

FD#3

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DEC 01 2025

Land Use Department

From: [Steve Masalin](#)
To: [Elizabeth Burdick](#)
Cc: [Hannah Gienau](#)
Subject: FW: photos of Cranberry pond
Date: Monday, December 1, 2025 3:32:58 PM
Attachments: [flooded_road.docx](#)
[image001.png](#)
[image002.png](#)

FYI

Steven E. Masalin, P.E.



Public Works Director, Town of Ledyard
741 Colonel Ledyard Hwy.
Ledyard, CT 06339
(860) 464-3238
www.ledyardct.org

From: Steve Masalin
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2025 4:29 PM
To: mobbylarson@gmail.com
Cc: Fred Allyn, III <mayor@ledyardct.org>; Elizabeth Burdick <planner@ledyardct.org>; Tobias Glaza <tglaza@avalonialc.org>; Joseph Tillman <hwy.supt@ledyardct.org>; galesferrydistrict@gmail.com
Subject: FW: photos of Cranberry pond

Good Afternoon Ms. Larson,

I am happy to provide some clarification.

I've included the email you had sent to Highway Superintendent Joe Tillman (see below) which is a good starting point for context. Thank you also for the photos you included as part of this. Your email shows you have a good understanding of some of the issues we are facing in this watershed, including flooding risks at Harvard Terrace and beaver activity impounding water above the berm due to blockage of the primary waterway.

As you know, I was at the last IWWC meeting where you shared comments about the activity at the berm. I have also been apprised of comments you made at the Gales Ferry Fire District Semi-Annual meeting last night.

The information I share with you should help clarify the Town's objectives in the watershed consistent with our obligations to address structural and flooding issues that we face all the way from Christy Hill Rd through the dam at Harvard Terrace. And it will dispel some of the

misinformation that has apparently overtaken this in the absence of certain facts. This information will be further fleshed out through formal reports that have been undertaken, as well as the results of a professional hydraulic study presently underway at the cost of nearly \$15,000 to the Town.

In December 2024, the Town engaged professional engineering services for an updated report on the condition of Pine Swamp Brook Dam (CT Dam ID#7212), i.e., the dam at Harvard Terrace. The dam unsurprisingly received a “fair” rating, which appreciably coincided with the assessment rendered by a 2023 Save the Sound study. Thus, there are a number of structural issues that will need to be addressed.

More recently, beaver activity in the Pine Swamp Brook watershed below Route 12 to Harvard Terrace has, as you are well aware, altered the hydraulics of the watershed above the berm. More specifically, the beaver dam raised the water level above the berm by at least 18 inches, perhaps closer to 2 feet. This backed water up to and through the culvert under Route 12, severely reducing the flow capacity at that crossing and further affecting areas to and beyond Christy Hill Road. The culverts at the intersection of Christy Hill Road and Route 12 have been overtopping in even higher frequency storm events, and one property toward Crestview Drive was being flooded. This situation needed immediate attention.

To this end, the Town secured a permit from the State to trap the beavers, and permission was received from the owner at 39 Military Highway to do so. That was the first step. Subsequent to beaver removal, Town forces sought to remove the beaver dam to alleviate the flooding and restore the watershed to its baseline, historic condition in that area. In addition to the main dam at the brook, we found two locations of beaver activity along the berm. After removing the beaver debris and due to lack of immediate access to the main dam (which will require equipment for removal) I directed cutting through the berm at the two locations of beaver activity to provide immediate relief of the flooding, which has been a pressing need. By simply restoring the conditions to the historic norm, this action did not, nor could it, alter the wetlands designation/nature of the affected area. And there was no collaboration with the owner of 39 Military Highway in this beyond permission for beaver removal.

This action had no bearing on the pond level, which is controlled by outlet structures at Harvard Terrace. First, the primary cause of the recent low pond level has been the relative drought we’ve experienced. Access to the primary drop inlet had been impeded, historically by an ill-placed berm and more recently by a homemade wooden cover. When the Town attended to the drop inlet and replaced the wooden cover with a more appropriate grate, we also removed a log that traversed a break in the berm enhancing flows to the structure. Subsequently, illicit activity plugging this gap more directly has prevented flows, virtually isolating the structure from the pond and preventing it from performing its intended function. There is some seepage getting through the berm that is still evident at the outlet.

But notwithstanding this, the separate metal culvert that also traverses the road (dam) outside of the bermed-in area receives water in an uninhibited fashion. Thus, the pond is free to drain completely to this pipe’s inlet invert level, which is what has happened with the lack of rainfall. That is the primary basis of the low pond level, not anything conspiratorial or

intentional through any actions that have been taken to date. It's simple hydraulics.

The Town is in the process of preparing for an IWWC application to attend to the comprehensive needs of the watershed, from structural to hydraulic (including flooding prevention). The aforementioned hydraulic study is an important part of this preparation. Since you have made this a matter of public record, as cited above, I am copying in several key parties that have been/will be involved, or otherwise interested, in this matter as it continues to advance.

Regards,

Steve

Steven E. Masalin, P.E.



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From: Mobby Larson <mobbylarson@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 15, 2025 11:46 AM
To: Steve Masalin <pwd@ledyardct.org>
Subject: Cranberry Pond

Steve,

I am trying to clear up a question about the cut that was made through the berm at the north end of Cranberry Pond, severing the border between the pond (Avalonia property) and the wetlands on the Sweet Hill property.

There is an obviously man-made cut about 2' wide and 3' high, right through the middle of the land spit. I can send a picture, looking north from the pond towards the wetlands, if that would help identify it.

Someone said that Public Works had done this, and I am trying to check on that. If you could please let me know, that would give us some clarity to work with.

Thank you--and thank you for all you do for the town, especially during these storms!

Mobby Larson

53 Harvard Ter.

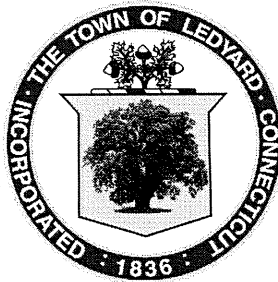
From: Joseph Tillman <hwy.supt@ledyardct.org>

Sent: Tuesday, July 01, 2025 6:34 AM

To: Steve Masalin <pwd@ledyardct.org>

Subject: FW: photos of Cranberry pond

Thank You
Joe Tillman



Public Works Superintendent
860-464-9060 Ext.1
hwy.supt@ledyardct.org

From: Mobby Larson <mobbylarson@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, June 25, 2025 12:53 PM

To: Joseph Tillman <hwy.supt@ledyardct.org>

Subject: photos of Cranberry pond

Joe, it was nice to meet you and chat this morning. And thank you for all you and your crews are doing!

I promised to send you some pictures:

One is the beaver dam on Pine Swamp Brook, taken from our canoe facing north. The blue barrel on the right is on the NW corner of 57 Harvard Ter

One shows flooding over the spit of land where Avalonia borders the farmland, looking north into the wetlands on the farm (since the beaver dam is blocking the brook)

Another page with 2 photos shows a couple of times the pond overflowed Harvard Terrace

Thanks for your concerns and help.

Mobby Larson

53 Harvard Terrace