

**1/20/25 JOINT STATEMENT
5 TOWN DAM COMMITTEE
(SILVER, ALAMOOSOOK, TODDY)**

Representatives from the 5 Town Dam Committee met at the Bucksport Town Office on Wednesday, January December 18th to discuss new developments regarding Bucksport Mill LLC's petition to abandon the Toddy, Alamoosook, and Silver Lake dams.

Legislative Developments

Steve Bishop, HD17 State Representative, provided the group with an update on the bipartisan bills addressing our dam issues that have been introduced this season. Bills include

- Clarifying the information a dam owner must provide if they petition DEP for a release of ownership and maintenance of water levels (dam abandonment).
- Clarifying the timeframes involved in the dam abandonment petition process
- Creation of a quasi-municipal agency that could take ownership of dams
- Creating a revolving fund available to municipalities for dam repairs
- Providing additional resources to MEMA for conducting more frequent dam inspections and enabling the agency to provide technical assistance to communities in addressing dam deficiencies.

Consultation Between the Towns and Bucksport Mill LLC

All 5 towns completed their town votes to endorse entering into the consultation process with Bucksport Mill LLC to consider ownership of the Dams. Bucksport Mill LLC has acknowledged that they have received the extensive information requests submitted by the towns in November. Acquiring this information is the first step in the towns' assessment of the viability of assuming dam ownership. A response from Bucksport Mill LLC is anticipated

Design of a Quasi-Municipal Agency to Assume Dam Ownership

This effort only applies to Alamoosook and Toddy because Silver Lake is facing a very different situation requiring a different solution. Some residents of the impacted towns would prefer that one of the State agencies, such as Maine Inland Fish & Wildlife (IFW) or the Department of Agriculture, Conservation & Forestry (DACF), take ownership of the dams. However, in the event this does not happen the Towns felt it prudent to work with our State Legislators to develop a legislative alternative (as described above). The timeline is short -- late February is the deadline for getting draft language to the legislators. Therefore, the Committee seeks input from residents as soon as possible to guide their process of designing the proposed entity and outlining its charge. At the end of February, the legislators would use that language to craft legislation and then bring it to a legislative committee. Before the quasi-municipal organization created by the legislation can be implemented, town residents will be asked to vote on whether or not to participate.

Each town will hold its own session where its residents will hear updates, have the opportunity to ask questions, talk with fellow residents, and provide input about ownership and management options for the dams. The public input sessions are scheduled as follows (all scheduled for 6:00 - 7:30 PM): Orland, February 5th at Alamoosook Lakeside Inn, 229 Soper Rd.; Surry, February 10th at Surry Elementary School, 754 North Bend Rd.; Blue Hill, February 12th at the Town Hall Auditorium, 18 Union St.; and Penobscot, February 13th at Penobscot Community School, 66 North Penobscot Rd. As part of this effort, a survey is also being developed to gather resident feedback. That survey will be available in person as well as online.

For those unable to attend their town's public input session, video recordings will be made available on the towns' and lake associations' websites. Residents of these four towns who are unable to attend are invited to submit questions in advance to alamlaketoddypond@gmail.com. Responses will be incorporated into the public input session discussion and video recordings. For further information, please email any inquiries, also to alamlaketoddypond@gmail.com.