



Connecticut Chapter
645 Farmington Ave. Hartford, Connecticut 06105
www.connecticut.sierraclub.org

Connecticut Sierra Club Statement on the Housatonic Railroad's solid waste facility in Hawleyville Connecticut

The Connecticut Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly opposes the Housatonic Railroad's continued unrestricted use and expansion of the wetlands property at its solid waste facility in Hawleyville Connecticut. The basis for this opposition stems from the environmental contamination, public health, safety, and traffic hazards. Specifically we refer to the alleged wetland violations, the sensitivity of the Pond Brook aquifer recharge area, the rise in air and noise pollution from the increased truck traffic to and from the site, and the increase in amounts and types of hazardous waste materials handled at this facility.

The Town of Newtown issued a notice of violation in 2007 for encroaching on area wetlands. Apparently, this as yet has not been remediated. On July 16, 2009 the Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) conducted an onsite inspection that revealed 1 to 2 acres of wetlands apparently filled in. Along with these alleged wetland violations, they observed wetlands clearing and sediment discharge and several other violations.

Many area residents rely on the Pond Brook aquifer as a sole source of well water. We agree with Congressman Chris Murphy's request for a soils test by the DEP to assess the possible contamination of groundwater in the area from these existing activities.

We also feel the addition of materials like tires, treated wood, contaminated soils, construction/demolition materials, asbestos and coal fly ash will only exacerbate the existing conditions. Treated wood alone has been shown to have arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead, nickel, mercury, selenium, et.al. Tires are known to have arsenic and cadmium. Contaminated soils and coal fly ash present an even greater concern because of the ease of contaminant transfer to the soil during erosion events.

We urge the DEP to maintain their vigilance on this issue and request they deny permits to expand the solid waste handling of the facility and expansion of solid waste materials accepted.

John Blake, Chapter Chair
John D. Calandrelli, State Program Director

Phone: 860-236-4405 -- Email: Connecticut.chapter@sierraclub.org
Fax: 860-236-3782