

FLANDERS POND NEWS

Water Level Stabilization

For several years, individuals, beavers, droughts and storms have impacted water levels at Flanders Pond. We will continue to battle with beavers and weather as they are unlikely to agree with anything we do! Human “disturbance” has generally been done with good intentions but perhaps less than desirable results.

Most people who live on or recreate on Flanders Pond would probably agree that an established higher water level during the summer is desirable for boats and swimming. Fish passage in late spring and early fall is also enhanced by higher water levels. On the other hand, lower water levels in winter and early spring would allow Flanders to accommodate more runoff from significant storms. This might help alleviate flooding and washouts.

We listened to your concerns and the Town of Sullivan sought a way to repair this problem. We believe that being proactive is better than having people frustrated or angry with neighbors. It certainly is better than having property damaged and people in jeopardy of breaking the law by adding to or taking away materials from the outlet.

If we can agree on these points, we should be able to move ahead toward a common goal.

In 2016, DMR made some recommendations after a site visit to Flanders. Current conversations with DMR, DEP, US Fish and Wildlife engineers and biologists lead us to believe a small, simple fishway as well as the ability to maintain water levels between established high and low water marks at the outlet would be in the best interests of all living things at Flanders.

These agencies and departments have been very supportive of our effort to date. They will also assist us in getting grant money to do the necessary repairs! This grant money is currently available but we must act soon while the funds still exist.

We have a major roadblock that will derail the entire effort. The State and the Federal Government require that all abutting land owners at the outlet agree to allow us to do the job. Two of the three landowners gave us immediate approval and expressed their desire to help Flanders. The third landowner does not want the project to proceed. This factor alone is enough cause for the DEP, DMR, USF&W and others to tell us they are done providing guidance and assistance. Instead of walking away, they are sending several experts on August 13 to do a full assessment. We are thankful that they care enough to give us a last chance for a grant opportunity and a fix for the pond we love. We also thank Tim Ray and Roger and Betsy Wakefield for their approval as abutters of the outlet.

We believe a positive, cooperative effort will result in a more stable pond environment, a secure fishway for passage to and from the pond and the opportunity for visitors and owners to enjoy Flanders Pond and its wonderful diversity for many years to come.....minus the conflict of an unmanaged outlet. We hope you will support our effort!