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Michele L. Tremblay
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Conservation
Community

Larry T. Spencer
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Conservation
Commissions

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
Public Water Suppliers

Vacant
Agricultural Community

Vacant
Historic/Archeological
Interests

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

RE: SB 491 *relative to shoreland water quality*

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is writing to express its support for Senate Bill 491, clarifying the definitions of shoreline frontage, structure, and pervious surface and makes changes to the minimum shoreland protection standards regarding such subjects.

The RMAC believes this bill strengthens the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act by increasing the percentage of vegetation within the woodland buffer required to be maintained on larger lots. Preserving trees, shrubs, and groundcover in an unaltered state in the area between 50 feet and 150 feet from the reference line of the waterbody is imperative to protecting water quality. Trees and plants help filter contaminants from stormwater runoff and spring snowmelt before they enter our rivers and lakes. Even the groundcover of leaves and pine needles under the trees play a unique role in purifying our water. Native vegetation also provides critical habitat for wildlife.

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 491, as it strengthens the protective measures for our rivers and lakes. Clean water is key to protecting the features which bring visitors to the beautiful state of New Hampshire and the health of our state's residents.

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. Chuck Grasse
Rep. Amanda Gourage
Rep. Suzanne Smith
Rep. Judith Spang
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