



OFFICE OF THE WARDEN
1.800.663.0750
T 519.837.2600 x 2550
F 519.837.1909
E warden@wellington.ca

74 WOOLWICH STREET
GUELPH, ONTARIO
N1H 3T9

April 4, 2017

Dear Ms. Heron and Mr. Imhof,

Re Hillsburgh Dam and Bridge

Thank you for your letter of March 29, 2017.

You ask that the County prioritize your interest in attempting to recreate conditions that may have existed some 160 years ago to facilitate development of brook trout habitat by agreeing to the elimination of the Hillsburgh Pond.

As you appear to be aware, the County acquired the Pond as well as an adjoining piece of property last year for the express purpose of developing a new library and cultural centre at that location. Work on the project has already begun. The long social and cultural heritage of the Pond was well appreciated by the County when the decision was made to proceed with the new library/cultural centre at this site. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with that heritage. The Dam and the Pond was created in the 1840s by the Gooderham family, in order to operate a grist mill there. Subsequently, prior to acquisition by the County, the Pond was owned and used by the Caledon Mountain Trout Club and later the Guelph Fishing Club for fishing and recreation. Over the years, Pond has also been the site of many community facilities, including a bandshell, wharf and pavilion, and has been a popular swimming location.

While the County did not conduct the Class EA assessment for the Dam and Bridge rehabilitation, we question why your interest in facilitating brook trout habitat should take precedence over the social and cultural interests of the residents of Erin and the County, who have for many decades made abundant use of and benefited from the presence of the Pond as noted above. The Environmental Assessment Act, under which the Town conducted the Class EA in question, in fact requires that the social and cultural environments be equally considered in assessments undertaken under that Act. While I appreciate that the mandate of you and your group compel you to advocate for the outcome you seek, a more holistic and balanced approach is on my understanding required by the Environmental Assessment Act.

I also note that according to the environmental assessment conducted by the Town, removal of the Hillsburgh Pond, even with mitigation, would or could negatively impact a number of

species that currently use the Pond, including Snapping Turtles, a species of Special Concern and Banded Killfish, a Species of Interest. In addition, removal of the Pond is predicted to negatively impact the rare treed fen community downstream of the Pond and well as possibly the upstream extent and quality of the Provincially Significant Wetland upstream of the Pond. So while you advocate for removal of the 160 year old Pond to enhance habitat for one species, its removal would or could negatively affect several other species of animals and plants.

In any event, while I respect your perspective and interests, the Pond is owned by the County. We acquired it for an important reason, and one that we as elected representatives believe reflects the interests of our constituents. We have advised the Town and the relevant regulatory and commenting agencies that we have no intention of agreeing to its removal.

I do though thank you for your comments and interest.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Lever". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Dennis Lever
Wellington County Warden

c. The Honourable Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change
The Honourable Kathryn McGarry, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry
Diane Sax, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario
Paul Ziegler, Triton Engineering
Dina Lundy, Clerk, Town of Erin
Wellington County Council