

ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE

KENNETH J. RONK, JR.
Chair

JAMES F. MALONEY
Vice Chair

MARY BETH MAIO
Majority Leader

HECTOR S. RODRIGUEZ
Minority Leader



P.O. Box 1800
KINGSTON, NEW YORK 12402
Telephone: 845 340-3900
FAX: 845 340-3651

VICTORIA A. FABELLA
Clerk

NICHOLAS A. PASCALE
Counsel

KYLE BARNETT
Counsel

CHRISTOPHER RAGUCCI
Minority Counsel

August 30, 2018

Hon. David H. Mortimer, President
Palisades Interstate Park Commission
Bear Mountain State Park
3006 Seven Lakes Drive
Post Office Box 427
Bear Mountain, New York 10911-0427

Dear Mr. Mortimer and Members of the Board,

We, the below signed members of the Ulster County Legislature, write to respectfully request your reconsideration of the draining of Tillson Lake. While we know the Palisades Interstate Park Commission takes very seriously your stewardship of the Minnewaska State Park Preserve and the many other amazing natural and recreational resources under your care, this is the wrong decision.

We completely understand the difficult position worthy organizations like yours find themselves in when weighing the preservation of resources, providing opportunities for public enjoyment and recreation and responsible fiscal management. With that said, the maintenance of the dam at Tillson lake has been identified in the Park Master Plan as a critical priority in the Minnewaska State Park Preserve. The residents of the Town of Gardiner who live near the lake and the countless others throughout Ulster County who visit the lake to enjoy fishing, boating, hiking bird watching and more certainly agree with that assessment.

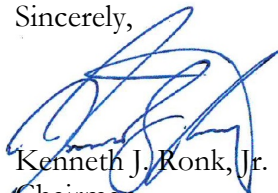
It goes without saying that, in addition to the loss of an important recreational resource, the environmental impacts of draining the lake would be devastating. Tillson Lake is home to bass, trout, reptiles, numerous bird species, including raptors and bald eagles, and countless other fauna. The lake also supports wetlands and serves as an important resting place for migratory bird species. Additionally, impacts to the Wallkill River's phosphorous levels and the potential costs to mitigate any resulting increase should also be considered before any final decision is reached.

Lastly, Ulster County will unquestionably suffer a financial blow should the lake be drained. Tourism and recreation in that area will be nearly eliminated to the detriment of area businesses. Property values will decrease resulting in a measurable decrease in county property tax revenue. Local government budgets are increasingly tighter and any revenue lost has significant impacts.

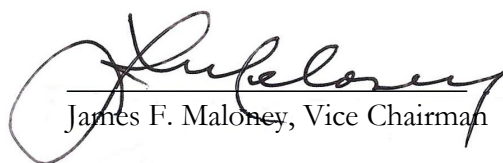
We urge you to withdraw your proposal to drain Tillson Lake, and instead work with Governor Cuomo, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, state lawmakers and other stakeholders to secure the funding necessary to repair and upgrade the dam. We offer our support in petitioning for the necessary funding.

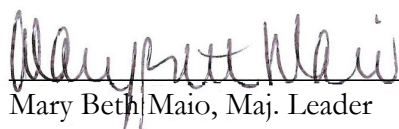
Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

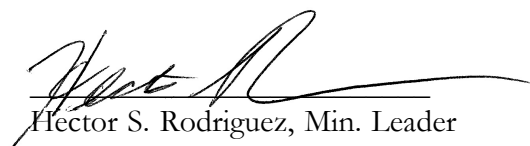
Sincerely,



Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr.
Chairman

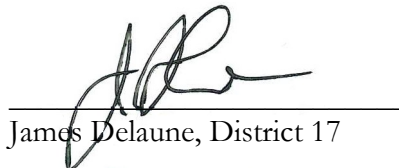

Tracey Bartels, Legislator
District 16


James F. Maloney, Vice Chairman



Mary Beth Maio, Maj. Leader

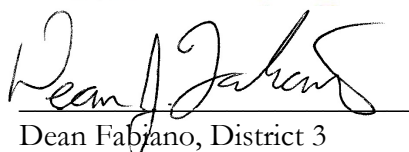

Hector S. Rodriguez, Min. Leader


Lynn Archer, District 21

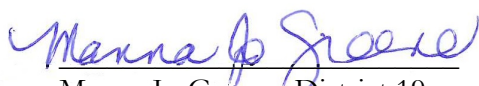

James Delaune, District 17

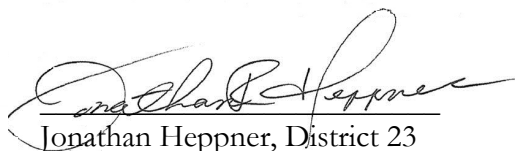

David B. Donaldson, District 6

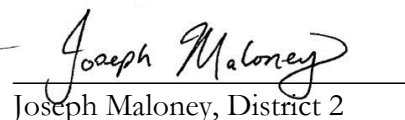

Lynn Eckert, District 95



Dean Fabjano, District 3



Richard Gerentine, District 11

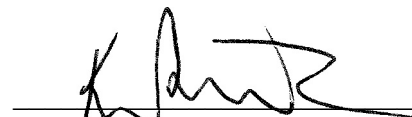

Manna Jo Greene, District 19

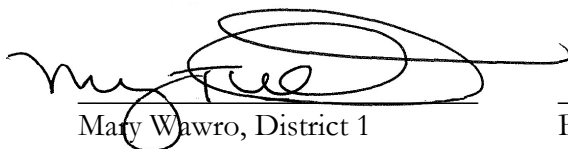

Jonathan Heppner, District 23

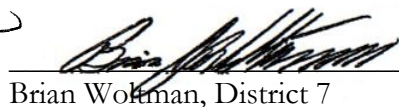

Joseph Maloney, District 2


Kathy Nolan, District 22


Laura Petit, District 8


Kevin Roberts, District 12


Mary Wawro, District 1


Brian Wolfman, District 7

Cc: Congressman John Faso, Governor Andrew Cuomo, NYS Senator John Bonacic, NYS Assemblyman Kevin Cahill, Commissioner Rose Harvey, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation