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*The Voice of the Connecticut Forest Products Industry*

March 7, 2010

Testimony in opposition to:

**RE: S.B. No. 123 AN ACT CONCERNING PRESERVING NATURAL VEGETATION NEAR WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES**

Submitted by: Joan Nichols – President CT Professional Timber Producers Association, Inc.

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

The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association strongly opposes the removal of “harvesting of crops” from Subsection (a) (1) of Section 22a-40 of the CT Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Act. Neither the Connecticut forest products industry nor the thousands of private forest landowners in Connecticut need to be further regulated. Fragmentation of forest land is one of the highest threats to this valuable natural resource. Burdensome regulation will only serve to force more forest land into development. The Connecticut forest products industry is comprised of almost all small business owners, the lifeblood of Connecticut industry. Small business owners cannot absorb the cost of further regulation by the State of Connecticut. The burden of compliance will ultimately be passed on to the private forest landowner in the form of lower value for stumpage, which is the value of timber standing in the woods before harvesting and trucking costs are incurred.

Connecticut is fortunate to have a well trained professional logging industry Certified by the State of Connecticut. These state Certified foresters and loggers are trained in the best management practices to operate in and around wetlands and watercourses.

The Connecticut Professional Timber Producers Association supports the reference to CGS 1-1q in Subsection (a) (1) as a way to clarify what is agriculture when implementing this section of the statute.

The Association further supports Sec. 3 (d) provided “harvesting of crops” is maintained in Sec. 22a-40 (a) (1).