

To whom it may concern,

3/4/14

As a citizen of Connecticut, I am an enthusiastic outdoors-man & frequent state park/forest user, and I fully endorse and recommend HB 5369 & HB 5370.

I believe our state parks & forests have been subjected to a progressive series of neglect regarding their overall preservation and maintenance. I understand we have realized challenging fiscal constraints over time, however I believe it is time to address these effects on our state park & forest resources.

Excepting the several very popular and highly used areas, the following are examples of what I am referring to, as witnessed over the past several decades of personal use:

- \* Picnic & park areas that do not provide refuse & recycling collection points and/or removal.
  - \* Availability of open, clean restrooms with seasonal running water.
  - \* Trail maintenance, especially following storms (this seems to have been left to volunteers who use the trails, who go in with their own personal equipment, on their own personal time, and do the necessary work)
  - \* General litter pick-up (again concerned citizens seem to be the ones doing this).
  - \* Repairs to infrastructure - including kiosks, signs, foot bridges, parking lot & access road surfaces, etc.
  - \* General preventative maintenance - including erosion control, re-painting, replacing & restoring as necessary.
  - \* Availability of state personnel to patrol & monitor our parks & forests. This is especially evident in the area of rule & regulation monitoring, resulting in an increasing degree of violations that occur unchallenged (ie: off road vehicle use, unregulated hunting & fishing, frequency of alcohol & drug use, campfires, graffiti, etc).
- I believe this factor also contributes to the above points noted, as with less personnel presence available and with less involvement, proactive and preventative upkeep goes undetected & unreported, contributing to the cycle of neglect.
- Additionally evident is the lack of state personnel to assist, guide, educate & inform the general public.
- \* Implementation of proactive improvement & enhancement measures.

I believe we as the citizens of Connecticut are extremely fortunate to have the quantity & wide variety of areas of outdoor opportunity that exist here in our small state. Our state parks & forests are an amazing resource. They need to be maintained, protected & preserved on a higher level than they have seen as a result of continuing budgetary restraints.

Supporting & implementing the proposed bills being reviewed here are an important step towards generating the necessary revenues that our public parks & forests desperately require. I support these bills, and as involved & concerned citizen, I ask that you please do so as well.

Thank You !

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