

VII. CONCLUSION

The time has come for Connecticut to lead the nation in the development of a comprehensive and sustainable water allocation policy. The ideas and proposals set forth by the Department in this report, if implemented, will create a progressive water regulatory framework that will provide predictability to the regulated community and will help assure that all of Connecticut's citizens have a reliable source of water, live in a healthy environment, and experience the natural beauty of the state.

Some of the changes contained in this report will not be easy to implement, because they represent a major change in the way we think about water. Some of the changes also emphasize the future needs of the state, and therefore require what may initially be experienced as sacrifice. However, a decision on the direction of water regulation cannot be put off any longer. The conflict between competing water uses is mounting. With each passing year, opportunities to make positive changes with respect to our water resources are lost.

Shifts in population and industrial growth are exerting increasing pressure on Connecticut's water resources. The state needs to take action now to protect this public resource, in keeping with the responsibilities with which we are charged for managing public resources. The changes we make now will be appreciated for generations to come.