



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **Hope Mills Dam in North Carolina Earns Envision Award for Sustainability**

**WASHINGTON, D.C. – August 7, 2019** – The Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI) announced today that the Hope Mills Dam in North Carolina is the recent recipient of the Envision® Bronze award for sustainable infrastructure. This is the first dam project to earn an Envision award, and the second project in the state to earn recognition from ISI for sustainability. To earn an Envision award, a project must deliver a range of environmental, social, and economic benefits to the host and affected communities and have these benefits validated through a rigorous third-party review process against the Envision sustainable infrastructure framework and rating system.

### **Project Background and Context**

The Town of Hope Mills is located in western Cumberland County south of Fayetteville in North Carolina. Hope Mills Lake is the centerpiece of the town, one of the main reasons for the town's existence and a crucial element included in the planned revitalization of the town's historic downtown district. In 2003, on Memorial Day weekend, a series of overnight thunderstorms became eight-inches of rainfall that filled the lake, causing the 80-year old already filled earthen dam to overtop and eventually break, leading to the evacuation of 1600 residents. The Town, determined not to let a similar situation transpire, spent five years working towards financing, designing and building a new dam, which unfortunately failed in 2010—only two years after it was completed. After reaching a multi-million-dollar settlement with the designers and builders of the 2008 dam, the Town selected the design-build team comprised of Schnabel Engineering and ASI Constructors to design and build a new dam and new lake for Hope Mills within a budget of \$8 million.

The Schnabel/ASI design-build team worked in close partnership with the Town of Hope Mills to deliver this award-winning sustainable project. Construction of this new dam began April 2016 and was completed in 2018.

Jackie Warner, Mayor, Town of Hope Mills: "Having the lake back is a huge event for Hope Mills. The whole process has been a positive one--the crew starts early every day, stays late, works on weekends if they need to, and they respond to the people in the town who want to know more about what they're doing."

Aaron Herrle, Craft Superintendent, ASI: "This is something new for us, the first dam we've ever built right next to Main Street. Every day people are here with their phones out, their cameras out, taking

pictures. Sometimes they drop off treats, drop off letters--we've definitely been the talk of the town."

Aaron Collins, Schnabel Engineering: "The community has been a really important part of the process. It was community input, for instance, that led to decision to create an open recreation area on the Main Street side near the dam that will be suitable for community celebrations and possibly a picnic shelter. The people in the town know what they want, and we do our best to give it to them."

"The new Hope Mills Dam is a demonstration of leadership in sustainability and is a testament to the resilience of the Town and its residents," said Melissa Peneycad, ISI's Managing Director. "This project delivers a larger, improved public resource, and restores a vital component of the Town's character. I am pleased to present the Envision Bronze award for sustainable infrastructure to the Town for the new Hope Mills Dam."

The Envision sustainable infrastructure framework assesses project sustainability across five categories: Quality of Life, Leadership, Resource Allocation, Natural World, and Climate and Resilience. These key areas contribute to positive social, economic, and environmental impacts on a community during the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure projects.

Key factors contributing to the Hope Mills Dam project earning an Envision Bronze award include:

### **Collaboration and Stakeholder Engagement**

From the very beginning the Schnabel/ASI design-build team worked closely with the Town of Hope Mills, including residents and community groups who attended monthly information sessions at the site and followed the dam's progress on social media.

Through a collaborative process that involved a broad range of stakeholders, several goals for the Hope Mills Dam project were identified and delivered by the project team:

- Smaller footprint;
- More attractive, less obtrusive design;
- Minimize vibration;
- Higher water level;
- Deeper swimming area; and
- More lakeside areas suitable for recreation activities.

### **Cost-effectiveness**

While the most important goal for the Town of Hope Mills was to have the dam rebuilt so they could get their beloved lake back, the project team also had to be sensitive to budget. The new Hope Mills Dam has been designed to avoid and correct the shortcomings of the most recent failed dam. The project was delivered at price that was less than the previous dam and within the limits of the financial settlement of the earlier dam failure.

## Reducing Noise and Vibrations

The old dam's spillway design included a weir crest with a sharp-crest and vertical downstream face. Vibrations causing significant and disruptive noise occurred whenever a thin stream of water flowed over the crest which was a regular occurrence. The vibration and noise created by the old dam was a serious problem for residents who lived on or within several blocks of the lake. Community members made it clear in early planning meetings that vibration was one of the issues they expected the new dam design to address. The new Hope Mills Dam includes a half-round crest recommended in a Schnabel commissioned study to minimize the vibrations often caused by shallow flow over weirs, thus reducing noise and vibrations and delivering a higher quality of life for residents.

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## PROJECT ORGANIZATION INFORMATION:

**About the Town of Hope Mills:** *Hope Mills is a favorite neighborhood destination for families. It is a place where generations have grown up and come of age—a place where families grow, traditions are formed, and communities unite for the greater good. Lush greenery and Hope Mills Lake are just a few of the things that can be found here. Hope Mills is situated in Western Cumberland County, North Carolina and offers quick access to Interstate 95 with convenient access to highly rated employers and major universities.*

**About Schnabel:** *Schnabel builds the foundation for project success by providing specialized expertise and design for geotechnical, dam, and tunnel engineering projects across the United States and worldwide. More than 300 people in 19 offices from coast to coast have a passion for service and tough technical challenges. An ENR Top 500 Design Firm and Top 200 Environmental Firm, we serve both public and private sector clients.*

**About Envision®:** *Envision is the product of a joint collaboration between ISI, which was founded by three national engineering associations: American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) and American Public Works Association (APWA), and the Zofnass Program for Sustainable Infrastructure at Harvard University Graduate School of Design. Information on ISI and Envision can be found on the ISI website, [www.sustainableinfrastructure.org](http://www.sustainableinfrastructure.org), and by viewing this video: <https://youtu.be/eyf-QZzSiug>*