

# Poquetanuck Cove

## Canoe and Kayak Trail



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### Poquetanuck Cove – A Very Special Place

Poquetanuck Cove is a two mile long tidal estuary located between the towns of Preston and Ledyard, Connecticut. State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection experts describe the cove as the largest and highest quality brackish water meadow and cattail marsh on the Thames River.

An important extension of the Long Island Sound ecosystem, the cove is a State of Connecticut designated bird sanctuary and it provides shelter for significant flocks of wintering waterfowl each year. Bald eagles are a common sight along the cove during winter months.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Northeast Coastal Area Study lists the cove as a regionally significant fish and wildlife habitat. It is home to multiple species of plants and animals listed as endangered, threatened, or of special concern in the state of Connecticut.

Noteworthy fish species including alewife, white perch, blueback herring and striped bass inhabit or migrate through the cove. Fishing, blue crabbing, bird watching and paddling are all popular recreational activities at Poquetanuck Cove.

### Access Points to Poquetanuck Cove

*Drawbridge Road, Ledyard:* From I-395, take Route 2A East for 2.5 miles. Turn right onto Route 12 South (Military Highway). After traveling 1 mile and going over the Poquetanuck Cove bridge, turn right onto Drawbridge Road and turn right toward the boat launch area.

Beginning in 2008, a three year Phragmites control effort was initiated in Poquetanuck Cove. This effort involved the cooperation of more than 20 different entities which included members of the Thames River Basin Partnership and a variety of funding sources. *Phragmites australis* is an introduced, invasive plant species that had taken root along the fringe areas of the cove's marsh system. The high quality brackish water marshes of the cove have been documented to contain plant species rare to Connecticut. This project would not have been possible without the numerous volunteers who participated in gathering important data as part of this effort. For more information about Partnering to Protect Poquetanuck Cove, please visit the Thames River Basin Partnership website at [www.trbp.org](http://www.trbp.org).

*Royal Oaks Drive, Ledyard:* Take Route 2A to Cider Mill Road (Avery Hill). Then take the second right onto Arrowhead Drive. Go all the way to the end and turn right onto Royal Oaks Drive. The launching site will be at the end on the road. This area is useable at high tide only.

### A Safety Reminder

Poquetanuck Cove is a tidal body of water and is best paddled at high tide. For an approximation of the tide cycle in the cove, go to [www.saltwatertides.com/](http://www.saltwatertides.com/) and check the Thames River tides at the Yale boathouse.

Paddlers should wear U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets at all times! View the Connecticut Boater's Guide online, or call the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection at 860/424 3000 for more information.

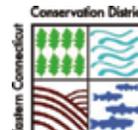
Always let friends or family know where you will put in, take out, and when you expect to return. Take a cell phone and keep it in a waterproof bag in case of emergencies (be aware that cell phone coverage may be spotty).

For more tips, visit the American Canoe Association online at [www.americancanoe.org](http://www.americancanoe.org).

### Partners

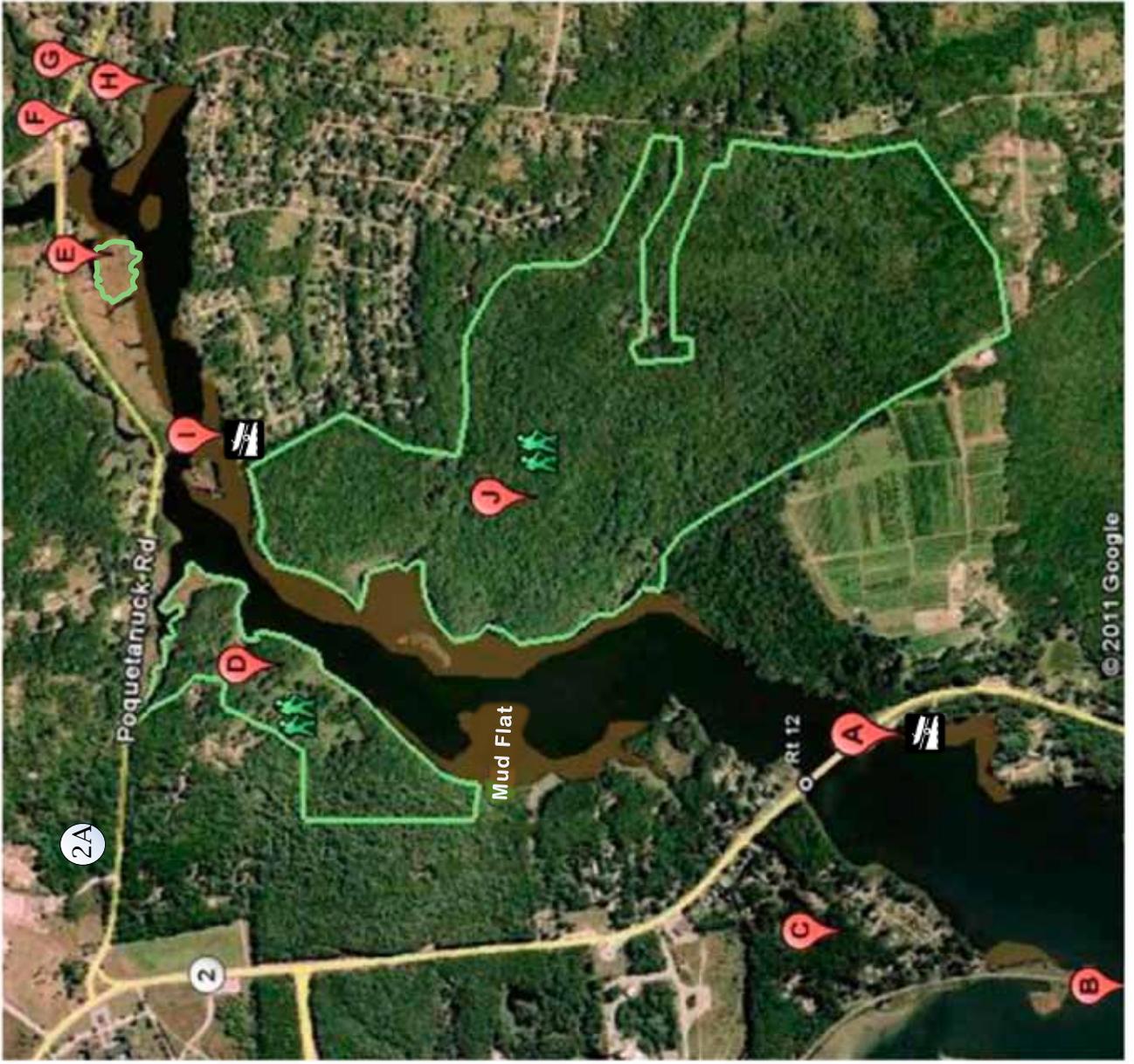
Funding for this paddle guide was provided by the USFWS. Technical support provided by the Eastern CT Conservation District, USFWS and Avalonia Land Conservancy in celebration of the 10th annual Thames River Basin Partnership Floating Workshop (2010). For more information on Poquetanuck Cove, visit [www.trbp.org](http://www.trbp.org).

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**A - Poquetanuck Cove Quentin Long Car-Top Boat Launch:** 100' carry to the put in point. Parking for 8 cars only. Interpretive signage highlights the ecological significance of Poquetanuck Cove. More information at <http://lisrc.uconn.edu/coastalaccess>

**B - Providence & Worcester Railroad:** This low railroad bridge limits the connection with the mouth of the cove and the Thames River. It also restricts the ability of powerboats to enter the cove.

**C - Happyland:** Before the hurricane of 1938, this part of Preston was a popular destination for outings and picnics. It included a dance hall. The current neighborhood honors the past by retaining the name.

**D - Poquetanuck Cove Coastal Access:** This property is owned by the CT DEEP. It includes an extensive upland trail system through the site's upland forest. Parking area and access trail begin just west of Route 2A's wetland/tidal creek crossing. More information at <http://www.lisrc.uconn.edu/coastalaccess>

**E - Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. Sedge Bed:** ALC acquired the 1.5 acres of tidal estuarine marsh in Preston in 1980 as a donation from the Lionel Wood family of Preston.

**F - Poquetanuck Brook (Indiantown Brook):** Where the Brookside Tavern is currently located was once the site of Lucas Mill. The brook has been relied upon to provide waterpower for an assortment of pre-industrial agricultural processing mills.

**G - Poquetanuck Village** is listed as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places.

**H - Joe Clark Brook (Cider Mill Brook):** The border of Preston and Ledyard.

**I - Royal Oaks Drive Canoe/Kayak Launch:** Town of Ledyard. Street side parking. Usable at high tide only.

**J - TNC Poquetanuck Cove Preserve:** This 234 acre preserve was donated to The Nature Conservancy in 1988. It contains a 1.5 mile loop trail through a variety of habitats. A significant portion of the shore frontage in Poquetanuck Cove is under stewardship of TNC due to the generosity of Desire Parker. More information at [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org)