



The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

April 10, 2014

The Honorable Shannon Chandley, Chairman
Resources, Recreation and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 305
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

RE: SB 267, An Act extending the effective date for integrated land development permits.

Dear Chair Chandley and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 267 which would change the implementation date for the integrated land development permitting program to July 1, 2017 from January 1, 2015. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) supports this bill.

In 2013, RSA 489 (Senate Bill 124) was enacted to establish an integrated land development permit that applicants could choose, at their discretion, as an alternative to obtaining separate permits from up to four DES programs specified in the bill (Wetlands, Alteration of Terrain, Subdivision and Individual Sewage Disposal, and Shoreland Water Quality Protection). RSA 489 also set the stage for improvements in the coordination of permitting efforts between DES and municipalities by strongly encouraging collaboration of project reviews from the pre-application stage through final permitting. It is expected that integrating permitting will ultimately provide a more streamlined permitting process and improved environmental outcomes for large projects.

RSA 489 also authorized DES to establish two positions in the DES Land Resources Management Program but these positions were unfortunately not funded for the FY 2014-2015 biennium. These positions are critical to provide adequate staff expertise to start up, implement and effectively operate this program. SB 267 would authorize delay of the effective date for program implementation until July 1, 2017 (instead of January 1, 2015) in order to allow time for the Legislature to consider options to fund this program as part of the FY 2016-2017 budget, legislative review of which will begin in early 2015.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact either Rene Pelletier, Assistant Director (rene.pelletier@des.nh.gov), 271-2951 or me at tom.burack@des.nh.gov, 271-2958.

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc : Senators Odell, Waters, Carson, Reagan, Rausch, Stiles, Fuller Clark, Woodburn, Boutin, and Bradley
Representatives Grenier, Sad, and Gottling