



**MICHAEL G. WILMES, L.S.
DEBRA F. WILMES
1752 SAYBROOK ROAD
P.O. BOX 14
HADDAM, CT 06438-0014
860-345-2713**

March 19, 2011

Senator Gail Slossberg, Chair
Government Administration and Elections Committee
Legislative Office Building
Room 2202
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

**Re: Riverhouse Properties/CT State DEP
Proposed Land Exchange
Haddam, Connecticut**

Dear Senator Slossberg:

We live in Haddam at 1752 Saybrook Road, a little south of the 17 acre sand pit that the Connecticut State DEP purchased when they acquired the property to the east between the railroad tracks and the river. We have lived at this location for 30 years and are very familiar with the sand pit, the waterfront parcel and the adjoining Riverhouse facility. I understand that the Connecticut State DEP acquired the sand pit as part of a deal to purchase the riverfront property. These were both commercial properties along with the recent purchase of a resort on the Salmon River in East Haddam. We are at a loss to understand why the Connecticut State DEP is purchasing commercial land instead of forest lands that we would all like to see preserved.

It is our understanding that a proposed property exchange of the 17 acre sand pit parcel and 87 acres of forest in the Higganum section of the Town of Haddam has again been raised. We feel that this would be a very good deal for both the Connecticut State DEP and the Town of Haddam. The Riverhouse facility has been a big boost to the Tylerville section of Haddam and this will allow for more improvements to the area while reclaiming the former sand pit at the same time preserving 87 additional acres of existing forest. I understand that the Connecticut State DEP purchased this property and that it was not a donation to the state so there should be no reason that it could not be exchanged for a property that better served the mission of the Connecticut State DEP.

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The reasons are too many to list as to why we support this proposed land swap.

Thank you for your time and please call us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael G. Wilmes, L.S.



Debra F. Wilmes

