

To whom it may concern:

I strongly support keeping Kensington Hatchery operational and removing it from the list of cuts proposed in the governor's budget. This hatchery generates more money for our state than it costs, and it provides unique benefits that would be forever lost.

I'm a flyfishing guide and an outdoor writer, so part of my livelihood is directly linked to the quality of trout fishing in Connecticut. Decreased trout stocking will lead to less angler hours realized, less tourism, less revenue for small businesses like mine, and therefore less tax and license revenue for CT.

Our other two hatcheries are operating at maximum and will be unable to make up for the loss of Kensington's capacity and unique elements such as chilled water capability and uniquely favorable well water. Closing Kensington Hatchery would end the brood stock salmon stocking program in CT, and along with it up to 7,000 Atlantic salmon fishing trips per year. Valuable genetic traits defining Connecticut River salmon will also be lost forever. Our successful Seeforellen Brown trout strain will be lost, as will much of the trophy brown trout and sea run trout programs that generate significant tourism revenue.

Come on, folks. This is one's a no-brainer.

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