



COUNTY OF MERCER

McDADE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
640 SOUTH BROAD STREET
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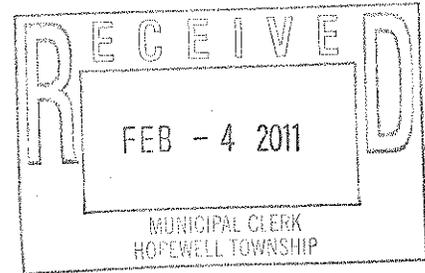
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Paul P.

BRIAN M. HUGHES
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

TEL: (609) 989-6518
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January 26, 2011

Mr. Thomas Drewes
State Conservationist
Natural Resources Conservation Services
220 Davidson Avenue, 4th Floor
Somerset, New Jersey 08873



Re: Stony Brook Watershed 14 – Honey Lake Rehabilitation Planning

Dear Mr. Drewes:

I am responding to your correspondence dated December 30, 2010 concerning the rehabilitation of the Honey Lake dam. Please be advised that the County of Mercer will not serve as a sponsor of the Honey Lake Dam! Although a public sponsor is needed to obtain federal funding for rehabilitation of the dam, this project would exceed the scope of involvement the county deems appropriate. It is also my understanding that if no public sponsor comes forward, the Mercer County Soil Conservation Service would decommission the dam, which would result in the draining of Honey Lake and restoring the area to its prior condition before the dam was constructed.

The Honey Lake dam was constructed as part of a sedimentation basin for Lake Carnegie. Abutting properties extend to the center of Honey Lake thus restricting it to the public. Furthermore, since there is no public access to the lake, County sponsorship of the dam would benefit only those homeowners abutting the lake. There are a number of other concerns which prompt Mercer County to decline sponsorship of the Honey Lake Dam:

- The dam is considered a “high hazard” dam, presenting a significant liability to the county.

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- The dam is not in compliance with the Safe Dam Act. Again, this condition presents a considerable liability. Remediation of this condition would be very costly and time-consuming.
- There are no public lands contiguous to Honey Lake nor are there plans for Mercer County to acquire properties contiguous to the site in the future.

In summary, while Honey Lake is a valuable resource for abutting landowners, sponsoring the dam presents a considerable financial burden and serious liability to Mercer County now and in the future and I cannot justify spending county tax dollars for the sole benefit of the homeowners abutting the lake. Furthermore, County sponsorship of the dam under current conditions does not benefit to the greater population of Mercer County. Again, Mercer County is not willing to sponsor the Honey Lake dam.

I hope this information has been helpful. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or the Mercer County Engineer, Gregory Sandusky, at (609) 989-6000.

Sincerely,



Brian M. Hughes
Mercer County Executive

C: William Brash, Director, Mercer County Soil Conservation District
Gregory Sandusky, County Engineer, Mercer County
James Burd, Mayor, Hopewell Township
Paul Pogorzelski, Township Administrator/Engineer, Hopewell Township
Michael McKay, Vice President for Facilities, Princeton University
Robert Olsen, Northern Regional Superintendent, NJDEP Division of Fish & Wildlife
John Moyle, Head, NJDEP Bureau of Dam Safety