



April 27, 2022

Dear Secretary Theoharides,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment about the future of DCR's Watertown Dam. 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 Watertown Dam and restoring the Charles River in Watertown.

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 feasibility study's findings were clear: the dam removal is feasible and would have benefits to the environment and neighboring Watertown community. Restoring full fish passage for alewife, american eel, blueback herring and rainbow smelt to the Charles River would further improve one of the Commonwealth's most iconic rivers and help these keystone species.

Additionally, resident fish including bass, bullhead, catfish, perch and pickerel would also have increased habitat and access to food and mates.

Removal of the dam will improve the health 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 and other aquatic life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deb Pasternak". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deb Pasternak

State Director, Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter

CC: DCR Acting Commissioner Stephanie Cooper
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