

To whom it may concern:

I was recently made aware of section 3 of conveyance act HB 6998. This act would apparently hand over sections of Silver Sands State Park to the City of Milford for possible development. I feel that these areas should remain part of Silver Sands State Park. I am an avid birdwatcher and Silver Sands is one of the best birdwatching areas in the state. I frequently visit the park and I have hiked most of the park's habitats in search of birds. According to the E-bird citizen science website 233 species of birds have been recorded in the park. This ranks it among the top 10 best birding sites in the state by number of species recorded. Some of the rare birds found here over the past include White-faced Ibis, Connecticut Warbler, Blue Grosbeak, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Audubon's Yellow-rumped Warbler, and MacGillivray's Warbler.

Most people would think that the best places to look for birds in the park would be the beach and the marsh areas, but this is not correct. The best areas to find birds in the park are actually the brushy fields and woodlands that cover the undeveloped areas of the park. These areas are migrant traps. Hundreds of sparrows and other birds can be found in these areas in the fall. This is why the Connecticut Ornithological Association has held their fall "Sparrow Workshop" at the park in the past. These brushy areas are not pretty but they represent valuable habitat for migrating birds, and it is these areas that are being targeted for development. I would hate to see these areas destroyed. Hopefully Silver Sands can be kept intact for future generations to enjoy.

Sincerely,

John M. Oshlick

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