

Dana Stairs
PO Box 541 (410 Washington St.)
Rollinsford, NH 03869
Dana.stairs@gmail.com
603-343-6448

LD 531: Dam Ownership

Sponsored by: Nina Milliken D-Blue Hill

Committee: Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

In Favor of the Bill

Although I am now a resident of New Hampshire, I am the third generation of my family to own property on Toddy Pond. One of Maine's Great Ponds, Toddy Pond spans 2,408 acres and boasts 27.5 miles of shoreline. In addition to the benefits to the waterside landowners of Blue Hill, Orland, Penobscot, and Surry, there is a public boat launch maintained by the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands. Recognizing its value to the state, this boat launch was recently renovated. The adjacent Alamoosook Lake also features a boat launch, picnic area, and beach provided by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service at Craig Brook National Fish Hatchery.

Both bodies of water offer public access to fishing, paddling, water skiing, tubing, or simply enjoying the view bookended by Great Pond and Blue Hill mountains.

The creation of Toddy Pond was achieved by damming a natural waterway to support industrial development in Bucksport. The Seaboard Paper Company mill replaced a tannery on the site of a former steel mill. To provide the water needed by a paper mill, three area waterways were dammed: Silver Lake, Alamoosook Lake, and Toddy Pond. These now stand as remnants of Maine's lost industrial age. The surrounding towns have undertaken extensive efforts to recover from the loss of the Bucksport mill in 2015, with a significant focus on developing tourism and recreation. Losing the substantial income and opportunities provided by Toddy Pond and Alamoosook Lake would further harm these towns, which have already suffered from the loss of a major employer.

In the absence of a decision for the State of Maine to take over the dam infrastructure for the benefit of all residents and visitors, creating a local authority to fund and operate these dams is the most viable option, and I encourage the legislature to support this bill.

Sincerely,



Dana Stairs