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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 24, 2019

The Honorable Mary Jane Wallner, Chair
House Finance Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 210-211
Concord, NH 03301

RE: SB 254 *Appropriating funds to the department of environmental services for the purpose of funding eligible wastewater projects under the state aid grant program.*

Dear Chair Wallner and Members of the Committee:

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 254, which will make appropriations to fund wastewater projects in New Hampshire under RSA 486 in fiscal years 2020 and 2021.

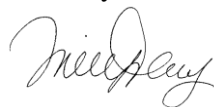
The state aid grant program for water pollution control is a critical resource for communities who need to update their water treatment infrastructure but may not be able to afford these important projects. Replacing aging infrastructure eliminates the flow of polluted water into New Hampshire's rivers and lakes and is essential not only for the health of these water bodies and the fish and wildlife that rely on them, but also for the health of residents who depend on them for drinking water and recreation. It is always more cost effective to protect water quality than it is to be forced to restore it. New Hampshire's clean rivers and lakes are key components to drawing tourists to our state, attracting and retaining a diverse workforce, and maintaining a healthy state economy.

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.

In conclusion, the RMAC supports SB 254 because it would allow NHDES to fund eligible wastewater projects through the state aid grant program during the fiscal years of 2020 and 2021, supporting upgrades to deficient wastewater infrastructure and clean water in New Hampshire.

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

The Honorable Mary Jane Wallner
Chair, House Finance Committee
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cc: Sen. Jeb Bradley
Rep. Thomas Buco
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