

Lake Petit Dam - RFQ Comments (A Public Letter)

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Date: Friday, September 8, 2023 at 04:59 PM EDT

To David Griffin / GA Safe Dams Program,

Greetings Mr Griffin,

I just got back my latest Open Records Request, and was able to review all of the RFQ data and communications. As usual, with my perspective as someone who has accumulated and collated 50 years of historical data on Lake Petit Dam (see <https://lakepetitdam.com/>), I have a concern with what I see so far in the Seismic Analysis Review process.

I believe that what I am seeing is not fair to the process, and is not fair to the Engineering firms being asked to bid on this review job. I believe that critical and pertinent information is being withheld from the bidders, that could affect the scope of the review, and possibly even the outcome. As a person with a strong scientific approach, I always take the position that more information and data can only help to mold a better understanding, and a truer outcome.

So let me break down my concerns.

#1) Stability Analysis Report provided to reviewers is NOT the full [132 Page Rpt](#) originally submitted by Geosyntec. [One missing page](#) specific to the Original Report was *conspicuously absent*, and partially detailed previous Non-Approved attempts by Geosyntec to qualify the Dam as having acceptable stability. No explanation as to why that and other previous Analyses by other Engineers like [JJ&G \(see Pg 14\)](#) that actually showed Stability FAILURE, were not included, nor the fact that [GSD subsequently notified Big Canoe](#) that the Petit Dam did not meet Stability Requirements, citing "*a steady-state safety factor of around 1.28 and a seismic safety of 0.75*", and then shortly thereafter [put the Dam under Non-Compliance for failure to meet Stability Requirements](#) (and yet subsequently for 25 years no enforcement has followed, nor has the order to begin Rehabilitation Construction been complied with). Then there is the previous 1998 Geosyntec Report ([Part 1](#) - 64 Pgs; [Part 2](#) - 66 Pgs; and [Part 3](#) - 98 Pgs) itself, which was reviewed by Schnabel Engineering, and was subsequently [never approved](#) by Safe Dams.

#2) Then there is the LLO Pipe, which is over 800' long is most likely fatally compromised, this based upon my review of all available data, including source information and discussions with professionals. The LLO itself has never been tested as legally required in it's 50 year existence, and it is my understanding that as recently as Sept 23 of this year, Safe Dams acknowledged in a Microsoft Teams Meeting, that the pipe was incapable of sustaining flow necessary to meeting drawdown criteria. MORE DISTURBING is the 2020 Camera Inspection Report that is treated like it has the Nuclear Launch Codes. GSD Kate Betsill has suggested it

be obtained and reviewed, but this has not been done. MY SOURCES indicate that the inside of that pipe is severely compromised. You can walk down to the Outlet and see water flowing like a decently sized small creek out of the pipe, and the heavy brown/red/orange discharge is substantial, all of which lines up with substantial joint seepage due to the apparent settling over the past 50 years in the pipe. Talking at length to one of the preeminent pipe inspectors in the State, it became clear to me that the outside area along the pipe is most certainly losing compaction and possibly becoming a conduit channel from the bottom of the lake through to the outfall. I was told that a standard procedure would be to do a 2nd comparative inspection since almost 3 years had passed. **The EXISTENCE of the prior camera inspection, and the known deterioration of the pipe seem to me** (*granted I am not an engineer, but the professionals I have talked to tell me this is quite relevant information*) **that this would be a factor in the overall review of the stability of the Dam.**

So as a property owner in the community, and as a person that has multiple properties that rely on the water system that would be impacted in the event of a failure, and as a person with friends in the downstream inundation zone, and considering that the Big Canoe POA has just approved the expenditure of about \$15 MILLION Dollars to remodel Golf Courses, including almost \$7 for new fancy clubhouse verandas, etc.... **I believe that the more information that the Engineering Reviewers have at their disposal, the more informed of a decision can be made...** and IF this Dam needs to have work done, let's find out about it before the community fritters away funds on non-essential items. **We are a private community. There are no public funds coming to our rescue. We are relying on our regulatory agency watchdog (GA Safe Dams & their Network of Supporting Engineers) to guide us. So let's please make sure that the wonderful and talented professional engineers that will be tasked with doing this review... have ALL of the pertinent data at their disposal.**

PS... since this is a "Public" letter, you can find it online as Article #25 in our [newspaper series](#) about Lake Petit Dam.

Thank You,
- david hopkins / property owner / publisher
Focus on Big Canoe, GA
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