Rivers Alliance of Connecticut is a statewide, non-profit coalition of river organizations, individuals, and businesses formed to protect Connecticut's waters by promoting sound water policies, uniting and strengthening the state's many watershed groups, and providing education on water stewardship.

We write to urge you to retain at the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

There has never been a more important time for independent reporting on science and the environment. The federal government is pulling down its science pages and silencing staff at the Environmental Protection Agency. In Connecticut, the entity that can be counted on to report to the public, without bias, on the overall condition of our environment and natural resources is the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). It is also the one place a citizen can go with a complaint about environmental management and be sure of getting a fair hearing and helpful response. CEQ also provides policy makers with carefully researched recommendations for changes in law and regulation.

All this is done for $174,000 per year. We estimate that CEQ saves the state many times more that amount in staff time, legislators’ time, consultants’ fees, and litigation. CEQ’s reports would have to be done by someone. The state needs a basic overview of its environmental status. DEEP does not have the resources to do this. There are several bills introduced each year requiring DEEP to be more responsive. The situation would be much worse if CEQ did not take responsibility for many complex responses.

The elimination of CEQ does not make financial sense. Connecticut has always valued facts, science, and the protection of natural resources. CEQ represents and implements those values.

Thank you for your attention. We would be pleased to answer questions you may have.

Margaret Miner, Executive Director

West Street, Litchfield rivers@riversalliance.org tel 203-788-5161