

SAVE THE DAM-- UPDATE FROM FULLERSBURG HISTORIC FOUNDATION

Background: On October 6, 2020, the DuPage County Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners voted to grant a license to a local organization to remove the Graue Mill Dam and to narrow the channel of Salt Creek by moving it north, eliminating the millpond. *Approximately one mile of the creek bed could be altered to change the flow of water through this area.* Graue Mill and Dam are part of the unique historical legacy of Fullersburg, which includes the Settlement Era in the early nineteenth century. The local pioneers participated in the Underground Railroad before and during the Civil War, assisting fugitives seeking freedom from slavery; fourteen Civil War veterans are laid to rest at Historic Fullersburg Cemetery. Also, Native American burial grounds are documented near Salt Creek and Graue Mill. The Foundation is concerned about the preservation of all of these historically significant sites for future generations.

The Board of Directors strongly encourages you to express your position about the planned permanent alterations to this exceptional area. The topics below illustrate the wide-reaching concerns about the proposed project. Restrictions caused by the Covid 19 pandemic have inhibited public debate about this issue. *We want your opinion to be heard.*

- 1) The early settlers of eastern DuPage County exhibited innovation and perseverance exemplified by Benjamin Fuller (founder of Fullersburg), who was friendly with the local Potawatomi. Benjamin's farmhouse was built with balloon frame construction, now believed to be the oldest surviving example in northern Illinois. **How can this unique building be protected and used to educate the public about the Settlement Era?**
- 2) Tunnels and structures that were part of the Underground Railroad existed around Graue Mill, and Fullersburg citizens assisted escaped slaves seeking freedom during the Civil War Era. **What is being done to safeguard these historically significant sites during the proposed removal of the Graue Mill Dam and the major revisions to Salt Creek?**
- 3) Sauganakka was the largest Potawatomi village in DuPage County, and it was located on both sides of Salt Creek in Fullersburg. Burial mounds are referenced in several primary historical sources, including maps and research notes created over 120 years ago. **What measures are in place to observe the sanctity of indigenous burial sites in Fullersburg? How will the recovery of Native American remains and artifacts be handled?**
- 4) In 2020, a nation-wide revision of flood risks was published. **What provisions are there for anticipated climate change? Could the flood risks increase in the Fullersburg area due to these changes and the proposed changes to Graue Mill Dam and Salt Creek?**

A list of contacts is attached for your convenience. If you would like any assistance in writing a letter or message about the above topics, Fullersburg Historic Foundation can help; email us at fullersburghistoric@gmail.com.

CONTACTS

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<https://www.nytimrd.com/interactive/2020/06/29/climate/hidden-flood-risk-maps.html>
(2020 link to article about climate change and flood risk)

