



Connecticut Department of
**ENERGY &
ENVIRONMENTAL
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

**Public Hearing – February 22, 2013
Continuing Legislative Committee on State Planning and Development**

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Dan Esty

**Draft 2013-2018 Conservation and Development Policies: The Plan for
Connecticut**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding the draft *Conservation and Development Policies, The Plan for Connecticut 2013-2018 (Plan)*. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

The Department has been involved with the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) in developing this draft Plan. DEEP has had multiple meetings and opportunities to comment during the drafting process. We appreciate the extraordinary efforts of the OPM Intergovernmental Policy Division to include State agencies, regional planning organizations, municipalities and other stakeholders in the process to revise the Plan. We recognize the delicate balancing act required of OPM to consider many competing interests and viewpoints in producing a Plan that is a comprehensive statement of policies that addresses conservation and development needs of the State. We would like to take this opportunity to suggest one additional revision, involving climate change and sea level rise.

Page 20 of the Plan contains the following policy:

MINIMIZE the siting of new infrastructure and development in coastal areas prone to erosion and inundation, encourage the preservation of undeveloped areas into which coastal wetlands can migrate, and undertake any development activities within coastal areas in an environmentally sensitive manner consistent with statutory goals and policies set forth in the Connecticut Coastal Management Act;

We recommend adding 'from sea level rise or storms' after the word inundation. Public Act 12-101 mandates that any revision of the State Plan of Conservation and Development "(1) take into consideration risks associated with increased coastal erosion, depending on site topography, caused by a rise in sea level, as defined in section 22a-93, as amended by this act, (2) identify the impacts of such

increased erosion on infrastructure and natural resources, and (3) make recommendations for the siting of future infrastructure and property development to minimize the use of areas prone to such erosion.” We believe that the wording in the plan that pertains to coastal development should explicitly reflect the objectives of this statute.

We would also like to suggest two minor corrections.

The policy on page 23: “**REDUCE** carbon dioxide emissions in this state consistent with the recommendations of the Connecticut Climate Change Preparedness Plan,” should reference the statutory goals for greenhouse gas reductions (CGS section 22a-200a); the plan cited does not include reduction goals.

The *Connecticut Climate Change Preparedness Plan* would be more appropriately listed under Growth Management Principle 4, not 5.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP’s legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance at 424-3401 or Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov