

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority
90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, CT 06511
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AGENDA

Regular Meeting of Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

1. Safety Moment
2. Approval of Minutes – November 12, 2025 meeting
3. Recreation Update: Jeff Yale
4. Review FY 2027 Budget Schedule and schedule proposed joint meeting date with Consumer Affairs Committee to review budget
5. Updates on land and RWA properties, including invasive species update
6. Other land items
7. Reminder: volunteers for upcoming Authority meetings:
 - a. December 18, 2025 – G. Malloy
 - b. January 22, 2026 – P. Betkoski
8. Next Regular Meeting: Wednesday, January 14, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.
9. Adjourn

****Members of the public may attend the meeting in person or via remote access using instructions at the top of the agenda. To view meeting documents, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/3antbz44>. For questions, contact the board office at 203-401-2515 or by email to jslubowski@rwater.com**

Weekly Safety Topic

December 1, 2025

Title: Winter Season and Snow Storm Preparedness



Regional Water Authority

The New England region is prone to winter storms that bring extreme cold, freezing rain, sleet, heavy snowfall, ice, and high winds. At the RWA, we need to be prepared for these storms and understand the impact they may have on our day-to-day operations. RWA will continue to encourage work from home activities for those employees with the ability to do so when impending storms are forecasted and will monitor storm predications and State of Connecticut guidance on closures and delays.

Activity/Process

Be Prepared for the weather – Dress properly for the weather, including dressing in layers. Wear warm and sturdy shoes to avoid slip and falls on ice and snow. Carry extra supplies in your bag and vehicle such as blankets, hats/gloves, socks, food etc.

Stay Connected – Emergency Alerts will come from multiple communications tools. RWA will communicate via email and automatic call regarding any office closures or delayed openings. Automatic calls will go to company assigned cellphones and personal telephone numbers as saved in Dayforce. Please take a minute to make sure your contact information in your Dayforce profile is up to date.

The RWA also maintains an Emergency Hotline number as well. You can call 1-888-373-0007 for an update on office status. We will endeavor to provide all decisions on closings or delays by 5am.

Give Yourself Extra Time – If you need to travel to an RWA facility during inclement weather, give yourself extra time for your commute. Drive slowly and avoid abrupt stops and turns. If you become stranded, call for help, set your vehicle's hazard lights to flashing, and remain with your vehicle.

Summary - Being prepared for winter storms can save you in an emergency, take the time to prepare both at home and at work to provide peace of mind when winter weather hits. Make sure your information is up to date and look for important updates from RWA.

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
November 12, 2025

Minutes

The regular meeting of the Land Use Committee (“Committee”) of the Representative Policy Board (“RPB”), of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”), took place on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority, 90 Sargent Drive, New Haven, Connecticut. Chair Levine presided.

Committee Members Present: M. Levine(R), P. Betkoski(R), P. DeSantis(R), B. Eitzer(R), G. Malloy, J. Oslander, and J. Mowat Young(R)

RPB: R. Harvey, D. Allard(R), N. Campbell(R), C. Havrda(R), C. Mancini(R)

FMA: M. Ricozzi(R) and T. Cort(R)

Management: V. Benni, J. Hill(R), J. Triana, W. Henley, and J. Guimaraes

Staff: J. Slubowski

Chair Levine called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Ms. Young and seconded by Mr. Eitzer, the Committee voted to approve the minutes of its October 22, 2025 regular meeting.

Ms. Guimaraes, the RWA’s Aquatic Resource Intern, provided an update on the West River Stream Flow Monitoring System, which included:

- Program reimplementation and length
- Watershed area images
- Temperature and dissolved oxygen level comparisons at reservoirs
- Raw water sampling sites including pilot sites comparisons of 1934 vs. 1970
- Sampling procedures and parameters
- Outside lab testing
- 2024-2025 Data results and variables related to weather sampling, temperature, dissolved oxygen, dissolved organic carbon
- Future management
- Controlled water flow alternatives (floating baffle curtain)

Committee members discussed turbidity/silk curtain and options to reduce issues.

The committee reviewed and adopted the proposed 2026 calendar year meeting dates, as amended.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Triana, the RWA’s Real Estate Manager, reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
October 31	65%	73%	66%	None

<u>Rainfall (inches)</u>			
	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
October 31	5.23	0.79	3.85
Fiscal YTD (6/1/24 –	11.63	17.58	19.05

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Cheshire, former Bis property (CH 5) – Reviewed grant agreement and easement documents from DEEP. Executed OSWA forms grant and submitted to DEEP. Executed conservation easement and mailed to DEEP. Still discussing the language needed for the certificate of title.
- Madison, Weber property (MA 6B) – Received closing documents from Murtha. In contact with a claimant who had recent permission to hunt the property from the previous owner.
- Seymour, 56 Squantuck Rd. (SE 5) – Property sold to the town.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – RPB approved the disposition application.
- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – See attached article.

Forestry Update

- RWA has received a proposal from Dr. Mark Bradford and first year PhD student, Maddie Annis, on a nutrient research project focused on slash wall harvests.
- Master Woodland Managers training was held at Nathan's Pond property.

Recreation

- Oak identification walk at Maltby Lake #3 with 32 participants was organized.
- Boat rentals ended. The docks were removed from the lake.
- Walleye were stocked at Lake Saltonstall in coordination with DEEP. About 1650, 5-8" fingerlings were released.
- Cleared brush from the shoreline of Lake Saltonstall for fishing access.
- Initiated work on preplacing bog bridges at Lake Hammonasset.
- Reported unauthorized horse trail markers on the North Sleeping Giant Wellfield property to police (HA 19). Contacted DEEP park ranger in charge of the adjacent property.
- The Water Wagon was brought to 3 events by the recreation staff which ends our season for this year.

	October		September	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Permit Holders	4,857	4,889	4,892	4,846

Special Activity Permits

- Yale University School of the Environment (Annise Dobson)-research on earthworm impacts on soil and plants, working with RWA on measuring success of invasive species management, collecting invasive earthworms, collecting soil samples (2cm diameter, 10-15 cm depth), sampling leaves (3 leaves maximum per plant/tree) Lake Gaillard (41.339459, -72.787557), (9/30/2025-9/30/2026).

- New Haven Parks (Mr. Stephen T. Hladun, Deputy) – repair, rebuild damaged rock wall, Edgerton Park exterior rock wall abutting RWA property, (12/15/25 – 1/12/26).
- Yale University School of the Environment (Maddie Annis)-soil sampling in and around slash walls trying to uncover the interacting impacts of downed dead wood inputs into soil vs. live root inputs as trees regenerate with and without deer pressure. N. Madison, Lake Saltonstall, Prospect, and Seymour slash wall sites (11/1/2025 – 2/1/2026).
- TRC Environmental Corporation (Mr. Christopher Lindahl, Licensed Environmental Professional)-sampling of groundwater monitoring wells (MW-10, MW-21, MW-22) required in connection with an environmental monitoring program being conducted at a site located at 1817 Dixwell Avenue Hamden, West of Lake Whitney along dirt road from Mather Street in Hamden just east of Lake Whitney Glenn Condominiums (11/1/2025 – 11/1/2026).

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural fields – Corresponded with potential tenant of the Prospect fields.
 - Madison, 702 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) – Abutter installed underground power line through driveway and would move the shed and container when that is complete.
- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in Hamden, Bethany, Orange, and North Branford. A new population of water chestnut was found in upper Lake Whitney. Reviewing continued removal of barberry and other invasives at Lake Gaillard.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	64.5 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	3.25 acres

- Deer hunt – Scouting period occurred in October. Hunt began on October 31st. One hunter's permit was revoked for not following various rules.
- Land Use Plan – In progress.
- Hamden, Waite St. pollinator pathway garden (HA 6A) – Garden preparation and planting was done.
- Drone flights - Conducted flights for pipe bridge inspection on Washington Ave. in New Haven, over the West River and to map new population of water chestnut in the upper Lake Whitney basin.

There were no other land items to report.

Chair Levine reviewed upcoming Authority meeting assignments:

- November 20, 2025 – J. Oslander
- December 18, 2025 – G. Malloy
- January 22, 2026 – P. Betkoski

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

At 5:14 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy and seconded by Mr. Eitzer, the Committee voted to adjourn the meeting.

Mark Levine, Chair

UNAPPROVED

Tap Into Nature



EVENTS

Oak Identification Walk – Lake Saltonstall

Saturday, September 13, 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Join Nicole Smith, the RWA's Natural Resources Analyst, and learn to identify local oaks. After a brief overview of tree identification, the walk will focus on oak ID as well as learning about the importance of oaks to our ecosystems. Wear appropriate footwear, as part of the hike is off-trail. Meet at the fishing shack via the main gate at the Saltonstall recreation area – 100 Hosley Avenue, Branford, CT.

Lake Gaillard Walk-a-Thon

Sunday, September 21, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

This 6.9-mile walk or run around Lake Gaillard is hosted by the RWA and the Northford-North Branford Women's Club as a fundraiser. Start walking anytime between 9 and 11 a.m.; all walkers must be off the trail by 1 p.m. A shuttle bus will take walkers to the gate at Beech Street from the Atwater Library parking lot in North Branford. There is no parking at Lake Gaillard. Bikes and pets are not allowed. For more information, call 864-288-7760 or send an email to northford.nbwomensclubfwc@gmail.com.



Oak Identification Walk – Maltby Lakes

Saturday, October 4, 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Join Nicole Smith, the RWA's Natural Resources Analyst and licensed arborist, and learn to identify local oaks. After a brief overview of tree identification, the walk will focus on oak identification and their ecological importance. Wear appropriate footwear, as part of the hike is off-trail. Meet at the Maltby Lakes parking lot.

Boating Ends at Lake Saltonstall

Sunday, October 12

October 12 is the last day of the season to rent boats at Lake Saltonstall. Boat rentals will resume at the end of April 2026.



New Haven Bird Club Walk - Lake Dawson

Saturday, November 1, 8 – 11 a.m.

A fall walk to see the resident birds on the lake and in the woods, and possible late migrants. Expect some mild slopes on a well-maintained road. Meet at Lake Chamberlain RWA parking area on Sperry Road south of Morris Road in Bethany and carpool to Lake Dawson.



New Haven Bird Club Walk – Lake Chamberlain

Saturday, November 15, 8 – 11 a.m.

Join the New Haven Bird Club for a walk around Lake Chamberlain, looking for fall migrants. The walk is relatively easy. The forest, fields, streams, and lake provide a variety of habitats for birds. Meet at the Lake Chamberlain recreation parking lot.



Winter Tree Identification – Genesee Recreation Area

Saturday, November 15, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join Nicole Smith, the RWA's Natural Resources Analyst and licensed arborist, at Genesee to learn how to identify trees in the winter without leaves, using bark, buds, and leaf scars. Dress for the weather and wear comfortable footwear. Meet at the Genesee recreation area parking lot, Rt. 79 in Madison.



Fishing Ends on RWA Properties

Sunday, November 30

Fishing on RWA properties is not permitted after November 30. The RWA recreation areas are privately owned and follow different regulations from public lands with a year-round fishing season. Fishing resumes on April 1, 2026.



! Please note that all events are subject to cancellation due to inclement weather. Please follow "Regional Water Authority Recreation" on Facebook for updates.



Please Leave Your Dogs at Home



Lock Gates Behind You



Recreation Areas Close at Sunset



Claire C. Bennett Recreation Program



Visit: <https://www.water.com/about-us/in-the-community/recreation/>



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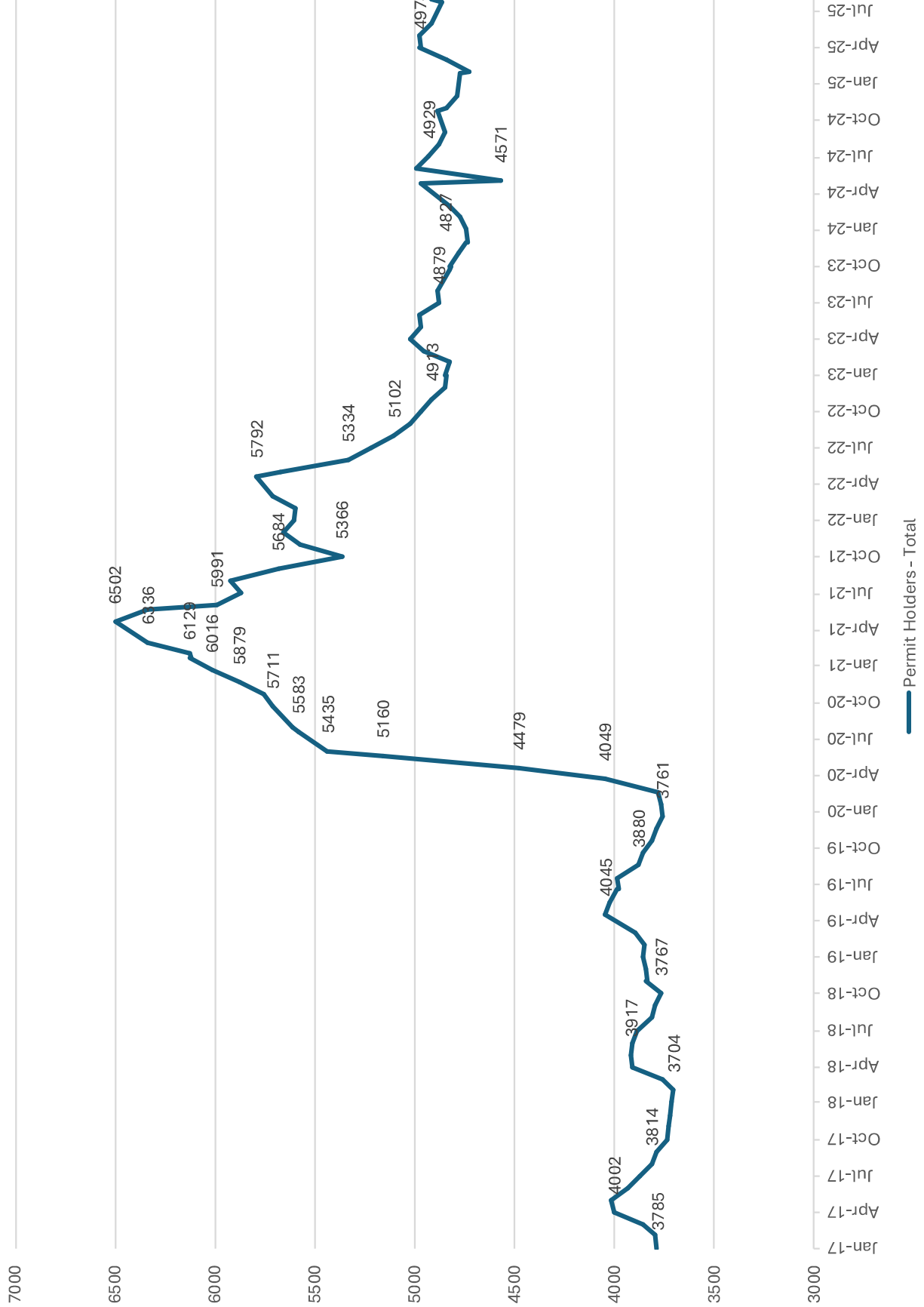
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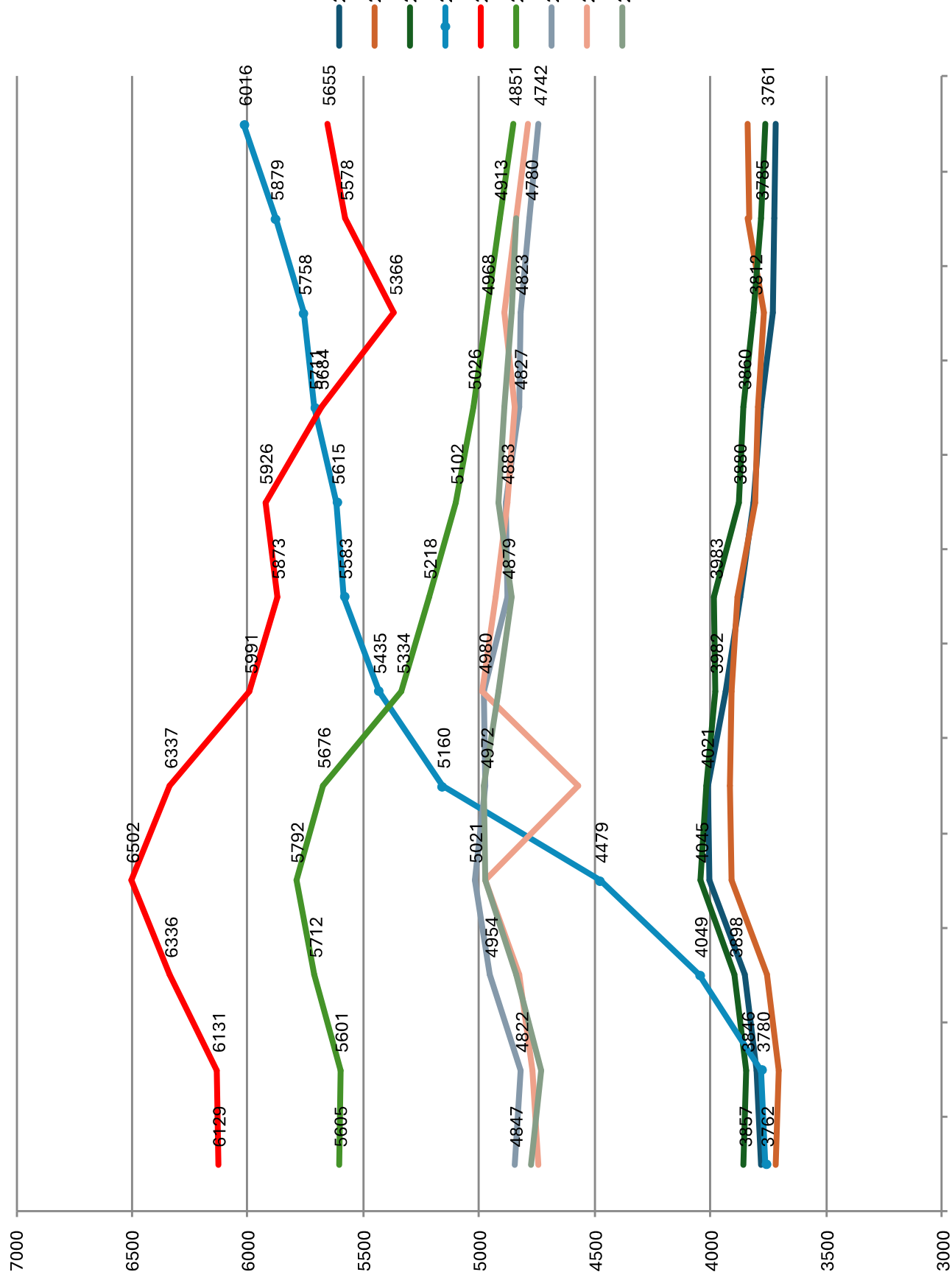


August 2



Permit Holders - Total





Sugarloaf area - Guilford



SUMMARY SCHEDULE OF IMPORTANT DATES FISCAL 2026 PROJECTIONS AND FISCAL 2027 BUDGET REQUESTS		
	2025-2026	
	Oct 7, 2025	Management begins capital budgetary process by requesting project managers to complete capital budget input forms
	Dec 5, 2025	Management begins O&M budgetary process by requesting projections for FY26 payroll through May 31, 2026
	Dec 2025 to Feb 2026	Finance requests budget managers to project FY26 and FY27 O&M expenses and revenue
	Mar 16, 2026	Management-approved FY27 capital and operating budgets are <i>electronically sent</i> to the Authority
A	Mar 30, 2026 (or later in the week)	Management discusses FY27 capital budget with the Authority, anticipating that the Authority will approve distribution of preliminary capital budget to the RPB. (special meeting)
A	Mar 30, 2026 (or later in the week)	Management discusses FY27 operating budget with the Authority, anticipating that the Authority will approve distribution of preliminary operating budget to the RPB. (special meeting)
	Apr 1, 2026 (subject to above)	Management <i>electronically sends</i> the Authority's preliminary budgets to the RPB and Office of Consumer Affairs
	Apr 13 to Apr 17, 2026	Meet with OCA to discuss budgets – if requested
R	Apr 13 to Apr 17, 2026	RPB Finance Committee meets with management (potential special meeting)
R	Apr 13 to Apr 17, 2026	Land Use Committee and Consumer Affairs Committee meet with management (potential special meeting)
R	***	Prior to Finance Committee meeting on 5/11/26 (regular meeting), the chairs of the Land Use Committee and Consumer Affairs Committee convey their comments to the Finance Committee
R	May 11, 2026	RPB Finance Committee (regular meeting) meets to comment on the budget (other RPB members are invited to attend)
A & R	May 28, 2026	Regular full RPB meeting with Authority in attendance -- Finance Committee makes its recommendation regarding the FY27 budgets to the full RPB
A	May 28, 2026	Authority reviews and votes on operating and capital budgets. (meet after RPB Board meeting)
	May 29, 2026	Management sends approved budgets to Trustee by 5/29/2026 (or late on 5/28/2026)
R	RPB / RPB Committee meetings	
A	Authority meetings	

Note: Good Friday is April 3, 2026, Easter is April 5, 2026, Passover is from Wed. (evening) April 1, 2026 through Thur. (last day) April 9, 2026.

Other holidays include Monday, January 19, 2026 Martin Luther King Day and Monday, May 25, 2026 Memorial Day

December 10, 2025
Land Use Committee Meeting

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
November 30	61%	69%	66%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
November 30	2.02	2.96	3.91
Fiscal YTD (6/1/24 – 11/30/25)	13.65	20.54	22.96

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Cheshire – Interactions with property owner of 20+/- acres continue.
- Cheshire, former Bis property (CH 5) –Conservation easement signed/sent DEEP. Discussions ongoing with DEEP about the COT and/or title insurance.
- Hamden condemnations (HA 5A and HA 7) – Condemnation deeds completed. Waiting for instructions from DOT.
- Killingworth, Abner Lane Rd. (KI 6) –Class III land with Killingworth Land Trust and Madison Rod and Club.

Rental houses:

- Woodbridge, 1029 Johnson Rd. – Consulted Murtha on lack of progress. Issued letter to Tarlowski's requiring them to send us their plans (i.e. timeframe to complete house) by Dec. 1st.
- Woodbridge, 1955 Litchfield Tpk. (WO 1) – Exploring possibility of demolition of the house and the old treatment building with Environmental Planning staff.

Forestry Update

- Worked with three maple tapers on various management goals, including expanding operations, enrolling in Audubon's Bird Friendly sugarbush program, and access issues.
- Worked with a volunteer to obtain a donated evergreen tree for the Pardee Seawall Park's annual Christmas tree display.
- Contracted vendor to perform a turtle survey to help determine plans for the design of the slashwall at Lake Saltonstall.

Recreation

- Held winter tree identification walk at Genesee with 10 people.
- Fishing ended on our properties for the year on Nov 30th.
- Recreation staff worked on bog bridges at Lake Hammonasset and reblazed some trails.

	November		October	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
Permit Holders	4,840	4,838	4,857	4,889

Special Activity Permits

- A. DiCesare Associates (Clay Carlson)—perform a routine and underwater inspection of the Lake Whitney Bridge, contracted by CTDOT to perform the inspection (11/19/25).

- Yale University School of the Environment- (Dr. Craig R. Brodersen) - Field trips in field botany and forestry. - North Madison Cedar Swamp off of Rt. 80, (11/15/25 – 11/15/26)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Madison, 702 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) –some of the underground utility conduit was slightly over the property line. Abutter showed where Gesick set the stakes with agreed with abutter's survey. Abutter will relocate stakes to locations that agree with Gesick's 2006 survey.
 - Madison, 752 Summer Hill Rd. (MA 9) –Materials still encroaching and abutter informed to remove everything and have corners visible by year end.
 - Hamden, 0 Willow St. (HA 19) – Found horse trail markers on the property. Contacted DEEP staff since the trail was coming from state property. Removed the markers from our property.

- Invasive plants – Treated or documented invasive plant populations in North Branford.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	10 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	2 acres

- Deer hunt – 2025 hunt concluded. Harvested deer by location are shown in the table below. Post-hunt surveys were mailed out.

Property	Does	Bucks
North Branford	9	10
Bethany	0	1
Prospect	2	4
Seymour/Ansonia	0	1

- Orange, Baldwin Rd. guy wire (OR 4) –Manager said the staff would contact others to move the matter along.

Attachments

- November 7, 2025 - A new generation of CT kids are learning to hunt on 'Pheasant Lane' – CT Public Radio
- November 21, 2025 - Will Connecticut's winter weather help or hurt the invasive Spotted Lanternfly population? – CT Public Radio
- November 21, 2025 - Aquarion and Connecticut Water sold customers water contaminated with PFAS, lawsuits claim – CT Insider
- December 2, 2025 - The EPA is changing how water in the U.S. is protected. Here's why CT environmentalists are alarmed – Hartford Courant
- November 21, 2025 - CT officials warn new EPA rule threatens at least 59,000 acres of wetlands, Long Island Sound - NH Register

Upcoming Agenda Items

January 2025 -

A new generation of CT kids are learning to hunt on 'Pheasant Lane'

Connecticut Public Radio | By [Aine Pennello](#) - November 7, 2025

Twenty minutes from the highway, off an old dirt road in Colebrook, Connecticut, dozens of people are milling about, wearing bright orange hats and vests, getting ready to hunt pheasants.

There's bacon on the grill, a place to practice target shooting, and plenty of birds to hunt. But the hunters are not the big, burly guys you might be picturing. "As a kid, I would say I'm decently experienced," said 14-year-old Garrett Zagurski. "But like, if we're talking about hunters who've been around 20, 30 years. I know nothing compared to them," Zagurski said. Today's hunters are all children.

Every year, the state of Connecticut puts on a series of training days for kids ages 12-15 where they learn to hunt different animals. The goal is to promote gun safety and to get more kids excited about hunting.

Like many states across the country, Connecticut's hunters are greying. Over half the state's deer hunters are aged 50 or older, [according to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection](#), and few young people are taking up the sport. Last year, 468 licenses were sold to junior hunters, down from 489 in 2023.

"There's a much smaller percentage of kids who are participating in it and that's due, in large part, because families aren't hunting like they used to," said Tom Donlon, who coordinates hunter education programs for DEEP.

What was once a common scene in hunting circles, of kids going out on weekends to shoot with their dads, is happening less often.

"All my buddies, we all went out," said Chris Campbell, a member of the Harwinton Rod and Gun Club, who's been teaching kids to hunt for almost a decade. "They've got soccer, they've got sports, they've got video games," Campbell said. And, he said, more people are getting turned off by guns. "Because of what happened at Sandy Hook, which [was] a terrible thing," he said. "A lot of people have preconceived ideas, whereas this is a very safe environment. You're practicing safety and you're learning a lot about people and nature."

Zagurski doesn't know any kids his own age who hunt and doesn't talk to his friends about his hunting trips. "To be honest, I usually don't tell them, and if I do, they either really don't understand what I'm saying about it or they don't care. It's kind of weird," Zagurski said.

Hunting the pheasants

After a couple of practice shots, Zagurski makes his way up a hill to a cage full of pheasants. The birds are not native to Connecticut and are stocked by DEEP from October to December, bringing in a total of approximately 15,000 to 20,000 birds a year.

A team of trainers, and a hunting dog named Penny, guide Zagurski through a field where the birds are hidden. Each kid gets two pheasants to hunt. After a couple of yards of bramble and grass, Penny finds the first bird.

Zagurski gets into position. A trainer opens the launcher remotely and the bird flies up. Zagurski fires and tiny tufts of feathers fly through the air while Penny runs to get the bird. "Good girl! Good girl!" yells Matt Funchion, Penny's handler.

Then it's on to the second bird. This time Penny stays next to the bird. It's closer to real-life hunting and the stakes are higher. Zagurski needs to be careful where the bird goes so he doesn't accidentally hit Penny.

"If it stays low, you do not shoot," said Rob Kalita, one of the trainers. "We want a good height. Above head height, alright? Plenty of room to work with."

Zagurski pauses and takes aim. He hits the bird in the wing and Penny retrieves it. "Perfect, you did perfect," Kalita said.

Back at the bottom of the hill, Campbell waits for each kid and takes photos of them next to a sign that reads "Pheasant Lane." "This was actually a lot of fun," said 12-year-old Evan McMaster, who promises to come back next year.

There might not be enough kids to replace the older hunters aging out of the sport, but for the kids here today on Pheasant Lane, it's a start.

Will Connecticut's winter weather help or hurt the invasive Spotted Lanternfly population?

By [Dan Amarante](#), Nov 21, 2025 - WNPR

The Spotted Lanternfly, or SLF, is an invasive pest that has exploded in population across [Connecticut](#) over the last three years, threatening native plants and quickly rising ranks to become one of the state's most hated bugs.

Originally from Asia, this leaf-hopping insect emerged in southeastern Pennsylvania in 2014 and since has expanded to at least 16 states as of July 2025. Fittingly, these flies are feasting in their new "home" thanks to another invasive species native to Asia. *Ailanthus altissima*, nicknamed the Tree of Heaven, is the primary food source of the SLF, potentially creating a hellish scenario for Connecticut's native ecosystem.

Squish on sight

Why get rid of them? Can't we just coexist in peace? Unfortunately, the Spotted Lanternflies have chosen violence in the form of consumption. According to the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, nearly half (47 percent) of forest trees in the state are considered potentially susceptible to the SLF, and several fruit tree species (like apples and cherries) also are vulnerable. Grapes and hops also are at high risk from these pests, possibly affecting the state's vineyards and breweries.

With millions of dollars across several industries at stake, local leaders began urging residents to do their part by eliminating as many lanternflies as possible. Despite community efforts to stop the spread of these pests in our state, Spotted Lanternfly sightings were [reported in nearly every corner of Connecticut by fall 2025](#).

Can winter save us?

Unfortunately, SLF are a hearty and resilient species, largely thanks to their youngest members. While the first hard freeze of autumn kills nearly every adult, egg masses laid by females on tree trunks can survive temperatures far below zero. The secret to their survival is in the shiny gray, waxy protective coating surrounding the eggs. Acting as an insulator, this coating shields the eggs from nearly anything that nature throws at them.

Want more New Haven Register?

A 2024 study exposed SLF egg masses to various temperature ranges, and the results were surprising, with the researchers writing, "Our findings suggest that [Spotted Lanternflies] will be able to survive in colder climates than initially thought." That study ultimately determined that -18 degrees Fahrenheit is a conservative estimate for a lethal temperature for these pests.

We would need an unrealistically harsh winter to significantly reduce the SLF population in Connecticut. The Hartford area hasn't dropped below -15 degrees Fahrenheit since January 1984, and only on two days (Feb. 14-15, 2016) have temperatures sunk below -10 degrees so far in the 21st century. With winters trending milder due to climate change, the odds of cold weather killing this species in Connecticut are extremely slim.

With a temperate climate, Connecticut's average yearly temperature range provides a favorable environment for Spotted Lanternfly spread.

Iowa Environmental Mesonet of Iowa State University

Recent studies also have looked at the most suitable weather conditions for these pests to spread, and it may come as no surprise that the temperate climate of southern New England is nearly perfect for a thriving lanternfly population. Connecticut is located in a "Goldilocks zone" of temperatures compared to other parts of North America, often featuring winters that aren't too cold and summers that aren't too hot.

Nature is healing, sort of

Recently, evidence has emerged that some predatory species are fighting back. [Connecticut's official state insect, the praying mantis](#), was found to be one of the top predators of the SLF in China, and even chickens have been observed snacking on these pests. Time will tell whether any of these predators will have an impact on reducing SLF spread.

What can we do now?

What can be done this winter to reduce the number of SLF pests flying around next summer? The simplest solution is egg scraping. By removing as many egg masses as possible, residents can help put a dent in the number of nymphs that emerge in spring.

Like a twisted version of an Easter egg hunt, egg scrapers are looking for grayish-brown streaks that are roughly 1.5 inches long. Some of them look as if they were recently smeared with putty, while others will appear dried, cracked, or partially eroded. To remove an egg mass, scrape it with a putty knife or credit card until the mass is removed. Experts recommend putting the egg mass into a solution of rubbing alcohol or hand sanitizer, but thoroughly smashing it will also do the trick.

Aquarion and Connecticut Water sold customers water contaminated with PFAS, lawsuits claim

By [Bruno Matarazzo Jr.](#), CT Insider - Nov 21, 2025

File photo of Aquarion Water Company headquarters. Aquarion and Connecticut Water Co. are facing two lawsuits claiming they sold customers water contaminated with high levels of PFAS.

Ned Gerard/Hearst Connecticut Media

WATERBURY — A judge rejected requests by Connecticut Water Co. and Aquarion Water Co. to dismiss [two proposed class-action lawsuits](#) accusing the utilities of selling drinking water contaminated with hazardous levels of [PFAS](#), commonly known as “forever chemicals.”

Two separate lawsuits were filed, one against Bridgeport-based Aquarion Water Co., a subsidiary of Eversource that supplies water to 780,000 residents in 73 cities and towns in Connecticut, Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Another lawsuit was filed against Connecticut Water Co., a Clinton-based company that serves approximately 350,000 residents.

The decision, handed down by Judge Daniel Klau last week, allows the cases to move forward in state Superior Court in Waterbury.

PFAS are artificial chemicals that have been used in manufacturing since the 1940s that have been added to or used in products such as metal coatings, clothing, furniture, adhesives and food packaging, according to the lawsuits filed by the Stamford-based law firm Silver Golub & Teitell LLP.

The plaintiffs contend that the companies charged customers full price for water that was unfit for consumption, alleging they would not have purchased it had they known it contained unsafe levels of PFAS.

Their amended complaint seeks monetary damages under consumer protection and common-law theories, including breach of warranty and strict liability.

"PURA's established rates are reasonable per se, and if Plaintiffs have a complaint about the service provided and the rates charged for that service, they must first seek relief with PURA, which has the statutory duty to investigate the validity of the Plaintiffs' allegations and, if necessary, order restitution, proactively revise the applicable fee schedule, or administer any other relief authorized by statute," attorneys for Aquarion argued in its motion supporting the motion to dismiss.

An attorney for Aquarion argued in court documents supporting the motion to dismiss that neither the state Department of Public Health nor the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency had no testing requirements or maximum contaminant levels for PFAS during the "class period," which is not defined in the complaint. Aquarion said the EPA set regulations in June 2024 that give public water systems three years within which to complete initial monitoring of PFAS levels and must disclose those monitoring results to the public starting in 2027.

Aquarion started testing in 2019.

"Thus not only was Aquarion testing and publishing its data well in advance of regulatory requirement, the PFAS levels found in a substantial number of Aquarion's source waters ... fall at or below the new (maximum contaminant levels) — levels that Aquarion is not legally required to meet for another five years," attorneys for Aquarion wrote in support of its motion to dismiss.

The new regulation, which went into effect on June 25, 2024, set MCLs for PFOS and PFOA at 4 parts per trillion, according to Aquarion's motion.

The Connecticut Water Co. noted that the plaintiffs are not alleging they suffered any physical injury or property damage, or that the water they purchased made them sick, according to the company's motion in support of dismissing the case.

"Rather, Plaintiffs' sole basis for damages is that they sustained economic loss because they overpaid for the water they purchased. In essence, they claim the water has zero value — in other words, they claim they would not have purchased the water if they had known it contained trace amounts of PFAS," the attorneys wrote in their motion.

The two companies argued the claims should be routed to the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority and the Department of Public Health, arguing the plaintiffs were required to pursue administrative remedies before turning to the courts.

Klau disagreed, concluding that neither agency had the legal authority to award the monetary relief the plaintiffs seek, particularly compensation for past economic losses.

"A party is not required to exhaust an administrative remedy if it would be demonstrably futile or inadequate," Klau wrote in his decision.

Because of that limitation, the court found that the doctrines of exhaustion of administrative remedies and primary jurisdiction did not apply.

"Connecticut Water remains unwavering in its commitment to providing high-quality drinking water to our customers. The water supplied by Connecticut Water has and continues to meet all current state and federal regulations for drinking water, including standards for PFAS. We will continue to vigorously defend ourselves against this lawsuit," Richard Rathsack, a spokesman for Connecticut Water Co., said in a statement.

The EPA is changing how water in the U.S. is protected. Here's why CT environmentalists are alarmed

Hartford Courant | By Stephen Underwood | Dec. 2, 2025

A new proposal by the Environmental Protection Agency could leave miles of wetlands in Connecticut more vulnerable to development and pollution, according to environmental advocates.

The EPA and the Department of the Army recently announced that they have signed a proposal to "revise the definition of the waters of the United States" which would narrow the scope of waters protected under the Clean Water Act, officials said. The Clean Water Act was signed into law in 1972 to provide protections for waterways, wetlands, marshes and streams.

The proposal comes after the 2023 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Sackett v. EPA* that found protections do not apply to wetlands and streams unlike traditional navigable waters under the Clean Water Act. The issue has long been controversial, as developers, farmers and others have long sought to narrow the scope of protected waterways for decades, arguing that it is too restrictive, according to the ruling.

"No longer should America's landowners be forced to spend precious money hiring an attorney or consultant just to tell them whether a water of the United States is on their property," said EPA administrator Lee Zeldin in a press release. "The EPA is delivering on President Trump's promise to finalize a revised definition for WOTUS that protects the nation's navigable waters from pollution, advances cooperative federalism by empowering states and will result in economic growth across the country."

The 2023 Supreme Court ruling also said that in order for a wetland to receive protection, it needs to have a "continuous surface connection" with a protected body of water, making the two areas "indistinguishable." Environmental activists say narrowing protections to these critical areas will be devastating for wildlife and contribute to runoff pollution entering waterways, according to the environmental group Save the Sound.

"The types of wetlands at risk of losing federal protection under the Clean Water Act are essential to the restoration and protection of the Long Island Sound and its watershed," said Denise Stranko, executive vice president of programs at Save the Sound. "Science clearly shows that they provide filtration and improve water quality, moderate stream temperatures, provide habitat for fish and wildlife and reduce flooding. With more frequent and intense storms, those protections are more important than ever."

Stranko said that because these protections will no longer be guaranteed, more responsibility will fall to individual states to protect their own wetlands.

"This proposed rule reaches beyond the Supreme Court's *Sackett v. EPA* decision, under which it claims to act, and contradicts the decades of law, science and policy that have required federal regulation of wetlands as waters of the United States. We will continue to use New York and Connecticut laws to protect wetlands and clean water in our region even as we fight to restore federal jurisdiction," said Roger Reynolds, senior legal director for Save the Sound.

The EPA said that in developing the proposed rule, the agency reviewed and considered feedback and recommendations from states, tribes, local governments and stakeholders and held listening sessions. The publication of the proposed rule will be followed by a 45-day public comment period, the EPA said.

Save the Sound officials said they will be reviewing the proposal and encourage the public to write to the EPA to restore the Clean Water Act. The 45-day comment period will close on Jan. 5, 2026.

CT officials warn new EPA rule threatens at least 59,000 acres of wetlands, Long Island Sound

By [Austin Mirmina](#) – NH Register - Nov 21, 2025

Connecticut conservation groups are pushing back against the Trump administration's bid to narrow the nation's Clean Water Act, warning it could [threaten the health of tens of thousands of wetlands in the state](#).

The proposed changes, announced Monday by the Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, could sharply reduce the number of wetlands, rivers and other bodies of water protected under the law's pollution safeguards, the [Associated Press reported](#).

"Water across the country is going to be affected by this," said Alicea Charamut, executive director of the Rivers Alliance of Connecticut, a nonprofit dedicated to protecting the state's rivers, streams and watersheds. "I can't even come up with a word for how I'm feeling about this. It's devastating."

The proposal builds on a 2023 Supreme Court decision, *Sackett v. EPA*, which removed federal oversight for large swaths of wetlands without clearly defining what should remain protected.

Under the administration's new "Waters of the United States" definition, only waters that flow year-round – and wetlands directly connected to them – would receive federal protections.

These changes could strip federal protections from at least 38 million acres of wetlands, or about 46% of all wetlands nationwide, according to a report by the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#), an environmental group. In Connecticut, more than 59,000 acres of wetlands could be at risk of pollution under the proposed rule, with New London County containing the highest percentage of those vulnerable areas, the council's report shows.

In a statement, Katie Dykes, commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, said her agency was "disappointed" by the federal government's decision to scale back the law.

"These changes will limit the applicability of Clean Water Act protections – damaging American lakes, rivers, and wetlands vital to clean drinking water, safe recreation and flood prevention," she said.

It remains unclear exactly which Connecticut waterways could lose coverage. Dykes said the changes "may result in the loss of some federal protections for certain waters in Connecticut due to terrain, landscape and hydrologic features."

She noted that state laws, including Connecticut's Water Quality Standards and the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act, "employ broad definitions that allow for protection and management of our surface water resources, even if they are not included in the federal regulatory scope."

EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin defended the rule in a news conference this week, saying it would cut red tape for farmers, home builders and other groups that have lobbied to scale back the Clean Water Act, the AP reported. He also said the proposal, which faces at least 45 days of public comment, would protect water quality because any lands removed from federal jurisdiction will still face regulation from states and tribes.

The announcement drew criticism from Connecticut environmental groups, who said the rollback could have major implications for the vast network of waterways that drain into [Long Island Sound](#). The Sound's watershed spans six states, including nearly all of Connecticut, and is home to about 9 million people.

"Removing protections for wetlands and streams will lead to increased pollution in the Long Island Sound as well as drinking water supplies," said Rep. Joe Courtney, D-2nd District, who co-chairs the congressional Long Island Sound Caucus. "Protecting wetlands also helps prevent flooding, which communities across Connecticut have been seriously impacted by in recent years."

Denise Stranko, executive vice president of programs at [Save the Sound](#), a nonprofit advocacy organization, said in a statement that wetlands now at risk "are essential to the restoration and protection of the Long Island Sound and its watershed."

These waterways, she said, filter pollution, moderate stream temperatures, provide habitat for wildlife and reduce flooding. With [climate change fueling heavier and more frequent storms](#), "those protections are more important than ever," Stranko added.

Charamut, of the River Alliance of Connecticut, said that while the state has strong water quality laws, "we should definitely not be dismissive of what's happening at the federal level because ... we are the terminus of a lot of watersheds that drain into Long Island Sound and don't have control over what happens in other states."

For Charamut, the most troubling part of the EPA proposal is its potential effect on clean water, which she said could seriously undermine the state's economy. Studies show communities without access to clean water face increased disease rates, reduced education rates, food insecurity and other issues.

Trump sought to [scale back the water law in his first term](#), while Democratic administrations generally have pushed to expand federal oversight. That back-and-forth has led to big swings in how the law is interpreted and applied.

Zeldin said the EPA's new proposal follows the Sackett ruling, which greatly narrowed the federal government's authority to regulate pollution entering certain wetlands. The case centered on Michael and Chantell Sackett, an Idaho couple who wanted to build a house near a lake.

Since his first term, Trump has moved aggressively to roll back longstanding environmental regulations, including [efforts to loosen greenhouse gas limits](#) and [weaken methane rules](#). He also tried to [shut down Connecticut's off-shore wind-power project](#). And on Wednesday, his administration said it would [scale back protections for threatened animal and plant species](#) and the places they live, according to the AP.

Dykes, the DEEP commissioner, said the new Clean Water Act proposal, combined with other efforts to weaken clean air rules, is "another example of EPA's abdication of its responsibility to protect public health and the environment." She added that state and local governments "are more important than ever to protect our resources, including inland wetlands and watercourses."