

Connecticut



Waterfowling
Association

January 30, 2019

Dear Members of the Legislature's Environment Committee:

I am writing you on behalf of the Connecticut Waterfowling Association (CWA) a 52-year-old Connecticut conservation group focused on wetland conservation and the preservation of the tradition of waterfowl hunting. The CWA urges you to oppose S.B. 7, *An Act Establishing Calf Pasture Beach in Norwalk as a Wildlife Refuge*.

The decision to establish wildlife refuges should be made by the natural resource professionals within the DEEP, not by legislators. The CWA is not aware of any unique or rare ecological features at Calf Pasture Beach that warrant special protection.

Our understanding is that the issue here is opposition by some members of the public to waterfowl hunting. The legislature has provided guidance to the DEEP through CGS 26-67c on how to evaluate the suitability of certain areas for hunting. Using the guidance under CGS 26-67c, the DEEP has evaluated many areas over the last 20 plus years. In the overwhelming majority of cases this process has worked well to protect public safety and maintain hunting opportunities for sportsmen.

However, the CWA feels that 26-67c may be too limiting in that the criteria for closing areas in pertinent part reads, "(1) The physical setting of a locality presents an unreasonable risk that hunters may violate regulations regarding shooting towards persons or buildings; or (2) a record of documented complaints reveals that violations of such regulations occur with significant frequency." The CWA respectfully requests that the DEEP develop modifications to this statute that would allow it more flexibility in evaluating sites.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Greg Chasko
President, CWA
Certified Wildlife Biologist

