



The State of New Hampshire  
**Department of Environmental Services**



**Robert R. Scott, Commissioner**

January 11, 2018

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

RE: HB 1745 FN-A, *an Act making appropriations for costs involved in controlling invasive aquatic species.*

Dear Chair Christensen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1745 FN-A. This bill seeks to make an appropriation to cover costs involved in further managing invasive aquatic species in state waterbodies. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) supports the bill in concept but has concerns about the language of the bill.

There is a documented need for additional funding to prevent the spread of invasive aquatic species. Currently, 86 waterbodies are infested with some type of invasive aquatic species, including 11 rivers and 75 lakes. Some of these waterbodies have just one type of infestation, while others have as many as six different invasive aquatic species. There are generally one or two new infestations documented each year as invasives continue to spread, albeit at a slower rate than they have historically.

There is an established Exotic Species Program at NHDES that focuses on a multi-pronged approach in addressing invasive aquatic species, including prevention, early detection, rapid response, and long-term management. Need and demand for funds for each of these activities easily exceeds the current funding level of about \$500,000 annually. NHDES can only fund a portion of the desired management activities, often asking grantees to scale back on projects to match available funding. Similarly, control efforts are only occurring on about one-third of the infested waterbodies due to lack of funding. NHDES funds between 25-40% of the total control costs, while local entities, like municipalities and non-profits, contribute the balance of the costs. Often control actions are downsized due to lack of funds. Because all available grant funds are awarded each

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year, there are no reserves on hand to address sudden new invasions. As a result, some impacted waterbodies are not managed immediately, but rather are added to the queue for grant funds the following year.

The revenues derived from this bill would allow for expanded program capacity for additional prevention activities to slow the rate of invasive species spread, expanded control projects, and for work on currently un-managed infestations. Funds could also be earmarked for rapid-response initiatives to expedite management of new infestations once they are found.

NHDES has some concerns relative to the wording of the bill. The effective date of the bill is listed as July 1, 2018; however, the bill authorizes appropriations from SFY 2018, which closes on June 30, 2018. As such, it is unclear how allocations could be made from SFY 2018 as the budget year will have ended before the effective date of this bill. Additionally, the bill does not address how unspent funds should be dispensed after June 30, 2019. NHDES assumes that unspent funds would be used per statutory authority outlined in the Lake Restoration and Preservation Program.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on HB 1745 FN-A. Should you have further questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact either Amy Smagula, Exotic Species Program Coordinator, at 603-271-2248 or [Amy.Smagula@des.nh.gov](mailto:Amy.Smagula@des.nh.gov), or me at 603-271-3449 or [Robert.Scott@des.nh.gov](mailto:Robert.Scott@des.nh.gov).

Sincerely,



Robert R. Scott  
Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of HB 1745: Representatives McConnell and Messmer;  
Senator D'Allesandro