

## INFORMATION FOR SALMON-IN-SCHOOLS SUPPORTERS June, 2017

The Salmon-in-Schools Program, the sea-run trout stocking and our Connecticut state Atlantic Salmon Legacy Program are all threatened with elimination because of state mandated personnel reductions – not because of a lack of funds!

Below are some talking points for you to use when you contact your state legislator to ask for their support to maintain hatchery staffing at current levels.

Here's the link to find your legislator:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/asp/menu/cgafindleg.asp#>

- Over \$14 million per year is contributed to CT DEEP by law through federal excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment and Connecticut hunting and fishing licenses.
- Over \$7 million is contributed by anglers including \$4 million from fishing license fees.
- Operation of our current hatcheries costs approximately \$3 million per year.
- Our understaffed hatcheries are losing three employees to state layoffs ordered by the governor and two more to voluntary departures. This will reduce staffing levels to HALF of what they were several years ago.
- This will require severe cutbacks in trout production and stockings in rivers and lakes, the elimination of Salmon-in-Schools and sea-run trout stocking.
- The current Office of Policy & Management state policy is to prevent replacing any staff who leave for any reason including layoffs, retirements and other departures.
- There are over 100,000 trout anglers in Connecticut who take an estimated 1.5 million fishing trips each year and they spend over \$45 million annually.
- Salmon-in-Schools program: 59 schools hosted 80 tanks in 39 towns across the state and we released over 12,000 fry into the Connecticut River watershed this spring at no cost to the state except the supply of salmon eggs.
- The issue is not funding hatchery staff **but retaining staff positions in the event of departures or layoffs at a minimum level to maintain operations.**