

NEWS RELEASE

FROM: Derek M Horne, Town Administrator

RE: Update – NHDES Owned Dams on Piscataquog River

DATE: 06/10/2024

The NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), Water Division, Dam Bureau, has provided the Town of Goffstown with an update regarding the NHDES-owned dams in Goffstown and Manchester along the Piscataquog River.

Kelley's Falls (P-3025) - The current lessee of the NHDES owned Kelley Falls Dam is Green Mountain Power (GMP). At the end of 2022 GMP informed NHDES that they would be terminating the lease and leaving the site due to fish passage measures needed to relicense the dam with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). As part of the lease termination the current FERC license for the dam would be surrendered as well. In March of 2024, FERC approved the surrender application and now GMP is in the process of vacating the site. Once the FERC license is surrendered hydropower cannot be generated at Kelley Falls Dam, therefore, the ability for water to move through the dam will be constrained. Historically, when the 34-inch-tall wooden flashboards on top of the concrete spillway needed to be replaced, typically one or more times per year, water exiting Namaske Lake was routed through the hydropower generator rather than over the spillway. This allows for the concrete spillway to be exposed and dry so that the flashboards can be installed. Without the ability to generate hydropower at Kelley Falls Dam this process cannot occur. When NHDES takes over dam operations from GMP other measures will need to be taken to bypass water around the spillway. This may be done when flows coming into Namaske Lake are very low and NHDES can use a small bypass discharge gate located at the dam. NHDES is currently discussing operations of dams along the Piscataquog River to see how operations of those dams could affect flow into Namaske Lake and allow NHDES to safely replace the flashboards when necessary. However, when the flashboards are not installed at Kelley Falls Dam it is likely that residents around Namaske Lake will observe the lake remaining in a lowered state (up to 34 inches below normal summer elevations) for a longer period of time than was observed historically.

Hadley Falls (P-5379) - In May of 2024 NHDES became aware that the proposed project to remove Hadley Falls Dam, provide river restoration and public improvements at the Hadley Falls Dam site, and provide fish passage at Kelley Falls Dam did not

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receive any of the \$20 million requested through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Restoring Fish Passage Barrier Removal funding opportunity. NHDES will continue negotiating with FERC on the next steps to surrender the FERC license for Hadley Falls Dam and remove the dam, and will continue to seek funding mechanisms to do so. As part of determining what will be necessary for removing that dam, NHDES is continuing to conduct a full hydrological and hydraulic analysis of the Piscataquog River, which includes Hadley Falls Dam and Kelley Falls Dam.

Piscataquog Dams Info - The Town's website has information about the three (3) NHDES-owned dams on the Piscataquog River. This information can be access at <http://www.goffstownnh.gov/>; click on the Community link in the top menu and go to the [Piscataquog River Info](#).

The Town continues to communicate with NHDES about the future of the NHDES-owned dams and options available to the Town.

The Select Board will vote on the creation of an advisory committee at their next regularly scheduled meeting, 06/10/2024, 6:00 p.m. at Goffstown Town Hall. The purpose of this advisory committee, once adopted by the Select Board, will be to advise the Select Board in all matters relating to the Piscataquog River, with a focus on the Hadley Falls Dam (FERC Project P-5379), Gregg Falls Dam (P-3180), and Kelley's Falls Dam (P-3025).

Questions about the dams can be directed to Town Hall, during normal business hours (Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) at (603) 497-8990.