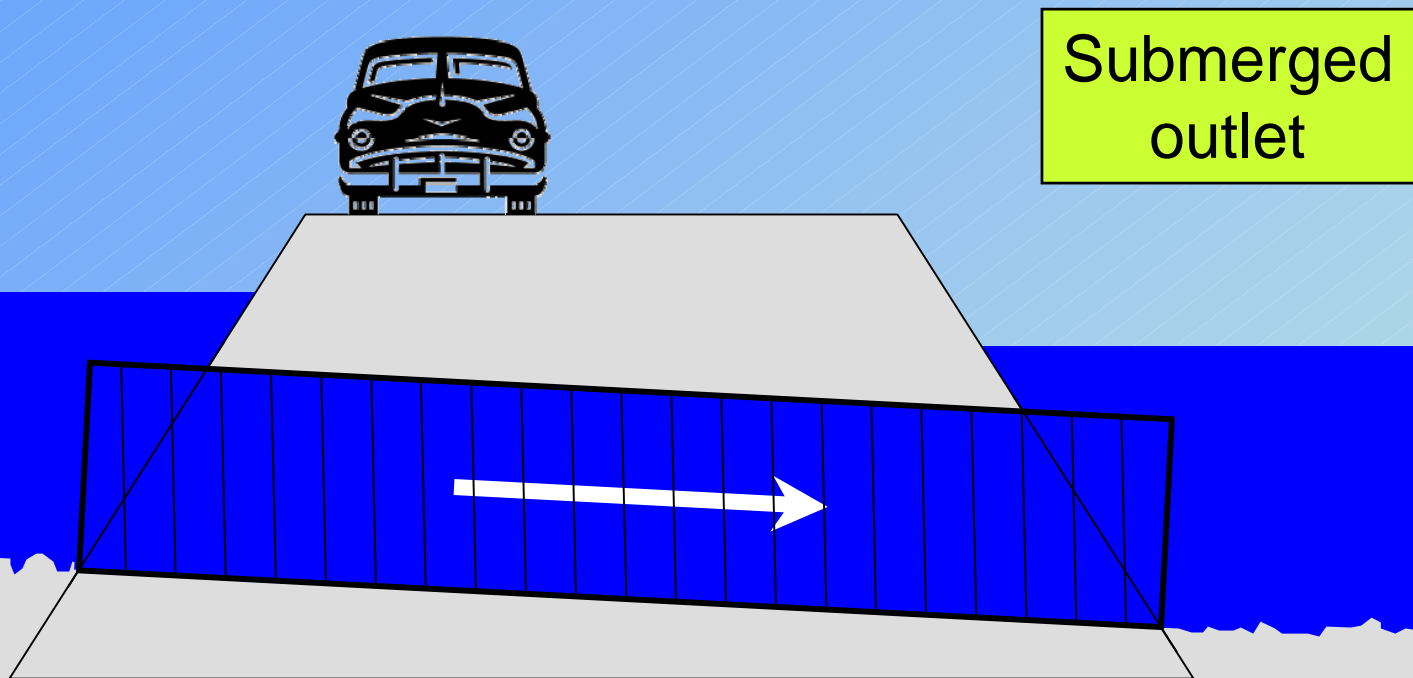
Hydraulics: Culverts

Submerged
Inlet
(rapid flow)



$$Q = CA_0 \sqrt{2g(h_1 - z)}$$

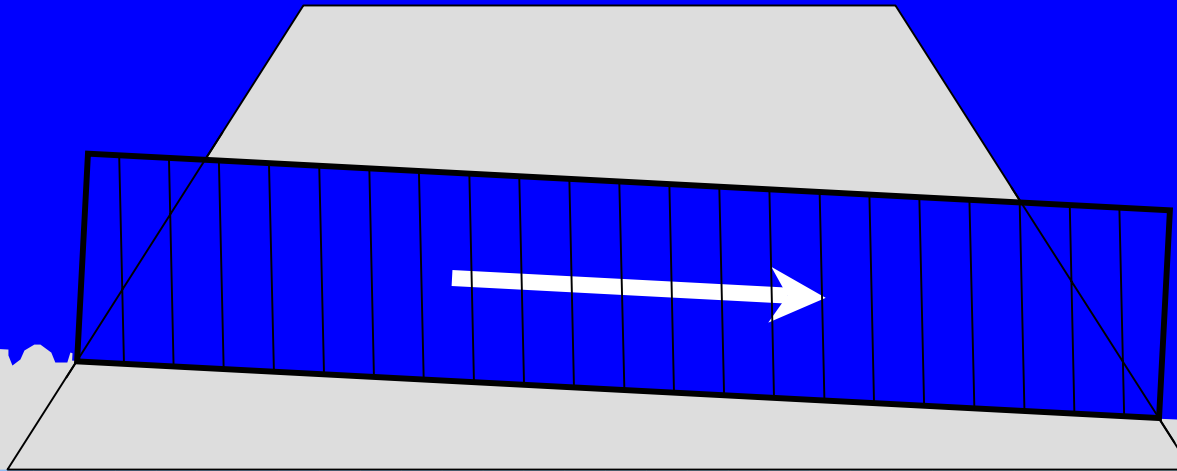
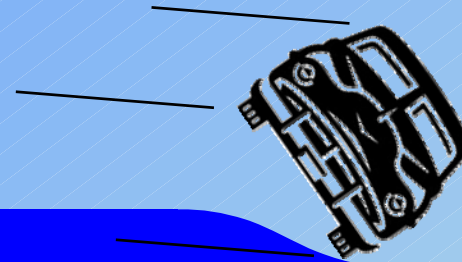
Hydraulics: Culverts



$$Q = CA_0 \sqrt{2g(h_1 - h_4) / (1 + 29C^2 n^2 L / R_0^{4/3})}$$

Hydraulics: Culverts

Flow over roadway

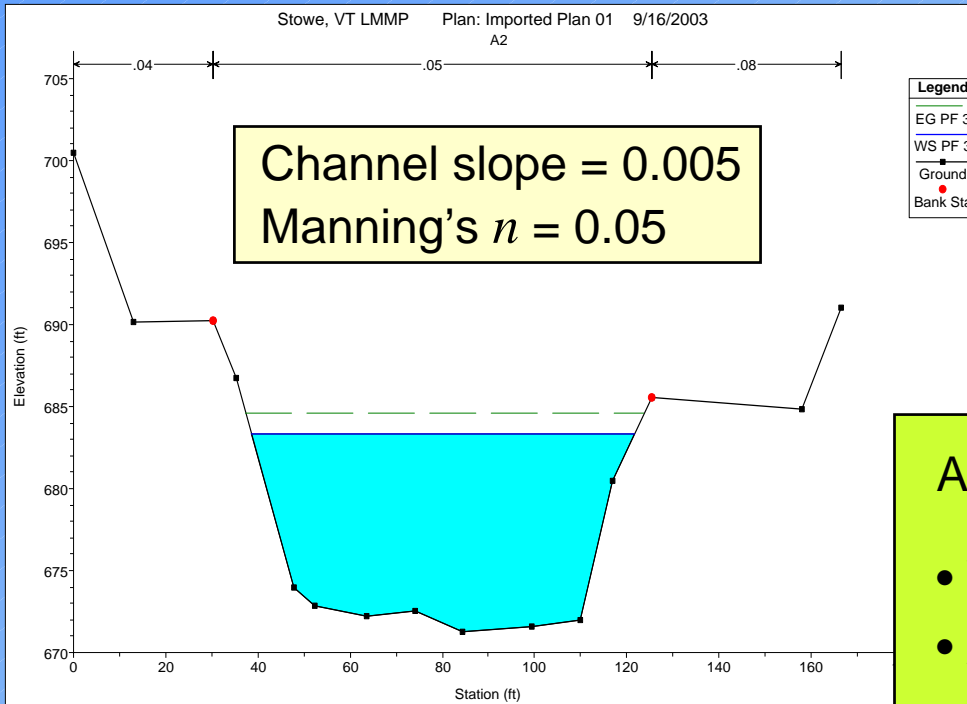


$$Q = CA_0 \sqrt{2g(h_1 - h_4) / (1 + 29C^2 n^2 L / R_0^{4/3})} + kCbH^{3/2}$$

Zone A Workshop Outline

- I. Sources of Flood and Watershed Information
- II. How to Determine BFE: Simple Methods
Detailed Methods
- III. Example of Determining Zone A BFE
- IV. Questions and Answers

Example: Normal Depth BFE



$$Q_{100} = 7,200 \text{ ft}^3/\text{s}$$

At water depth of 12.17 ft:

- WSE = **684.67 ft (NGVD29)**
- A (X-sec Area) = 807.28 ft²
- P (Wetted Perimeter) = 92.33 ft
- R (Hydraulic Radius) = 8.743 ft
- Q (Discharge) = $(1.486 A R^{2/3} S^{1/2})/n$
= 7200 ft³/s

$$H_v \text{ (Velocity Head)} = v^2/2g = 1.25 \text{ ft}$$

$$\frac{1}{2} D_h = \frac{1}{2} (A/W_t) = 4.84 \text{ ft}$$

$$H_v < \frac{1}{2} D_h \rightarrow \text{subcritical flow}$$

Zone A Workshop

How to determine
Base Flood Elevation (BFE)



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?

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