

From: Tom Woosley
To: rklask@bigcanoepoa.org
Date: 5/19/2009 1:18 PM
Subject: Big Canoe (Lake Petit) Dam

CC: Tom.Graves@house.ga.gov

I have been asked by Tom Graves office to contact you regarding your email on the dam. I have been unable to reach you via phone and I too am in and out a lot so I am hard to reach. I thought I could at least start a discussion with you via email and maybe answer your questions.

With respect to the availability and use of stimulus money, our program has little information on what projects are getting the money and how to get in line for that money. It is my understanding that the lists were developed many months ago and that the money is for public projects. Since Big Canoe is a private development, I am not sure if you could qualify. Again though, I am not an expert in that area. Our congressmen could better answer that question for you.

Regarding the dam, the email indicated our office has a concern over the spillway and has requested it be replaced. You have been proactive and retained an engineer to develop a fix for the spillway. Kudos to you for that! Some of what has taken me some time is researching the available information. This dam has been around a while and has some history to it. I also tried to find the letter indicating a requirement to retain an engineer to fix the spillway. I was not able to locate such a letter but did speak with Ms. Carey Anderson from our office. Carey performed the annual inspection of the dam this year and she did note a concern about the spillway. However, she has not sent a letter out yet. Thus creating some confusion on my part. Carey still has that letter to complete and one reason it has not been finished yet is our trying to resolve what the Safe Dams Program wants to say about the spillway. This letter should go out in the next few weeks.

Let me step back and add a little bit more to the status with this dam. During last year's annual inspection a comment was made about wave action erosion and the need to address that. Again, being proactive, Big Canoe retained a firm who developed a report and submitted it to our office. We have that report but have not reviewed it yet (we are operating at about an 18 month backlog of work right now). An additional and important item to mention is the stability of the dam. Several years ago a question came up about the stability. Engineers were hired and they evaluated the dam and determined it was stable during most situations, except for a seismic event. The fix was going to be well over a million dollars. A different firm was then retained who came up with a different approach. Their approach was new to the Safe Dams Program and so there was some educating back and forth. Ultimately, for whatever reasons, this situation has just been put aside, and it is still unresolved.

In summary, there are three areas that need to be addressed with the dam 1. wave action erosion 2. spillway system 3. stability. These items each need to be addressed, though it may not be necessary to do that all at one time. It may however, be more practical too. That is something the consultants will have to evaluate. This leads to my next and final point.

The Safe Dams Act requires that a professional engineer registered in Georgia work on dams and any work be reviewed and approved by this office. There is also a requirement that the engineer be designated as an Engineer of Record (EOR) with our office. This EOR designation helps ensure the engineer has some knowledge of dams. Before any work can commence on the dam, this office needs to review the reports and work with the engineers and you as the owner, to insure we are all in agreement on the solution. I am also going to offer that it might be useful to have an onsite meeting with this office and your consultants to further evaluate the spillway. Just have your consultants contact us for an agreeable time.

I know this is a long email, but I hope I have been able to answer your questions. In summary, this office does not know of any funding to help with repairs, whether through the stimulus package or not. Also, this office needs to complete the annual inspection letter and send it out and then meet with your consultants to determine the best approach and timeframe for addressing the above mentioned items. Feel free to call or email me if you have further questions. I look forward to meeting and working with you soon.

Dallon Thomas Woosley, P.E.