



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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January 17, 2013

The Honorable Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor of Connecticut  
State Capitol  
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Recommendations for Legislation

Dear Governor Malloy:

The Council soon will submit its annual report to you on the condition of Connecticut's environment. Trend data in last year's report point to several chronic deficiencies in the state's environmental progress. Pursuant to the Council's responsibility to recommend legislation to correct deficiencies, today we are submitting several proposed steps to put or keep the state on track toward its stated goals of healthful air, sewage-free rivers, a vital Long Island Sound and well-managed land.

Several other deficiencies became evident during our investigations of citizen complaints pursuant to CGS Section 22a-13. The Council also is recommending legislative solutions to those.

In November, the Council published these recommendations in draft form and invited the public to a forum to offer comment and advice. The insightful input of the public helped the Council to refine the list on the following page.

The data that led to these recommendations can be found in last year's *Environmental Quality in Connecticut*. Additional information on specific topics such as environmental compliance and invasive species also can be found on the Council's website. As always, the Council and its staff are prepared to provide additional information or answer any questions you might have.

I hope that you find these recommendations useful as you prepare for the coming year.

Sincerely,

Barbara C. Wagner  
Chair

## CEQ Recommendations for Legislation – January 2013

### 1. Maintain the Foundation on which Connecticut's Environmental Progress is Built

Trend data confirm that progress in Connecticut's core environmental missions is tied to level of public investment. For progress to continue, there is no immediate alternative to adequate public investment.

#### Rivers, Lakes and Sound

- ❑ The state's Clean Water Fund is the foundation of progress toward sewage-free rivers and a Long Island Sound that sustains valuable marine life: Maintain bonding authorization at recent levels.

#### Fields, Forests, Wetlands

- ❑ Maintain farmland preservation funding at recent levels, enough for 2,000 acres per year.
- ❑ Authorize sufficient bonding for preservation of at least 10,000 acres of conservation lands annually.

#### A solid foundation requires management:

- ❑ Invasive species probably are the greatest single threat to native habitats, and the state's response to date has been inadequate: Appropriate sufficient funds to allow state agencies to prepare a defensive strategy against terrestrial invasive species. (An aquatic strategy exists.)
- ❑ Appropriate sufficient funds to allow all state parks to be open and maintained.
- ❑ Improve training opportunities for municipal officials. The Council has proposed a set of recommendations aimed at improving wetlands officials' compliance with existing training requirements. The cost is very low. The Council also recommends improving training opportunities for other municipal officials – planning and zoning officials, floodplain management staff, tree wardens – all of whom have significant influence on environmental conditions.

### 2. Solutions to Problems Reported to the Council

#### *From the investigation of citizen complaints pursuant to CGS Section 22a-13*

- ❑ Overhaul remediation programs to allow for more rapid cleanup of contaminated properties. Detailed recommendations are expected from DEEP.
- ❑ Consolidate into one agency all responsibilities for providing potable water to contaminated communities.
- ❑ Prohibit highly-polluting Outdoor Wood Furnaces; allow only cleaner-burning furnaces that burn only clean fuel.
- ❑ Improve public notice for cell tower applications.

**The Council has detailed recommendations for each of the above. In addition, the Council is prepared to use existing data, prior research and expertise to assist with legislation, as requested, on the Connecticut Environmental Protection Act, all-terrain vehicles, compliance, water resources, funding for environmental protection and related issues that might be discussed during the session.**