

## From the Executive Summary:

### What Does the Plan Mean by “Balance”?

Item #3 above in the list of the five most important points is based on the overarching goal defined by stakeholders, that the Plan should help improve the balance of water use in Connecticut. During the planning process, this was frequently interpreted to mean the balance of uses that rely on the removal of water from its natural environment (withdrawals, diversions, etc.) and those that require water to remain in its natural environment (for aquatic ecology, recreation, and aesthetics). Most of the information in the Plan, then, is based in part on this principle of balance, and is extended to use the familiar planning tool of the “Triple Bottom Line,” where alternatives or decisions are evaluated based on their social,

environmental, and economic factors. One related aspect to the concept of balance, which was widely brought up during the public comment period following Plan development, is water as a public trust. Following Water Planning Council (WPC) discussion of this prevalent comment, it was noted that there is an existing statute as follows: “Sec. 22a-15. Declaration of policy. It is hereby found and declared that there is a public trust in the air, water and other natural resources of the state of Connecticut and that each person is entitled to the protection, preservation and enhancement of the same. It is further found and declared that it is in the public interest to provide all persons with an adequate remedy to protect the air, water and other natural resources from unreasonable pollution, impairment or destruction.”

## From Section 2.2.1:

In the Plan, the term “balance” is used to remind decision makers to consider social, environmental, and economic factors of all uses, and to ensure that all aspects of planning and decision making are data-driven to the practical extent possible. As with so many components of the Plan, the use of the word “balance” needs to be taken as part of the overall Plan, not necessarily specific to one component, and that “balance” considered during future water

management decisions needs to be topic-specific. A current water resource management structure topic that was brought up during the Plan’s public comment period, which the WPC considers related to balance, is water as a public trust. Note the DEEP statute as part of Chapter 439 as follows: Sec. 22a-15 Declaration of policy. It is hereby found and declared that there is a public trust in the air, water and other natural resources of the state of Connecticut and that each person is entitled to the protection, preservation and enhancement of the same. It is further found and declared that it is in the public interest to provide all persons with an adequate remedy to protect the air, water and other natural resources from unreasonable pollution, impairment or destruction.

From Section 6.8.6:

#### **6.8.6 Additional Topics for WPC Discussion**

During the Public Comment Period from July – November 2017, many comments focused on clarifications to the Plan, voiced support of the Plan’s recommendations, expressed desire for the language in the Plan to be stronger, or suggested that certain issues should be high priorities as the Plan moves toward adoption and subsequent implementation steps.

The Water Planning Council will prioritize the recommendations within the Plan. In addition to some of the near-term priorities identified in this section, other issues in this report may rise to immediate prominence. In addition to the topics covered in detail by this plan and its recommendations, many other water management topics were noted by readers who offered comments on the report. These new topics, while they did not rise to prominence during the stakeholder deliberations while the Plan was under development, are noted here as worthy of future discussion by the WPC, inclusion in the discussion of prioritization of near term and long-term steps, and perhaps further work as the Plan is revised and updated in years to come.

Additional topics offered by readers during the public comment period for consideration of the Water Planning Council:

- Water as a public trust in the context of existing statutes and the themes of “balance between all uses” in this Plan (reference Section 22a-15 of the Connecticut General Statutes, and Section 2.2.1 of this Plan)