



GARDINER CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION SHEET



Meeting Date		Department	
Agenda Item			
Est. Cost			

Background Information

Requested Action	
City Manager and/or Finance Review	
Council Vote/ Action Taken	
Departmental Follow-Up	

<i>City Clerk Use Only</i>	1 st Reading _____	Advertised _____	EFFECTIVE DATE _____
	2 nd Reading _____	Advertised _____ w/in 15 Days	
	Final to Dept _____	Updated Book _____	Online _____

New Mills Dam Repair and Maintenance Plan (2026-2029)

The opportunities to obtain funding through the Maine State CRPP program and federal funding through EDA (Economic Development Agency) to pay for vital repair and restoration of function work on the New Mills Dam lead us to propose doing the work in three phases.

PHASE 1: Toe repair to reinforce the timber and stone crib supporting the concrete spillway

- **Target start date:** October 3, 2026 (weather and water level dependent)
- **Funding:** \$100,000 from NMDC annual municipal payments +\$175,000 from anticipated CRPP action grant (sponsors Gardiner and Litchfield)
 - Gardiner re-enrolled March 2026, Litchfield still in progress
- **Engineering:** Completed 2025; Foresight Engineering, Ted Ocana
- **Contractors:** McGee Construction; possibly Commercial Divers of Maine if needed
- **Permits required:** Maine DEP NRPA; USACE standard permit (both in progress)
 - **Agent:** Gregory Anderson, NMDC, 61 Pleasant Pond Ln, Litchfield, ME 04350 (anderson.gregoryj.me@gmail.com; 207-577-7091)
 - **Applicant:** Denise Brown, City of Gardiner, Interim Town Manager/Finance Director
 - **Project Description** (from permit applications)

Phase I New Mills Dam project description 2026

The New Mills Dam suffered significant erosion of fill material from around the cribwork supporting the spillway apron during major storms in 2023 due to excessive flow rates. As Phase 1 of a multistage project, we propose to stabilize the cribwork and apron structure (see NMD Section C) by placing approximately 400 CY of freshly quarried, large boulder riprap (1-4 ft) up to the toe of the dam, sloping out from it approximately 20 feet. The riprap would be stabilized by pouring/injection of 5000 psi concrete into the matrix. The contractor proposes to build a “road” across width of the stream bed (about 100 ft) below the dam (access from Harrison Avenue parking area by dam) using the riprap material to provide a work platform for a large excavator with a thumb bucket (see Sketch Plan). To facilitate the work, KEI, Inc. (operator of New Mills Dam, owner of American Tissue Dam) will dewater the toe pond by release from the downstream American Tissue Dam (see NMD Aerial view). Culvert pipe(s) will be temporarily installed on the west side of the stream below the main gates to discharge water from that gate away from the work area. The “road” would then be deconstructed, from east to west, as the riprap was moved into place against the cribwork. If fully exposed (dry), concrete will be pumped onto the riprap to lock the matrix in place. If underwater, the concrete will be pumped through perforated pipes within the matrix. Upon completion of the repairs, residual riprap will be removed from the stream bed. All appropriate siltation and turbidity barriers will be deployed downstream, and barriers along the Harrison Avenue side of the stream for shoreline stabilization. The work is proposed for early October 2026, when the annual fall drawdown of Pleasant Pond and the stream will reduce head pressure on the dam. The contractor expects to complete the work in a week or two.

By lowering the toe pond to the maximum extent possible, we will minimize potential environmental impacts, particularly associated with siltation or erosion. Being able to work on a dry/nearly stream bed means the riprap work platform for the excavator can be smaller and access for applying concrete to the riprap matrix can occur in air, rather than under water, which will reduce or eliminate leaching from the concrete while it cures. Streambed flora and fauna may experience exposure during the project window.

Aquatic plants are abundant throughout the stream and can replenish easily through natural processes. Macroinvertebrates such as mussels and snails will be manually collected and moved into lower parts of the toe pond still underwater. Alewife outmigration occurs over many weeks during the fall, so we do not anticipate any harm to the fish if they are delayed by a week or two above the dam before passing through New Mills Dam. According to a recent certification review for the American Tissue Dam (ATD), there are no listed endangered species living in the project impact area (New Mills Dam to the American Tissue Dam), nor any registered protected historical or cultural sites (https://lowimpacthydro.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/American-Tissue-Certification-Review_2022-final.pdf). The review mentions remains of the Gardiner Mill which are submerged by the ATD impoundment, but so far that site has not been examined for inclusion on a national register of historic sites.

- **Pre-project inspection:** Commercial Divers Inc of Maine, Joe Kacer, owner; Kleinschmidt
 - Once water levels have dropped to summer levels in June, CDI will inspect the toe/crib for current erosion status to determine whether or not a year's delay in the project would put the dam at increased risk of greater damage.
 - Project would have to be delayed in the event of delays obtaining permits or funding, or high water conditions in the fall.
 - When toe pond has been dewatered, asking Kleinschmidt and Maine Dam Safety to do an inspection of opportunity to assess structural integrity of the normally submerged parts of the dam; may impact Phase 2 and 3 work.

PHASE 2: Restoration of forebay gates and structure to operable status

- **Target start date:** Fall 2027 or 2028 (weather and water level dependent)
- **Consulting:** Kleinschmidt Engineers
 - Asking for assessment of scope of work and estimated cost Phase 2 and 3
- **Funding:** Applying for up ~\$1.2-1.5 million from US Dept of Commerce Economic Development Agency (EDA) ;
 - **Contact:** Katherine Trapani, EDA Rep, Portland Maine; ktrapani@eda.gov, 215-514-6572
 - Phase 1 expenditures may count as (20%) local match of \$275,000+
 - NMDC is preparing a proposal; submissions on a rolling basis anytime
- **Engineering:** TBD (possibly Kleinschmidt)
- **Contractors:** TBD; TBD whether we need to go to bid
- **Permits required:** May be covered by PBR (permit by rule) since little or no in-water work and all repairs to existing structures; as precaution, we will try to get Phase I permits to cover all three phases
 - **Agent:** Gregory Anderson, NMDC, 61 Pleasant Pond Ln, Litchfield, ME 04350 (anderson.gregoryj.me@gmail.com; 207-577-7091)
 - **Applicant:** Denise Brown, City of Gardiner, Interim Town Manager/Finance Director
 - **Project Scope**
 - Restore the two large forebay inflow gates including new gate door panels and gantry-lift system to raise/lower the gate doors; requires a temporary coffer dam to isolate.

- Restore the outflow gates and mechanical infrastructure for the west forebay wall outflow gates
- Restore inflow/outflow pathway/gates in old turbine room; potentially remove the old turbine
- Restore the stonework and masonry of the forebay basin, including around the inflow gates on the head pond side. Leakage into the forebay has been a problem on the east side of the dam.
- Restoration/repair of the walkways as needed to assure safety.

PHASE 3: Refurbish main spillway gates (western gates) and flashboard spillway infrastructure

- **Target start date:** Fall 2028 or 2029 (weather and water level dependent)
- **Funding:** ; NMDC municipal contributions; EDA grant (we hope) ~\$1.2-1.5 million from US Dept of Commerce Economic Development Agency (EDA); funding covers both Phases 2&3
 - **Contact:** Katherine Trapani, EDA Rep, Portland Maine; ktrapani@eda.gov, 215-514-6572
 - Phase 1 expenditures may count as (20%) local match of \$275,000+
 - NMDC is preparing a proposal; submissions on a rolling basis anytime
- **Contractors:** TBD; TBD; TBD whether we need to go to bid; anticipate using same contractor
- **Permits required:** May be covered by PBR (permit by rule) since little or no in-water work and all repairs to existing structures; as precaution, we will try to get Phase I permits to cover all three phases
 - **Agent:** Gregory Anderson, NMDC, 61 Pleasant Pond Ln, Litchfield, ME 04350 (anderson.gregoryj.me@gmail.com; 207-577-7091)
 - **Applicant:** Denise Brown, City of Gardiner, Interim Town Manager/Finance Director
 - **Project Scope**
 - Refurbish the western gates infrastructure including replacing the spillway pipes and servicing the gates gantry system
 - Repair masonry and stonework around the gates as needed
 - Repair flashboard spillways and infrastructure as needed. (some work to replace several vertical posts will have been done by KEI during or before Phase 1)
 - Bring all railings up to OSHA height standards

Prepared by: Greg Anderson, NMDC, Litchfield, March 31, 2026

