

Flowage Preservation Alliance

February 2, 2014

The past month has brought considerable progress toward the resolution of the Little Tamarack dam problem.

First, on January 2nd, as you know, the Petition to form a Lake District, signed by well over 90% of the affected property owners, was presented and accepted by the Town of Conover. On Saturday Feb. 1st, a hearing was held by the Town of Conover on that subject. At that hearing, no opposition to a Lake District was presented. The only public comments at the hearing were by Rich Ruffalo and Bob Senechalle, both in favor of the Lake District. Bob gave a detailed explanation for the record, as to how each of the statutory requirements for a Lake District will be met. The Town Board discussed a date to put the issue before a Town Meeting; although they did not yet pick a date, it was indicated that they will be acting quickly.

Equally important, on Jan. 28th, the Vilas County Board adopted the Little Tamarack Flowage "Dam Failure Analysis & Flood Shadow" into its Floodplain Ordinance. This should eventually result in a "low hazard" assessment of the dam by the Wisconsin DNR. This will dramatically lower the requirements - and the cost - of meeting State standards, allowing our dam to receive a permit. Ongoing maintenance costs will also be lowered, by receiving the "low hazard" rating. Truly great news!

The next step: We will request the Town Board to create a five-member Lake District Board: one from the Town, one from the County, and three elected by our Lake District, as provided by Wisconsin Statute. Once they take this step, then at our organizational meeting in July, (probably the same day as the Alliance meeting on the 4th of July weekend) the Lake District property owners will elect those three property owners to be on the Lake District Board, to serve along with the Town appointee and the County appointee. This will give the property owners effective control of the Lake District.

All in all, very good news, and we are moving forward.

Rich Ruffalo, President
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