

Steven Wheeler, Hinckley, NY.  
Hinckley Gregory P Jarvis Project P-3211-009

To whom it may concern,

In 1993 my family started visiting relatives camping at Trails End Campground and fell in love with the lake and the surrounding area. We eventually purchased land and built a cabin on the lake in 2000. When we became "empty-nesters", we built on and moved here year-round in 2008.

During the time we have been on and around the lake we have observed first hand several interesting things. While the following seems anecdotal, I am expressing some of the same observations and concerns that many people share.

First: During the times of low water levels you can observe a tremendous amount of silting. During our tour of the facilities last week, we were told that Hinckley has very little silting compared to other lakes. I strongly disagree.

I can show anyone who cares to see it, places where lawns, banks have disappeared into the reservoir and sandbars that never existed when we started coming here now exist.

I believe there should be a thorough study of shoreline erosion and the true capacity of the lake as compared to 1915 when the lake was formed by the dam. The "rule curve" allows for releases never intended for the reduced capacity of the lake as it exists today.

Second: We need to consider that the majority of the lakes in the region are also "controlled release" lakes. They include a few we all recognize, i.e. Fulton chain of lakes, Kayuta lake, Delta, North and South lakes, The Great Sacandaga.

Many of these lakes do not see nearly the rapid fluctuations of water levels that we experience here on Hinckley. The thing that these lakes have in common is that there is no downstream hydro facilities.

We have one that has sued the state and won for minimum water release levels or compensation. (2012 Brookfield Power).

Back in the early 2000's Assemblyman Butler told a large group of nearly 200 people that to change the rule curve would require massive legislation that would require action from both sides of the isle and perhaps the federal government. Perhaps all it really takes is a lawsuit and the right political connections?

I was raised to not complain unless I had a suggestion for improvement. With that in mind, I would suggest we take a step back from all of this and try to seek an outcome that is beneficial to all interests concerned.

We have an opportunity to change the image of this lake that is that of an unreliable place to live and visit because you can never count on consistent water levels. This opportunity will affect at the very least, the next 2 generations after us.

I suggest that we seek a "target level" during the mid-spring into early fall time of year.

Many lakes have been very successful utilizing this format and the precedent does exist.

I urge a study of the affects of tourism dollars being lost to surrounding lakes with a more reliable shoreline water level.

I appreciate the opportunity to express these concerns and suggestions and look forward your consideration of them.

Respectfully Yours,

Steven E Wheeler

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Sent from my iPad