



**FARMINGTON RIVER COORDINATING COMMITTEE**  
**100 East River Road – Squires Tavern**  
**P.O. Box 395**  
**Pleasant Valley, CT 06063**  
**860-379-0282    [www.farmingtonriver.org](http://www.farmingtonriver.org)**

September 20, 2005

Senator Craig Thomas, Chairman  
Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Subcommittee on National Parks

RE: Testimony of the Farmington River Coordinating Committee in Support of  
Senate Bill # S435

Honorable Chairman Thomas and Members of the Committee:

After a unanimous vote of the 10 member organizations of the Farmington River Coordinating Committee (FRCC), I write this letter to support S. 435, “The Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook Wild & Scenic Study Act of 2005.” The FRCC was established in 1994 when 14 miles of the Upper Farmington River were added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The Committee is made up of representatives of the towns bordering the designated stretch (Barkhamsted, Canton, Colebrook, Hartland, New Hartford) and other organizations and agencies with a stake in the river (CT Department of Environmental Protection, Farmington River Anglers Association, Farmington River Watershed Association, Metropolitan District Commission, and the National Park Service). The coordinating committee implements the Upper Farmington River Management Plan and continues to build the relationships and resources needed to protect and enhance the outstanding resources of the Upper Farmington River: historic buildings and areas (including the Hitchcock Chair Company), cold-water fisheries (particularly for trout), recreational opportunities (kayaking, canoeing, hiking), and wildlife habitat (including bald eagles).

It has been eleven years since the FRCC was established and it has accomplished a great deal to preserve and protect the Farmington River’s outstanding resources. Based on a Partnership Wild & Scenic model, the FRCC strongly represents and carries forward a true partnership between local, state and federal interests. This partnership has been able to leverage dollars and expertise for many projects that otherwise would not have been possible. As an example of the many things we’ve accomplished, I am including information from this year’s Annual Report. Of course, this is a small portion of the many things that we’ve accomplished over the past decade:

#### Membership

*The addition of the Farmington River Anglers Association to FRCC was a major event of the year – this association links FRCC to many people who enjoy and care for the Farmington River. FRAA’s mission is to “Preserve, Protect and Enhance the Farmington River Fishery.”*

### Outreach and Education

*10 Years of Wild and Scenic Designation Anniversary Celebration - August 26, 2004 – FRCC held a celebration with about 100 attendees. Entertainment was provided by David Paton and the Magic River Band and catering by Blue Sky Foods.*

*FRCC Website Improvements and Website training – The FRCC website has been maintained by two FRCC volunteers – Mario Santoro and Chris Bailey. Mario and Chris received training on Dreamweaver early in the year.*

*FRCC Newsletter – FRCC produced and distributed a spring newsletter to over 300 riverfront landowners and town officials.*

*Kiosks Improvements – Two back sides of our kiosks were produced this year. One at Mathies Grove parking area and one at the Church Pool at the MDC parking area.*

### Resource Stewardship

*Farmington River Riverbank Assessment – Milone and MacBroom completed a draft report of the riverbank assessment.*

*Upper Farmington River Water Quality Monitoring – FRWA completed streamwalk trainings and its first round of streamwalks. FRWA also conducted water quality testing at various locations on the river. A database is being developed in cooperation with Farmington Valley Health District and CT DEP.*

*Land Protection – Along with FRAA, FRCC contributed to FRWA's effort to protect Sugar Meadow Island in Barkhamsted which is now held by the Barkhamsted Land Trust.*

*Aerial Photos - FRCC had aerial photos taken of the towns along the 14-mile Wild and Scenic stretch of river. The photos will be helpful in land protection efforts and monitoring the health of the river over time.*

*Plans of Conservation and Development - FRCC provided comments on both New Hartford's and Barkhamsted's updates of their Plans of Conservation and Development.*

### Policy and Administration

*FRCC Grants Program - FRCC revamped its grants program to allow larger amounts and fewer deadlines. Grants were given to the Barkhamsted Conservation Commission for publicizing a public meeting on the possible ridgeline zoning; the New Hartford Land Trust for the Riverwalk project; Colebrook Land Conservancy for closing costs associated with protecting the Corliss 100 property.*

*Ongoing Support to the Squires Restoration (FRCC Headquarters) - FRCC continues to support the efforts to restore and enhance the Squires Tavern.*

*New Project Tracking system – FRCC established a new tracking system to keep track of projects and finances.*

*River Rally and Professional Development trainings – Several members of FRCC attended the National River Rally. Pat Keener and Mario Santoro attended a series of sessions by the Center for Watershed Protection and accrued 12 hours of free technical assistance from CWP to share.*

Cooperative Projects

*New Hartford Riverwalk – FRCC continued to work with New Hartford to help plan and implement the town’s riverwalk project.*

*Enhanced Fish Habitat – FRCC helped coordinate a cooperative effort between CT DEP, ConnDOT, and USGS that enhanced the fish habitat below the Riverton bridge. Two large trees had fallen and one was cabled to the bank for some much needed “large woody debris” that will not interfere with boaters.*

The Farmington River Coordinating Committee would like to encourage the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee to support Senate Bill #S435 and to authorize the study for the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook. As you might suspect, our work on the Upper Farmington River is related to the future successes of conservation efforts on the Lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook. The entire Farmington River is a valuable natural resource for the State of Connecticut, it is important to preserve and protect it, and it is logical to consider conservation efforts on the entire River together.

Sincerely,

S. Patricia Keener, Chair  
on behalf of the Farmington River Coordinating Committee:

Town of Barkhamsted, CT  
Town of Canton, CT  
Town of Colebrook, CT  
Town of Hartland, CT  
Town of New Hartford, CT  
Farmington River Angler’s Association  
Farmington River Watershed Association  
CT Department of Environmental Protection  
Metropolitan District Commission  
National Park Service