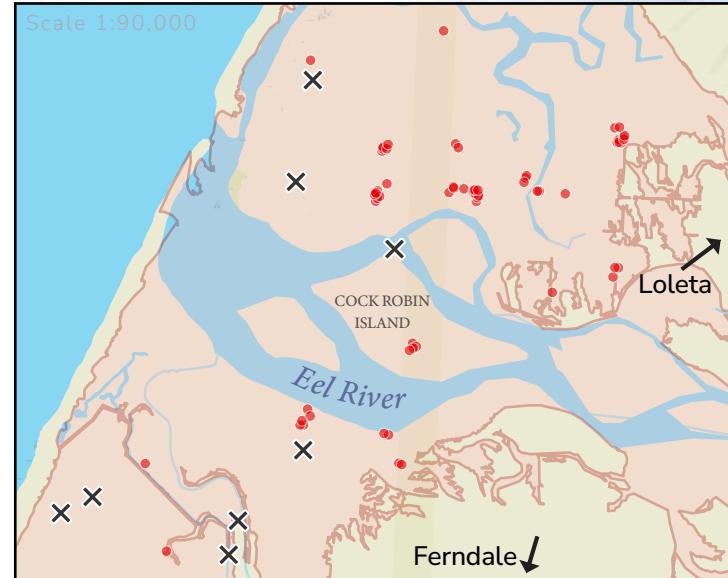


# A DANGEROUS DAM IN OUR BACKYARD

Why the Removal of Scott Dam Can't Wait



- Inundation Area\*
- Eel River Watershed
- County Boundaries
- Major Faults of the Lake Pillsbury Region
- Highway
- Inundated Bridges
- Inundated Buildings
- Cities



Sources: USGS, CA Dept. of Water Resources, Caltrans, ESRI, GEBCO, Garmin, NaturalVue  
\*Inundation area is based on a "fair weather" dam failure from the 2018 report by GEI consultants for PG&E.  
Coordinate System: NAD1983 CA Teale Albers  
Map Author: Ginevra Ryman Map Date: 12/13/2023



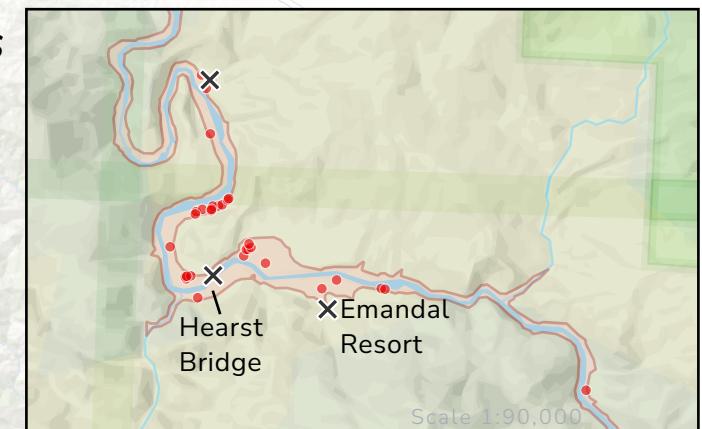
Built in 1920 as part of the Potter Valley hydroelectric project, the 138-foot Scott Dam holds back the Eel River to create Lake Pillsbury. During the dam's construction, the builders discovered that the outcropping of bedrock on which they planned to anchor the dam's south end was actually a giant boulder. The builders completed Scott Dam by angling it in front of the boulder, a less-than-ideal design. A 2018 study revealed that this southern slope is the remnants of an ancient landslide that is still moving today and is vulnerable to collapse during a storm or earthquake. These risk factors are amplified today by the steady sediment buildup against what is now a century-old structure.

All these risks are compounded by the discovery that Scott Dam and its Lake Pillsbury reservoir sit on the Bartlett Springs Fault. USGS researchers assessed it as capable of producing quakes of greater magnitude than Scott Dam was ever designed to withstand. Additionally, climate change increases the likelihood of more extreme weather events, leading to flooding that could cause the Scott Dam to fail.

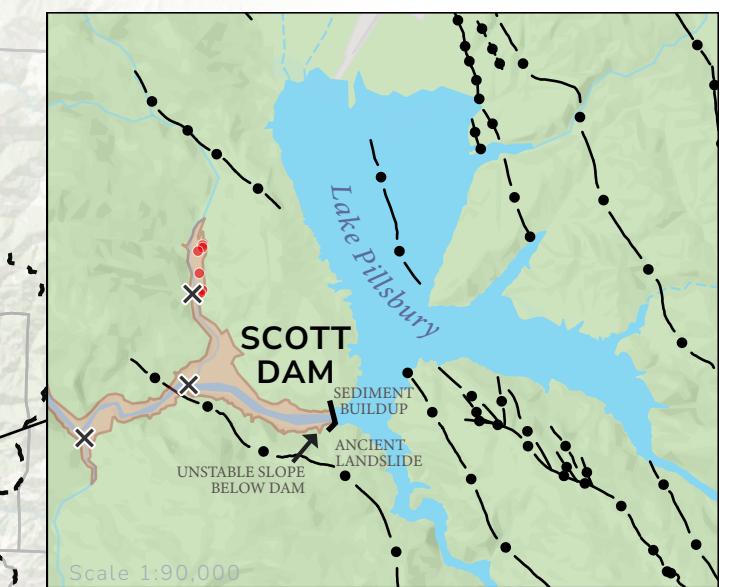
Scott Dam is classified as a high-safety hazard dam, meaning that its failure would likely lead to the loss of at least one life. Furthermore, a dam failure would damage numerous bridges and roads and could effectively cut off many communities and Highway 101, a significant path into Humboldt County. This multitude of risk factors shows why removing the Scott Dam as quickly as possible is essential.

## Dam failure would inundate:

- 43 Square Miles
- 42 Bridges
- 224 Buildings



10 Miles



The main Bartlett Springs Fault Zone runs directly underneath Lake Pillsbury and is capable of producing earthquakes greater than **magnitude 7**.