

To the Honorable Senator Matt Dolan, Chair

Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

My name is Tom Butch and I am president of the Columbiana County Federation of Conservation Clubs (CCFCC). As a representative of the approximately 2000 members of the CCFCC I want to offer testimony on the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' budget in Sub. HB 33, which will establish their operating appropriations for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025.

The CCFCC has a long history of support for ODNR in the almost 50 years that CCFCC has been in existence. In many instances our members have worked side by side with ODNR to protect the wildlife of Ohio, and to help with the reintroduction of some species of wildlife; we have supported ODNR's efforts to keep Ohio's state parks free to all citizens and a parks system that is looked up to across the country as one of the best; and we support the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves in their work to protect the "last great places" in Ohio. We are very grateful for the work of DNAP to protect the greatest natural resource in Columbiana County, the state designated Wild and Scenic Little Beaver Creek.

We believe that the current effort to remove some of the ODNR funding is not in the best interest of the sportsmen and women of Ohio, nor all the citizens of Ohio. The Divisions slated for funding loss in the budget serve all the citizens of Ohio. We ask that the ODNR budget be restored to what it was when the biennium budget was first submitted.

Thank you.

Tom Butch