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Michele L. Tremblay
Chair
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Community

Larry T. Spencer
Vice Chair
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Edna Feighner
Historic/Archeological
Interests

Christopher Hodgdon
NH Fish & Game
Commission

Mark Lombardi
Granite State
Hydropower
Association

Frederick J. McNeill
Municipal Officer

Allan G. Palmer
Business & Industry
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Norman Sims
Recreational Interests

Ruth Ward
Local River Management
Advisory Committees

Donald L. Ware
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Jennifer Gilbert
NH Office of
Strategic Initiatives

Mark Hemmerlein
NH Department of
Transportation

John Magee
NH Fish & Game
Department

Gail McWilliam Jellie
NH Department of
Agriculture,
Markets & Food

Alexx Monastiero
NH Department of
Safety

Vacant
NH Department of
Natural and Cultural
Resources

Staff:

Tracie Sales
Program Manager

Jen Drociak
Watershed Coordinator

Mariah Mitchell
Program Assistant

N.H. Rivers Management and Protection Program

N.H. Rivers Management Advisory Committee

April 23, 2019

The Honorable Martha Fuller Clark, Chair
Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
Senate House, Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 682 *Establishing a water resources fund in the department of environmental services and charging certain application and permit fees.*

Dear Chair Fuller Clark and Members of the Committee:

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is writing to express its support of House Bill 682 as amended, which increases some wetlands, shoreland, and alteration of terrain permit application fees, and combines the wetlands and shorelands review fund and the terrain alteration fund into the new water resources fund.

This bill increases fees for the wetland, shoreland, and alteration of terrain programs for the first time in eleven years. This fee increase is necessary to maintain the current staffing levels necessary to keep pace with increasingly complex permit application reviews and shorter statutorily-mandated review and approval timeframes. The fee increase outlined in this bill will help sustain the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) program functions critical to preserving New Hampshire's aquatic resources, water quality, local communities, businesses, and tourism industry.

The fee increase in this bill will better facilitate the continued partnership of local river management advisory committees who work closely with wetland, shoreland, and alteration of terrain program staff at NHDES by providing a local review of permit applications, submitting comments, and fulfilling their statutory duties as the municipal voice in state permitting along these rivers. The RMAC believes that the mission of and duties performed by the NHDES land resource management programs are imperative to the protection of valuable resources within the watersheds of our rivers and lakes.

The RMAC is a legislatively created body charged to work with 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.

In conclusion, the RMAC supports HB 682 as amended because it is necessary to maintain critical functions of NHDES programs and in doing so continues to support the relationship between local river management advisory committees and NHDES

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permitting staff in the protection of highly-valuable and environmentally-critical natural resources such as wetlands and shorelands.

Should you have any questions regarding our testimony, please feel free to contact me at 603.796.2615 or MLT@naturesource.net.

Sincerely,



Michele L. Tremblay
RMAC Chair

cc: Rep. Judith Spang
Sen. Lou D'Allesandro
Sen. David Watters
RMAC Representatives
Robert R. Scott, Commissioner, NHDES
Thomas O'Donovan, Director, Water Division, NHDES
Ted Diers, Administrator, Watershed Mgmt. Bur., NHDES
Tracie Sales, Rivers and Lakes Programs Manager, NHDES
Local River Management Advisory Committee Chairs