



# Advocacy Alert

Working together for the lakes we all love.  
January 12, 2024

Dear Lake Lover,

**The New Hampshire Legislative Session is in full swing and two lake-friendly bills that will be heard in just a few days need your support!** These bills deal with septic system pollution and the Surface Water Quality Protection Act.

Read on to see why we think you should support these bills and the actions you can take to help. Legislators need to hear from you to know how critical it is for them to support these bills. I've also included a brief update on what's happened so far on four other priority lake bills.

**Thank you for continuing to stand up and give our lakes a voice in the legislature—they are counting on YOU.**

**Working together to protect the lakes we all love,**

Andrea LaMoreaux, President & Policy Advocate  
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**P.S. Forward this email to those you know who also want to ensure our lakes are clean!** Sign-in numbers and personal stories make a difference!



## THESE TWO BILLS NEED YOUR URGENT SUPPORT!

### HB 1103, relative to revising the penalties of the shoreland protection act

This bill makes it less difficult for the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services to enforce penalties for violations of the Shoreland Water Quality Protection Act. The act establishes a 250-foot buffer around our lakes where vegetation removal, fertilizer use, excavation, fill, and development are regulated. Currently, the department must prove that a violation damaged the waterbody and fines can only be issued after the department determines the violator failed to make a good-faith effort to correct the problem. This bill does not raise fees for violations of the act.

#### **NH LAKES supports HB 1103 for these key reasons:**

- It will help the department hold individuals who violate the act accountable for their actions and may deter others from violating the act.
- It will reduce the amount of polluted runoff water flowing off the landscape degrading the health of our lakes and potentially contributing to the increasing frequency and severity of toxic cyanobacteria blooms in our lakes.
- It is consistent with the recommendations included in the State's recently released plan to address cyanobacteria blooms.

#### **HB 1103 Hearing Information:**

- Date: Wednesday, January 17, 2024
- Time: 1:00 p.m.
- Committee: House Resources, Recreation and Development
- Location: Room 305, Legislative Office Building, Concord, New Hampshire

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### HB 1113, relative to relative to shoreland septic systems

This bill modifies requirements for site assessments of shoreland septic systems when a property near a lake is sold. If the system is not approved by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, or was approved more than 20 years ago, a detailed septic evaluation by a permitted septic system designer will be required. If the system is found to be in failure, the state and the local health officer must be notified, and this must be included in the site assessment report. As the bill is currently written, failed

systems will need to be replaced prior to the close of the sale.

**NH LAKES supports HB 1113 for these key reasons:**

- The current site assessment requirement, which relies on visual inspection of the land surface, is not sufficient to determine if a septic system is failing. Many septic systems cause pollution problems without any visible signs of failure. This bill requires that a system be evaluated for its ability to contain and treat sewage discharge by inspecting a number of components of the system.
- Septic systems contribute a substantial portion of the nutrient pollution to our waters, degrading lake health and potentially contributing to the increasing frequency and severity of toxic cyanobacteria blooms in our lakes.
- This bill is consistent with the recommendations included in the State's recently released plan to address cyanobacteria blooms.

**HB 1113 Hearing Information:**

- Date: Wednesday, January 17, 2024
- Time: 2:00 p.m.
- Committee: House Resources, Recreation and Development
- Location: Room 305, Legislative Office Building, Concord, New Hampshire

**THREE WAYS TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THESE BILLS!**

**1. Register Your Support Online!**

- Go to the NH General Court: <https://www.gencourt.state.nh.us>
- Scroll to Meeting Resources, House Sign-in Form, and Online Testimony submission.  
<https://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/committees/remotetestimony/default.aspx>
- Fill in your personal information.
- Refer to the hearing information listed above to enter the date, committee, bill number, and time of the hearing.
- Indicate your support of the bill.
- You will have the option to upload a letter of support or paste in a statement of support. A few sentences about why you support the bill can make a big impact.
- Review and submit.

## **2. Attend the Hearing and Register Your Support!**

You don't have to speak at the public hearing, but our lakes need a large crowd standing up to support these bills. There is a sign-up sheet in the hearing room where you can register your support.

## **3. Attend the Hearing and Share Your Personal Story in Support!**

A one to two-minute personal story from you at the hearing about why you support a bill can leave a lasting impression on committee members. Call or email me if you plan to testify so we can coordinate our talking points. And I'd happily tell you what to expect at the hearing.

### **UPDATE ON OTHER LAKE PRIORITY BILLS**

#### **SB 394-FN-A: Relative to the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund**

This bill allocates \$1M to the Cyanobacteria Mitigation Loan and Grant Fund, with \$350K specifically for Lake Kanasatka. On January 4, it was heard by the Senate Finance Committee, and NH LAKES testified in support. Since there are numerous bills this session seeking financial support, the committee will likely make their decision closer to April after hearing all requests.

#### **HB 1293: Relative to prohibiting the use of certain fertilizers using phosphorus**

This bill limits phosphorus fertilizer application by making it applicable only for certain uses and during certain times of the year. It requires retailers to post signs about the impacts of phosphorus fertilizer on waterbodies. It also prohibits online sales of phosphorus fertilizers and requires additional setbacks from storm drains. On January 8, the House Environment and Agriculture Committee heard this bill, and NH LAKES testified in support. Online, 227 individuals signed-in in support, one opposed, and one as neutral.

#### **HB 1301: Relative to wake surfing on public bodies of water**

This bill puts in place a process for 25 residents or property owners to petition the New Hampshire Department of Safety to restrict or prohibit wake surfing on a public waterbody, or a portion of a waterbody. Once the petition is submitted and reviewed by the department, a public hearing will be held. The department will consider testimony from the public and review shoreline impacts, size/depth of the waterbody, and other factors before issuing any restriction to ensure access, safety, and appropriate use for all. On January 10, the House Resources, Recreation and Development Committee heard the bill. NH LAKES and numerous individuals from lakes around the state spoke in support, while other members of the public and the boating industry spoke in opposition. Online, 399 individuals signed-in in support, 687 in opposition, and two as neutral.

### **HB 1304: Relative to vessel registration and boat fee decals**

This bill modifies the procedure for the registration of boats by requiring the issuance and display of a boat fee decal for the payment of boat fees in addition to the issuance and display of a boat registration decal. This will result in New Hampshire complying with federal law. It will protect the New Hampshire Marine Patrol from losing critical federal funding and provide a way for the state to legally collect fees for other critical programs, including invasive species control and prevention programs for our lakes. This bill was heard by the House Transportation Committee on January 9, and NH LAKES spoke in support. Online, 184 individuals signed-in in support and three in opposition. The committee is scheduled to discuss a recommendation in executive session on January 16.

## **HELPFUL RESOURCES**

[NH LAKES 2024 Bill Tracking Sheet](#)

[Webinar Recording: Lakes & Legislation: 2024  
Legislative Session Preview](#)

[Who's My Legislator?](#)

### **Meeting & Hearing Schedule:**

[NH House](#)

[NH Senate](#)

[Find a Bill](#)

[Tips on How to Advocate](#)



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The lakes we all love can't take care of themselves. They need you to do your part. You can invest in clean and healthy lakes by making a charitable donation today.

**Donate Now**

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