



# East Lyme Connection

SPRING 2024 EDITION



And just like that, we are in the second year of construction.

In this edition of the *East Lyme Connection*, we will outline the project activities for 2024. The first year is in the rear-view mirror. Project activities this year will include the roadway widening of I-95 northbound. This will be the most visible and impactful portion of the work.

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# 2024 PLANNED ACTIVITIES

This year will be the biggest noticeable change in the area. There will be a major traffic shift on I-95 northbound right past Exit 74. The project team will be building the new temporary section of highway from Exit 74 I-95 northbound off-ramp to the new portion of bridge. This will allow for a realignment of traffic off the existing northbound lanes which will then be reconstructed.



## Exit 74A I-95 Northbound On-Ramp / DOT Access Road

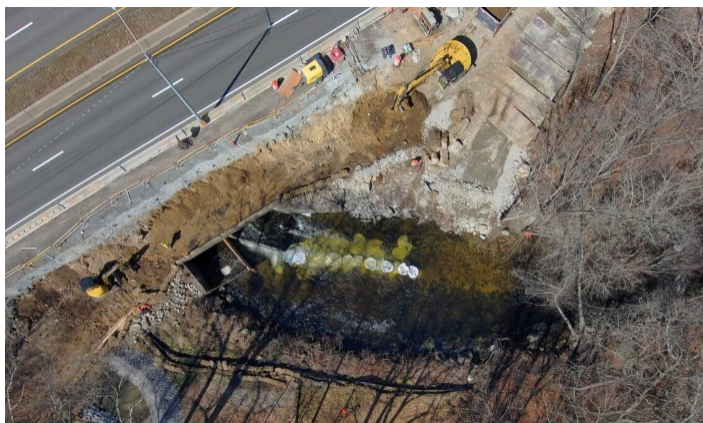
The project team will be completing retaining wall 111 (RW 111) and installing a temporary earth retaining system (TERS).



## Latimer Brook

- Selective demolition of certain existing components of the culvert
- Installation of retaining wall 115
- In-water work for environmental improvements

*It should be noted that all above activities for Latimer Brook need to be finished to complete Exit 74 I-95 northbound on-ramp.*



## Route 161

- Install drainage on the south side
- Relocate partial gas main
- Full depth roadway reconstruction



## Exit 74 Southbound On / Off Ramp

- Installation of fill in available areas.
- Complete retaining wall 105.



## Bridge 00250 (I-95 Over Route 161)

- Build the new section of the bridge
- Install new abutments
- Set structural steel
- Pour new bridge decks





## ENVIRONMENTAL 101: Bridge 0251 Over Latimer Brook

Bridge 0251 culvert passes Latimer Brook underneath I-95 and was first constructed in 1940. The Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) Fisheries department has stated through project permitting that “no confined or unconfined in-water work” is allowed between the dates of March 15<sup>th</sup> and May 15<sup>th</sup> for migration of diadromous fish (those that live in the ocean and spawn in fresh water) through the northern culvert barrel. The northern barrel contains a timber baffle system that allows migrating fish to swim upstream through the culvert. The fish then make their way towards the existing fish ladder, which provides a pathway to reach their final upstream spawning location.

The I-95 East Lyme project includes restructuring of the culvert headwall, wingwalls and apron. Latimer Brook will also experience some improvements, with the stabilization of the channel bottom at the culvert outlet area using existing and supplemental streambed material, and the installation of a precast concrete weir on the downstream side.

The beginning stages of this culvert work will focus on the outlet (95 NB) and modify one side at a time starting with the southern barrel. First, the apron and wingwall of the southern barrel will be removed and the southern side of the channel will be restructured. Next, the southern half of the precast concrete weir will be installed. This order of operations will then be copied for the northern barrel, with the addition of new baffles for next season’s fish migration. There will be no change to the width of the downstream channel or the width/length of the existing culvert. It should also be noted that all in-water work will be confined to using bulk sandbag cofferdams and sediment and erosion controls as necessary. The upstream side of the culvert will have a new wingwall constructed on the northeast side, a precast concrete water diverter and a modified headwall. Again, in-water work will be completed within a confined bulk sandbag cofferdam and there will be minimal change to the existing channel. The existing fish ladder will also remain.





## ENVIRONMENTAL 101: Bridge 0251 Over Latimer Brook (Continued)



These modifications will allow for retaining walls to be constructed on either side of the culvert, both northbound and southbound, to increase the width of I-95 and improve driving safety in this area.

The upstream side of the culvert will have a new wingwall constructed on the northeast side, a precast concrete water diverter and a modified headwall. Again, in-water work will be completed within a confined bulk sandbag cofferdam and there will be minimal change to the existing channel. The existing fish ladder will also remain.

If you would like more information on this subject, please contact us at [info@eastlyme.com](mailto:info@eastlyme.com).



## PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

**Joelle Westervelt, Senior Inspector**  
GM2 Associates, Inc.

**Please tell us about your day-to-day responsibilities.**

I serve as an environmental inspector on the project. Day-to-day I walk the job and look for potential washout areas, turbidity from pumping activities, environmental controls in need of repair, needs for equipment protection from fuel leaks, and slope protection in disturbed areas during construction. I have also been tasked with the inspection of retaining walls pertaining to the new southbound Exit 74 on-ramp where cofferdam and dewatering is necessary during the construction of the precast doublewalls. The contractor has completed the culvert extensions with the Patagansett River and reconstruction of the inlet and outlets of the culvert, which required bypass pumping and additional pumping within constructed steel pile and lagging cofferdams. Outside of field inspection, I assist with various administrative tasks, such as material testing, cost-plus, price requests and construction orders.



**Having studied biology in college, what led you to construction management?**

Studying biology led me to a passion for the environmental field. My older brother is a police officer in Branford and introduced me to my first boss out of college while he was assigned to a CTDOT project on Route 1. This led me to the environmental inspection aspect of construction, where I inspected areas of concern and soil management. During the I-84 widening project in Waterbury, I met many other construction inspectors and civil engineers, which inspired me to broaden my knowledge of the construction industry and obtain my NICET I and II. My experiences over the last five (5) years have helped me grow as an inspector and allowed me to have the confidence to inspect any operation that emerges on highway projects both large and small.

**Construction is a male dominant field, what advice would you give other females interested in construction management?**

My biggest piece of advice would be to hold your ground and take everything as a learning experience. When I first started in the industry, I lacked the experience and confidence to make decisions in the field, but now that I have had that time in the field, I feel that my confidence is my greatest tool as an inspector. I have arrived at a point in my career that others respect my opinion and take them into consideration. There will always be struggles as a minority in the industry, but I no longer let it hold me back.

