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Written Testimony of Christopher Phelps, Program Director
Before the Connecticut General Assembly Environment Committee

Monday, March 16, 2009

Written testimony supporting Raised House Bill 6345, An Act Protecting The Natural Resources Of The Highlands Region.

Representative Roy, Senator Meyer, and members of the Committee:

Environment Connecticut submits this testimony supporting Raised House Bill 6345. This bill would provide protections to certain waters in the western portions of Connecticut that are part of the multi-state Highlands Region. In particular, as drafted this bill would apply to the Yale Farm Golf Course proposed on property containing headwaters in this region.

Headwaters are quite simply the lifeblood of our state's waterways. Protection of these vital resources is one of the most critical steps the General Assembly could take to ensure that Connecticut's rivers, streams and lakes remain clean and healthy.

Environment Connecticut urges the committee to amend this legislation to maximize its protection of headwaters in the Highland Region. Specifically, we wish to support the following change proposed by our colleagues at The Connecticut Rivers Alliance:

No permit shall be issued for and no person shall divert water from the waters of the state in an amount greater than fifty thousand gallons per day for [nonmunicipal recreational] uses not essential to public health and safety when the source of such water is headwaters in the federally designated Highlands region

Thank you for raising this important bill to protect our state's waters. On behalf of Environment Connecticut's statewide membership, I urge you to approve HB 6345.

Sincerely,

Christopher Phelps
Program Director
Environment Connecticut