

MAIN STREET DAM REMOVAL & DANFORTH BROOK RESTORATION PROJECT

Reimagining Danforth Brook - Understanding the Future of Main Street Dam



The Main Street Dam on Danforth Brook is part of Hudson's industrial past. Built when rivers powered mills and local businesses, it supported operations like Larkin Lumber, a family-run company that was part of the community for more than a century.

Today, the dam no longer serves that purpose. Instead, it remains as aging infrastructure that requires ongoing maintenance and can pose safety and environmental challenges, especially as storms become more frequent and intense.

Across Massachusetts, communities are taking a closer look at dams like this one. Many dams are reaching the end of their useful life and maintaining them can be costly while still leaving communities exposed to risk. At the same time, dams can alter natural stream flow, warm water temperatures, and limit the movement of fish and wildlife.

Options like dam removal and stream restoration are being considered because they can:

- Reduce long-term safety risks, particularly during major storm events
- Eliminate ongoing maintenance and liability associated with aging dams
- Restore more natural stream flow and improve water quality
- Reconnect habitat for fish and other aquatic species
- Strengthen local and regional climate resilience

This project is about respecting Hudson's past while also planning for what comes next—a safer, healthier, and more resilient future for the community.

INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS

The dam owner, working with GZA and OARS, is evaluating the future of the site, including the potential for dam removal and stream restoration. This effort reflects a growing statewide priority to address aging dams, reduce risks from stronger storms, and restore rivers in ways that support long-term climate resilience.

To help the community better understand this work, OARS and GZA are hosting a series of **Informational Sessions** about the Main Street Dam project and the role of dam removal in ecological restoration and climate resilience.

Whether you live nearby, spend time in downtown Hudson, or are simply interested in how local infrastructure and natural systems are changing, we invite you to join us and learn more about this effort.

Join us to learn more about:

- The current condition of the Main Street Dam
- Why dam removal is being considered
- What ecological restoration could look like for Danforth Brook

These sessions are designed to provide clear, accessible information about the project, the science behind it, and how it fits into broader efforts to build safer, more resilient communities.

Abutter Informational Session:

- Tuesday, May 26, 2026

Community-wide Informational Presentations:

- Wednesday, June 3, 2026
- Tuesday, June 9, 2026

All Informational Sessions:

Hudson Senior Center
29 Church Street
Hudson, MA 01749
6:00-7:30 pm

QUESTIONS

Visit our [Main Street Dam webpage](#) for more information on the project and contact either Heather Conkerton at OARS (hconkerton@oars3rivers.org) or Adrienne Dunk at GZA GeoEnvironmental (Adrienne.Dunk@gza.com) with questions.

ABOUT OARS

OARS is the watershed organization for the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Rivers in Massachusetts. Founded in 1986, our mission is to **protect, improve, and preserve the Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord rivers and watershed for all people and wildlife**. Our service area spans 399 square miles across 36 communities.

With four decades of experience, a growing membership, and deep relationships with state and federal agencies, municipal partners, and local residents, OARS has a proven record of success in leading collaborative river restoration. Our work is grounded in science, built on trust, and focused on creating resilient ecosystems for the future.

LEADERS IN DAM REMOVAL & RIVER RESTORATION

The SuAsCo watershed is home to **163 documented dams**, many of which date back to the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, these aging and obsolete structures fragment aquatic habitats, pose public safety risks, and hinder the rivers' ability to support healthy ecosystems and climate resilience.

Dam removal is a transformative tool for watershed restoration. It re-establishes natural streamflow, restores critical aquatic habitats, improves water quality, and allows for the free passage of migratory species such as river herring, alewife, and Eastern brook trout. These ecological benefits ripple outward, strengthening the broader food web and building resilience across the landscape.

OARS is a recognized leader in dam removal within the SuAsCo watershed and beyond. We manage complex, multi-stakeholder restoration projects that deliver ecological, cultural, and community benefits. Our work is grounded in a **science-driven, ecosystem-based approach**—one that prioritizes long-term ecological function, regional planning, and meaningful community engagement.

RELATED RESOURCES FROM OARS

To learn more about OARS' dam removal and ecological restoration work, visit the following pages on our website:

- **Main Street Dam Removal Project (Hudson, MA)**
oars3rivers.org/our-work/ecological-restoration/dam-removal/main-street-dam-removal-danforth-brook-restoration/
- **Talbot Mills Dam Removal Project (Billerica, MA)**
oars3rivers.org/our-work/ecological-restoration/dam-removal/talbot-mills-dam-removal
- **Wheeler Pond Dam Removal Project (Berlin, MA)**
oars3rivers.org/our-work/ecological-restoration/dam-removal/wheeler-pond