

Voting Members:

Michele L. Tremblay
Chair
Conservation
Community

Larry T. Spencer
Vice Chair
Conservation
Commissions

Victoria Bunker
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
Association

Ruth Ward
Local River Management
Advisory Committees

Donald L. Ware
Public Water Suppliers

Stewart Yeaton
Agricultural Community

Vacant
Recreational 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

Meghan Wells
NH Department of
Safety

Staff:

Tracie Sales
Program Manager

Vacant
Watershed Coordinator

Vacant
Program Assistant

N.H. Rivers Management and Protection Program

N.H. Rivers Management Advisory Committee

February 9, 2021

The Honorable Gary Daniels, Chair
Senate Finance Committee
State House
Concord, NH 03301

RE: SB 127 *An act adopting omnibus legislation on appropriations.*

Dear Chair Daniels and Members of the Committee:

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is writing to express its support of Senate Bill 127, sections VII and VIII, which appropriate funds to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) for funding public water system and wastewater projects, respectively.

Regarding section VII, with many demands on public water systems such as drought and waterborne pathogens, funding to support testing, treatment, and delivery are more important than ever before. In addition, the more efficient the water plant and delivery system is, the less water that needs to be drawn from the source, whether it is from a river, a lake, or groundwater, which conserves that water for other uses or for critical needs in times of drought.

With respect to section VIII of SB 127, most wastewater systems discharge effluent into the state's rivers. These rivers provide recreation—such as fishing, swimming, and boating—irrigation, and drinking water. Upgrading wastewater systems means that effluent is cleaner and safer for the rivers and the aquatic life within them. Some plants have been able to upgrade to ultra-violet treatment of effluent instead of chlorine. While expensive initially, these changes to operations make a real difference in the quality of water and result in cost savings over time. Providing assistance to these wastewater treatment plants is essential for aquatic life, irrigation on farmlands, recreation, and drinking water.

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 SB 127 sections VII and VIII as they provide funding for projects which will conserve and protect New Hampshire's river water for drinking, recreation, irrigation, and wildlife.

The Honorable Gary Daniels
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
SB 127 February 9, 2021
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Should you have any questions regarding our testimony, please feel free to contact me at 603.796.2615 or MLT@naturesource.net.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michele L. Tremblay". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michele" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Tremblay".

Michele L. Tremblay
RMAC Chair

cc: Sen. Jeb Bradley
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