



*STATE OF CONNECTICUT*

**COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**

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Paul Aresta  
*Executive Director*

March 22, 2023

The Honorable Kevin A. Seery  
First Selectman  
Office of the First Selectman  
PO Box 519  
Niantic, CT 06357

Re: Fairhaven Road Bridge, East Lyme

Dear First Selectman Seery,

The Council on Environmental Quality (Council) received a letter and Press Release regarding the proposed bridge replacement project for the Fairhaven Road Bridge over the Pattagansett River in East Lyme. The Council notes that the bridge is located 1) within a Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB) buffer area<sup>1</sup>, 2) just south of a critical intertidal marsh habitat, and 3) within the Coastal Boundary. Consequently, the proposed project has the potential to impact state-listed species, critical habitat, wetlands, and coastal resources<sup>2</sup>. The Council also notes that there is a DEEP-owned parcel totaling approximately .37 acres located southeast of the bridge on the south side of Fairhaven Road. The Council recommends that the Town of East Lyme and/or the bridge designers/construction company consult with DEEP's NDDDB and Land and Water Resources Division for guidance to minimize and mitigate any potential adverse effects on state-listed species and critical habitat; wetlands; and/or coastal resources and uses, consistent with Connecticut's Coastal Management Act. In addition, the Council recommends that any work conducted on the roadway to the east of the bridge not restrict access to the DEEP-owned parcel in the event it is used for passive outdoor recreation and/or access to the river.

Thank you for your consideration of the Council's comments.

Sincerely,

Paul Aresta  
Executive Director

c: Marc Byrnes, Connecticut Department of Transportation (DOT), Transportation Supervising Engineer  
James Barrows, DOT, Project Engineer  
Alex Klose, P.E., Town Engineer, East Lyme

<sup>1</sup> Connecticut DEEP, Natural Diversity Data Base and Environmental Reviews; <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/NDDDB/Natural-Diversity-Data-Base-and-Environmental-Reviews>

<sup>2</sup> Connecticut DEEP, Coastal Resources; <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Coastal-Resources/Coastal-Management/Coastal-Management>