

RE: Update on Lake Petit Dam Maintenance (Brian Kemp - Where are you?)

From: Griffin, David (david.griffin@dnr.ga.gov)
To: themtnsvoice@aol.com
Cc: Clete.Barton@dnr.ga.gov; sara.lips@dnr.ga.gov
Date: Wednesday, May 3, 2023 at 04:14 PM EDT

Mr. Hopkins –

To answer your questions, the POA does not intend to, nor would we allow them to, use the bypass flow line as their permanent lake lowering method. The ability to lower the lake by only 7 feet would not be an acceptable long-term solution. According to our Engineer Guidelines, the drain system is to be designed to drain two-thirds of the volume of the lake at normal pool within 10 days. This is not, however, practical for all dams due to downstream conditions, so the engineer can request an alternative time frame. In the case of Lake Petit Dam, that would be a drawdown of 2,824 acre-feet (using a normal pool volume of 4,235 acre-feet.)

David M. Griffin, P.E.
Program Manager
Safe Dams Program
Environmental Protection Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive
Suite 1052
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Phone: 470-524-0663

From: themtnsvoice@aol.com <themtnsvoice@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 2, 2023 11:28 AM
To: Dunn, Richard <richard.dunn@dnr.ga.gov>; Truszczynski, Anna <anna.truszczynski@dnr.ga.gov>; Welte, Jennifer <Jennifer.Welte@dnr.ga.gov>; Griffin, David <David.Griffin@dnr.ga.gov>; Betsill, Kate <Kate.Betsill@dnr.ga.gov>; Curry, Lauren <lauren.curry@georgia.gov>; Lips, Sara <sara.lips@dnr.ga.gov>; Sauer, Bobby <Bobby.Sauer@dnr.ga.gov>; Kemp, Brian <brian.kemp@georgia.gov>; Kilpatrick, Trey <trey.kilpatrick@georgia.gov>
Cc: info@staceyabrams.com; info@abramsforgeorgia.com; info@fairfightaction.com; richard.belcher@wsbtv.com; paul.milliken@foxtv.com; aaron.willen@foxtv.com; bkeefe@11alive.com; Konrad, Susan <editor@dawsonnews.com>; Media - TV - WSB-TV <newstip@wsbtv.com>; cjc.news@aol.com; editor@bigcanoenews.com; editor@nganews.com; communitynews@ajc.com; Pool, William <news@pickensprogress.com>; bkp@fetchyournews.com; tips@fetchyournews.com
Subject: Fwd: Update on Lake Petit Dam Maintenance (Brian Kemp - Where are you?)

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Big Canoe is a private, affluent gated community in North Georgia. It is home to the 2nd largest Earthen Dam in Georgia. It has a 50 year track record of egregious legal and safety violations. The Dam is rapidly deteriorating with leaks popping up; the Spillway being undercut by water flow, and the emergency drain not operational. This is a potential "Miami Condo Collapse" in the making, and Governor Brian Kemp's Office is ignoring it in lieu of politics. Big Canoe POA just put out a community eblast on a recent issue with the dam, and has basically put in writing that we now have NO mechanism for lowering lake levels effectively to anywhere near legal requirements.

See Big Canoe's Email Update below, but first my NOTE on some of their comments.... that by leaving the "Plug in Place" as the POA is doing, they have effectively eliminated the legal requirement of having an emergency drawdown. But all is good because now Big Canoe residents don't have to have our 4th of July plans disrupted just because of some pesky legal requirement. Good damn thing we have crew at Ga Safe Dams that is willing to ignore legal safety requirements on this 50 year old, 2nd largest, "high hazard", earthen dam in Georgia that hasn't even passed a stability report, and indeed FAILED the only one ever officially accepted 25 years ago, resulting in a Non-Compliance letter - that has NEVER been enforced.

GREAT JOB EPD!!! So glad we have Richard Dunn at the helm of this important Agency. And of course David Griffin can be proud to be the latest in a long line of Ga Safe Dams Directors to have worked so tirelessly and creatively to find ways to keep this Dam operating illegally, even as it's condition deteriorates. Maybe this is why our State Agency is listed almost DEAD LAST among all 50 state Dam Safety organizations. I feel so much safer *<sarcasm in case you are missing it>* knowing that this fine crew is hard at work IGNORING LEGAL SAFETY REQUIREMENTS. But what the hell.... Safe Dams has allowed them to be in Non-Compliance for 50 years regarding the Lower Level Outlet testing.... why start paying attention to regulations now? Right? I wonder how many years we can continue to kick this can down the road? Hopefully long enough for the Big Canoe POA to lock in it's 10+ Million dollar Long Range Plan to remodel Golf Courses, add on to the Clubhouse etc. Because silly things like Dam Safety clearly should take second place to the spoiled needs of a private Golf Country Club - even if it does jeopardize regional infrastructure and economy.

Oh, and by the way.... MY SOURCES tell me that they did NOT get the Gate successfully opened and closed as is claimed in the following eblast from the BCPOA. That all they did was manage to crack it an inch before they got scared to death that it was going to get stuck open after they discovered the cracks in the stem.... and that the plug could fail due to the constant pressure on it - as it was only designed to be temporary. But I am sure that you at Safe Dams have CONFIRMED that they got the entire thing completely closed? Right? And there is not continued pressure on the plug?

Also, regarding the following quote, I have a question:

Q: With the plug in place, will we be able to lower the lake if needed?

A: There is a bypass flow line near the spillway that gives us the option of lowering the lake by up to seven feet if necessary.

This flow pipe they reference, and the 7' limitation on lake lowering? Is that within the legal depths required for emergency drawdown? And do you have any data to support the supposition that that "bypass flow line" is anywhere near capable of lowering the lake within anything near the legally required emergency drawdown timeframe requirements? I mean, it took them a week to take it down 1 foot using this method - isn't the requirement something like 30 feet in 10 days? WHAT IS the legal requirement?

THE ABOVE ARE 3 DIRECT QUESTIONS I WOULD LIKE AN ANSWER TO!

I look forward to someones answer, and for any of the news media copied on this.... I assure you there is a BIG political story here if you want to look. Kemp is aware of this. Putting politics over public safety is always a good story. **See below for Big Canoe's recent eblast to residents.**

See "[here](#)" for over 20 historical articles on this subject. I have tirelessly tried to contact the Governor's Office to enforce compliance on this situation - but from the top down, they are refusing to deal with this issue due to the impact it may have on their elite, rich supporters in North Georgia's largest and most affluent private gated community.

- david hopkins / publisher & community resident
Focus on Big Canoe, GA
www.BigCanoe.org
... a publication of The Mountains Voice

10887 Big Canoe

Big Canoe, GA 30143

706-265-0010

themtnsvoice@aol.com

-----Original Message-----

From: Big Canoe POA <media@bigcanoepoa.org>

To: themtnsvoice@aol.com

Sent: Tue, May 2, 2023 9:44 am

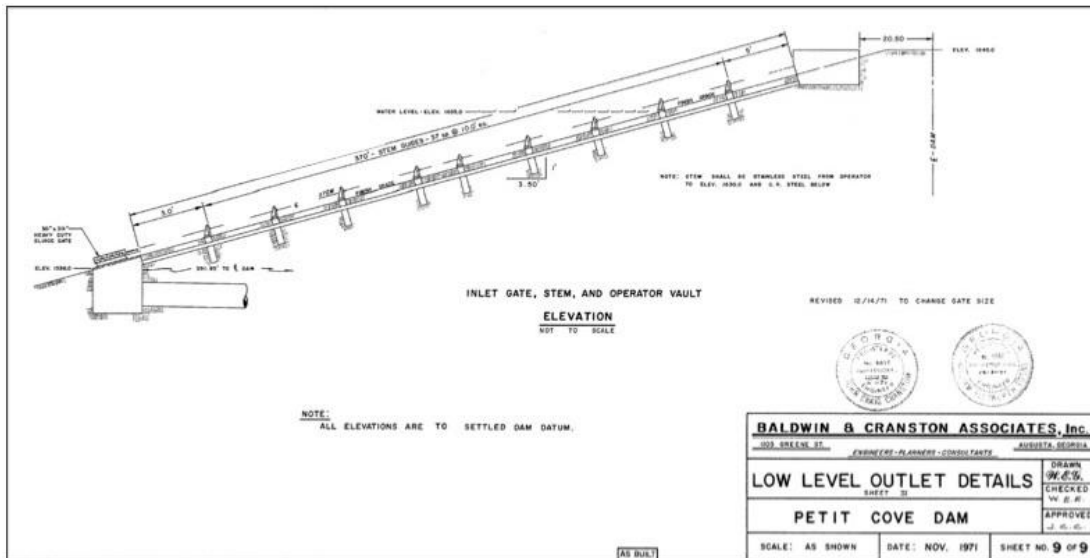
Subject: Update on Lake Petit Dam Maintenance

A: The parts are not especially expensive, and the gate manufacturer and the POA will determine the correct design for the parts. The new stem guides will have to be custom-made – these are not off-the-shelf purchases – and installed sometime this year.

Q: Will the ongoing work require the lake to be lowered?

A: All of the work, which has been mostly conducted below the surface of the lake, will not require the lowering of the lake water. The plug is in place and the gate is closed, ensuring that Petit's summer season, including the July 2 fireworks show, is on schedule.





Q: How much will all of this unanticipated work cost?

A: The cost of replacing all 37 stem guides and even the concrete piers will be determined by the recent data gathered from diving inspections during the gate test. Geosyntec will work with the POA to determine the extent of the work needed. With parts that are more than a half-century old, the team is looking at what needs to be replaced to provide the best operation in the future.

Q: With the plug in place, will we be able to lower the lake if needed?

A: There is a bypass flow line near the spillway that gives us the option of lowering the lake by up to seven feet if necessary. There are no current plans to lower the lake level.

Q: Is Georgia Safe Dams aware of the test?

A: Throughout the planning and actual testing phases of this project, we have been keeping Georgia Safe Dams apprised of our work on a frequent basis. They thoroughly understand the results of the test and the next steps we are taking. They have asked for a schedule of the next phase of the project as soon as it becomes available.

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Big Canoe POA | 12 Wolfscratch Dr, Big Canoe, GA 30143

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