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Swain's Lake Dam

The Swain's Lake Dam continues to be an important part of Barrington's character, natural beauty, economy, and protector of our most precious resource, water. It quietly does its job constantly, out of sight, and out of mind of most people that live here. When all is well, it is a source of great tranquility. If it failed, it would be the cause of absolute destruction, the magnitude of which most people couldn't imagine. Because of this, the dam is a very needy beast on occasion. When the Town decided to take the dam over many years ago, a big responsibility got inherited with it. The stakes are very high if we forget this fact.

The dam is currently in need of two major repairs and one minor one. The minor one is just replacing the shingles on the weathered (lake) side of the gatehouse. The other two repairs are more substantial. One is repair of the underwater part of the concrete over granite structure that holds the gate that controls the flow of the dam. A dive inspection last spring showed substantial deterioration of the cement, and reinforcing bar that shields the granite blocks from the water. This needs to be fixed before it become an internal seepage problem. We have current pricing of about \$106,000 for this repair which would need to be done in conjunction with next year's drawdown. The dam is not in imminent danger at this time, but prudence would dictate that it needs to be a priority. The second repair is an ongoing item of mention from the NHDES Dam bureau for the past few years. It is called a rip rap filer, which is basically erosion control for the lakeside face of the earthen portion of the dam. It serves to block the wave action from mining the soil from the face of the dam. This project would have to be engineered and approved by the State. We have no cost on this yet, but with the engineering in, my guess would be that this would be a \$150,000 project at minimum. It is for these reasons that I would strongly suggest that this year's contribution to the Swain's Dam capital reserve account be \$150,000.

Respectfully,
Marc Moreau
Barrington NH Road Agent
Dam Monitor