

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2019

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Clearing the Air, If Not the Water

Dear Editor:

Please print my letter to the Suffolk County Legislature. Dear Presiding Officer Gregory and Honorable Legislators:

Re: December 4, 2018 General Meeting

I write to correct the record regarding statements made by Legislator Fleming during deliberations pursuant to the Vector Control 2019 Annual Plan of Work. Specifically, alleging that I made “absolutely misleading” and “absolutely untrue” statements: (1) that Connecticut has banned methoprene use in coastal areas and (2) there was a 33% increase in methoprene treated wetlands from 2017 to 2018.

I’ve appeared before the Legislature many times during the past twenty years in a professional capacity as an environmental scientist and advocate. Addressing a myriad of issues which have included water protection, land acquisition and coastal management.

While my appeals for government-directed actions haven’t always been realized, I see great value in educating and informing decision-makers in hopes that subsequent decisions will strengthen environmental protection. In all instances I maintain a high standard of integrity, relying on substantive academic training and thirty-plus years of natural resources management experience.

For your consideration, I’m providing the Connecticut legislation (Public Act No. 13-197) and a letter from U.S. Senator, Christopher Murphy to Governor, Andrew Cuomo.

The Public Act is sited verbatim as follows (P.9):

“Not later than September 1, 2013 a prohibition on the use or application of methoprene or resmethrin in any

storm drain or conveyance for water within the coastal boundary as described in subsection (b) of Section 22-94 provided that such prohibition shall not apply to any municipality where there was a documented death of a human being from West Nile Virus if such municipality has a population greater than one hundred thousand residents”.

Excerpt from Senator Murphy Letter:

As further confirmation of the Connecticut ban, in a September 25, 2015 letter, U.S. Senator, Christopher Murphy urges Governor Andrew Cuomo “to consider the legislation passed by the Connecticut General Assembly as potential legislation for New York.” Specifically stating, “the Connecticut General Assembly has made illegal two pesticides-methoprene and resmethrin”

My assertion of a 33% increase in methoprene-treated wetland acreage from 2017 to 2018, is based on the Summary Of Vector Control Activities.

2018 Annual Plan of Work, P.3, #4 Larval Control: “Treated approximately 15,000 acres with biorational larvicides: *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti), *Bacillus sphaericus* or methoprene depending on mosquito stage of development, weather, coastal tides and virus findings”

2019 Annual Plan of Work, P.4, #4 Larval Control: “Treated approximately 20,000 acres with biorational larvicides: *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* (Bti), *Bacillus sphaericus* or methoprene, depending on mosquito stage of development, weather, coastal tides and virus findings.” Further, Page 19, Suffolk County Pesticide Acreage Estimates for 2018 reports methoprene acreage as 19,004 (26% increase).

It’s unfortunate that Legislator Fleming chooses to quibble over semantics, my use of the word “ban” rather than “prohibition.” And while the Legislator tries to paint a rosy picture of less methoprene spraying in Accabonac Harbor as a result of more targeted applications, fact is the poisoning of wetlands with methoprene has increased county-wide.

Suffolk County led the nation with a voluntary suspension of DDT use in 1967. I pray that you find the fortitude to do it again.

Respectfully yours

Kevin McAllister, Founder and President

Defend H2O