

# Status Update on Dam Abandonment

- Silver Lake
- Alamoosook Lake
- Toddy Pond



February 17, 2025 Penobscot Public Input Meeting

# Acknowledgements

- Penobscot residents – \$2,000 in donations to our legal fund has bolstered the Select Board’s financial commitment to keep us “in the game”
- Nina Milliken, Steve Bishop
- TPA efforts, surveys, awareness campaign (Save our Ponds), fund raising
- The Maine Monitor, articles on dams in Maine
- Kevin Turcotte – maps
- Charles Bloch - Business Survey
- Mark Whiting, HCSWCD-Maine Community Foundation funding

# Environmental & Recreational Impacts

## Key Concerns:

- Loss of public boat/swimming access
- Disruption of loon nesting habitat
- Effects on conservation areas



# Economic Impact

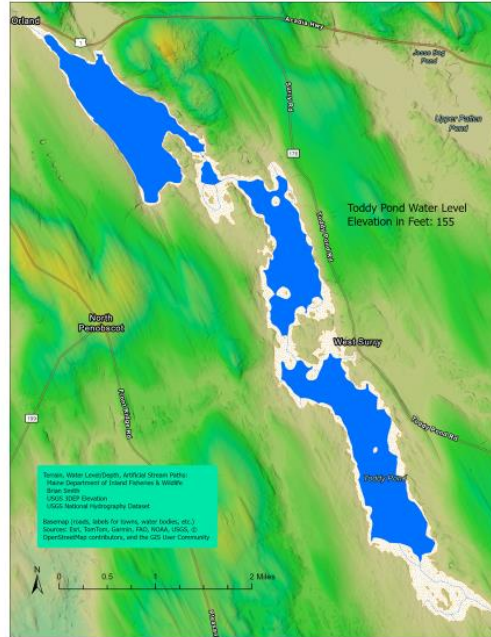
## **Potential Consequences of Dam Abandonment:**

- Town tax revenue losses (\$240K estimated);  
higher mil rate
- Business disruption

# Economic Impact Assessment

## Potential Consequences of Dam Abandonment

- 8 foot drop



# Timeline of Key Events (Part 1)

## July - September 2024:

- **Formation of 5 Town Dam Committee:**
  - Coordinated messaging and biweekly updates
  - Initiated impact assessments
  - Explored ownership solutions
- **Bucksport: Passed Dam Abandonment Ordinance**
- **Orland: Enacted 180-day Moratorium**

# Timeline of Key Events (Part 2)

## October - December 2024

- Oct 19: Bucksport Mill LLC submitted 2nd application to ME DEP
- Nov 1: DEP accepted petition
- By Dec 13: All 5 municipalities completed town votes required to pursue potential ownership discussions

# Public Consultation Status

## November 14, 2024 Public Meeting

- Limited public exchange (3-minute questions)
- Responses posted to [bucksportmillanswers.com](https://bucksportmillanswers.com).
- Note: Meeting did not constitute formal town consultation.



# Required Legal Steps for Abandonment

## Consultation Requirements (38 M.R.S. § 902(3))

- Individual/Group consultation
- Municipality consultation
- Owner reports to DEP late April on consultation status
- DEP granted 180-day extension until October 2025
- State agency evaluation if no owner found

# Review by 3 State Agencies

**60 days to determine if ownership is warranted**

Will weigh costs of dam maintenance and public value

- **Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife**
- **Department of Agriculture Conservation and Forestry**
- **Maine Emergency Management Agency**

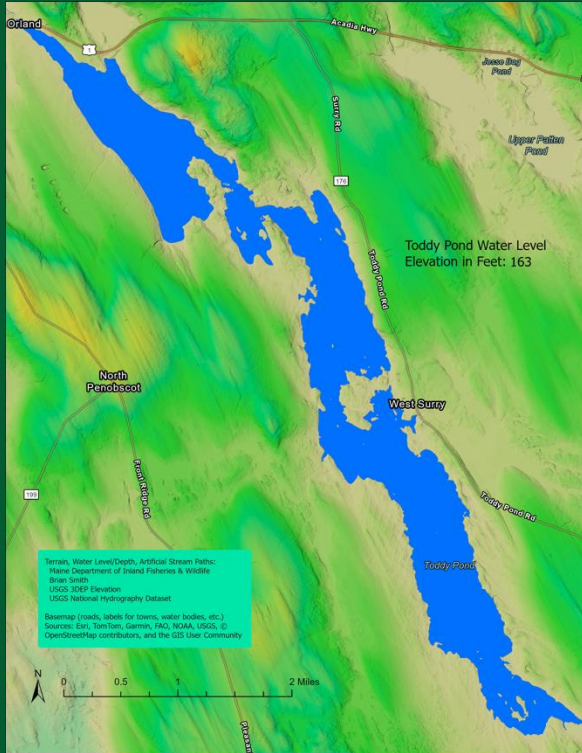
# Additional Legislative Initiatives

## Current Initiatives:

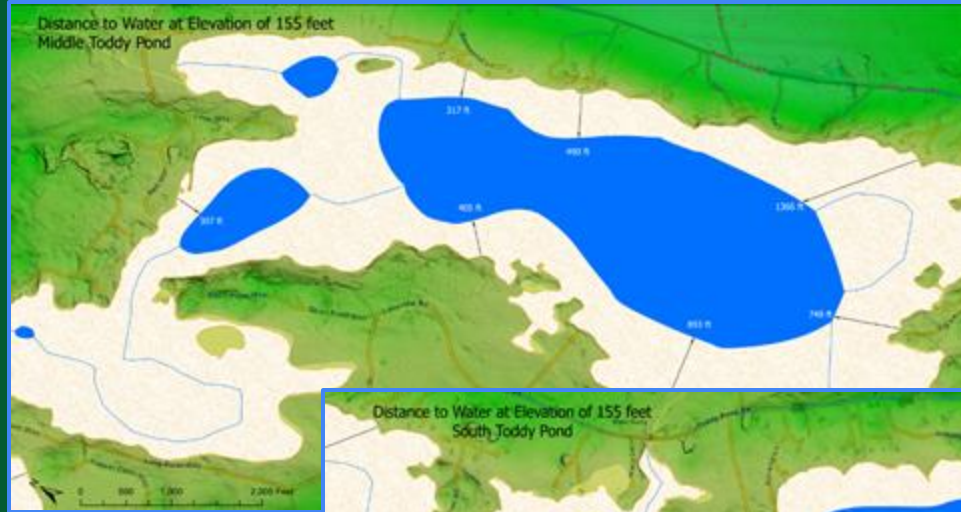
- Governor's bill expanding consultation requirements
- Dam assessment/renovation revolving fund
- Maine Emergency Management Agency enhancement
  - Increased inspections and technical assistance

# Water Levels In Toddy Pond

## Current



## Projected



# Toddy Pond Dam Ownership Model

## Key Considerations:

- Legislation to create Quasi-Municipal Watershed Protection Districts
- Governed by an appointed or elected board
- Funded by town contributions, property owners' assessments, or both
- Authority to own, operate and renovate Toddy Pond Dam
- Implementation will require voter approval

# Your input is needed



## **Key Questions for Today:**

- Should lakes be preserved?
- Cost allocation method