

From: DeidreConsolati
Sent: October 12, 2006
To: Michael Chelminski
Subject: My Comments Regarding River Restoration

Dear Committee Members:

I was born and raised in Lee and for 43 of my 65 years I have lived next to the Housatonic River. For the past 23 years I have lived in a Main Street apartment, a stone's throw from the river. On hot summer nights Dobson flies hatch out, and these ferocious-looking Hellgrammites---which resemble the goliath of all house flies---find their way to the screens in my living room. In the old days I used to panic at their appearance but I always treated them kindly and am happy that such creatures which are indicators of a viable permanent stream, can still be found nearby.

Yesterday I was on the riverbank watching my 27-year-old son do fly fishing. I became despondent watching this son of mine ply his craft---which he loves so much---all the while surrounded by trash that had been tossed there because the river is synonymous with the word "dump". I thought, Can't we do better for our children than to watch them grow up enveloped by human detritus that cannot be controlled?

I am aware that this area of the river had been cleaned in other years. But I also believe that volunteer work alone, while of enormous help, cannot begin to solve this problem.

You have the chance to change that scenario and that perception. You have the opportunity to make the statement that "we care". And only by cleaning the river on a regular basis can this profoundly important message reach those who need to hear it. And doesn't "river upkeep" seem to be vital to your plans for the river's restoration? What good will ANY project be if it is not accompanied by an active program that keeps the river surroundings habitable?

I propose setting aside a yearly portion of the Restoration monies for paid maintenance and regular paid policing of the river banks for removal of trash and other evidence of human carelessness. In my view, only then can others become more conscious of their actions, and only then can we truly enjoy the scenic and educational enhancements which have been proposed.

Thank you for your excellent work regarding of the restoration of this incomparable resource.

Yours in good faith

Deidre Consolati
Town Representative for District Five (Housatonic River Area)
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