

Hi all,

At the recent NYSFOLA (Federation of Lake Associations) meeting, LMA President Ann Palmiter learned that our dam is rated high risk by the DEC. This means that should the dam fail, it would result in death downstream. She also learned that DeRuyter Lake has the same rating and is being drained this fall for dam repairs. Given additional rumors about the possibility that our dam might be next on the repair list, she invited Ted Halpin, Director of Madison County Emergency Management to speak at our May 26 General Meeting.

Ted was very informative, although he could not speak for the Canal Corporation or the NY Power Authority (the Canal Corp is a part of the Power Authority and these are the owners of the dam), but told us what he knows. He said our dam (#104-0753) has been inspected, and deemed "unsound, fair". The report indicates concerns with an old weir seepage, the inadequacy of the new spillway, and the damage in the old spillway. He confirmed that the engineering report estimates 18 feet of water in Hamilton in 20 minutes if the dam suffered a total fail. Needless to say, this is of great concern to Madison County Emergency Management (Ted Halpin) and the Village of Hamilton. Hamilton Mayor Ruthann Loveless attended the meeting and forwarded the contacts below, asking the lake community to push the Canal Corp and the Power Authority, as well as our political representatives to make the necessary repairs as soon as possible.

The risk of a catastrophic failure of the dam may not be an imminent threat, but there is not much information out that would alleviate fears downstream. For those of us on the lake that would be impacted by a drawdown, the lack of information makes planning for such an event very difficult. The board is struggling with lake management plans, those with shallow wells that live full time on the lake need to prepare for any drawdown contingencies, and any summer without a lake would certainly impact our recreational opportunity. A drawdown would also provide an excellent opportunity for waterfront work. But we need to better understand the concerns and potential timeline and scope of work to help us make the best use of any time we have to prepare.

Neither the Canal Corp nor the NYS Power Authority have made public any plan to repair our dam, but it appears quite likely that some level of repair work is likely within the next 2 years. We have experienced dam or spillway work in the past; in the 40's, 60's and 80's the lake was drained completely twice and lowered 12 feet once.

We have been advised that the best way to get action and additional information is to contact our state representatives and the owners of the dam. We are providing the following contact information so you can urge them to complete any necessary work as soon as possible to alleviate concerns in the village and ensure that our dam meets current safety guidelines, and to provide us on the lake with information on the plans and concerns on the part of the owners.

Fenton and Ann would like to invite any of you that would be interested to a letter writing event on Tuesday, June 11 at our house at 5:00. As an incentive we will serve beer and wine! I would think we could jointly create a letter that we can all send to the below parties. Please let Ann know if you can make it, annpalmiter@gmail.com.

Senator Rachel May
333 E Washington St Suite 815
Syracuse NY 13202

Assemblyman John Salka
214 Farrier Ave
Oneida NY 13421

Governor Andrew Cuomo
110 State Street
Albany NY 12207

Brian Stratton
NY Canal Corp
30 S Pearl St
Albany NY 12207

Gil Quiniones
New York Power Authority
123 Main Street
Corporate Communications
Mail Stop 10 B
White Plains, NY 10601-3170

Theodore Fisch
Director of Crisis Management
NY Power Authority/Canal Corp
30 S Pearl St
Albany NY 12207

Ted Halpin
Director of Madison County Emergency Management
138 N Court St
PO Box 577
Wampsville NY 13163

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