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Cultural Resources

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NH Dept. of Trans.

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NH Dept. of
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Staff:

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Watershed Coordinator

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Program Assistant

N.H. Lakes Management and Protection Program
N.H. Lakes Management Advisory Committee

February 13, 2019

The Honorable Suzanne Smith, Chair
House Resources, Recreation, and Development
Legislative Office Building, Room 305
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 326 *relative to the definition of a prime wetland.*

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

The Lakes Management Advisory Committee (LMAC) is writing to express its support for House Bill 326, which further defines prime wetland for local protection in fill and dredge permits.

The proposed expanded definition of prime wetland would allow municipalities to include narrower portions, or "fingers" of wetlands in their designation. These narrower portions could be fringe wetlands, low-gradient feeder stream systems, or connectors between two larger wetland systems and provide significant habitat for macroinvertebrate, fish, birds, and wildlife. As such, these narrower portions can provide a significant contribution to the wetland functions and values of the prime wetland. The LMAC believes the current exclusion of these narrower portions is arbitrary and not based upon science. Thus, the LMAC supports HB 326 to allow these narrower portions to be included as prime wetlands.

The LMAC is a legislatively created body charged to work with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to administer RSA 483-A, the Lakes Management and Protection Program. The Governor and Council appointed Committee is comprised of 19 members representing academia, business, conservation organizations, lake associations, tourism, fish and game commission, marine trades, realtors, municipal government as well as several state agencies. Among its other responsibilities, the LMAC reviews legislation relevant to the Program and the state's lakes and ponds, and advises the NHDES Commissioner on the merits of such legislation.

In conclusion, the LMAC supports HB 326 relative to the definition of a prime wetland because it would include sensitive narrower portions of these wetlands which can be as significant as the larger wetland itself in their functions and values.

The Honorable Suzanne Smith
Chair, Resources, Recreation, and Development
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Should you have further questions about this testimony, please feel free to contact me at (603) 867-9299 or appliedforce52@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



David Packard
Chair

ec: Rep. Chuck Grassie
Rep. Joshua Adjutant
LMAC Representatives
Robert R. Scott, Commissioner, NHDES
Rene Pelletier, Assistant Director, Water Division, NHDES
Ted Diers, Administrator, Watershed Mgmt. Bur., NHDES
Tracie Sales, Rivers and Lakes Programs Manager, NHDES