

From: Oskar W. F. Sanio  
Sent: Sunday, February 28, 2016 2:08:56 PM  
To: City of London, Mayor; Hubert, Paul; City Councillors; Shane O'Neil  
Subject: Springbank Dam

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This is what experts are saying!

**Chris Tasker, P.Eng., Mgr. Flood Control, UTRCA**, said at the **Urban League of London** meeting on Feb. 25th, that the Thames River's ecosystem from the river forks to Byron is healthier **WITHOUT** the Springbank Dam working.

Sadly, self-serving and uninformed dam supporters stubbornly refuse to accept the widely known aquatic science that barriers in rivers damage the river's ecosystem, including the habitat for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife, some of which are species at risk.

"The river has noticeably healed itself since the dam was left open in 2008 allowing the water to flow freely. A public consultation meeting has been scheduled for March 8 and there is way more opposition to completing the dam rehabilitation than there was in 2003," says the UTRCA's general manager Ian Wilcox.

#### **For the March 8, 2016, Public Participation Meeting Agenda**

Chair and Members  
Civic Works Committee  
The Corporation of the City of London

#### **Re: The costly and unnecessary Springbank Dam; Fountain at the Forks**

I am steadfastly opposed to the repair and reactivation of the river-killing Springbank Dam but also wish to point out the following information:

If and when a combined EA is undertaken for the Back-to-the-River project and the Springbank Dam, the health effects of the toxic spray of the **Walter J. Blackburn Memorial Fountain** at the forks needs to be examined during the EA since the fountain, installed in 2009, has never operated with the Springbank Dam working, spraying the more polluted water impounded by the dam (the fountain uses recycled river water).

As some on city council may remember, the fountain project was stopped in its tracks about 15 years ago by then **Middlesex-London Medical Officer of Health Dr. Graham Pollett** due to human health and safety concerns with the toxic spray (including E. coli and benzenes) of such a fountain (the carcinogenic coal tar blob was never completely removed from the river near Thames Park).

The fountain project was subsequently allowed to proceed when the fountain was designed with wind sensors to try and keep the toxic spray from hitting the shore. Nonetheless, this toxic spray continues to hit the shore at various times and as such represents a human health hazard.

**DAM:** I've heard four specious arguments from Springbank Dam supporters to date regarding repairing and reactivating the unnecessary dam:

**1. You can't canoe or kayak on the Thames River without the Springbank Dam working, particularly in the summer.**

RESPONSE: False. While water levels are obviously lower without the Springbank Dam working, people still canoe and kayak on the main branch of the Thames all the time, even in the summer. Rowing, not so much. That's happening at Fanshawe Lake where there's a national rowing and training facility.

**2. The water coming from Fanshawe Lake is already polluted so we shouldn't blame it on Springbank Dam or try to improve it by removing the dam in Byron.**

RESPONSE: Not only does the Springbank Dam needlessly destroy important shoreline habitat for aquatic and terrestrial wildlife by flooding it, why would we want to impound pollutants again, including the raw and partially treated sewage that enters the Thames from our treatment plants and pumping stations downstream of Lake Fanshawe? Creating a stagnant reservoir from the forks to the Springbank Dam makes water quality even worse, not better. Keep the river running free. Don't impound pollutants and then release them every six months all at once or just during heavy rainfalls. Neighbours downstream hate it as well. The river is healthier when it's running free without man-made barriers.

**3. It looks prettier when the river is swollen at the forks when the Springbank Dam is working. The stagnant headpond looks like a real river.**

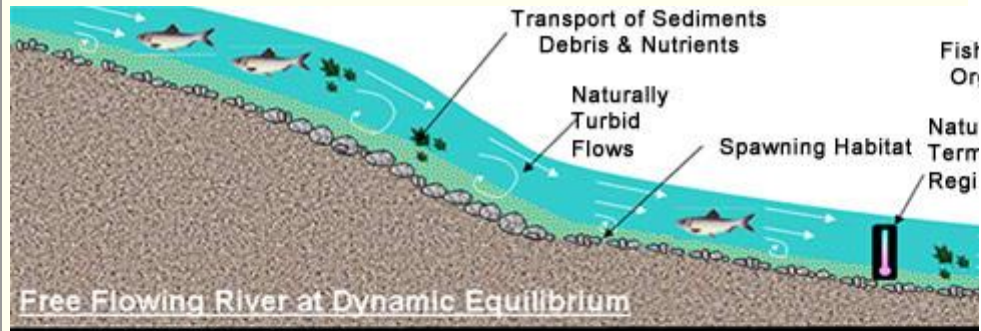
RESPONSE: If anyone thinks a swollen, de-facto cesspool looks good at the forks and is a healthy situation, go for a swim in it. Breathe in the sweet smells of the impounded river while you're at it. Better still, bottle that brown water and sell it to tourists. John Winston at Tourism London will be impressed.

**4. The City just started a \$40M, 30-month-long-project at Greenway Treatment Plant to increase its capacity, so London's sewage overflow problem will disappear soon.**

RESPONSE: False. While the \$40M project will increase Greenway's sewage treatment capacity when the project is completed in 2019, it will only (purportedly) reduce Greenway's sewage overflows by 60%. But much of the sewage going into the Thames comes from London's other treatment plants (there's six in total and 36 pumping stations). To fix the problem, the estimated cost is \$337M. So the sewage overflows into the river will be continuing for at

least another 20-25 years unless the City tackles it sooner with lots of public cash.

[2015's raw and partially treated overflows into the Thames River from London's sewage treatment plants, CoL, Feb. 27](#)



**UPSTREAM IMPACTS\***

Reduced:  
Natural Function, Water Quality, Oxygen, Turbid Flow, Circulation, Available Habitat  
Rivers ability to adjust horizontally and vertically (reduced resilience to change)

Increased:  
Pollutant Accumulation, Stratification, Temperatures, Algae Blooms

Loss of:  
Natural Transport Processes of Sediments, Nutrients and Debris  
Self-sustaining Nature

**DOWNSTREAM**

Reduced:  
Water Quality

Altered:  
Flow Regim

Starved of:  
Sediment, &  
(habitat buil

