

Honorable Senator

Kris Jordan, Chairman

Dear Sir,

Please accept this as a follow up and expansion of my testimony given to your committee on May 10, 2016 related to section 1547.84, Wild and Scenic River Councils. There are currently four active councils in the northeast quadrant of the state. Conneaut Creek, Ashtabula River, Grand River and Little Beaver Creek, one inactive council on the Chgrin River, and one pending council on Pymatuning Creek.

In the testimony given on December 14, 2015 by Gary Obermiller, Chief of the Division of Parks and Recreation within the ODNR, he proposed that structural changes be made to the councils. His proposed change would eliminate the current ten member volunteer councils and replace them with one council consisting of fourteen appointed members, one for each Wild or Scenic designated river. His stated reason for this proposed change was two fold. Economic and the inability to form local councils where none exist. Currently there are six councils that are not functioning.

Let us start with Economic factors, in the Northeast quadrant under ODNR regional manager Matthew Smith there are five Wild and or Scenic rivers. We meet quarterly, four times a year. Mr. Smith's drive and meeting time is about 6.5 hours of his time per meeting, with four meetings per council and five councils it would constitute to 130 hours per year. If you divide 130 hours into a 2080 hour work year you end up with 6.25% of Matthew's time. It seems to me that this is a bargain, time well spent with 50 local council members four times a year?

The inability to form councils, there are six designated rivers without an active council.

1. The Olentagy – This river runs through the Ohio State University Campus with 58,000 or so students, scores of faculty, and numerous schools of study.
2. The Kokosing and the Mohican – The Kenyon College is located on the Kokosing. Again you are within 50 miles of OSU, there is also the college of Wooster and Ashland University, all of these are close to students, faculty, and schools of study.
3. Big little Darby - Lies southwest of OSU, again close to scores of students and faculty.
4. Stillwater /Greenville - Stillwater runs through Dayton, close to the University of Dayton and Miami University. Again Students, Faculty, schools of study...

All six of these rivers also have Nature Clubs, Sportsman clubs, County Commissioners, Township Trustees, Mayors, City managers, Farm Bureaus, Granges, and lots of just plain folk! In summary if you can't form councils out the people that I just mentioned than maybe our marketing staff needs a little tweaking. I apologize for the bit of sarcasm, but I just can't help it.

Again, thank you for your attention and consideration of my sincere hopefully positive input.

Respectfully Yours,

Larry Penniman

546 Keffus Rd. Conneaut, OH 44030 (440) 593-1304

