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Students gather data using various instruments during a demonstration of maximum probable flood scenarios on a scale model of Halligan Reservoir's spillway and stilling basin on July 15 in a hydraulics laboratory at Colorado State University's Foothills Campus in Fort Collins. PHOTOS BY KELLY LYELL/THE COLORADOAN

Halligan Reservoir plans undergo testing

Scale model at CSU gives hands-on data for project

Kelly Lyell Fort Collins Coloradoan | USA TODAY NETWORK

Inch by inch, the water behind the dam rises. When it reaches the top, it begins to trickle over the spillway.

Within minutes, water cascades down the spillway into the stilling basin below before rushing down a narrow canyon.

The roaring water represents a once-every-10-million-years rainfall event at Halligan Reservoir, 25 miles northwest of Fort Collins, Chris Thornton explained. Modeled on a 1-to-24-inch scale in a hydraulics laboratory at Colorado State University's Foothills Campus.

Each inch of water flowing through the model during a demonstration July 15 represents 2 feet of water in the actual reservoir following its planned expansion, said Thornton, an associate professor and director of the hydraulics lab.

That once-every-10-million-years modeling represents the "probable maximum flood" standard new dams in the United States have to be built to accommodate. And for Halligan Reservoir, that maximum would be 105,000 cubic-feet per second, said Darren Parkin, the Halligan program manager for the city of Fort Collins.

That's a lot of water crashing down the spillway of a dam that will be nearly 145 feet tall and 1,000 feet across at the top, narrowing down the spillway and through a crash basin below before flowing downstream through Phantom Canyon and beyond.

"I'm a visual learner, and it's great to see what the actual site looks like on a scale version," said Ben Schaub, a graduate research assistant who was collecting and analyzing data.

The new dam will be built 200 feet downstream of the existing 78-foot tall dam that was built in 1909 by North Poudre Irrigation, which still owns and



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operates the reservoir. The surface level of water in the expanded reservoir will be 26 feet higher than the current level, and the volume of water behind

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Pushback for PSD on public comments

Plan would reduce opportunity at meetings

Kelly Lyell
Fort Collins Coloradoan
USA TODAY NETWORK

Earlier this summer, Poudre School District posted a change in policy on its website that would eliminate public comment at its monthly work sessions, effectively ending public comment from nearly half the board's meetings.

On June 13, Superintendent Brian Kingsley's chief of staff, Lauren Hooten, emailed three members of the PSD communications team to say, "Also, next school year, we will only have community comment at the business meetings (first meeting of the month)."

The policy change was noted in a newsletter sent to district staff a month later, dated July 14.

But there was just one problem. The Poudre School District Board of Education never approved the policy change nor discussed it in a public meeting, Vice President Jessica Zamora wrote in an Aug. 7 email to the Coloradoan. The first public discussion took place during the school board's

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Farmers' Almanac: 'Very cold, snowy' winter for Colorado

Miles Blumhardt
Fort Collins Coloradoan
USA TODAY NETWORK

The dog days of summer ended Aug. 11, which means it's time to look ahead at the winter forecast, according to the old reliable — or unreliable, depending on your meteorological beliefs — Farmers' Almanac.

The 209th edition of the almanac recently released its winter weather forecast with this ominous prediction: "Chill, Snow, Repeat" forecasting "dramatic swings and widespread wintry weather" overall for the U.S. NOAA released its September through November forecast for Colorado.

'Classic winter wonderland' forecast for Colorado and surrounding states

The almanac predicts for the North Central states (Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Minnesota, Montana,

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