

Memo Adding Files to the Record

Project No: P-10809-045

Project Name: Secord Project

Date added to record: September 3, 2020

Date received: Various, see individual items below

Description of files: The comments included below were received via email directly to FERC project staff and contain comments regarding the Secord Project.

From: christine kuszpit <ckusz@comcast.net>

Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 5:45 PM

To: David Capka - OEP <David.Capka@ferc.gov>; John Zygaj <john.zygaj@ferc.gov>; Steve Hocking <Steve.Hocking@ferc.gov>; Olaf Weeks <Olaf.Weeks@ferc.gov>; John Goetgeluck <John.Goetgeluck@ferc.gov>; Kim Nguyen <Kim.Nguyen@ferc.gov>; krugerk@michigan.gov; Scott.Hicks@fws.gov

Subject: Second Lake restoration

Second Dam P-10809

To Whom it may concern,

I am a property owner on Secord Lake and I am writing to ask your help in expediting the restoration of our lake. From what I understand we are waiting for a report from ferc to determine the work that is essential to the dam in order to refill our lake. I read a report that stated an environmental survey was ordered to investigate the snuffbox mussel situation. Please do not delay the reparation of Second dam. The lake has been the only source of entertainment for my family and grandkids during this pandemic. More importantly, the small business owners in West Branch and Gladwin are suffering. Please do not stall this repair as many of the Second property owners are collecting money to do the repairs as we watch our shores fill with algae, green scum and continue to erode. Hopefully our voices will be heard.

Sincerely,
Christine Kuszpit
1634 Deerhaven
Alger, MI 48610

TO: Director David Capka, P.E.
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

FROM: David & Carol McAllister
1508 Pioneer Dr
Alger, Michigan

SUBJECT: SECORD DAM (GLADWIN, MICHIGAN) REPAIR AND SNUFFBOX MUSSELS SURVERY (SECORD DAM P-10809)

I'm sending you this letter regarding the environmental survey ordered by FERC for the presence of snuffbox mussels. There is insufficient evidence regarding these mussels to warrant the survey.

The impact on the community is devastating. The dam repairs should be made as soon as possible and the survey greatly holds up repairs. There is an extensive economic lost to the county, city, township, and property owners on Secord Lake. Several people on Secord Lake have had their wells go dry, wood seawalls are drying out, erosion has taken a great toll on our shorelines. The cost to the people on our lake should take priority over snuffbox mussels.

We are nearing 80 years old and must sell. Now that the property values have gone down, banks will not finance these homes, businesses are closing, etc. We are dependent on the money from our house/property sale to help with our retirement. The current situation does not allow us to sell.

We are requesting that you not put the priority of the FERC survey for the possibility of snuffbox mussels in Secord Lake over the economic hardships that we are experiencing. This survey is just one more thing that is holding up the repair of the dam.

Please discontinue the survey requirement and allow us to fix the dam.

Thank You,

From: gary.kuszpit
To: [David Capka - OEP](mailto:David.Capka@OEP); [John Goetzeluck](mailto:John.Goetzeluck); [John Zygaj](mailto:John.Zygaj); [Steve Hocking](mailto:Steve.Hocking); [Kim Nguyen](mailto:Kim.Nguyen); krugerk@michigan.gov; [Scott Hicks@fws.gov](mailto:Scott.Hicks@fws.gov)
Subject: Fw: Second Lake restoration
Date: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 7:56:32 PM

From: gary.kuszpit <gkusz1@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 7:19 PM
Subject: Fw: Second Lake restoration

From: gkusz1@hotmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 5:45 PM
To:
Subject: Second Lake restoration

Second Dam P-10809
To FERC Members

Our lake is dying. Any further delay to restoring water to the reservoir at Secord poses grave ecological consequences. In addition to the mussel varieties being observed decreasing and requiring further delay to study, in the meantime the rodent, snake, frog, vegetation and insect populations are exploding. As we look for FERC to allow repairs to the tailrace and any other concrete remedies necessary to at least restore partially or perhaps even fully the water for the sake of the community, property values, and business in the area I urge your attention to remedy any obstacles, resolve this dilemma ASAP. Though many are working in different ways to group concerns I believe that we all have the same interests at heart.

Regards,
Gary Kuszpit
1634 Deerhaven
Alger, MI 48610

From: [Jenny ORourke](#)
To: [David Capka - OEP](#)
Subject: Secord 10809
Date: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 9:04:58 PM

The effect of the loss of Secord lake on the local economy and the property values of our over 1,800 lake homes has been severely affected. Few homes are able to acquire mortgages, the fire department no longer has the access to water for fighting fires, our wells are going dry at great expense to property owners, local businesses are suffering and shuttering their doors. Now we must once again face a mussel issue for which there has not yet been proof provided that our area is a critical habitat for these mussels? We are not aware of proof of the snuffbox mussel having Secord or the area rivers identified as a critical habitat. Any studies required will take time and resources away from the repair of our dam.

It concerns greatly us that the suspected presence of this mussel takes precedence over the interests of so many private property owners. That the presence of this mussel's critical habitat existence here has not been proven on Secord lake therefore we should not have to incur additional hardship as property owners for the time and use of resources that it will take to proof or disprove it's existence. While this is occurring, all of us on Secord will continue to suffer the consequences of no lake including erosion of the lake and seawalls crashing into the lake bottom which could cost each homeowner in excess of \$20,000.

We are pleading with you to not put the possibility of this mussel's existence in Secord and rivers over the economic hardships that we have been experienced and will potentially continue to occur due to absence of Secord lake.

The absence of our lake is a potential hazard to the area and time is urgent for the repair of Secord dam and the restoration of our lake.'

[Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android](#)

From: [CINDY JORDAN](#)
To: [David Capka - OEP](#)
Subject: Secord Dam P-10809
Date: Wednesday, August 12, 2020 11:40:59 AM

I own two properties on Secord Lake. The effect of the loss of our lake on the local economy and property values to 1,800 lake homes has been severely impacted. To mention a few, homes are unable to acquire mortgages, the fire department doesn't have access to water to fight fires, wells are going dry and many businesses are suffering and closing down. As if this isn't enough now we must face a mussel issue for which there is no proof that our area is a critical habitat. The studies for this are going to take more time and resources away from the repair of our dam.

I am very concerned that the suspected presence of this mussel takes precedence over the interest of so many private property owners. While this is happening all of us on Secord continue to suffer the consequences of no lake including erosion and falling house values.

I am asking you to not put the possibility of the mussel's existence in Secord over the economic hardships that we have and continue to suffer due to the absence of our lake.

The absence of our lake is a potential hazard to the area and time is urgent to repair Secord Dam and the restoration of our lake.

I feel that if the lake levels were maintained during the uncertainty of our dam; erosion, marine life, weeds, economic and tax issues would not be an issue as well as if generating electricity the monies could be put toward repairs.

John and Cindy Jordan

From: Julie Szydowski <jmszyd@yahoo.com>
Cc: John Zygaj <john.zygaj@ferc.gov>; carlisa.linton@ferc.gov <carlisa.linton@ferc.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 24, 2020, 12:01:48 PM EDT
Subject: Secord Lake

Dear FERC members,

Please consider this. Can we add just enough water to Secord Lake to cover the exposed lake bottoms to avoid rapid forest growth reclaiming the lake until repairs are ready to be made, and then when repairs are actually ready to be made, draw down the lake again? From what I am reading, the problems with Secord dam are not so extensive that it could not withstand minimal water level just enough to cover the exposed lake bottom. If we wait until all funding is available and everything is ready to be repaired, trees, grass and other vegetation will have reclaimed our beloved Secord Lake and then we will have no hope of getting our lake back.

Please, can we just have a little water added back in while things get sorted out?

Thank you,
Julie Szydowski
Secord Property Owner

From: [Paula Mondoux](#)
To: [David Capka - OEP](#)
Subject: Secord Lake
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 9:03:07 PM

August 11, 2020

Secord Dam P-10809

We are current lake owners on Secord Lake in Gladwin Michigan. We were just informed that an environmental survey regarding the suspected existence of those snuffbox mussels has now been ordered by FERC before we can restore Secord lake. We are not aware that our area (Secord Lake) or any surrounding rivers are identified as a critical habitat. The presence of this mussel's critical habitat existence here has not been proven on Secord Lake. Why are we incurring additional hardships as property owners?

Do you have any explanation that you could offer as to why we must now have to wait even longer to have our dam repaired and filled? How much cost do you expect our residents to be responsible for. People are suffering due to property values going down, erosion issues, wells going dry, our fire department no longer has access to our water for fighting fires.

I am looking forward to a quick reply to my questions and hope you put the residents of Secord Lake as a top priority.

Robert & Paula Mondoux
4158 Scotts Court
Gladwin, MI 48624
Pmondoux53@hotmail.com

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

From: [TIMOTHY PENNINGTON](#)
To: [David Capka - OEP](#); [John Zygaj](#)
Subject: Secord Dam project 10809
Date: Monday, August 24, 2020 3:24:33 PM

As a resident of Secord lake in Gladwin County Michigan I am writing to inform you of how displeased I am with FERC and your response to Secord Lake. Before the dam failures at Edenville and Sanford the Four Lakes Task Force was going to take over Secord, Smallwood, Edenville and Sanford Dams. They had a plan which would cost all taxpayers \$5 million to repair all of these dams and leave them as hydro dams. This plan was reasonable and accepted by taxpayers and so they were allowed to become a special assessment district. On May 19th Edenville and Sanford dams failed. Secord and Smallwood did not. Now FLTF wants taxpayers to spend \$400 million dollars to replace the two failed dams along with the two dams that did not fail. I'm sure you can agree this is not acceptable as this plan will cost \$12,000 per home on Secord alone. Residents on Secord have expressed their displeasure with this plan and had we had the opportunity to vote on the new plan FLTF would not have been approved as a special assessment. It appears FERC is doing the bidding of FLTF and is not aware of their questionable practices. Not only are Gladwin County commissioners on the board of FLTF they are allowed to approve their deeds in Gladwin County. Even against taxpayers wishes. Instead of trying to find issues to cost the current dam owner money and keep it in disrepair so that FLTF can take control please simply help the tax payers get the dam fixed so we can get our water back and resume our lives. All we ask is that you tell us, the residents, what needs to be fixed so the water may be returned. We have been more than willing to pay for the fix of the hydro dam but it seems FERC is more interested in the political interest of FLTF. Again I ask on behalf of the taxpayers that you be reasonable and allow the dam to be fixed without delay and stop bowing to the wishes of FLTF who are now emailing residents for money. They have already spent a \$5 million grant for dam repairs and done nothing for Secord. What happened in Edenville and Sanford was sad when the dams failed and the lakes are devastated and home values have dropped significantly. With the drawdown of water in Secord and Smallwood you have caused the same devastation to these lakes as if these dams had also failed. Enough is enough instead of going out of your way to keep the water out of our lakes we are asking our federal government for help to restore our lake. Thank you Tim Pennington

From: vickie.jacobs
To: [David Capka - OEP](mailto:David.Capka@oep.state.mi.us); [John Zygaj](mailto:John.Zygaj@oep.state.mi.us); [Steve Hocking](mailto:Steve.Hocking@oep.state.mi.us); [Olaf Weeks](mailto:Olaf.Weeks@oep.state.mi.us); [John Goetzeluck](mailto:John.Goetzel@oep.state.mi.us); [Kim Nguyen](mailto:Kim.Nguyen@oep.state.mi.us); krugerk@michigan.gov; [Scott Hicks@fws.gov](mailto:Scott.Hicks@fws.gov)
Cc: [Christine Ringo CPA CFF](mailto:Christine.Ringo@cpa.cff.state.mi.us)
Subject: Secord Dam P-10809
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 12:57:06 PM

The effects of the loss of Secord lake on the local economy and property values of over 1,800 lake homes has been severe. New buyers are unable to acquire mortgages, the fire department in many areas has no access to water for fighting fires, our wells are going dry, seawalls and shorelines are eroding and local businesses are suffering and shuttering their doors.

In the wake of all of this we are once again facing the issue of alleged snuffbox mussel habitat for which there is no proof. There is no current evidence of the snuffbox mussel being in Secord Lake or associated tributaries that supports the requested study. Indeed if the snuffbox mussel does inhabit the area it is suffering due to slow moving murky water inherent with all of the erosion and associated run off.

According to the Michigan State University" Natural Features Inventory"<https://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/species/description/12365/Epioblasma-triquetra> there have not been any observed snuffbox mussel in Gladwin County. The requested studies are baseless and are hindering the efforts to restore the environment in and around Secord Lake. The requested study is taking time and resources away from the repair of the dam and restoration of the lake.

It concerns us greatly that the alleged presence of this mussel takes precedence over the interests of property values, safety, and our local livelihood. The presence of snuffbox mussel's critical habitat here on Secord Lake has never been established therefore we should not have to incur additional hardship as property owners for the time and use of resources that it will take to disprove the mussels existence.

We are requesting your assistance in putting an end to this frivolous request for studies that will cost our community much needed time and money.

Regards,
Vickie Jacobs
Secord Lake property owner

From: [Bob Cowgill](#)
To: [David Capka - OEP](#); scott.hicks@fws.gov; krugerk@michigan.gov
Cc: chris@secordlakepa.org; ccowgill@cfl.rr.com
Subject: Secord Lake dam dilemma
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 2:56:06 PM

Dear sirs,

I am a 72 year old retired, 4 year resident at Secord Lake.

Along with my wife, we used our retirement savings to purchase this lakefront home where we had planned to live out our "Golden" years.

However, with no water in the lake, our living situation has changed dramatically.

Without being able to draw water from the lake to irrigate our lawn, we were forced to use a hose and our house water well to try and keep our once beautiful nearly half acre lawn alive.

However, we are now starting to notice an increase in the sulfur smell of the water and have been advised to cease watering the lawn, as several residents in our neighborhood have had their wells run dry, and have had to have new ones drilled at considerable expense.

Also, our seawall is beginning to shift, and I've had to back fill it in several spots already. If it collapses, as will likely happen if the water level is not returned to normal SOON, I am told to expect a cost of no less than \$2000 at a minimum to have it restored, not counting the cost to remove the debris from the lakebed as I would be required to do.

I understand that there is some concern about the possibility of the Snuffbox Mussel existing somewhere within the flow of the Tittabawasee River which forms the several lakes in the area, courtesy of the dams. If a detailed study of this matter must be performed, I would request that it take place AFTER the lake level at Secord has been restored to normal.

Besides the decrease in our personal quality of life, many of the local area businesses are suffering from the dramatic decrease in revenue due to part time residents either greatly reducing the amount of time (and money!) they spend in the area with no lake to enjoy, or simply not coming up at all.

Many of these businesses have been hanging on by a thread for years since the economic crash in Michigan in the early 1980's. Some have already shuttered their places for good. If you are feeling in an excessively good mood one day, I would suggest a sightseeing ride through these small towns. Look at the number of vacant business places. Then go out on nearly any nearby road and look at the abandoned homes, and shacks littered with disabled cars and trash where people STILL live. This should give you an idea of how things are going even WITHOUT the loss of the lake!

I read in one piece of correspondence between the various parties that economic concerns cannot be considered when viewing the mussel issue. I would submit that if for none other than purely selfish reasons, with the decrease in property values as well as the sparse population of the formerly thriving summer lake communities and the subsequent decrease in business revenue, someone sitting in an office funded by the taxes taken from these affected areas should realize that this situation cannot go on for long before those same government agencies, both state and federal will begin to look at ways to decrease their operating expenses, perhaps by downsizing the agency itself. One agency, (Four Lakes Task Force), supposedly representing the interests of the Secord residents as well as others downstream received a government handout of \$5 million, most of which they have managed to spend without a penny going to the small amount of needed repairs to the Secord dam. Needless to say, what confidence I may have initially had in this agency has been seriously depleted. A new agency (Secord Lake Preservation Association) is attempting to take up our cause where the FLTF failed.

So, for the benefit of ALL involved (save only perhaps the lawyers pursuing all of the various suits), I would beg you to move on our behalf. Allow the necessary repairs to be made to the Secord dam, and the lake restored. Don't force all of us who stand to lose so much to experience even greater harm for want of a lengthy study of a mussel which may not actually live here or be in harm's way at all.

Thank you for taking the time to read this message.

Robert Cowgill
2986 West River Drive
Gladwin, Michigan, 48624
Email: rcowgill@cfl.rr.com
Phone/text: (321)759-9131

Sent from my iPad

From: Carol M <cav9952@hotmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 9:15 AM

To: David Capka - OEP <David.Capka@ferc.gov>; John Zygaj <john.zygaj@ferc.gov>; Steve Hocking <Steve.Hocking@ferc.gov>; Olaf Weeks <Olaf.Weeks@ferc.gov>; John Goetgeluck <John.Goetgeluck@ferc.gov>

Subject: Secord Lake restoration Secord Dam P-10809

The effect of the loss of Secord lake on the local economy and the property values of our over 1,800 lake homes has been severely affected. Few homes are able to acquire mortgages, the fire department no longer has the access to water for fighting fires, our wells are going dry at great expense to property owners, local businesses are suffering and shuttering their doors. Now we must once again face a mussel issue for which there has not yet been proof provided that our area is a critical habitat for these mussels? We are not aware of proof of the snuffbox mussel having Secord or the area rivers identified as a critical habitat. Any studies required will take time and resources away from the repair of our dam.

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The absence of our lake is a potential hazard to the area and time is urgent for the repair of Secord dam and the restoration of our lake.

Carol Magee Secord Lake property owner

Document Content(s)

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