



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – March 15, 2013
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Daniel C. Esty
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Susan Whalen

Raised Senate Bill No. 1015 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE NEW ENGLAND NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised Bill No. 1015 – An Act Concerning the New England National Scenic Trail (NET). The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) offers the following testimony.

DEEP supports this bill with slight modifications. This proposal is intended to provide the same rights and obligations concerning the New England National Scenic Trail (NET) as what are established for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail. DEEP recognizes the important role recreational trails and greenways play in our lives and communities. In support of this, we develop and maintain recreational trails and greenways on our state properties, and through our Recreational Trails Program and Connecticut Greenways Council, we work with many dedicated and passionate volunteers to establish trails and greenways in their communities.

The DEEP continues to lend our expertise to the NET's bi-state Executive Committee and Connecticut Trail Stewardship Council working to develop, manage and maintain the NET. We are fortunate to have this second National Scenic Trail designated and agree that our first National Scenic Trail, the Appalachian, provides a well established management model.

Because of potential conflict or confusion with other authority currently resting with the Commissioner of DEEP to acquire property, we request that the committee review a drafting change we suggest for the bill so that Section 1, lines 5-11 be revised to read: "(b) The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is hereby authorized [by purchase, gift, eminent domain or otherwise] to acquire [such] land[, including, but not limited to, rights-of-way and easements] for the purpose of protecting or enhancing scenic beauty, as may be deemed necessary to establish, protect and maintain the portion of the New England National Scenic Trail between Long Island Sound and the Massachusetts state line"

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP's legislative liaison Robert LaFrance at (860) 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov.