

May 18, 2011

Mr. Wayne Ives, DES

I would like to express my concerns regarding the proposed potential drawn down of Pawtuckaway Lake:

1. Although I applaud the intent of creating a plan that takes into account water management, conservation, and dam management, I find the plan lacking in the very essence of its stated purpose, which is to protect the integrity of surface waters and in-stream flows in the Lamprey watershed area. No study or impact of the entire watershed area, more specifically with Pawtuckaway Lake, has been done. The focus on the lower Lamprey area in my estimation makes this entire report invalid as a guideline for all three stated goals.
2. It appears that the study did not involve any knowledge of the Pawtuckaway Lake. During a drought, the lake levels are in as much stress as the lower Lamprey River. The water levels are usually 6 to 8 inches lower than full pond. If DES is going to drain another 3 inches of water, this would further impact the lake. There is no inflow to replenish the water levels for Pawtuckaway and through natural evaporation the lake loses up to 1/4 of an inch of water daily. By releasing more water, this would impact the shallows and make it virtually impassable for boating, an activity that creates revenue for the state and the local economy through usage of the state park campgrounds.
3. I own Property on Pawtuckaway, Lake and have never been notified of any surveys in the year 2000 or even notified that this committee was being formed to address any proposals related to the lake level -- summer or winter.
4. I am against changing the drawdown in the winter months. It will affect the ability of residents to repair docks. It will affect the quality of the water; weeds will not be killed off as in the past. It will increase property damage that the state is so concerned about during the spring floods while there is ice on lake. That would be in direct contradiction to previously stated policy.
5. The evidence in this report does not support keeping additional water in this lake during the winter.
6. The entire report fails to consider the same stress related to the Pawtuckaway Lake that the plan is proposing to draw water from. Has there been a study to the impact of a drought to the Pawtuckaway Lake area, tributaries and upper watershed? It's quite possible that these areas would have a greater requirement for water than the lower Lamprey area.
7. Why is the health of the lower Lamprey River more important than that of the Pawtuckaway Lake area?
8. If water is added to the lower Lamprey area during stressful times, is there any data to suggest that the marine life and other bio-features will be impacted? What kind of damage to the lake biology would occur at the lake areas where the water is taken from? No study addresses this.
9. Conservation and water management plans are a positive step for entities that take water from the watershed area, but the idea of trying to adjust bio habitats by controlled dam releases might have a temporary positive impact on one area, but adversely affect another.

10. You stated that there is no study to the impact on the lake biology. This needs to be addressed to have a comprehensive plan in place. The premise of having a water management, conservation, dam management plan in place without taking into consideration the impact of the entire watershed would be grossly irresponsible at best.
11. The entire report characterizes the lake areas as storage impoundments. These are not just water storage areas that can be used at your leisure. Every lakefront property will be affected and they need to be notified in writing just as any abutter is notified when a building permit or septic permit is requested for an adjacent property that would affect their property value and border. This lake is my adjacent property.
12. It is my understanding that the water management plan has passed its legislative statute and was not approved or adopted by the September 30th, 2010 required date. I think this entire plan needs to go back to the drawing board or be scrapped.
13. There are large numbers of No Wake areas on the lake due to shallow water. The intent of a no wake area is to protect the shoreline as well as protect the bottom from being turned up by boat propellers. Turning up the bottom releases phosphorous and other sediments that were deemed harmful to plant and fish life. These are state mandated areas and enforced by Fish & Game and Marine Patrol. By lowering the water level, these areas should be banned from boating altogether. This would mean closing the public boat ramp in the Fundy Area and canceling all scheduled fishing tournaments. All this to protect the bio-areas which is the plans stated goals.
14. My confidence and the ability to have the State to be in charge of controlled water releases during the summer is suspect at best. I have been living on this lake for over 20 years and have seen the State: A. forget that there are 2 dams on Pawtuckaway and miss the spring rains leaving the lake 1-1/2 feet below full pond for the summer and: B. Put the boards in the dam upside down leaving tremendous leakage and again leaving the lake below full pond for the summer. There should be more local contact / input for any dam issued whether it might be a drawdown or fill in the spring.

Thank you for your time and attention to my concerns.

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