

Here we go again. I think my head is going to explode. I recently heard of yet another proposal to close the Kensington fish hatchery. To those of us who are trout and salmon fishermen this would have a very negative impact on some of the educational services we provide on a volunteer basis as well as impacting our quality of life in general. I am a native Nutmegger who moved away forty years ago but returned for family reasons. I'm delighted to be "home" in spite of doubling my property taxes and tripling my energy costs because of the wonderful fishing opportunities afforded by this state. You could say I'm pretty one dimensional. I fish all over the state during the season and spend the off season getting ready to fish the following season. I also volunteer as a CARE instructor and other venues in the "No Child Left Inside" program teaching conservation and fishing skills to children.

The following are impacts of the loss of this hatchery:

- Kensington production could not be moved to DEEP's other two hatcheries which were used to capacity.
- Trout in the Classroom program in over 100 tanks about 90 schools may be lost due to the need for chilled water (only available at Kensington) during egg development.
- Kensington has the only source of disease free seeforellen brown trout eggs which are the only trout on the current Trout in the Classroom hatching schedule.
- It is not clear what will happen to the TIC program since eggs from other species of trout available in the system do not develop at the appropriate time.
- The programs loss will affect over 10,000 kids each year
- The Salmon-in-Schools program, sponsored by the Connecticut River Salmon Association, would be terminated after this school year which would affect another 80-90 schools.
- Up to 7000 Atlantic Salmon fishing trips in Connecticut will be lost with the end of the brood stocking program. All salmon broodstock will be gone.
- The unique Seeforellen Brown trout will be lost to Connecticut anglers.

- Valuable genetic traits defining Connecticut River salmon will be lost forever.

I understand that the savings to taxpayers would be a mere \$150,000. I think that amount of money could be easily raised with additional fees. I remember the outcry that ensued the last time the Fish and Game Dept raised license fees. I would like to propose instead of raising the the license fees across the board, instituting a trout stamp program that would be borne by those benefiting directly from the function of the Kensington Hatchery. Other states have done this and although I know the state doesn't allow allocated funds it would be smart that the additional funds raised were somehow used for the fish hatchery system.

Many of us, like myself receive free senior citizen licenses and could easily afford to pay an additional stamp fee.

Please, lets try to cooperate and come up with a creative solution to this crisis other than shutting down a good and valuable program.

Sincerely,

Wayne Gustafson  
Deep River, Ct