

Update on the Effort to Save Toddy Pond

Update from the Toddy Pond Board for the Toddy Pond Association

March 6, 2025

Agenda


- Timeline / Recent Happenings and Updates
- Emerging Solution
 - What is the Narramissic Regional Water District? (NRWD)
 - Draft Legislation
- What Can You Do?
- Discussion/Question and Answers

Timeline of Key Events: High-level Process

Consultation Requirements (38 M.R.S. § 902(3))

- Petition to Abandon accepted by Maine DEP
- Individual/Group consultation
- Municipality consultation
- Owner reports to DEP late April on consultation status
- DEP granted 180-day extension until October 2025
- State agency evaluation if no owner found

Timeline of Key Events: What's happened since BML filed their petition to abandon the dams?



July – Sept 2024	Oct– Dec 2024	Jan – April 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formation of 5 Town Dam Committee:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coordinated messaging and biweekly updates• Initiated impact assessments• Explored ownership solutions• Bucksport: Passed Dam Abandonment Ordinance• Orland: Enacted 180-day Moratorium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oct 19: Bucksport Mill LLC (BML) submitted 2nd application to ME DEP• Nov 1: DEP accepted petition• Nov 14: Public meeting with BML• By Dec 13: All 5 town completed town votes required to pursue potential ownership discussions• DEP granted towns 180-day extension to consider assuming ownership (until October 2025)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Town meetings for public input on approach to dams• Public and business impact surveys conducted• DEP notified BML they were non-compliant with furnishing required data• Feb 21: Data from Bucksport Mill, including historical spending and estimated costs of O&M and repairs for Toddy dam• Late-Feb to now: four-town committee worked to draft legislation to create shared watershed district

The 4-Town Committee

Representatives from:

- Orland (Gina Bushong, Select Board)
- Blue Hill (Scott Miller, Select Board)
- Penobscot (Harold Hatch, Select Board)
- Mary Allen (Surry, Select Board)

- Toddy Pond Association (Marc Restuccia, President) *
 - Christopher Closs, Donna Foster, Brian Smith and Phil Roberts
- Alamoosook Lake Association (Lisa Deweese)*

Emerging Solution: Narramissic Regional Water District (NRWD)

- Proposed organization to own/manage the dams on Toddy Pond and Alamoosook Lake
- Consists of two separate organizations:
 - Toddy Pond Authority = Toddy Pond Dam
 - Blue Hill, Orland, Penobscot, Surry and Toddy Waterfront Property Owners
 - Alamoosook Pond Authority= Alamoosook Lake Dam
 - Orland and Alamoosook Waterfront Property Owners

Emerging Solution: Draft Legislation

Toddy Pond Authority – Key Terms

- Blue Hill, Orland, Penobscot and Surry + Waterfront Property Owners
- Quasi-municipal entity
- Ability to raise money and has liability protection
- 9-person Governing Board comprising Town-appointed trustees and elected Waterfront Property Owner trustees
- Initial 2-Year budget and formation period
 - All towns vote to participate and fund 2 years of Authority at 50% of the budget
 - Lakefront Property Owners fund the remaining 50%

Emerging Solution: Cost Illustrations

If Dam is Removed

Estimated Tax Increase to all Taxpayers

Decrease in lake property values	Approx Tax Increase per \$100k Value			
	BH	Orl	Pen	Sur
30%	\$3	\$117	\$43	\$38
50%	\$4	\$195	\$72	\$63
70%	\$6	\$273	\$101	\$88

If Dam is Preserved (50/50 Split)*

Estimated Tax Increase to *Town* Taxpayer

Annual Dam Budget	Approx Tax Increase per \$100k Value			
	BH	Orl	Pen	Sur
\$100,000	<\$1	\$6	\$5	\$3
\$200,000	<\$1	\$13	\$11	\$6
\$400,000	\$1	\$26	\$21	\$12

Estimated Tax Increase to *Waterfront Owner*

Annual Dam Budget	Approx Tax Increase per \$100k Value			
	BH	Orl	Pen	Sur
\$100,000	\$25	\$33	\$28	\$28
\$200,000	\$50	\$66	\$56	\$56
\$400,000	\$101	\$132	\$113	\$112

Note: Preliminary expected costs to own/operate dam are \$100k-\$200k annually. \$400k is an estimated annualized cost to *replace* Toddy dam at a cost of \$4 million paid for with a 20-year loan at 4% interest.

Emerging Solution: What's Next?

- Draft legislation has been submitted to the Legislature
 - Will be modified by Legislative staff for clarity, consistency, legalese, plus other potential changes
 - TPA is looking for ways to continue to influence and improve the language during this process (without jeopardizing the bill or sowing conflict)
- If Approved by Legislature and signed by the Governor:
 - Will come back to the towns for a public vote, likely in the Fall
 - Should each town join the Toddy Pond Authority?
 - Should each town fund the Authority for a minimum of 2 years?

What Can I Do?

- **Join TPA today:**

- \$30 annual dues (additional contributions welcome!); we stretch every dollar for maximum impact
- Encourage your neighbors to do the same
- Volunteer your time/skills

- **Stay informed and spread the word:**

- Share TPA updates and news stories with friends and neighbors. Post to social media. Strike up conversations while out and about.
- Encourage people to support TPA or the Towns' legal funds
- Make sure everyone knows what's at stake and that preserving the dams is the lowest-cost solution for *all* taxpayers.
- Talk to your elected officials. Let them know what the Pond means to you.

Questions?