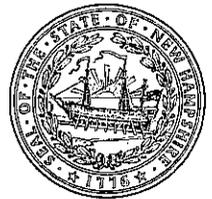




The State of New Hampshire
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner

February 11, 2010

The Honorable Judith T. Spang, Chairman
Resources, Recreation and Development Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 305
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Re: HB 1487 relative to the definition of certified wetland scientists

Dear Chairman Spang:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 1487, which would expand the definition of a certified wetland scientist and the types of experience necessary to receive certification as a wetland scientist. The bill would add specific references to classifying wetlands, functions and values assessment and wetlands mitigation design, implementation and monitoring to the wetlands scientist certification provisions in RSA 310-A. The Department of Environmental Services supports this bill.

HB 1487 proposes changes to the statutory definition and experience requirements for certified wetlands scientists that better reflect the contemporary range of required professional expertise for practice in New Hampshire. To a large degree, these changes have been the product of the evolution and increasing complexity of federal and state wetland program requirements. The professional responsibilities for certified wetland scientists are more complex and diverse than in the past. Wetland scientists are now routinely required to classify wetlands, make professional judgments as to wetland functions and values, and design, implement and monitor wetlands mitigation projects. The potential liability caused by errors in judgment can be very significant for the clients of wetland scientists, especially if errors cause or contribute to violations of state or federal regulations. The Department of Environmental Services believes that it will be protective of both the public and the environment to enhance the legal requirements for certification of wetland scientists to better reflect the contemporary practice of these important environmental professionals.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this bill. Please feel free to call me at 271-2958 or Collis Adams at 271-4054, if you have any questions or need additional information.

Very truly yours,

Thomas S. Burack
Commissioner

cc: Representatives Benn, Harding, Sad, McClammer, and Christensen
Senators Janeway and Carson

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