

To: Members of the Lakes Levels Task Force, the Lakes and Watershed Commission, and the Environment, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Committee

From: Residents Living on Lake Monona Bay

Re: Yahara Chain of Lakes Flood Prevention

Date: March 3, 2019

We appreciate the efforts of the Technical Work Group; the 2018 Yahara Chain of Lakes Flooding Technical Work Group Report provides useful information in guiding our long-term thinking.

This letter outlines the position of the undersigned residents of Lake Monona Bay with regard to flood prevention and mitigation. Last summer, many of us experienced flooding in our homes and yards; lived with mosquito infested, stinking standing water along our streets and sidewalks; were blocked by impassable streets; could not park our cars in our driveways or near our homes; and had diminished access to recreational uses of the bay. We take decisions about flood prevention and mitigation very seriously because for us, it's personal.



Because we understand that lowering Lake Mendota's water level alone would increase the water level in Lake Monona Bay, we urge continued efforts to manage the full Yahara chain of lakes at the lowest feasible levels.

We know that we must create ways for water to be moved through the Yahara chain of lakes more swiftly so we are actually able to lower lake levels. The Technical Work Group's report indicates that dredging the Yahara River system would create the capacity to reduce lake levels approximately one foot. That would be a good, but not independently sufficient, start.

We are grateful that the County has committed to expanding its weed harvesting program. We applaud the County's interest in testing the effectiveness of using conveyance barges to make weed harvesting even more efficient.

As residents of Lake Monona Bay, our immediate priorities are to

1. Dramatically increase the flow rate in the Yahara River system by both dredging and increased weed harvesting;
2. Continuously manage the Yahara chain of lakes at the lowest achievable levels; and
3. Reinforce the Tenney Park dam, insuring its competence to withstand major rain events and raising its retention height, thereby increasing Lake Mendota's capacity as an emergency reservoir for extraordinary rain events.

This third priority is beneficial because it can help equalize the levels of Lakes Mendota and Monona, preventing the disequivalent, greater flooding risk currently faced by Lake Monona shoreline neighborhoods.

Our long-term priority is investigation of the pipeline and pumping solution. We understand this solution, because of easements, permits, costs, and technical complexity, will take years to assess and implement. Still, it is a critical component

because as valuable as dredging, weed harvesting, and dam improvements are, when taken together they still do not fully protect against flooding in the kind of situation we experienced in 2018.

Lastly, we urge the city and county to continue aggressive exploration and implementation of on-land mitigation efforts in all related policy areas including land use planning, development regulations, agricultural management, park land uses and management, sewer and runoff management, incentive programs driving increased private investment in best water resource management, and public education.

Thank you for considering our shared opinion.

Sincerely,

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