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August 9, 2006

To the NRD Restoration Fund Committee,

I have been on the Berkshire Sanctuaries committee for more than 10 years since I consider myself a naturalist and tremendously enjoy being outdoors in the Berkshires. Through the years I have been very impressed with the Audubon Society's commitment to education and preservation of native surroundings. During the spring I am an Audubon tour guide for school groups that have an opportunity to visit and learn about the flora and fauna at Pleasant Valley Sanctuary.

In addition to my ties to Berkshire Sanctuaries, I am also a marathon canoe racer (current senior women's national champion) and I spend a good deal of time paddling on the Housatonic River training along with many other paddlers. The Berkshires is fortunate to have the river, even while we train we stop to admire the eagles, the herons, the variety of ducks, shorebirds, beaver, muskrats, and even the deer, bears and porcupines we come upon early in the morning. As the season changes from late winter to early spring we always notice the emergence of bird and plant life and it's fascinating to note the changes in the river from year to year due to flooding, silt and debris.

The Audubon Society has a wonderful opportunity to bring children, youth and families to the river and let them experience the wonders of this environment that they would normally never see. I am very much in favor of awarding a grant to Berkshire Sanctuaries, the organization is committed to education, is incredibly knowledgeable, and will put together a quality program to bring people to the river. There is no better way to learn than to be there and experience first hand what the river has to offer.

Thank you for considering my request.

Sincerely,

Patty Spector

Patty Spector
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