

## Minimizing Dam Disputes Using Real-Time Webcams

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The \$14-million Lake Townsend Dam and Spillway Replacement project currently underway in Greensboro, N.C., includes the construction of new earthen embankment dam, a labyrinth spillway and numerous environmental care and engineering advancements. However, if the project continues as it has so far, it will not entail any notable claims or disputes.

In 2006, the City of Greensboro contracted with Schnabel Engineering for design engineering, construction management and QA/QC services and Crowder Construction as the general contractor.

In a collaborative effort, the owner, engineer and contractor opted to help manage the project using a series of three webcams.

Frederic Snider, contract administrator with Schnabel Engineering, says, "For the Lake Townsend project, real-time, web-based cameras are a critical project management and communication tool keeping everyone on the same page—and out of conflict."

The project team installed two EarthCam ConstructionCam Lite Megapixel High-Definition webcams with live streaming video and one EarthCam ConstructionCam Lite Security webcam at select points on the site. The webcams are linked via an Internet connection to EarthCam's servers where the images are available through a password-protected website. The owner, the engineer and the contractor all have 24/7 access to the real-time pan, tilt and zoom features of the cameras, as well as archive photos taken every 30 minutes since the start of construction.

According to Allan Williams, director of Water Resources for Greensboro, "The cameras have certainly made my job easier, and have been a valuable asset in keeping the lines of communication open and the project running smoothly."

Snider concludes, "The webcams, coupled with our web-based document control system, are making a huge difference in the quality and timeliness of the work, degree of transparency and collaboration. They have helped build a level of trust between all parties that we are confident will reduce or eliminate claims at the close of the project."