



---

**Sunset Review Committee  
Testimony on the Waterways Safety Council  
Provided by ODNR Chief of Ohio State Parks Gary Obermiller  
December 14, 2015**

---

Good afternoon Chairman Brown and members of the Sunset Review Committee. My name is Gary Obermiller and I am the Chief of Ohio State Parks within the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present testimony on the Waterways Safety Council (Council) for your consideration.

**Purpose of the Waterways Safety Council**

The Council was established by law in 1973 to advise and make recommendations to ODNR's Chief of the Division of Watercraft concerning: plans and programs from construction, maintenance, repair, and operation of refuge harbors and other projects for the harboring, mooring, docking, and storing of light draft vessels; methods of coordinating the shore erosion projects of ODNR with the refuge of light draft vessel harbor projects; plans and programs for the acquisition, protection, construction, maintenance, and administration of wild river areas, scenic river areas, and recreational river areas; and consider and make recommendations upon any other matter which is brought to its attention by any person or that the Chief may submit to it.

**Composition of the Waterways Safety Council**

The Council consists of five members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Not more than three of such appointees shall belong to the same political party. To be eligible for appointment, a person needs to be a citizen of the United States and an elector of the state and possess a knowledge of and have an interest in small boat operations.

**Waterways Safety Council Summary and Recommendation**

ODNR values the work of the Council, but feels that the same level of input can be offered to the Department through a less formalized and bureaucratic process. Therefore, ODNR recommends that the Council be sunset by the Sunset Review Committee. We are committed to maintaining the same level of communication and engagement between the Department and these valuable stakeholders, but in a more efficient manner.

Members of the Committee, thank you again for giving me the opportunity to testify today. I would be happy to take any questions that you may have at this time.