



June 17, 2025

Dear Residents,

We want to provide you with the most up-to-date and transparent information regarding the current situation with EGLE (the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy) and the mandated drawdown of our water levels at the Mill Pond.

After thorough investigation and consultation, it has become clear that there is little we can do at the local level to prevent the drawdown. While we continue to advocate and fight at the state level, EGLE holds the legal authority in this matter. If we refuse to comply with their directive, we risk a court-ordered warrant and litigation to recover all costs incurred by the state—an outcome that could be devastating for our city and its limited resources.

In light of this, we are working to comply with the temporary emergency permit issued by EGLE, in hopes of preserving our resources for the real fight—where it belongs—in Lansing.

While we have officially ended our relationship with GEI Consultants, we have secured a new engineering partnership through Spaulding and DeDecker Engineering. Their team is now working closely with us as we navigate this temporary permit process at a significantly lower cost (\$10,000–\$15,000).

Please be assured: our position has not changed—we do not support this drawdown. EGLE's urgency and action have only intensified since our public meeting, pushing forward with the "emergency" designation, which allows them to bypass a public hearing until after the drawdown takes place.

We anticipate the drawdown could begin **Monday, June 23, 2025**, *though this date is still pending confirmation from EGLE and the necessary environmental contractors*. Once the city receives a finalized date with details, we will communicate them promptly via our city social media platforms and to the committee formed below.

We understand how deeply frustrating and disheartening this process is. That's why we're inviting residents to take meaningful action by joining the **Community Dam Committee**. This will be a citizen-led activist group—not a city-sponsored committee—designed to unite our broader community and amplify our voice at the state level. This group can explore petitions, advocacy efforts, and public awareness strategies to ensure your concerns are heard loud and clear in Lansing.





If you are interested in being part of this group, please email Lori Shears at **whiteclouddam@gmail.com**. I will remain in communication with her to stay informed and aligned with the committee's work as I continue advocating with representatives and state leadership.

**Included with this letter are two important attachments:**

1. A copy of a formal letter sent to EGLE placing the State on notice regarding their liability in any potential lawsuits or damage resulting from the emergency drawdown.
2. Additional information about the Community Dam Committee, including its draft mission, vision, and goals—intended to guide the group's efforts in advocacy and public engagement.

In closing, I want to thank every one of you who has reached out. Your voice matters. Please continue to direct your concerns to Lansing, to the Governor, and to all our state-level representatives. I encourage you to write letters, sign your name to petitions, and send copies to the Community Dam Committee so your efforts can be made alongside others.

This situation is beyond our local control, but together—with unified voices and persistent advocacy—we can continue to fight for what is right for our lake, our community, and our future.

We will not stop fighting for the restoration of our water levels, our recreational space, and the beauty and value of our riverfront properties. Thank you for standing up with us.

Sincerely,

**April Storms**  
City Manager  
City of White Cloud



## **Mission:**

To unite White Cloud's community, stakeholders, and advocates in a shared mission to protect, improve, and celebrate Lake White Cloud and its dam. We aim to safeguard its future health, functionality, and recreational value — honoring its rich history while strengthening it for future generations.

## **Vision:**

Lake White Cloud will be a shining example of what strong community advocacy can achieve—a well-protected, thriving lake and dam that reflects the unity, resolve, and stewardship of White Cloud. Through persistent, informed, and passionate advocacy, we will safeguard its future, influence decisions, and empower generations to appreciate and care for this vital community asset.

## **Goals — A Call to Action:**

1. **Strengthen Advocacy and Policy Support:**

Act as a unified community voice to influence decisions, pursue funding, and shape policies that protect and enhance the future of Lake White Cloud and its Dam.

2. **Safeguard Structural Integrity:**

Collaborate with City Government, engineers, regulators, and stakeholders to keep the dam well-maintained, strong, and able to serve future generations safely.

3. **Boost Community Engagement and Awareness:**

Educate, activate, and empower the White Cloud community to become advocates through meetings, workshops, events, and communications, strengthening their role in preserving this treasured asset.

4. **Develop a Sustainable Action Plan:**

Create and pursue a forward-looking, community-informed roadmap that guides future decisions, policy, and funding priorities to keep Lake White Cloud a thriving center of recreation and unity.

## **Motto & Hashtag:**

Our Dam. Our Lake. Our Legacy.

#damstrong





June 17, 2025

**Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)**  
**Dam Safety Unit – Constitutional Hall**  
525 W. Allegan St.  
PO BOX 30458  
Lansing, MI 48909-7973

**RE: City Position on EGLE-Ordered Dam Water Level Drawdown**  
**Permit: HQD-4BA5-3H0ND – White Cloud Dam**

To Whom It May Concern,

This letter serves as formal notice that the City of White Cloud unequivocally denies any responsibility or liability for current or future claims or consequences arising from the mandated drawdown of the water levels at the Mill Pond at the White Cloud Dam, as ordered by EGLE.

The city and community did not initiate, support, or request this drawdown, nor does it agree with the emergency nature in which EGLE is demanding it be carried out. The accelerated and rushed approach lacks adequate planning and risk mitigation and creates multiple areas of concern that EGLE must assume full responsibility for. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Public Safety Risks:** including individuals or animals becoming trapped or injured in unstable muck and newly exposed sediment.
- **Property Impacts:** including reduction in riverfront property values, boundary and lot line disputes due to shifting shorelines, and potential legal claims from impacted homeowners.
- **Environmental Consequences:** including unforeseen and unassessed damage to wildlife, aquatic ecosystems, and water quality.
- **Other Civil Liabilities:** related to infrastructure, recreational loss, or future unforeseen impacts stemming from the hasty implementation of this order.

Although the City has retained Spaulding and DeDecker Engineering to assist with technical compliance under protest, this is not to be interpreted as acceptance of the current process or its outcomes. The city remains opposed to the emergency permit method and urges EGLE to consider a more methodical, transparent, and collaborative path forward.

Therefore, let this letter serve as official notice that **the City of White Cloud does not accept and will not assume any liability** related to EGLE's decision and the consequences





that may result from this water drawdown. All legal and civil responsibility lies solely with EGLE and the agencies enforcing the drawdown.

We urge EGLE to reassess this course of action in light of the significant risks associated with the rushed timeline, lack of public processes, and incomplete environmental review.

Sincerely,

April M. Storms  
City Manager  
City of White Cloud