



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



**Robert R. Scott, Commissioner**

February 7, 2022

The Honorable Andrew Renzullo  
Chairman, House Resources, Recreation and Development Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 305  
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 1071 – AN ACT relative to wake surfing

Dear Chairman Renzullo and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1071. This bill proposes that the distance the activity of wake surfing occurs must be at least 250 feet from shore, docks, and other boats. The Department takes no position on this bill, but provides the following information for the Committee's consideration.

Wake surfing requires a wave of sufficient size to be produced by a vessel which allows the user to ride on it for an extended time period without the need of a tow rope. In 2020, NHDES was pleased to be able to participate in the wake boat legislative commission. The commission's report identified shoreline erosion an important environmental concern related to these types of watercraft. The NHDES concurred with this environmental concern raised by the commission; namely, that when these vessels are operated too close to shore, in protected coves, or on small waterbodies, there is a risk of unnatural shoreline erosion.

NHDES feels that the proposed legislation appropriately addresses the regulation of this growing watersport by identifying the activity of wake surfing, rather than the vessel type, and making attempts to reduce the probability of shoreline erosion. The new 250 foot distance requirement, as proposed, would fall more in-line with distances recommended by other states and the water sports industry for this activity. However, recent research from the University of Minnesota suggests that wakesurf boats require distances greater than 425 feet to decrease their wake characteristics to levels similar to the non-wake boats.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on HB 1071. 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](mailto:david.neils@des.nh.gov).

Sincerely,

Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of HB 1071: Representatives Gottling, Deshaies, MacDonald, Weston, Tanner, and Ebel