



Back in my day...How historical data can help your project of today

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We live in a world where large amounts of historical data are increasingly available. Dam engineers have the difficult task of compiling, categorizing, and selecting what to use. During this process questions inevitably arise about the data source, precision and accuracy, and usefulness. A dam engineer conducting a rehabilitation of a dam may have hundreds or thousands of pages of design reports, design drawings, and as-built drawings to comb through. This leaves the engineer with many decisions to make about what task they are trying to accomplish and then what data is usable as-is, where that data needs to be verified prior to using, what supplemental data is needed, and what data to discard. Lessons learned from several example dam rehabilitation projects will be presented, including historical data that were available, how they have been mis-used, methods for correcting those issues, and how to avoid those mistakes in the future. Specific types of data to be discussed include Historical Design drawings, As-built drawings, reports, and geotechnical boring logs will be among topics discussed.