

Appropriations Committee Testimony  
State Agency Budget Presentations: Conservation & Development Subcommittee  
Public Hearing Mar 2, 2015

Members of the Sub-Committee

My name is Bruce Tolhurst. I live in Marlborough, CT. I am writing to you to express my thoughts on the State Agency Budget Presentations: Conservation & Development Subcommittee Public Hearing; regarding specifically the funding for the Kensington Hatchery.

I support keeping Kensington Hatchery operational and removing it from the list of cuts proposed in the governor's budget because this hatchery generates more money for our state than it costs, and it provides unique benefits that would be forever lost. Decreased fish stocking will lead to less angler hours realized, less tourism, less revenue for small businesses and therefore less tax and license revenue for CT. The current stocking programs generate roughly 2 million angler hours and approximately \$60 million in revenue. The closing of Kensington would eliminate less than \$195,000 in a multi-billion dollar budget, and would be poor economic policy.

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. The award winning Salmon-in-Schools Program would be terminated after this school year which would affect over 50 schools and more than 6,000 Connecticut students each year. Another approximate 7,000 schoolchildren in 75 schools will lose the Trout in the Classroom Program due to the need for chilled water during egg development, which is only available at Kensington. These very cost-effective educational programs also develop environmental awareness in kids. Keeping Kensington Hatchery operational makes sense economically, educationally and environmentally.

Thank you for your consideration in this important Conservation budgetary dilemma.

Bruce Tolhurst  
16 Virginia Rail Dr  
Marlborough, CT 06447