

December 6th, 2024

Dr. Maria Rosa
55 Wendell Comrie Rd
Ledyard, CT 06339

Ledyard Planning and Zoning Commissioners
Liz Burdick, Ledyard Director Land Use and Planning Committee
Ledyard, CT.

Dear Commissioners and Ms. Burdick,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the work proposed by Cashman/GFI in a quarry in Gales Ferry. I have several strong concerns, outlined below, and because of this I am completely opposed to the implementation of their proposal.

As a homeowner and local resident, I strongly oppose the proposed work. My husband and I picked this house to settle in mainly due to the natural area, and being part of this beautiful little wooded town. The community is lovely and the natural surroundings are beautiful and incredibly important. We were drawn here by the trees and the woods, being avid hikers and nature lovers. The proposed quarry work would 1) decrease the quality of the wooded areas that we use for hiking and recreation, 2) increase noise pollution in the area, 2) significantly increase air pollution.

More specifically, the work proposed by Cashman would dramatically diminish the quality of the environment of our town. People come to Ledyard and Gales Ferry to go hiking and to enjoy the natural spaces in our town. The history of this land should not be ignored either. If we allow an outside company to further destroy our natural spaces this town will not be a desirable place for people to come and will not be a safe place for people to live. Not only would this work significantly damage the quality of the environment that we are surrounded by and all of the local hiking trails would be impacted but it would also increase the noise and reduce the air quality of the town. The quarry work is noisy and diminishes the peaceful quality of the local forests. People go to the woods because they want to experience the sounds of the nature, not the blasting noises from a quarry.

The quarry work will also significantly **increase the dust in the air, which will reduce air quality and directly impact the residents' health.** Residents have the fundamental right to live in a place with clean air. No one in our town should be exposed to reduced air quality from quarry related dust. I would like to acknowledge that some residents already experience some of this from the current quarry work. This new proposed quarry work would turn this town into an extremely undesirable and potentially dangerous place to live for many folks. Our children deserve to grow up in a town with clean air.

As a scientist and ecologist, I strongly oppose the proposed work. I am a research scientist who studies marine ecology and I am Associate Professor of Biology at Connecticut College. My PhD and training in ecological ecosystems give me the expertise to say that the work proposed by

Cashman/GFI would irrevocably damage the local surrounding wooded area. It would also have impacts on the Thames River, an important estuary and local biodiversity hotspot. **Runoff and increased flooding are two major impacts of the proposed work**, all of which will have effects not just on the water quality of the river, but on the health of the shellfish and other organisms we rely on for food and recreation. We have already experienced effects of increased rain and more flooding, which can be directly linked to removal of trees and addition of impermeable surfaces such as concrete and bare rock. The proposed work will make those problem worse. Increased runoff to the river will decrease water clarity, making it more difficult for plants to grow in the river. Runoff, especially those with increased sediment load, will also impact shellfish such as oysters and clams, and in recent years has led to the closure of areas to clamming or shellfish harvesting. These effects harm the local economy, and can also lead to people getting sick as they may consume contaminated organisms. Destroying the natural areas for **questionable profit margins** would devastate the quality of the environment in this area and would diminish the beauty and integrity of our environment. The natural spaces around us are not just there for our entertainment. Residents whose properties have wells will also see an impact to the quality of their water. Therefore, the impacts are not just directly to the environment, but indirectly to human health.

For the reasons outlined above, and many others mentioned by local experts and residents, I strongly oppose the proposed work and ask that the permit be denied.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Maria Rosa, PhD