

March 13, 2015

As a lifelong resident of Connecticut for the past 42 years, I am writing in support of reinstating \$195,000 in the DEEP budget for the Kensington Hatchery. You probably have received numerous letters extolling the virtues of the tremendous Trout in the Classroom and Salmon in the Classroom programs. This alone should be justification enough to keep the hatchery in service.

However, I'd like to share a brief story that demonstrates another benefit of the fisheries program, specifically the economic value the State of Connecticut receives from maintaining a top-quality fishery.

This past week, I was driving on River Road in Barkhamsted along the West Branch of the Farmington River. In a two mile stretch along the stream, I counted no less than six parked cars with out of state plates (New York, Massachusetts, and Vermont). This was in addition to about a half dozen vehicles with Connecticut plates. All of these cars belonged to fisherman.

The astonishing thing was not so much the out of state vehicles, but the conditions surrounding them. This was in early March.

On a weekday.

With two feet of snow on the ground and a water temperature of 36 degrees.

If a Connecticut fishery is drawing this type of attention on a day with such relatively poor conditions, imagine the traffic, along with the associated license fees, taxes and patronage of local businesses, these trout and salmon streams draw on a warm Saturday in June?

In order to continue to enjoy these fiscal benefits, the State must preserve the quality of the fisheries program. The Kensington Hatchery is a critical asset at the convergence of this economic and conservation ecosystem.

Thank you for your consideration.

David Garritt
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