



Testimony of:
Save the Sound, a program of
Connecticut Fund for the Environment

In Support of Governor's S.B. 1006
An Act Increasing Certain Bond Authorizations
for Capital Improvements



Before the Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee

March 7, 2011

Submitted by Leah Lopez Schmalz

Save the Sound is a regional program dedicated to the restoration and protection of Long Island Sound. Together with its parent organization, Connecticut Fund for the Environment ("CFE"), a statewide non-profit environmental advocacy organization, it represents over 6,500 members. Since 1978, CFE has used law, science and education to improve Connecticut's environment.

Dear Sen. Daily, Representative Widlitz, and members of the Finance Revenue and Bonding Committee:

Save the Sound, a program of Connecticut Fund for the Environment, submits this testimony in support of Governor's S.B. 1006, An Act Increasing Certain Bond Authorizations for Capital Improvements. Sections 9 & 10 provide new authorizations for the Clean Water Fund that will maximize job creation while providing public health protections and environmental benefits to Long Island Sound.

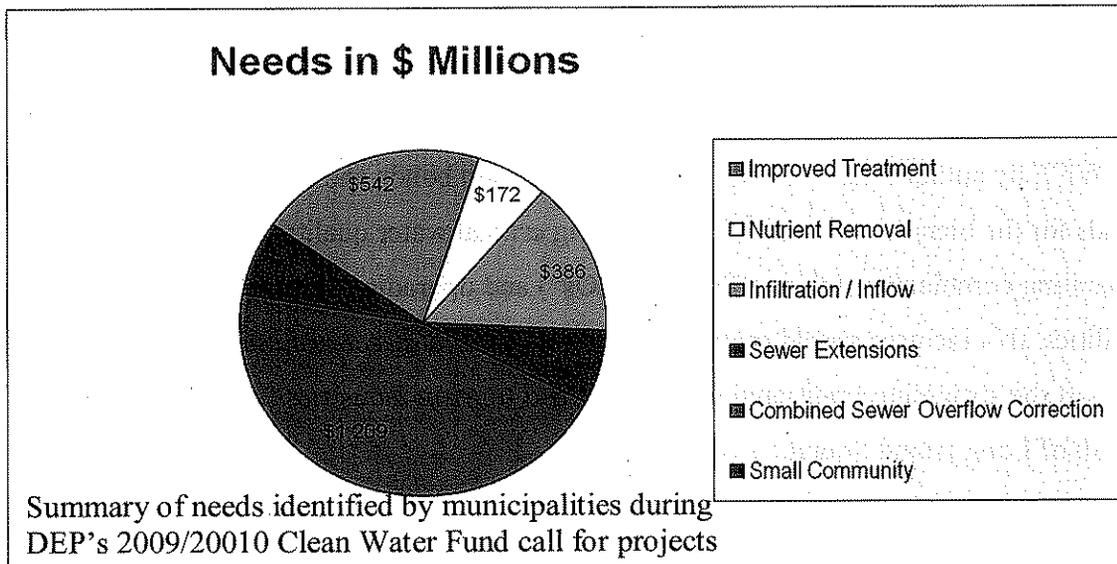
Clean Water Fund: Section 9 and Section 10

This bill would enhance the rebuilding of Connecticut's Clean Water Fund ("CWF") by authorizing \$187 M in general obligation bonds and \$472M in revenue bonds for the biennium. In addition to funding critical water quality projects like separating combined sewer overflows ("CSOs") and upgrading sewage treatment facilities, this increase would *create approximately 8468 direct and indirect jobs* and support the struggling traditional shellfishing and tourism industries that rely on the health of Long Island Sound.

1) The Clean Water Fund Need

The Clean Water Fund is the primary mechanism for upgrading sewage treatment plants, and related infrastructure, throughout the state. While over 600 projects in 114 municipalities have been funded with over \$2.2 billion, the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP) estimates that the current need is substantial: \$2.7 B in costs were identified by municipalities in response to CTDEP 2009/2010 call for projects. Furthermore, the agency has noted that \$5.8 billion will be required over the next twenty years to adequately meet our sewage infrastructure demands. Many of these projects, like combined sewer overflow separation (\$1.8B needed) and secondary treatment upgrades (\$1.4 B needed) are legally required and bind both our municipalities and the state. Additionally, newer issues are looming. For example:

- Numerous plants have not yet moved forward on nitrogen reduction construction to comply with the 2014 nitrogen removal requirements (\$700 M needed).
- EPA intends to require 28 facilities in the state comply with newly promulgated regulations for phosphorus removal (\$64 M in project costs have been identified).
- Increasing water quality regulations under the Clean Water Act's Phase II requirements could increase demands on the CWF as towns and cities move beyond sewage treatment discharge and are forced to confront stormwater runoff (at least \$100 M).



¹ Graph is provided by CTDEP.

2) **The Benefit of Investing in Clean Water**

The vision for healthy Connecticut waters that sustain a vibrant wildlife population, promote the local fishing and dining industry and support tourism with open and clean beaches has the added benefit of producing high quality jobs. Currently public health and wildlife vitality is put at risk by two problems: CSO flow and excess nitrogen. Public health is threatened by the two billion gallons of raw sewage that is discharged into our water ways every year from CSOs. These ongoing releases result in closed beaches and shellfish beds.² Similarly, excess nitrogen discharges lead to hypoxic, or low oxygen levels, which stretch from New Haven to New York City.³ This condition, which is primarily caused by inadequate denitrification processes at treatment plants, jeopardizes wildlife and submerged habitats. Both CSO separation and nitrogen reduction are required by law and both can be managed with adequate resources, like funding through the Clean Water Fund.

While these are projects that ultimately protect human health and the environment, like the \$8 billion/year economic-driver Long Island Sound, they are also short and long term job producers and enhancers. Authorizations for FY 2012 and FY 2013 are expected to create at least 8468 jobs.⁴ And once certain projects are complete existing industries can begin to grow job capacity. For example, once Bridgeport's CSO separation is finished local shellfishing companies will again be allowed to farm prime state beds that are currently closed by raw sewage discharges on 50% of harvestable days.

3) **The Clean Water Fund History**

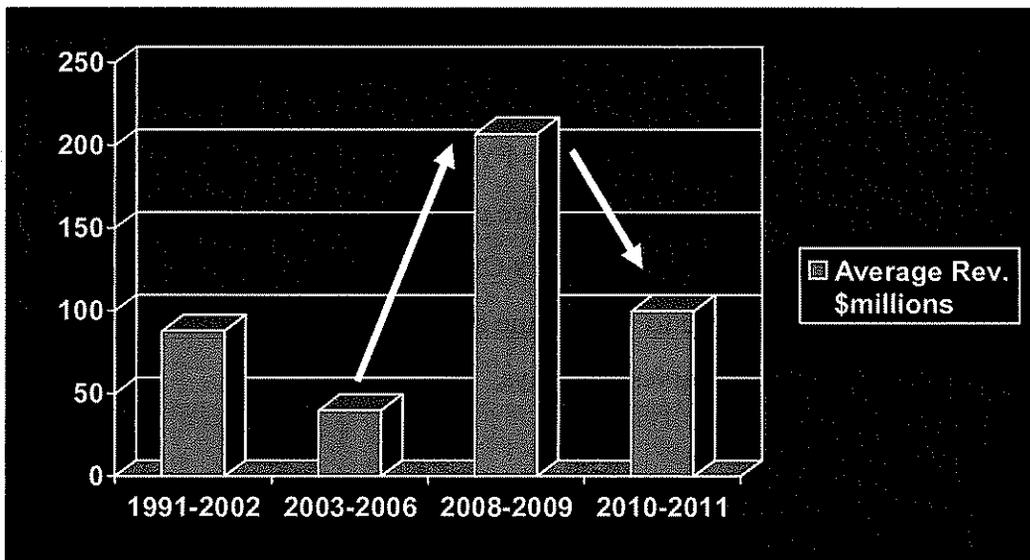
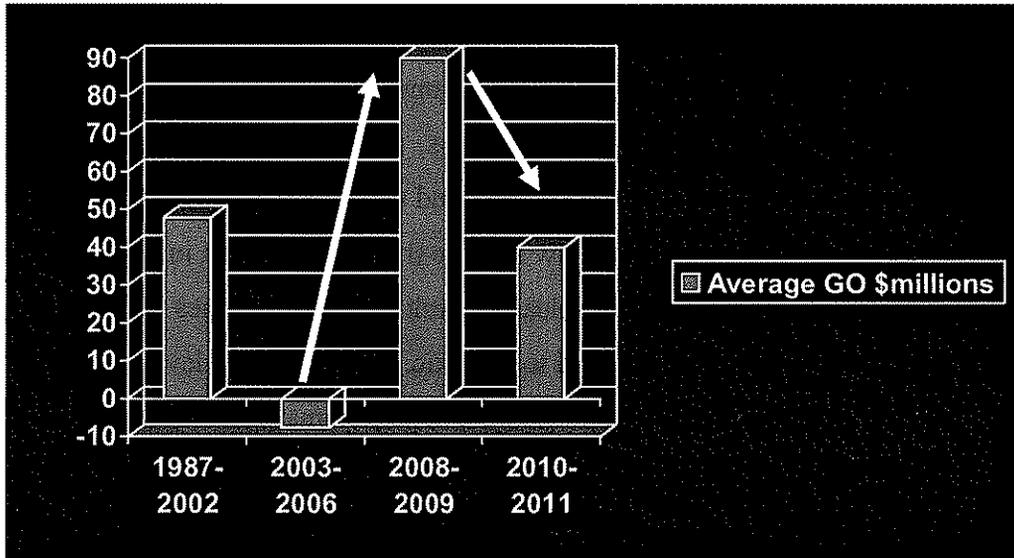
From 2002 to 2007, the Clean Water Fund was in serious trouble. It was created to ensure that towns and cities can afford to undertake sewage treatment projects to protect the health of its citizens and to clean up Connecticut's rivers and Long Island Sound. Despite years of great progress, the slow erosion of the Clean Water Fund

² See Shellfish Bed Maps attached.

³ See Hypoxia Map, attached.

⁴ *How Infrastructure Investments Support the U.S. Economy: Employment, Productivity and Growth*
http://www.americanmanufacturing.org/wordpress/wpcontent/uploads/2009/01/peri_aam_finaljan16_new.pdf.

escalated to a collapse in 2002. Because of swift action in 2007, there is hope for the fate of the Clean Water Fund.



The authorizations for FY 2008 and FY 2009 were some of the largest in a decade, but it was only the first step in rebuilding the state's clean water legacy. It took five years to decimate the fund, but it will take consistent levels of substantial funding to repair the damage. For example, despite the significant allocations in 2007-2010, there are CSO problems that are shovel ready, but nonetheless remain unfunded.

The value of a well-financed CWF to protect the public's health, particularly sufficient funding to separate CSOs, is clear. Over 80 miles of stream and 266 square miles of harbor fail to meet water quality standards, nearly 250 basements a year are inundated with sewage backup, and 100 days of beach-going are lost or hampered by pathogen worries each year.

After pulling the CWF back from the brink in 2007, Connecticut put itself on the right path—but failure to maintain that investment will force the state to fall behind on its commitments to safe beaches and healthy waters while sacrificing federal money and local jobs. Inadequate long-term CWF commitments could result in lakes and streams remaining impacted by sewage-laden water from combined sewer overflows for 100 years beyond the 2020 deadline and a 20-year delay in the cleanup of Long Island Sound (based on publicly available DEP data). And without these grants, construction delays for already approved projects will mean higher costs for residents and businesses. Failure to adequately invest in the CWF is a failure the state cannot afford. In addition to these much-needed upgrades, small investments in green infrastructure and other restoration projects allowed under the Clean Water Fund could provide water quality enhancements and livable, vibrant cities.

Simply put, Clean Water Funding makes Connecticut a better place to live and do business. We urge you to ensure clean water and green jobs remains a priority for the state by supporting Governor's S.B. 1006.

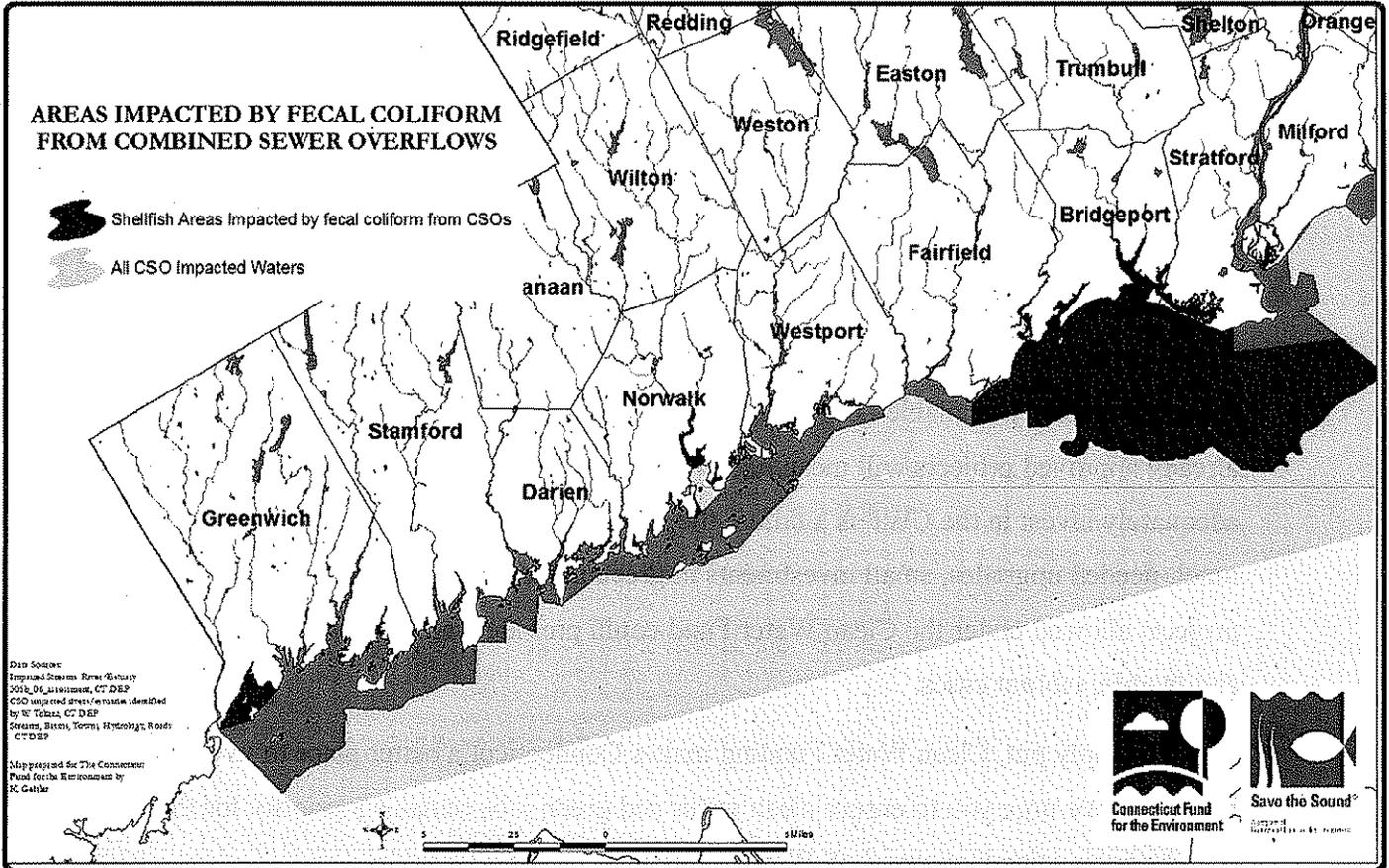
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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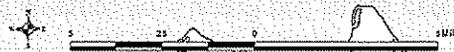
AREAS IMPACTED BY FECAL COLIFORM FROM COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOWS

-  Shellfish Areas Impacted by fecal coliform from CSOs
-  All CSO Impacted Waters

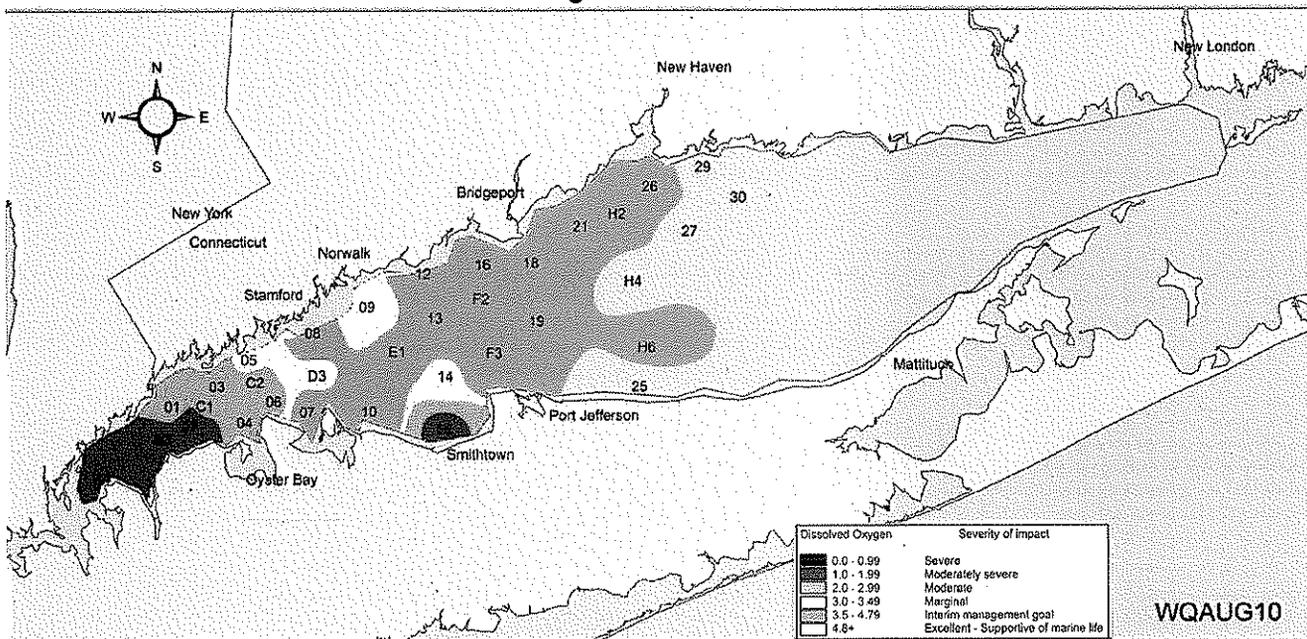


Data Source:
 Impaired Streams Runway Inventory
 2012, 06, 2012, CT DEP
 CSO impacted areas/streams identified
 by W. Tolson, CT DEP
 Streams, Bays, Toms, Hydrology, Roads
 CT DEP

Map prepared for The Connecticut
 Fund for the Environment by
 R. Galtier



Dissolved Oxygen in Long Island Sound Bottom Waters August 3 and 4, 2010



Areal Extent of Hypoxia During the WQAUG survey from 1999-2010

