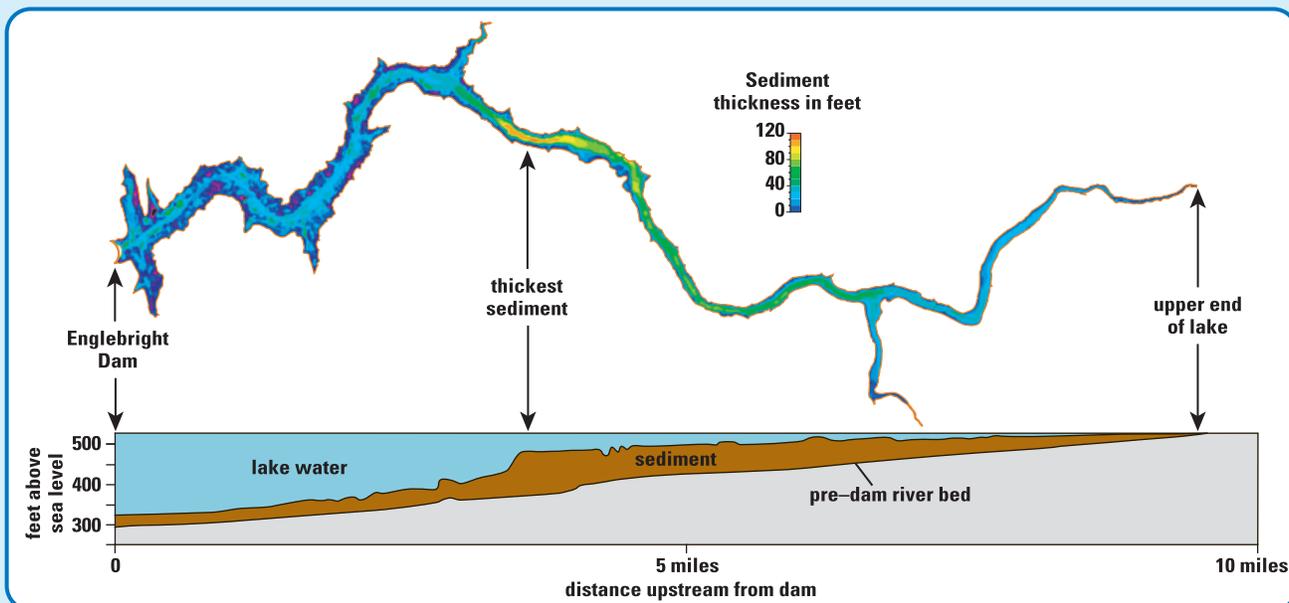


Should Englebright Dam Be Removed?

2001 – 2004



Englebright Lake sediment thickness (top) and cross-section (bottom)

The USGS, in cooperation with the Upper Yuba River Studies Program and the California Bay-Delta Authority (CALFED), studied Englebright Lake. Englebright Dam was built in 1941 to trap sediment washed downstream by hydraulic gold mining.

We used sonar to map the lake and took sediment cores from the lake bottom. By comparing the sonar map with a 1939 river map, we calculated that

28 million cubic yards of sediment are trapped behind the dam — 25% of the lake's capacity.

Our studies will help others decide the future of Englebright Dam. If the dam were removed, steelhead trout and salmon could have 100 more miles of upstream habitat. However, removing the dam could cause downstream flooding, destruction of fish habitats, and the release of sediments contaminated with mercury.



Location of Englebright Lake

Englebright Lake Team

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Noah Snyder analyzing cores in the lab

More information on the web: <http://walrus.wr.usgs.gov/posters>