A scenic landscape photograph of a lake with mountains in the background and trees in the foreground. The sky is blue with some clouds. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

Framing the Issue: How Science Leads to Watershed-Friendly Changes in the Law

Jared A. Teutsch, J.D.

New Hampshire Lakes Association

What is Science?

- Science is the concerted human effort to understand, or to understand better, the history of the natural world and how the natural world works, with observable physical evidence as the basis of that understanding. It is done through observation of natural phenomena, and/or through experimentation that tries to simulate natural processes under controlled conditions.

A Better Explanation...

- Science is “why”.
- Science helps explain through doubt how things work.

How Can Science Lead us to Better Policy?

- Provides the 'why' we should do something
- Establishes the basis for proactive or reactive changes in public policy
- Establishes known facts that are difficult to dispute

Case Study: Phosphorus Reduction

- The facts: Phosphorus (P) is involved in photosynthesis, seed formation, and numerous other plant functions.
- The Policy: Phosphorus increases the growth of exotic invasive aquatic weeds like variable milfoil, and increases the likelihood of toxic algae blooms.

Policy Action

- Removal of phosphorus from the 'source'
- Is it possible to get manufacturers to agree to remove it voluntarily? Not likely
- Next step: changes in regulations – but how?
- Advocate for changes

What Is Lobbying?

- The term “lobbying” was first coined over 130 years ago
- Lobbying is teaching policy makers about your issue and providing the facts needed to convince them to support your view rather than those of your competitors.
- Perception & Credibility



Statewide Issues



Case Study: Phosphorus Reduction

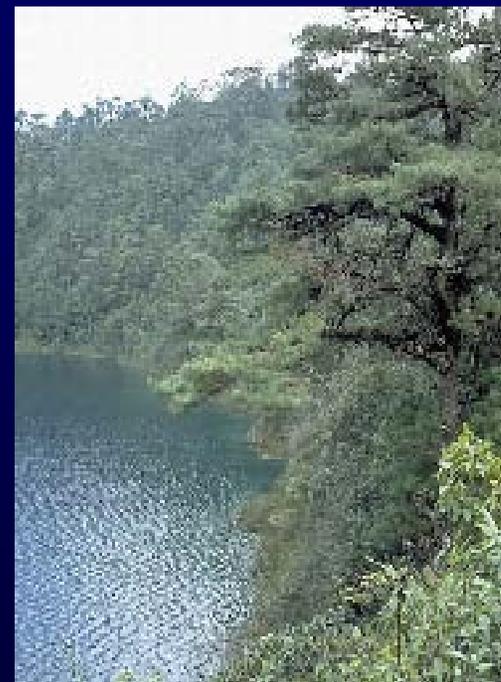
- In 1994, NH LAKES advocated for the removal of phosphorus from household detergents.
- The result? Success! NH passed a law in 1994 banning phosphorus in household detergents with one exception: dishwashing detergent

Some Local Issues



The Value of Your Issue

- Why are environmental issues so hard to lobby for?
- What is the value of protecting the environment (nature & human beings)?

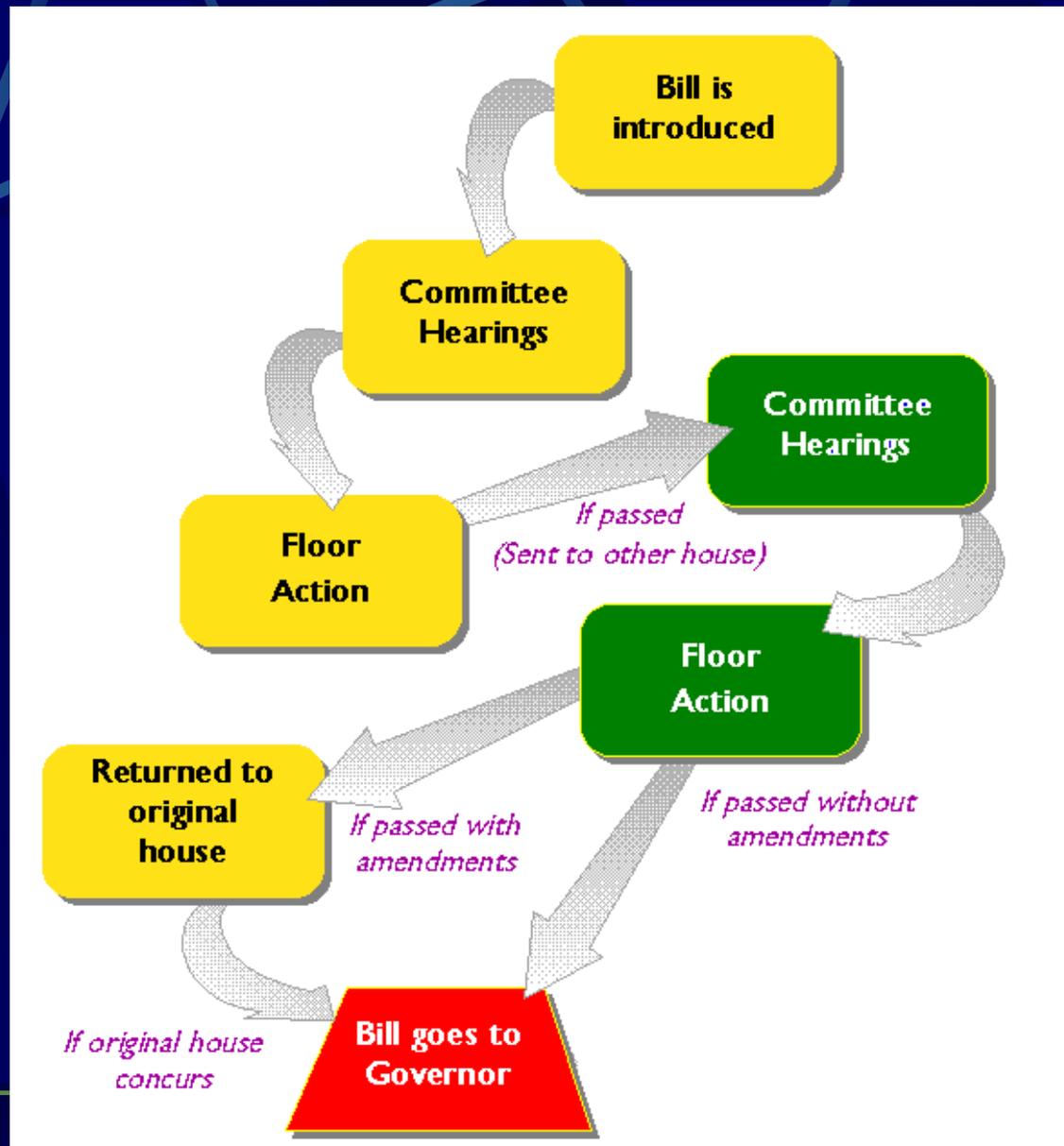


Where To Go With Your Issue



- State Legislature
- Administrative Rules Process
- Local (town) Regulations

Legislative Process



Components of a Legislative Campaign

- Creating the legislation
- Crafting an effective message
- Identifying leadership
- Building a coalition
- Developing grassroots support
- Garnering press coverage
- Building legislative support



Creating the Legislation

Procedure:

- Determine your needs
- Research how other organizations have addressed similar needs
- Draft sample legislation
- Disseminate legislation to stakeholders for comment



Creating the Legislation (cont.)

Result:

- Sound, tested legislation
- Legislation that addresses your organization's needs



Case Study: Phosphorus Reduction

- Since 1994, we had successfully eliminated phosphorus from household detergents except dishwashing detergent. Why?
- The technology to remove it was not available yet – but is now!
- Now we can pursue new regulatory change – 2009 introduced HB 350

Resources for Creating Legislation

- Your Senator and Representatives
- NH state website: www.nh.gov
- Existing Legislation
- Other states



Crafting An Effective Message

Procedure:

- Know your audience
- Determine which groups will support or oppose your concept
- Brainstorm opposing arguments



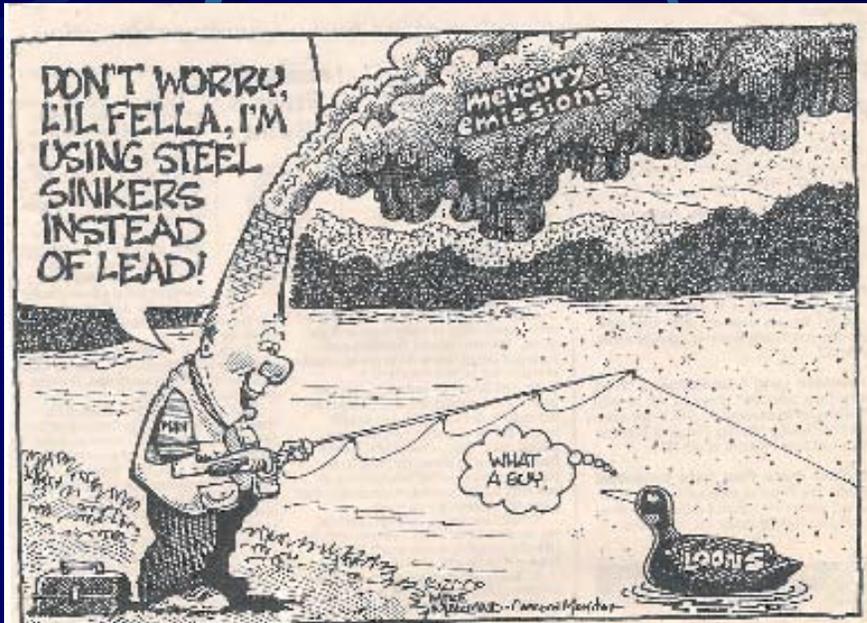
Crafting An Effective Message (cont.)

Result:

- A message that resonates with your audience
- A message that addresses the opposition's arguments
- A message that unites stakeholders



Message Topics to Consider



- Public Health
- Tourism
- Recreation
- Job Creation
- Property Taxes
- Lake Character
- Safety
- Preservation

Identifying Leadership



Procedure:

- Find a legislative advocate for your bill (Senator or Representative)
- Someone who is close to the issue and dedicated to the cause

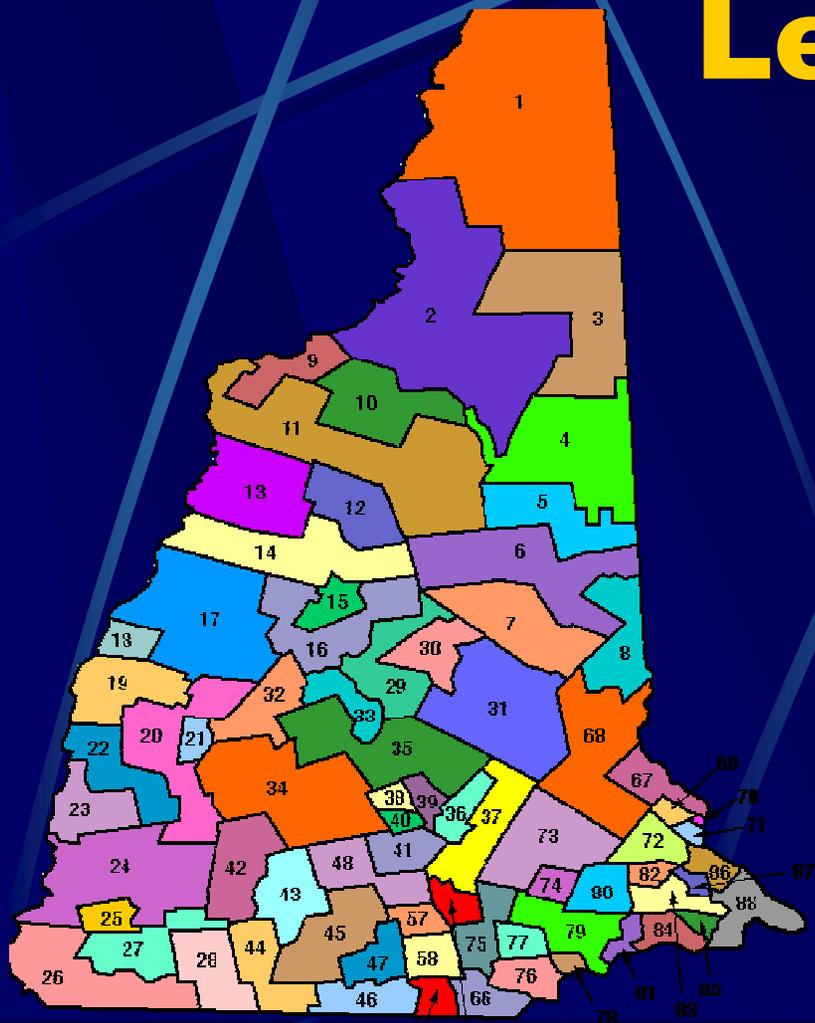
Identifying Leadership (cont.)

Result:

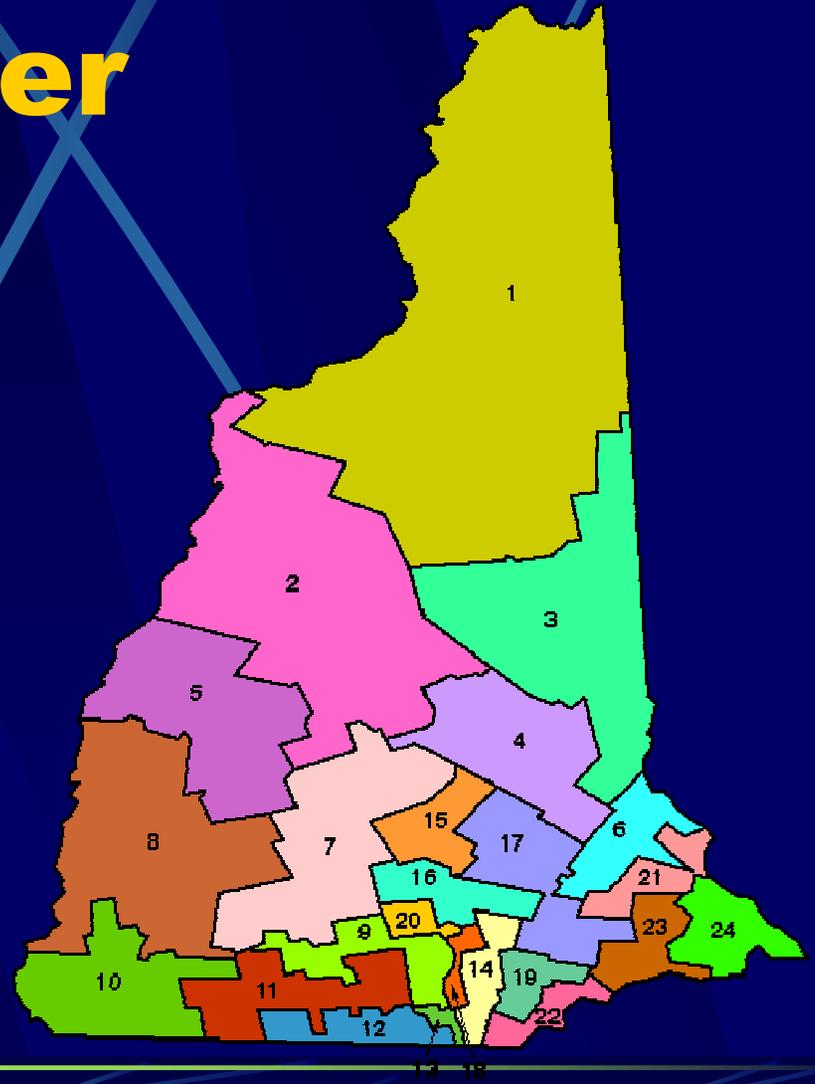
- An inside advocate for your issue
- Someone who knows the rules of the road
- Someone who passionately represents your cause



Where to Find Your Leader



House Districts

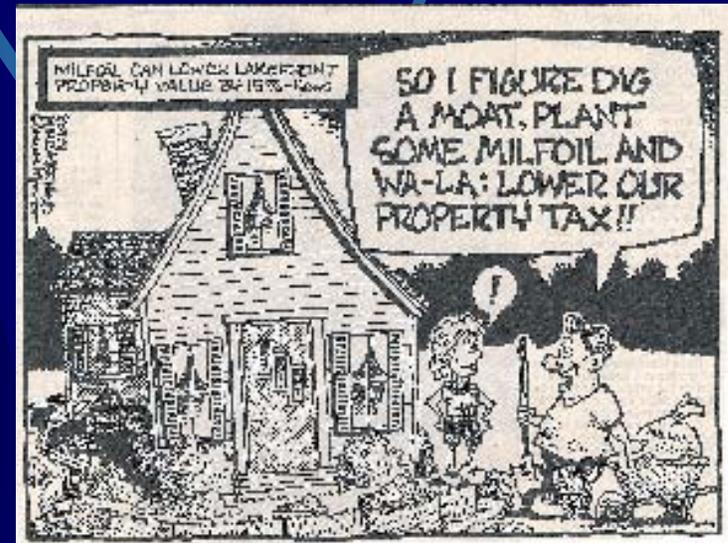


Senate Districts

Building a Coalition

Procedure:

- Speak to all stakeholders about the legislation
- Anticipate your needs from coalition members
- Determine the role of individual coalition members



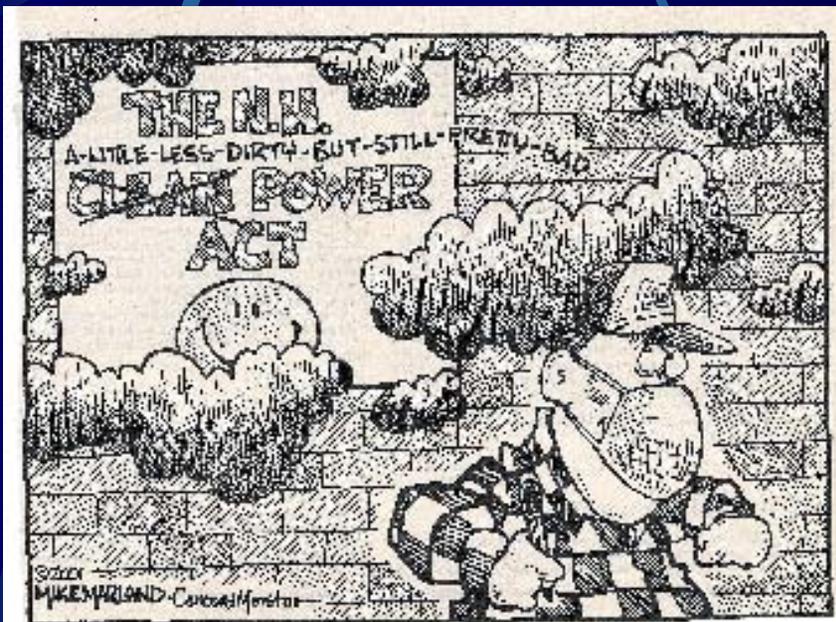
Building a Coalition (cont.)

Result:

- Greater visibility
- Greater contact with legislators and press
- Larger volunteer base
- Support from varied interest groups



Potential Coalition Members



- Other Environmental Groups
- Local Business
- Road Associations
- Town Government
- Conservation Commission

Developing Grassroots Support

Procedure:

- Involve member organizations and individuals in your effort
- Develop a fast and effective method of communication
- Provide volunteers with the necessary information to contact legislators
- Thank them, thank them, thank them!



Developing Grassroots Support (cont.)

Result:

- Legislators hear from constituents rather than lobbyists
- Ability to contact large groups of legislators quickly



Types of Grassroots Support

- Testifying at a public hearing
- Attending a public hearing to show your support
- Writing letters to legislators who will vote on the issue
- Telephoning legislators who will vote on the issue
- Emailing legislators who will vote on the issue

**Mass Produced
Letters
and
Emails**



Garnering Press Coverage

Procedure:

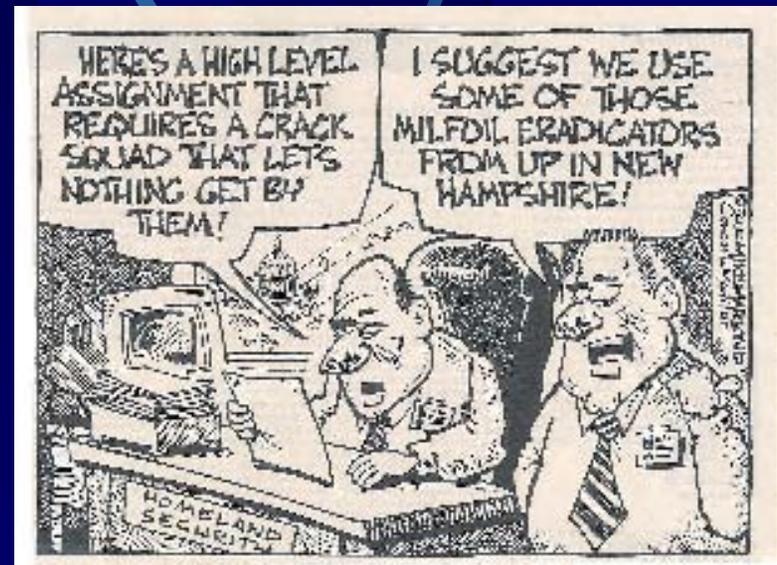
- Send out timely press releases
- Respond to articles, editorials and letters to the editor
- Work with media to cover the issue



Garnering Press Coverage (cont.)

Result:

- Generates more interest in an issue
- Elevates the issue and your organization in the eyes of the public, press and legislature



Does Local Media Count?



Local Media:

- Is easier to get coverage in
- Will print what you say
- Is read by local decision makers

Building Legislative Support

Procedure:

- Make individual contact with legislative committees and individual legislators
- Identify “key” legislators to help with the process

