

May 12 2026

To the Members of the Ledyard Conservation Commission:

As you are aware, some of the citizens of Gales Ferry are asking for your support in requesting that Gales Ferry Village be re-designated as a Village District by a zoning overlay. Gales Ferry is one of the most significant areas of Ledyard—not only for its colonial history, but for its unique ecology and importance to our town for wildlife preservation, water flow and purification, and passive recreation areas. When some of this area was designated Gales Ferry Development District in 2012, it became an immediate threat to the character and ecology of this gem.

Pine Swamp is owned by Avalonia Land Conservancy, designated a Critical Habitat on CT Natural Diversity Data Base. The aquifer and watershed begin at the swamp on Christy Hill and flow as Pine Swamp Brook under Rt. 12 near Our Lady of Lourdes to the former farmland behind the old Gales Ferry School. (See attachment for watershed map shown in yellow.) There it becomes part of the 100-year flood plain, and designated Coastal Boundary area by CT DEEP. The blue arrow shows where the brook continues on to Cranberry Pond (Moulthrop Pond on some old maps), which is owned by Avalonia Land Conservancy. From there, it flows into Smith Pond, designated by the Ledyard Conservation Commission as a “unique and fragile” water body. Then it continues to Mill Cove where Erickson Park, a town picnic, boat launch, and recreation area is located. And of course, it flows from there to the Thames River and eventually Long Island Sound.

The waters of this brook and the ponds that it feeds along its path contribute to the unique character of Gales Ferry Village. Besides picnicking, canoeing and kayaking, fishing and ice-skating are enjoyed by residents and people from beyond the District. Wildlife that has been seen by residents include: beavers and otters; great blue and night herons; ospreys; loons; great egrets (CT DEEP “threatened”), bald eagles, red-shouldered hawks, owls; mallard, wood, black, hooded merganser and bufflehead ducks; breeding mute swans, Canada geese; bass and pickerel; decades-old snapping turtles, painted and musk turtles, as well as spotted turtles. (CT DEEP “special concern”) The Natural Diversity Data Base map (second attachment) shows how much of the proposed Village overlay has state and federal listed species.

We are asking your support in conserving this unique and valuable area of our town. It must be protected from overdevelopment, and we believe that preserving the “village” character of Gales Ferry will be critical in this preservation.

Anne Roberts-Pierson
4 Anderson Drive

Mary Brown Larson (Mobby)
53 Harvard Terrace



