

Sunset Review Committee

Concerning S.B. No. 293, and recommendations by ODNR to consolidate Scenic River Advisory Councils

Dear Committee Members,

I have been in the business of providing high quality canoe, kayak and raft trips on the Little Miami River since 1984. I have also been a member of the Little Miami River Scenic River Advisory Council since approximately 1990. During that time I have had the opportunity to work with many from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. I do not oppose the merger of the Divisions of Watercraft and Parks. Being a fiscal conservative I understand that there are many areas where there are over lapping duties amongst the two Divisions. If handled properly the merger of the two can be both fiscally efficient for ODNR and an improvement in services delivered to the public.

I do oppose the request for the consolidation of the Scenic River Advisory Councils. The merger of these Councils into one Statewide Council defeats the entire purpose for which they were designed. Their original intent was to provide local citizen input and advice to the ODNR, and the State, concerning issues that affect the local river. It was in fact used as a "selling point" when new State Scenic Rivers were proposed, and later added to the system. Local citizen input is needed for the Department to adequately administer the State Scenic Rivers. These Councils provide information and advice to the State Scenic River Coordinator at no cost. Frequently a Council member is asked by the Coordinator to be their "eyes and ears" for a local project. This allows the Coordinator to have input and knowledge of the project without having to be on site. Again, this is provided at no cost. Removing the method by which concerned constituents are able to communicate with State Government representatives is not a healthy improvement. I ask the Committee Members to strike from, or amend the proposed S.B. No.293 to allow the work of the Councils to continue.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to this Committee.

Respectfully,

Rhett Rohrer

President

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