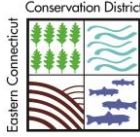


# EASTERN CONNECTICUT CONSERVATION DISTRICT, INC.

238 West Town Street  
Norwich, CT 06360-2111  
(860) 319-8806



[www.ConserveCT.org/eastern](http://www.ConserveCT.org/eastern)

139 Wolf Den Road  
Brooklyn, CT 06234  
860-774-9600

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January 18, 2024

Rebecca Jascot, Environmental Analyst  
CT DEEP  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

RE: Avery Pond

I attended the Connecticut Integrated Water Planning Management (IWPM) presentation on January 16, 2024. I was encouraged to submit, in writing, a request to make Avery Pond in Preston CT a water quality priority focus area.

I have been working with volunteers from The Last Green Valley water quality monitoring program to assess the water quality in Avery Pond using available tools in our program for several years. Avery Pond residents paid out of pocket for some nutrient analysis, but not consistently. They have collected uploaded data to the CT DEEP Lake Watch database, as well as the EPA Bloom Watch database. In 2023, the secchi depth in spring measured 1.5 M. By summer, it ranged from 0.5 – 1 M. Those measurements support the pond being classified as Eutrophic to Highly Eutrophic. Cyanobacteria blooms were documented and reported to EPA in 2023 from summer through fall using the Bloom Watch app.

In 2022 and 2023, Avery Pond volunteers were able to collect surface scum samples to be assessed by EPA as part of the Cyanobacteria Monitoring Collaborative. The samples will be assessed for cyanotoxins. The full suite of sample analysis has not yet been completed, but by request, the samples were assessed using a dip strip method. The microcystin toxin levels in the samples exceeded the maximum level of detection of 10 µg/L in both years. The EPA guidelines for safe recreation in freshwater is 8 µg/L.

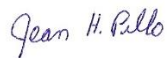
Avery Pond is listed in the 2022 Integrated Water Quality Assessment report as meeting both the Aquatic Life Use Support and Recreation Use Support criteria. Our data suggests it should be reassessed. Until this status is changed, there can be no funding support to develop a watershed-based plan to research the issues in the pond or support any remediation efforts in the watershed.

Avery Pond is in the Poquetanuck Brook watershed. This brook has been a focus for alewife migration route restoration by DEEP fisheries in partnership with Eastern Connecticut Conservation District (ECCD). ECCD has been managing several projects to restore the migratory historic fish run to Amos Lake. A fishway has been installed at the Hallville Dam in Preston. The Straight Pond Dam, upstream of Hallville Pond, was notched. This spring, ECCD will be hiring a contractor to install a fishway over the Shewville Dam in Ledyard. This dam is the final obstacle for the migrating fish to access their natural Amos Lake and Avery Pond spawning grounds.

Avery Pond has a DEEP maintained boat ramp and is a popular location for bass fishing. It is an important resource for fishery interests as well as providing recreational opportunities.

I request that Avery Pond is added to the list of water quality priority areas in the Integrated Water Planning Management Phase II report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Jean H. Pillo".

Jean Pillo, Watershed Conservation Project Manager  
Eastern Connecticut Conservation District  
The Last Green Valley Water Quality Monitoring Program Volunteer Coordinator  
Thames River Basin Partnership Coordinator