



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

January 15, 2019

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

RE: HB 137 – AN ACT establishing a commission to examine the effects of wake boats in the state of New Hampshire.

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 137. This bill proposes to form a legislative commission to examine issues related to the operation of wake boats on state waters.

Wake boats are recreational watercraft that are specially designed to generate a large wake which is used by wakeboarders and wakesurfers. The use of these boats has expanded over the past decade or so which has raised concerns about their potential impacts to the surface waters and shorelines on which they are operated. For example, NHDES has heard from some shoreland property owners that they have needed to stabilize their shorelines in places they never had to prior to the emergence of wake boats. An additional concern is that some designs of wake boats utilize ballast tanks to weigh down the boat. Water left in these tanks from one lake to another could transport aquatic invasive plants and animals. Finally, in shallow lakes, the potential exists for wake boats to increase turbidity which impacts fish and other aquatic creatures, not to mention the safety of swimmers.

If, for these and other reasons, the legislature wishes to examine these issues, NHDES stands ready to support such a commission with any data or information that we have available.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on HB 137. Should you have further questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact either Dave Neils, Limnology Center Director, at 603-271-8865 or david.neils@des.nh.gov, or me at 603-271-3449 or Robert.Scott@des.nh.gov.

Sincerely,



Robert R. Scott
Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of HB 137: Representatives Wolf and Tanner
Senator Fuller Clark