



WEANTINOGE  
HERITAGE LAND TRUST

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CELEBRATING  
10,000  
ACRES  
CONSERVED

March 13, 2018

**VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY**

Environmental Committee  
210 Capital Avenue  
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Raised Bill No. 427 AAC Public Trust Components of the State Water Plan

Dear Sen. Ted Kennedy Jr., Sen. Craig Miner, and Rep. Mike Demicco,

Founded in 1965 to benefit the general public through the conservation of natural areas, fish and wildlife, and working farmland, Weantinoge Heritage Land Trust is the largest land trust in Connecticut and the 18<sup>th</sup> largest in the United States by the number of lands we conserve.

Over its 52-year history, Weantinoge has permanently protected more than 10,000 acres in 17 communities throughout Northwest Connecticut. The organization's protected lands include designated wilderness areas, 28 working farms, streambelts, viewsheds, critical watershed lands, and 12 nature preserves open to the public with 18 miles of hiking trails.

**Weantinoge is strongly opposed to Raised Bill No. 427 that excludes private wells from the public trust and protection of the Connecticut Environmental Protection (CEPA). Water is a public trust resource and the public's interest in this communal and shared resource must be defended vigorously.** The exclusion of private wells from the public trust imperils waterways protected by Weantinoge. Private wells are a part of an underground water supply that is connected to wetlands, streams, lakes, and is indispensable for drinking water, public recreation, and wildlife. This exclusion will jeopardize water quality not only on Weantinoge lands, but also statewide.

Thank you for consideration and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or would like more information.

Sincerely,

Catherine M. Rawson  
Executive Director