

Voting Members:

**Michele L. Tremblay**  
Chair  
Conservation  
Community

**Larry T. Spencer**  
Vice Chair  
Conservation  
Commissions

**Christopher Hodgdon**  
NH Fish & Game  
Commission

**Mark Lombardi**  
Granite State  
Hydropower  
Association

**Frederick J. McNeill**  
Municipal Officer

**Allan G. Palmer**  
Business & Industry  
Association

**Norman Sims**  
Recreational Interests

**Ruth Ward**  
Local River Management  
Advisory Committees

**Donald L. Ware**  
Public Water Suppliers

**Vacant**  
Agricultural Community

**Vacant**  
Historic/Archeological  
Interests

Non-Voting Members:

**Peter Bowman**  
NH Department of  
Natural and Cultural  
Resources

**Jennifer Gilbert**  
NH Office of  
Strategic Initiatives

**Mark Hemmerlein**  
NH Department of  
Transportation

**Shawn Jasper**  
NH Department of  
Agriculture,  
Markets & Food

**John Magee**  
NH Fish & Game  
Department

**Vacant**  
NH Department of  
Safety

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

January 21, 2020

The Honorable Marjorie Smith, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 208  
Concord, NH 03301

**RE: HB 1559** *relative to sealing records in nonpublic session under the right-to-know law*

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is writing to express its opposition to House Bill 1559, requiring that the sealed minutes of nonpublic sessions under the right-to-know law be sealed for only one year unless the public body votes annually to keep them sealed.

The RMAC believes this bill would place an undue administrative burden on public bodies, especially volunteer advisory committees such as the RMAC. Not only would such a committee be obliged to remember the date any minutes of a nonpublic session were sealed, they would then have to convene a meeting on that date each successive year to vote to re-seal the meeting record. Should minutes of multiple nonpublic sessions be sealed, this would become complicated and burdensome over time. A change of membership on the committee, coupled with the passage of time and concurrent understanding of why the minutes were originally sealed, would only add to this long-term complication and administrative burden.

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 opposes HB 1559 which requires annual revoting to keep sealed minutes in nonpublic sessions sealed.

Should you have any questions regarding our testimony, please feel free to contact me at 603.796.2615 or [MLT@naturesource.net](mailto:MLT@naturesource.net).

Sincerely,



Michele L. Tremblay  
RMAC Chair

cc: Rep. Josh Yukala  
Rep. Michael Yakubovitch  
Rep. Kurt Wuelper  
RMAC Representatives  
Robert R. Scott, Commissioner, NHDES  
Tom 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