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December 8, 2008

Pete Grannis, Commissioner
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233-0001

Dear Commissioner Grannis:

I am writing to request the department postpone any decision on the closing of the hatchery at Connetquot State Park.

Significant questions have been raised by the Friends of Connetquot regarding the necessity of closing the hatchery. I believe the department should take the time to fully explore these questions. More than the simple value of the hatchery there is the issue of taking away a significant historic and educational resource from the community. Every year many local school groups visit the hatchery to learn about the natural world. Such a resource should not be taken away without a vigorous public discussion.

I am concerned that if the hatchery is closed it will never be reopened, and even if a replacement hatchery could be funded it would not replace the historic value of the current facility. I would like to see the closing put on hold until discussions can be held among all of the affected parties and the public.

With best personal regards, I remain

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Owen H. Johnson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Owen' being particularly prominent.

Owen H. Johnson

Member of the Senate