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NH Rivers Management Advisory Committee

NH Rivers Management and Protection Program



January 17, 2023

The Honorable Andrew Renzullo, Chair
House Resources, Recreation, and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 305
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 1113 *An act relative to shoreland septic systems.*

Dear Chair Renzullo and Members of the Committee,

The Rivers Management Advisory Committee (RMAC) is writing to express its **support of House Bill 1113**, which requires septic system inspections at the time of sale for properties within 250 feet of a shoreline.

The RMAC supports this bill because

- This bill is based on recommendations of the Cyanobacteria Plan Advisory Committee, which included lake and river stakeholders negatively affected by cyanobacteria blooms. Blooms are likely increasing in frequency and duration, and can threaten public health, impede recreation, and reduce business revenues.
- According to the state's cyanobacteria plan, out-of-date or improperly maintained septic systems are the second largest contributor of phosphorus pollution to New Hampshire waterbodies. Addressing nutrient pollution is one of the four major priorities of the cyanobacteria plan.
- This bill would require notification of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and the local health officer when septic systems are found in failure. A notification requirement supports the efforts of watershed associations seeking to determine where septic systems are likely contributing to water quality issues. At present, this is a lengthy process that slows stakeholders' work to develop and implement watershed plans.
- The current site evaluation requirement does not give a potential property buyer adequate information about the condition of the septic system. An inspection protects the interest of the homebuyer by providing a full assessment of the condition of the septic system.
- The bill would standardize the distance for shoreland septic systems to be the same as the buffer in the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act (RSA 483-B). The buffers in that act are the basis of most other state regulation of activities near waterbodies. Standardizing the septic requirement to that distance would eliminate a current source of confusion.

The Honorable Andrew Renzullo
Chair, House Resources, Recreation, and Development Committee
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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 composed of members from business, agriculture, hydroelectric, municipal government, water supply, conservation, recreation, fish and game, and historical interests.

Should you have any questions regarding our testimony in support of HB 1113, feel free to contact me at 603.796.2615 or MLT@naturesource.net.

Sincerely,



Michele L. Tremblay, Chair

cc: Representatives Rung, Coker, Rochefort, and Ebel
RMAC Representatives
Robert R. Scott, Commissioner, NHDES