

Testimony Submitted to Ohio Sunset Review Committee

May 10, 2016

My name is Dr. David Todt. I am a professor of Natural Sciences at Shawnee State University. Over the last two decades I have had the privilege of serving on three different agency advisory groups. I was appointed to the Ohio Natural Areas Council by Governor Voinovich and reappointed by Governor Taft. Governor Voinovich also appointed me to the citizen's advisory committee to the Ohio Environmental Education Fund of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. My third appointment was by Governor Strickland to eTech Ohio.

All of these appointments have given me the opportunity to provide citizen input into the workings of the respective agencies. I valued the opportunity to represent a citizen and user perspective, especially on the Ohio Natural Areas Council. These advisory groups provide a valuable service to the agencies in terms of accountability, a focus on best practices, and being held to a higher standard to continuously improve the management of state resources and serve Ohioans better than the previous year.

The Natural Areas Council was unique in that it was a mixture of citizens interested in Ohio's spectacular Natural Areas and resource professionals who managed natural areas for other agencies. The Council provided important input to the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves in selecting new unique areas to dedicate, providing advice and suggestions for management plans of natural areas, and bringing an outside and public perspective to issues like deer hunting on State Nature Preserves.

My interest in natural areas continues. I have been active in the Ohio Natural Areas and Preserves Association, a group of citizens who value Ohio's state nature preserves and seek to educate the public about the importance of these areas. I have also continued to volunteer with the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves as a Preserve Monitor. I have hiked the trails at dozens of state nature preserves in the last two years and reported my findings to the Division.

The Division of Natural Areas and Preserves is advantaged by a strong and vibrant Natural Areas Council to provide guidance and advice on the important work of managing state natural areas. I encourage you to continue the Natural Areas Council and urge the Governor to appoint and reactivate the Council.

Thank you.

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