



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

April 11, 2022

The Honorable Kevin Avard
Chairman, Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
State House Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 1066 – AN ACT requiring the commissioner of the department of environmental services to prepare a plan relative to cyanobacterial blooms in New Hampshire

Dear Chairman Avard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1066. This bill proposes to require the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to create a plan to address issues related to the occurrence of cyanobacteria in surface waters. NHDES supports this bill with an amendment that provides resources for the formation of the plan.

Cyanobacteria are a type of plankton that occurs in most New Hampshire surface waters. Under certain conditions these plankton become dominant and may cause unsightly scums on the surface of the water and create conditions that are unsafe for drinking water, recreation, and agricultural water usage. Cyanobacteria produce natural toxins or “cyanotoxins” that present health risks to humans, livestock, and pets. Over the past several years, high levels of cyanobacteria have forced NHDES to issue advisories on approximately 30 water bodies annually and has led to the cumulative loss of approximately 600 days of recreational use each year. Cyanotoxins are not yet regulated either on the federal or state level in New Hampshire, but are of concern for affected water supplies. Although some cyanobacteria blooms in New Hampshire have produced concerning levels of cyanotoxins in untreated water, there is currently no indication that harmful levels of cyanotoxins are finding their way into public drinking water.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on HB 1066. Should you have questions, or need additional information, please feel free to contact Dave Neils, Limnology Center Director, at 603-271-8865 or david.neils@des.nh.gov.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Scott
Commissioner

ec: Sponsors of HB 1066: Representative Rung; Senator Prentiss