



October 30, 2010

Michael Michaud, the Honorable Congressman  
Olympia Snowe, the Honorable Senator  
Susan Collins, the Honorable Senator

The Town of Canton has applied for an EPA Brownfield Cleanup Grant. The dam at the confluence of Lake Anasagunticook and Whitney Brook in the center of town was used in the 1800's by several mills to generate waterpower, lastly by a tannery for 150 years. Unfortunately in 1976, the tannery succumbed to competition and was forced to close causing local residents to lose their jobs and depressing the local economy. The closing of the tannery had additional ramifications that would not be realized for another 25 years when the dam fell into significant disrepair under the ownership of a private individual. In 2007, the MEMA issued an Emergency Dam Safety Order to the private owner, which mandated that the gates remain open until the ordered repairs were made.

Although issues with the dam have been prevalent for many years, Canton and Hartford, which share the lakefront property, have been directly affected by lower water levels: property abatement requests, restricted lake access, loss of quality recreation and wetlands, threatened Canton's water supply and loss of tourism dollars. As a result volunteers representing the five stakeholders formed a committee to take action to find a permanent solution. The committee facilitated municipal acquisition of the dam by eminent domain, construction of a temporary dam, a Community Development Block Grant and is assisting with a capital campaign to raise funds to build a new dam. The goal has now expanded to developing a municipal park with green spaces as well as constructing a public boat ramp by partnering with Maine's Dept. of IF&W on the adjacent property.

With the assistance from AVCOG and various State agency partnerships, we as volunteers and officials from two small towns are optimistic that our efforts to work together will overcome huge obstacles to protect the lake and restore the center of our community. Federal funding of Canton's EPA cleanup grant proposal is a key part of the plan to move forward since the site must be cleaned-up for any productive future use. Any support the Maine Congressional delegation can provide would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Malcolm Ray, PE and Ph D, Canton resident, LAA member, and dam committee Chair

Judy Hamilton, Hartford resident, former LAA officer and dam committee Secretary

Pauline Bussiere, Canton resident, Canton Hi Riders Snowmobile Club officer and former LAA President

Robert Turnbull, Canton resident, Canton Water District Trustee, and Mill Pond Assn. President

Jacqueline Conant, Canton Selectman and LAA member

Scotty Kilbreth, Canton Selectman

Don Hutchins, Canton Selectman and Canton Water District Trustee

David Bowen, former Hartford Selectman and LAA member