

My name is Jim Johnson. My family owned Sunrise Resort and sold 143.1 acres of the resort to the CT DEP in December, 2008. I am writing in support of Bill No. 6539 with the exception of the word "sale" included within the bill's language.

By selling the property to the State my family was under the impression the property would be used for the enjoyment of the public, specifically hiking, access to the Salmon River for kayaking, canoeing and the like and possibly camping. Within our purchase and sale agreement with the State, it clearly states "The State will allow the seller to run two festivals per year for the years 2009, 2010, and 2011.... Said festivals are commonly referred to by the sellers as the Connecticut Jazz Festival and the Cajun/Zydeco Festival." In negotiating with my family for the purchase of Sunrise, one could only think the State would not have intentions to resell the property if they were to allow us run these festivals.

Although my family had discussions with several developers, engineers and surveyors, we decided a lot more good could come by a State acquisition of our property. Neighboring Machimoodus State Park is a prime example. Hikers, dog walkers, family picnickers, nature lovers and plant & animal species are much better off than development of such pristine land. Prior to selling Sunrise to the State, my family sold 265 acres just across the Salmon River in Haddam Neck to The Nature Conservancy and the Town of Haddam. This contract had specific language forbidding the development of this land.

Regarding safety: as I am writing this email, there is a small demolition crew who have been working for about a month to take out a good percentage, if not all of the buildings on Sunrise. I have spoken with the foreman of the operation and was told the buildings would be taken out, but it is unclear regarding what is to be done with the foundations. Some of these foundations are 12' deep. Others are nothing more than good sized slabs of cement in the very middle of the resort on very steep terrain. These are dangerous and should not be overlooked.

Should you require additional information please don't hesitate to contact me by phone - 860-213-0564 or by email johnsonjimr@yahoo.com . Also if permitted, I could give a tour to any committee members at a mutually convenient time.

Thank you for your time.

Most sincerely,

Jim Johnson
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cc Representative Melissa Ziobron