

Celebrating 33 Years of Environmental Leadership!



Friday, March 10, 2023

Dear Secretary Tepper and Commissioner Rice,

On behalf of Green Newton, an environmental nonprofit, I am writing to you about DCR's Watertown Dam. Our mission is to create an environment in better balance with the natural world by making a significant, measurable difference in the way we use resources.

We encourage you to support the removal of the Watertown Dam and restoration of the Charles River. We were impressed by the 2021 feasibility study's findings and are excited about the prospects of further restoring Alewife, American Eel, Blueback Herring and Rainbow Smelt to the Charles River.

In Newton we are seeing the impacts of stronger storms and increased rainfall from climate change. Aging infrastructure like Watertown Dam pose a risk as we are seeing stronger and more intense storms of which much infrastructure was not designed for.

Findings of the report include information that flood elevations upstream of the dam will be lowered 6ft upstream of the dam and no change in flooding is anticipated downstream.

The Watertown Dam harms the health of the Charles River. Removal of the Dam and Restoration of the River will help further progress years of cleanup of the Charles River.

The current impounded area of the river upstream of the dam has higher temperatures, lower dissolved oxygen levels. Freeing the Charles River in Watertown will lead to lower temperatures and higher dissolved oxygen levels as the water would flow more freely. Colder waterways with higher levels of dissolved oxygen are better for fish like the wild trout that our organization supports.

Not only migratory fish would benefit from removal of the Watertown Dam, other resident fish including bass, bullhead, catfish, perch and pickerel would also have increased habitat and access to food and mates.

At a time of reckoning in the Commonwealth and our country we have learned that the construction of the Watertown Dam and others were opposed by the local indigenous peoples. We write to start to mend these wrongs and join with those indigenous voices who have been calling for years to remove the Watertown Dam and restore the river.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marcia Cooper".

Marcia Cooper. President of Green Newton

CC:

Massachusetts Fish & Game Commissioner Ron Amidon
Division of Marine Fisheries Commissioner Daniel McKiernan
City of Watertown Council
City of Watertown Conservation Commission
CRWA Executive Director Emily Norton

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