

N.H. Rivers Management and Protection Program

N.H. Rivers Management Advisory Committee

October 14, 2015

Representative Norman Major, Chairman
House Ways and Means Committee
Room 202, Legislative Office Building
Concord, NH 03301

RE: **CACR 2 Relating to dedicated funds.**

Dear Chair Major and Members of the Committee:

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is writing to express its conditional support for Constitutional Amendment Concurrent Resolution 2, relating to dedicated funds, providing that dedicated funds shall be used solely for the designated purpose of the fund. The RMAC supports the requirement that dedicated funds be used solely for the purpose of the fund as legislated, but does not support the provision that allows an appropriation of a dedicated fund for other than the fund's designated purpose with a 2/3 vote of each of the house and senate.

The RMAC and Rivers Management and Protection Program are concerned with the continuing practice of "raiding" dedicated funds for the purpose of balancing the budget and funding programs with no relationship to the purpose for which the funds were originally justified and collected. Some of these dedicated funds were created to support New Hampshire's environment and maintain or restore the natural ecosystems that residents and visitors rely upon. Redistributing these funds for non-related purposes is short-sighted, threatens continued public support for them, frequently has compounded fiscal impacts, and is counterproductive in the long run. For example, the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program was legislatively diverted from 2009 to 2012. Because this fund is frequently used to leverage additional funds, the fiscal impact of the diversion was cumulatively much greater. New Hampshire's landscape is one of the state's most attractive elements for residents, visitors and businesses alike, and it is critical that the funds collected to protect environmental initiatives are invested in environmental programs that support the long-term health of state's ecosystem.

The RMAC is a legislatively created body charged to work with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to administer RSA 483, the Rivers Management and Protection Program. The Governor and Council appointed Committee is comprised of members from business, agriculture, hydroelectric, municipal government, water supply, conservation, recreation, fish and game, and historical interests. Among its other responsibilities, the RMAC is charged with reviewing legislation relevant to the Program and with advising the NHDES Commissioner on the merits of such legislation.

Voting Members:

Kenneth D. Kimball
Chair
Recreational Interests

Michele L. Tremblay
Vice Chair
Conservation
Community

Anne Krantz
Historic/Archeological
Interests

Alan Larter
Granite State
Hydropower
Association

Fredrick J. McNeill
Municipal Officer

Roger Noonan
Agricultural Community

Allan G. Palmer
Business & Industry
Association

James W. Ryan
NH Fish & Game
Commission

Larry T. Spencer
Conservation
Commissions

Ruth Ward
Local River Management
Advisory Committees

Donald L. Ware
Public Water Suppliers

Non-Voting Members:

Mark Hemmerlein
NH Department of
Transportation

Patrick Hummel
NH Department of
Resources and
Economic
Development

John Magee
NH Fish & Game
Department

Gail McWilliam Jellie
NH Department of
Agriculture,
Markets & Food

Elizabeth Peck
NH Department of
Safety

Susan Slack
NH Office of
Energy & Planning

Staff:

Vacant
Rivers and Lakes
Coordinator, NHDES

Tracie Sales
Watershed Planner
NHDES

In conclusion, the RMAC conditionally supports CACR 2, which would require that dedicated funds be used solely for the purpose of the fund as legislated. The RMAC does not support the provision that allows an appropriation of a dedicated fund for another non-related purpose with a 2/3 vote of each of the house and senate. If you have further questions, please feel free to contact me at (603) 466-8149 or kkimball@outdoors.org.

Sincerely,

Kenneth D. Kimball, Ph.D., Chair

cc: Rep. Steven Smith
Rep. James Grenier
Rep. Daniel Itse
Rep. Thomas Laware
Sen. Martha Fuller Clark
Sen. David Pierce

Thomas Burack, Commissioner, NHDES
Eugene Forbes, Director, Water Division, NHDES
Ted Diers, Administrator, Watershed Mgmt. Bur., NHDES
Tracie Sales, Watershed Planner, NHDES
RMAC Members
Local River Management Advisory Committee Chairs