

**Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition
Comments
Docket 16-07-09 Public Hearings
September 27, 2016**

Members of PURA, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Len DeJong and I am the executive director of the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition. We are a coalition-based non-profit organization founded in 1999 for the purpose of helping to safeguard the water resources within the 90 square mile Pomperaug Watershed. Our coalition membership extends to our municipal partners, water suppliers such as the Heritage Village Water Company, business leaders and a diverse and devoted group of volunteers and supporters. Our work is science-based. Education and community outreach is a hallmark of what we do.

The Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition requested and was granted intervener status in this docket. It is as an intervener that I appear before you today to offer these comments in furtherance to the Letter of Record we submitted to PURA on September 15, 2016.

In its leadership role on the Water Planning Council, we appreciate PURA's effort relevant to State –wide water planning; most specifically the on-going development of Connecticut's first Water Supply Plan. We believe that the planning done right will lead to improvements in policies and regulations that will correct significant deficiencies that are harming our local water resources. The Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition is pleased to be participating with PURA and many other key stakeholders in the development of the Water Supply Plan.

The proposed acquisition of the Heritage Village Water Company by Connecticut Water Service has provided us with an opportunity to further address current issues and plan for future safeguards. Working in collaboration with Southbury's first selectman's office, the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition has facilitated four meetings with the Town and Connecticut Water Services specific to water resource matters. These meetings identified and began the process of resolving issues of significance to our watershed. Specifically we addressed the following: (1) concerns associated with relying on the Pomperaug aquifer for supplying the Towantic power facility and designating the facility as a priority customer during periods of water conservation;

(2) the importance of the Connecticut Water Services interconnect in mitigating the Towantic water demands and further securing an out-of-basin and one-way transfer of water supply to relieve dependence on the Pomperaug aquifer during periods of critical stream flow and low ground water levels; (3) our mutual interest to enhance water conservation planning to include incentives to customers to reduce water demand and the metering of flat rate customers; and (4) a coalition-based regional operational work plan that addresses the need to mitigate the negative impact on stream flow while continuing to meet public water supply, agricultural and other water demands.

The Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition has been pleased with our discussions in that they have provided for additional clarity on how planning needs and corrective actions can be addressed today and in the future. The support provided by the Town underlines their understanding and their commitment to taking the needed water resource protection actions. Knowing that Connecticut Water Services has a demonstrated record of solving similar issues in other areas of our State and that they have committed to working with the Town of Southbury and the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition is encouraging.

Should PURA decide in favor of this acquisition, we request that the Decision include supportive language directing Connecticut Water Services to further its stated support to resolve the aforementioned short term issues and to continue with a coalition-based approach toward addressing longer term water resource planning needs.

The Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition appreciates the opportunity to present these comments. As noted in our earlier submitted Letter of Record we are available to provide additional details or answer any questions.

**Submitted by:
Len T. DeJong
Executive Director
Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition**