SIERRA CLUB
MASSACHUSETTS

April 27, 2022

Dear Members of the South Natick Dam Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment about the future of the Charles River Dam in South Natick. On behalf of over 100,000 members and supporters across the Commonwealth, The Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter writes to you in support of removing the dam's spillway and preserving approximately 60 mature trees on the earthen portion of the current dam.

Restoring a free-flowing Charles River is strongly aligned with our mission to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

The 60 trees on the earthen part of the current dam provide significant shade, air quality and noise pollution mitigation, and sequester carbon. The trees provide services that benefit the Natick community and would be lost if they were removed.

The current dam and spillway negatively impact the water quality of the Charles River. The dam slows the water in the so-called mill pond upstream of the spillway leading to higher temperatures, lower dissolved oxygen levels that are bad for aquatic wildlife. In a dam repair scenario, this water would be even warmer with the 60 trees removed.

A free flowing Charles River with the spillway removed would allow for free movement of fish, wildlife and paddlers and establish colder water temperatures with more dissolved oxygen benefiting the fish and other wildlife.

Additionally, spillway removal would have the benefit of connecting two coldwater tributaries downstream in Dover to the largest free-flowing section of the river upstream of South Natick.

Thank you for considering our comments. Please feel free to reach out to us for more information.

Sincerely,

Deb Pasternak

Deb Pasternak

State Director
Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter

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