



The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

January 29, 2015

The Honorable Chris Christensen, Chair
Resources, Recreation and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 305
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 281 *An act defining "exotic aquatic animals" and relative to the duties of the exotic aquatic weeds and species committee.*

Dear Chairman Christensen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 281. This bill would add a new section (RSA 487:29-a) for a definition of "exotic aquatic animal," and charge the Exotic Aquatic Weeds and Species Committee (EAWS), under RSA 487:30 to include exotic aquatic animals in the scope of the committee's work. The Department of Environmental Services (DES) supports this bill in concept, and recommends one amendment to the proposed language.

The EAWS Committee was established by legislation in 2004, and recently amended in 2014 to expand committee membership to include state agency personnel and a variety of stakeholder interests. EAWS Committee membership includes a diverse mix of legislators and members of the public who are interested in the management of exotic aquatic species in New Hampshire. The Committee was originally charged with studying the spread of exotic aquatic weeds and species in the waters of New Hampshire as well as ways to provide public education, exotic species control and management. Over time, EAWS Committee roles and membership have expanded along with the nature of the issues associated with exotic aquatic species.

DES supports the concept of this proposed legislation because the original intent of forming this committee was to have a standing working group to examine issues related to exotic aquatic species in general. This should logically include aquatic plants, aquatic animals, and other forms of invasive aquatic life that may be, or become, problematic in New Hampshire.

For consistency and clarity within the existing statute, DES suggests that rather than creating a new section (RSA 487:29-a) for the definition of "exotic aquatic species of wildlife," that the definition simply be added within the existing definition section of the chapter (RSA 487:16).

Thank you for your consideration in this matter. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Amy Smagula (Amy.Smagula@des.nh.gov or 603-271-2248) or me (Thomas.burack@des.nh.gov or 603-271-3449).

Sincerely,

Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Rep. Gottling, Rep. C. Christensen, Rep. Suzanne Smith, Rep. Grenier, Rep. Spang, Sen. Bradley, Sen. Little, Sen. Fuller
Clark