

SAVE OUR STREAMS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 05, 2021

Congressman Himes Tours Ridgefield Dam with SOS Founder Ostrand

US Representative Jim Himes came to Ridgefield on Tuesday after requesting Save Our Streams Founder Bill Ostrand give him a site tour of the Great Swamp Dam, as well as discuss federal proposals regarding its removal. As previously reported, federal officials from the USDA's Natural Resources Conservation service have recommended its decommissioning.

Now serving his seventh term in the US House of Representatives, Congressman Himes inspected the dam's function then held an hour long discussion with Mr. Ostrand, Ridgefield First Selectman Rudy Marconi, as well as former Ridgefield Town Engineer Charles Fisher. After the Meeting, Mr. Ostrand expressed his appreciation for the Congressman's visit. "I believe it's important for our elected representatives to understand what federal & state agencies propose to do to our property values," Mr. Ostrand said. "Having now witnessed Jim's genuine concern about his constituents and their communities, I can say that Ridgefield and all Connecticut's 4th are lucky to have him."

Whereas Connecticut's Department of Energy & Environmental Protection already is the true owner of the dam, the USDA/NRCS "Preferred Alternative" is to reconnect the swamp to the floodplain, affecting at least 128 properties -- both commercial and residential. These properties -- in their words -- **will have a substantial decrease in their values.**

"We must continue to fight this nonsensical plan, push for federal & state agencies to rehabilitate the dam if they believe it's obsolete, and work together to find common ground," as Mr Ostrand concluded, "I urge everyone to submit public comment on this USDA/NRCS proposal by going to the Save Our Streams website @ sosridgefield.org."

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