

Building Strong Collaborative Relationships for a Sustainable Water Resources Future:

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SUMMARY OF STATE WATER PLANNING

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The findings contained in this report are based on the information collected from the literature search and interviews for this initiative and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy or decision unless so designated by other official documentation.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

1. STATE/REGIONAL WATER PLANNING STATUS

New Hampshire is in the early stages of developing a statewide water resources plan. A 2003 state statute declares the need for comprehensive statewide water management and planning, to be carried out by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and calls for the creation of a Water Resources Committee to study water resources issues in the state. The Water Resources Committee consists of appointed state senators and representatives who “shall study water resources in the state of New Hampshire” (RSA Chapter 481 Section 1-b).

At the recent 2008 Watershed Conference, NHDES presented the status of the Water Plan process (Source [4]). These include the development of the Water Resources Primer, an initiative designed to gather information to help craft the framework for a state water plan. The Water Resources Primer was completed in December 2008 and published on the NHDES website in January 2009. Spearheaded by the Water Resources Committee, but authored by NHDES, the stated purpose of the Primer is “to inform policy makers and citizens about the state’s water resources and the challenges faced in sustainably managing them” (Source [8]). The results of a statewide survey were presented at the Watershed Conference, which captured the opinions of state and local officials and the public on various water-related issues.

The Primer identifies the following primary challenges that face New Hampshire as a comprehensive statewide water plan is being developed (Source [7]):

- Landscape change and increased demand for water related to population and economic growth.
- Climate change: increasing temperature, more frequent and intense storms, etc.
- Aging and inadequate water infrastructure: wastewater, drinking water, stormwater and dams.
- Information needs: water quantity and quality data collection, analysis and management

The Primer is a comprehensive description and assessment of the state of water resources in New Hampshire. It does not include planning goals and objectives, but it encompasses the various aspects of water resources – such as water use, stormwater, dams, floods, wetlands, etc. – and identifies challenges, issues, successful management programs, and areas in need of improvement.

In the absence of funding to continue the Water Plan process, NHDES has not established a timeframe for the development of the statewide Water Plan, but it is clear that the Water Division within NHDES is taking on this responsibility.

Prior to the formal initiation of a statewide Water Plan development process, in 2002, the Watershed Management Bureau (WMB, within the Water Division) released its official Strategic Plan, which consists of a set of goals and objectives aimed at achieving their mission: “To protect and improve the health and function of New Hampshire’s waters and watersheds for human and ecological benefit” (Source [2]). There are numerous state programs associated with the WMB that are designed to manage, plan for, and protect the state’s water resources; the Strategic Plan addresses how the WMB will assess and manage these programs, but does not offer the specific details, in the form of distinct goals, objectives, and desired outcomes, that would be included in a comprehensive state water plan.

The main focus of WMB’s past and current programs is on surface water and watershed protection. The Rivers Management and Protection Program (RMPP, developed in accordance with the Rivers Management and Protection Act) was the most widespread planning initiative prior to the initiation of the Water Plan process. Under the RMPP, the state has designated 15 rivers as being in need of watershed protection and management, initiating local-based programs to develop watershed plans for the designated rivers. Figure 1 shows the state’s designated rivers.

New Hampshire also has a statewide drought management plan, a well-defined groundwater strategy, and a water supply watershed protection program. These management programs are not tied to the statewide plan development, but a short description of relevant water resources management programs is included in this summary to establish a baseline for how the state currently conducts water resources planning and management.

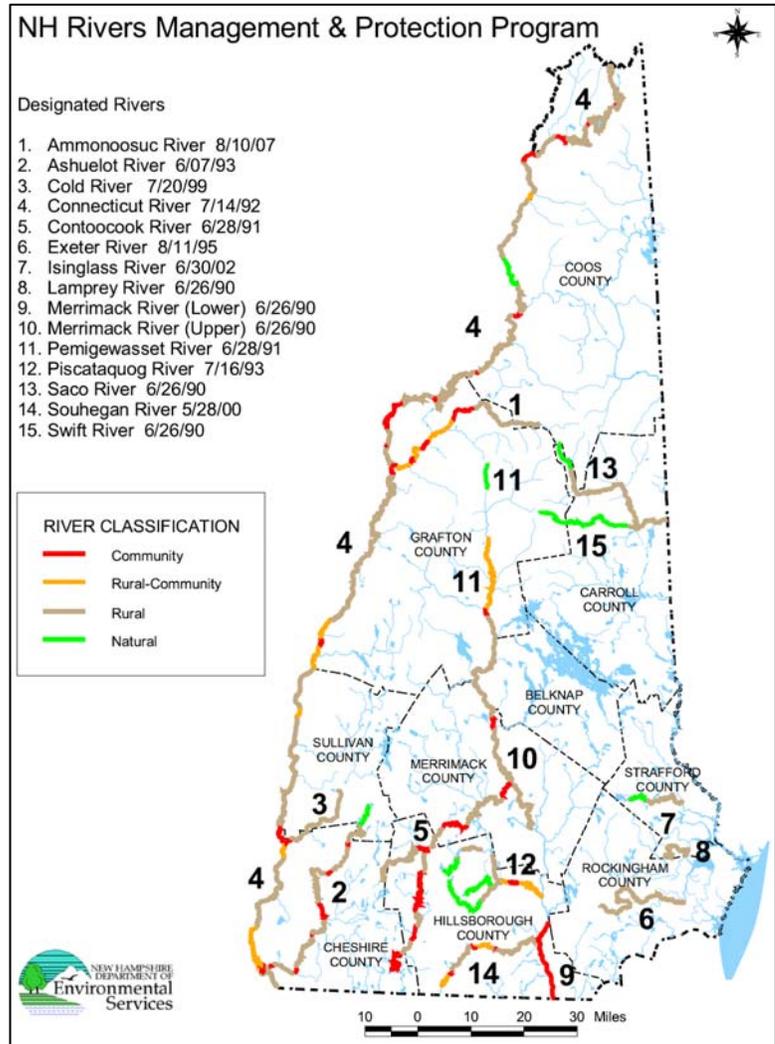


Figure 1. Designated Rivers in the NH Rivers Management and Protection Program (Source [3])

2. RESPONSIBLE STATE AGENCIES/REGIONAL ENTITIES

The Water Division of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) is responsible for the development of a statewide plan, and houses the state’s numerous water planning and management related programs. The contact information for the director of NHDES’ Water Division is as follows:

Harry T. Stewart, P.E., Director, NHDES Water Division
 29 Hazen Drive; PO Box 95
 Concord, NH 03302-0095
 (603) 271-3434

Within the Water Division there are six bureaus covering various state water components –Dam Bureau, Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau, Subsurface Systems Bureau, Wastewater Engineering

Bureau, Watershed Management Bureau, and Wetlands Bureau. The Watershed Management Bureau (WMB) has been involved with previous and current management programs. The contact information for the WMB is as follows:

Paul Currier, Administrator, Watershed Management Bureau
NH Department of Environmental Services
29 Hazen Drive; PO Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095
(603) 271-2304
paul.currier@des.nh.gov

Separate from the Water Division are the Water Council and the Water Resources Council. The Water Council consists of 16 members representing various divisions of the New Hampshire state government and the public. Their stated role is: “To consult with and advise the director of the water division with respect to the policy, programs, goals, and operations of the division other than those relating to wetlands under RSA 482-A, with particular emphasis on long-range planning for the division and on education of the public relative to the functions of the division, on a continuing basis” (Source [3]). The Water Council also handles appeals and rules from the Water Division. The Water Resources Council was established under the previously mentioned 2003 statute, and at this time has the role of acting as a “trustee and overseer of water resources council projects” (Source [3]). An explanation of this role is offered on the NHDES website, stating: “This second function includes responsibility for the research, evaluation, financing, development, implementation, and management of water conservation/distribution projects which are in turn financed through user fees imposed on those benefiting from the project” (Source [3]). The contact information for the two councils is as follows:

John F. Bridges, Chair, Water Council
NH Department of Environmental Services
29 Hazen Drive; PO Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095

Thomas S. Burack, Commissioner, NHDES and Chair, Water Resources Council
NH Department of Environmental Services
29 Hazen Drive; PO Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095
(603) 271-4974

3. WATER MANAGEMENT VISION AND GOALS

In 2002 the WMB published a Strategic Plan for the Bureau, outlining its priorities, goals, and objectives for watershed management in the state. The mission statement, as presented in the 2002 Strategic Plan, of the WMB is: “To protect and improve the health and function of New Hampshire’s waters and watersheds for human and ecological benefit” (Source [2]). The Water Resources Primer, an informational document published by NHDES in January 2009, does not have a specific vision statement.

4. SCOPE OF WATER RESOURCES PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The process for carrying out water planning in New Hampshire is not currently well-defined in web-published documents; however the state has instituted several programs that are directly related to water planning. A few of the most relevant programs will be summarized here, along with the most current available information on the Water Plan process.

Water Plan Process

The Water Resources Primer is the first step in New Hampshire's development of a statewide comprehensive water plan. This document is intended to present an overview of all aspects of the state's water resources; there are chapters dedicated to:

- Rivers and streams
- Lakes and ponds
- Groundwater
- Wetlands
- Coastal and estuarine waters
- Water use and conservation
- Drinking water
- Wastewater
- Stormwater
- Dams
- Floods and droughts

Each chapter provides information about the topic, issues related to it, and current management efforts, including descriptions of the relevant current state programs. A short list of stakeholder recommendations is also included for each of the water resources topics listed above.

The Primer identifies four underlying, overall challenges related to New Hampshire's water resources, citing data that support the need for increased water planning to address these key issues. Listed below are the four challenges and specific water resources issues related to each (Source [7]):

1. Landscape change and increased demand for water related to economic and population growth – increasing water use, landscape change and managing stormwater.
2. The state will permit the broadest possible access to and common use of state waters, consistent with the public interests, acknowledging that the Legislature may by general law regulate and limit access to state waters in the interest of preserving or fostering preferred beneficial uses or public purposes (Constitution of Alaska, Article VIII, Sections 3, 13 and 14).
3. Aging and inadequate infrastructure – drinking water and wastewater, stormwater, dams.
4. Information needs: stream gages to monitor protected instream flows, stream morphology, groundwater levels, water quality, lake carrying capacity, invasive species, updated flood elevations.

The Primer stresses the interconnectivity of water resources, and instructs readers that the underlying challenges should be considered when reading the individual chapters dedicated to specific areas of water resources. The Primer appears to include the relevant research and information necessary to establish a comprehensive statewide water plan, however does not describe a well defined process or timeframe for the development of such a plan. In addition to the information presented on various water resources topics, the Primer includes a synthesis of the key issues facing the state. The issues have been determined by both state officials and outside reviewers representing key stakeholder groups, based on information presented in early drafts of the Primer.

In addition to preparation and publication of the Primer, NHDES had completed several components of the Water Plan process as of July 2009. NHDES worked with contractors to complete a survey of legislators and local officials during the fall of 2008 to identify the relative importance of various water resources issues and concerns. N.H. Geological Survey completed work on a fine-grained analysis of hydrologic stress (net surface and groundwater withdrawals compared with seasonal low stream flow) statewide. Finally, NHDES conducted a series of 16 public meetings throughout the state to present the contents of the Primer and the survey, and to hear about local water resources concerns. Next steps are for NHDES to conduct additional outreach to stakeholders and to report back to the Water Resources Committee.

Water Management Bureau Strategic Plan

The most comprehensive set of goals and objectives on watershed planning and management are those set forth in the 2002 Strategic Plan of the WMB. The Bureau established nine goals, each accompanied by three to five objectives aimed at achieving those goals. There is no further explanation of the goals and objectives in the Strategic Plan, other than to state the overall purpose of the Plan is to tie together the 31 programs within the Bureau that relate to water planning and management. The Strategic Plan was meant to apply for 2 to 3 years after its publication, at which time it would be revised and re-released, however the latest version available online is the original 2002 Plan. The nine goals and objectives of the WMB Strategic Plan are as follows:

Goal 1. Provide a coordinated public outreach program that includes education, technical assistance, and a mechanism for volunteerism.

- *Objective 1: Identify, coordinate, and support education and outreach activities.*
- *Objective 2: Encourage volunteerism through strengthening volunteer-based programs.*
- *Objective 3: Provide training and assistance opportunities which both address the public's needs and enhance the Bureau's programs.*
- *Objective 4: Create, revise, and disseminate public information and guidance materials using all available media.*

Goal 2. Improve the quality, consistency, and accessibility of water-related data.

- *Objective 1: Increase staff GIS use and capabilities.*
- *Objective 2: Develop and maintain applications and procedures to support Bureau's data management needs.*
- *Objective 3: Improve accessibility of data to the public.*
- *Objective 4: Ensure that data is accurate, compatible, and consistent with other bureaus.*

Goal 3. Provide a surface water monitoring, assessment, and reporting program that addresses the needs of DES, the public, and all regulatory requirements.

- *Objective 1: Conduct long-term water quality monitoring programs (i.e., programs that are regularly conducted on an annual basis).*
- *Objective 2: Prepare reports on the status of water quality.*
- *Objective 3: Conduct water quality monitoring and analyses for the development of water quality standards.*
- *Objective 4: Develop a comprehensive monitoring strategy and an assessment methodology that fulfills State and federal requirements (i.e., Section 305(b) and 303(d) of the CWA).*
- *Objective 5: Conduct special, relatively short term water quality studies (i.e., studies that last no more than approximately 3 years).*

Goal 4. Improve communication and the exchange of information.

- *Objective 1: Improve communications within the Watershed Management Bureau.*
- *Objective 2: Improve communications between the Watershed Management Bureau and other bureaus/divisions within the Department.*
- *Objective 3: Improve communications between the Watershed Management Bureau and public and private organizations outside the Department as well as the general public.*

Goal 5. Foster a professional, cooperative, efficient, inspiring, and physically comfortable work environment.

- *Objective 1: Foster a cooperative, enjoyable, team atmosphere within the Bureau.*
- *Objective 2: Foster professional development within the workplace.*
- *Objective 3: Provide a physically comfortable and productive work environment.*

Goal 6. Develop and implement a watershed management approach that involves citizens, local/state/federal governments, and non-government organizations.

- *Objective 1: Establish a system to track statewide data, outreach efforts, and projects by watershed.*
- *Objective 2: Develop a watershed management approach.*
- *Objective 3: Implement a watershed management approach.*

Goal 7. Restore impaired waterbodies and protect aquatic communities using a watershed management approach.

- *Objective 1: Install and evaluate stormwater BMPs, streambank restoration techniques, agricultural BMPs, and stream restoration methods.*
- *Objective 2: Develop framework for riparian restoration and enhancement.*
- *Objective 3: Develop a stormwater utility guidance document for municipalities.*

Goal 8. Foster partnerships that provide support and coordination to local entities in their efforts to monitor, protect, and restore waterbodies.

- *Objective 1: Determine the need for watershed coordination in the Connecticut, Saco, and Androscoggin basins.*
- *Objective 2: Spend restoration funds on the most significant water quality impairments.*
- *Objective 3: Increase development and implementation of lake and river management plans.*

Goal 9. Develop and/or support laws, rules and policies that are consistent with the bureau and department missions.

- *Objective 1: Ensure the existing laws, rules and policies for which the Bureau is responsible are current, are being properly implemented, are being enforced, and are achieving the desired result.*
- *Objective 2: Ensure proposed legislation is consistent with the Bureau's mission, laws, rules and policies.*
- *Objective 3: Work cooperatively with other agencies, organizations to develop or revise appropriate legislation and policies.*

Rivers Management and Protection Program

New Hampshire's surface water planning and management efforts are heavily directed toward priority water bodies and supported by local volunteerism. In 1988, New Hampshire created the Rivers Management and Protection Program (RMPP) to protect the state's "significant river resources for the benefit of present and future generations through a unique combination of state and local resource management and protection" (Source [5]). The program has identified 15 rivers designated as being in need of protection and restoration and initiated local development and adoption of river corridor management plans for those rivers. The designated rivers are first nominated for the program by a citizen or organization in the state, then the commissioner of NHDES evaluates the nomination and, if approved, passes it to the state legislature to formally include the river in the RMPP.

The RMPP relies on local implementation to develop the river corridor management plan, through the creation of a local river advisory committee (LAC). The LACs are comprised of representatives from each riverfront municipality who come from local government, business, conservation, recreation, agriculture, riparian landowners, and other entities that have a potential stake in land use and river quality. During the river nomination process, the local sponsor of the nomination must prove that there will be local participation in order to receive approval for the river's designation in the RMPP (Source [6]). While the management plans are developed and implemented at the local level, the state provides technical assistance and enforces regulations concerning the quality and quantity of flow in the protected river segments. The RMPP does not, however, have the authority to alter zoning regulations to inhibit or control the development in a designated river's watershed (Source [5]).

The river corridor management plans developed for the RMPP's designated rivers are individualized documents that cover each river's resources and include recommendations for how to manage and protect those resources. There is no formal guide issued by NHDES for developing the corridor management plans. The plans themselves do not specifically assign responsibility or authority for implementing the recommended actions, rather they offer suggestions for the entities and tracks that will be most appropriate to pursue in accomplishing the goals and objectives of the plan. The scopes of the

corridor management plans are not strictly limited to surface water issues, and may contain planning and management objectives related to aquifer and groundwater quality protection (Source [7]).

The overarching purpose of the RMPP is to create a forum for multiple municipalities and local groups to collaborate and manage their watershed and river corridor more effectively. The designated rivers receive more attention from the state, which often results in more funding opportunities as well as technical assistance to solve issues in the watershed. Due to the nomination and approval process, the development of RMPP corridor management plans must be initiated at the local level, and therefore the program does not yet encompass all major rivers in New Hampshire.

Other State Water Planning and Management Programs

New Hampshire has many state programs directly related to water planning and management. The following is a listing of those programs that might be included in a comprehensive statewide water plan (Source [3]):

- Beach Inspection Program
- Best Management Practices to Prevent Groundwater Contamination
- Biomonitoring Program
- Boat Pumpouts (Clean Vessel Act) Program
- Businesses United for Water Security
- Coastal Program
- Dam Removal & River Restoration Program
- Drinking Water Source Protection Program
- Drought Management Program
- Emergency Action Plans Program
- Estuaries Project
- Exotic Species Program
- Groundwater Discharge Permitting and Registration
- Groundwater Reclassification
- Instream Flow Protection Pilot Program
- Interactive Lakes Ecology Curriculum
- Lakes Management and Protection Program
- Large Groundwater Withdrawal Permitting Program
- New Community Well Sitings
- Small Water System Help Center/Capacity Assurance
- Nonpoint Source Pollution Program
- Permitting of Sources of Bottled Water
- Private Well Testing Program
- Project WET
- Public Waters/Great Ponds Program
- Regional Environmental Planning Program
- Rivers Management & Protection Program
- Section 401 Water Quality Certificate Program
- Shellfish Program
- Shoreland Program
- Stormwater Program (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Federal Stormwater Program - Phase II)
- Surface Water Quality Assessment Program - Section 305(b) / 303(d)
- Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program
- Volunteer Lake Assessment Program
- Volunteer River Assessment Program
- Water Conservation
- Water Quality Standard Advisory Committee
- Water Supply Land Conservation Grants
- Water System Emergency Planning/Security
- Water Use Registration and Reporting Program
- Water Well Board
- Watershed Assistance Section
- Winnepesaukee River Basin Program

Several of the programs most relevant to statewide water planning are described below. The descriptions have been excerpted from the NHDES Water Division website (Source [3]).

Best Management Practices to Prevent Groundwater Contamination:

The State of New Hampshire's Best Management Practices Rules apply to all facilities that handle larger-than-household quantities of regulated substances. These facilities are identified in New Hampshire's Groundwater Protection Act (RSA 485-C) as Potential Contamination Sources. The purpose of the BMPs is to prevent the release of a regulated substance into groundwater and potentially contaminating drinking water supplies. The BMPs are common-sense operating practices that help businesses minimize their environmental liability.

Biomonitoring Program

The Biomonitoring Program assesses the biological health and integrity of aquatic ecosystems throughout the state. The results of these assessments are used to establish reference locations for "least disturbed" conditions in the state, identifying areas that are biologically impaired, and for prioritizing those areas needing management, restoration, or preservation efforts.

Groundwater and Drinking Water Source Protection Program

The Groundwater and Drinking Water Source Protection Program provides regulatory and non-regulatory tools to protect groundwater and sources of public drinking water. The program is responsible for ensuring protection of new sources of drinking water as well as improving protection of existing sources. We work closely with water systems, municipalities, residents and organizations to ensure adequate quantity and quality of New Hampshire's drinking water.

New Hampshire Estuaries Project

*Beginning in 1995, the New Hampshire Estuaries Project (PREP) embarked on a process to develop and systematically address the 98 Action Items outlined in the program's guiding document, the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. The intent was to achieve the Plan's goals of improved water quality in New Hampshire's estuaries. The organization's name was changed in 2009 to the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP). The PREP addresses Action Items by either completing them directly or funding other organizations to complete the work.
(Source: www.nhep.unh.edu)*

Instream Flow Pilot Program

The Instream Flow Pilot Program is developing river-specific numerical criteria for stream flow protection and water management plans to implement those criteria. The Souhegan River and Lamprey River are currently being assessed under this pilot program.

Large Groundwater Withdrawals Permitting Program

In 1998, two State laws, the Groundwater Protection Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act, were amended to ensure that undesirable impacts to water resources from new large groundwater withdrawals are identified and addressed. Any groundwater withdrawal from a new well having a

maximum withdrawal of 57,600 gallons per day or more is considered to be a large groundwater withdrawal.

Project WET (Water Education for Teachers)

Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) is an interdisciplinary environmental education program which utilizes water as its theme. In New Hampshire, the program focuses on providing formal and non-formal K to12 educators with water education training and materials which can be used to promote awareness, appreciation, knowledge, and stewardship of water resources with youth.

Surface Water Quality Assessments

The Surface Water Quality Assessment Program produces two surface water quality documents every two years, the "305(b) Report" and the "303(d) List". As the two documents use the same data, the 305(b) Report and 303(d) List were combined into one Integrated Report starting in 2002. The Integrated Report describes the quality of New Hampshire's surface waters and an analysis of the extent to which all such waters provide for the protection and propagation of a balanced population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife, and allow recreational activities in and on the water.

Volunteer River (and Lake) Assessment Programs

The Volunteer River Assessment Program loans water quality monitoring equipment, provides technical support, and facilitates educational programs to volunteer groups on numerous rivers and watersheds throughout the state. Volunteers conduct water quality monitoring on an ongoing basis and increase the amount of river water quality information available to local, state and federal governments, which allows for better watershed planning.

5. PARTNERSHIPS, STAKEHOLDER, AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Several of the current water resource management programs implemented by the state rely on local volunteers. The RMPP, the process of protecting and managing an important river starts and ends with local volunteer support and input. A river is first nominated by an individual or river/watershed group in order to initiate the RMPP process of developing a river corridor management plan, which is also developed by a local constituency. The state also uses volunteers to collect valuable data through their Volunteer River Assessment Program and Volunteer Lake Assessment Program. The data collected through these programs are used by the state to assess the water quality of New Hampshire's surface water.

The state has also been engaging the public, as well as a diverse group of stakeholders, in the early stages of its statewide water plan development. At the 2008 Watershed Conference, which is designed to inform public and non-governmental organizations about New Hampshire water resource issues, the NHDES Water Division presented the results of a recent survey gauging the opinion and knowledge of public and private stakeholders on various water resources issues. The results of this survey are intended to guide the creation of a statewide water plan. Contributions were also made to the Water Resources Primer by a diverse group of water resources stakeholders, listed below (Source [8]):

- Manchester Water Works
- N.H. Department of Resources and Economic Development
- N.H. Water Well Board; N.H. Water Well Association; Cushing and Sons Water Wells, Inc.
- N.H. Water Works Association
- N.H. State Representative; N.H. Groundwater Commission; Environmental Research Advisory Committee; N.H. House Science, Technology and Energy Committee
- N.H. Office of Energy and Planning
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Stormwater Center, University of New Hampshire
- N.H. Estuaries Project, University of New Hampshire
- Conservation Law Foundation
- N.H. Farm Bureau Federation
- Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, University of New Hampshire
- N.H. Estuaries Project, University of New Hampshire
- Appalachian Mountain Club
- N.H. Lakes Association
- U.S. Geological Survey
- N.H. Water Resources Research Center
- NHSC, Inc.
- N.H. Fish and Game Department
- Lakes Management Advisory Committee
- Manchester Water Works
- N.H. Rivers Council
- Public Water Access Advisory Board
- U.S. Geological Survey
- N.H. Office of Energy and Planning
- Cooperative Extension, University of New Hampshire
- NHSC, Inc.
- N.H. Groundwater Commission
- N.H. Estuaries Project, University of New Hampshire
- N.H. State Representative; Resources, Recreation and Development Committee; Water Resources Committee
- Granite State Designers and Installers Association
- Lakes Management Advisory Committee
- Society for the Protection of N.H. Forests
- The Nature Conservancy
- NHSC, Inc.

6. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Apart from developing the Water Resources Primer as the foundation of the future plan, New Hampshire has not yet devised a strategy to implement their forthcoming statewide water plan.

The RMPP, which is the program under which 15 river corridor management plans have been developed for designated rivers in New Hampshire, does not have a defined implementation strategy or update timeline. Each individual plan may be updated periodically, although this appears to be done on an individual, as-needed basis. For example, the Lampry River Management Plan was first written in 1995 and updated in 2007 (Source [9]); the Lower Merrimack River Management plan was first written in 1989 and updated in 2008 (Source [7]).

7. OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The Strategic Plan for the WMB is the only available documentation of a formal outcomes assessment process related to water planning in the State of New Hampshire at this time. A tracking process is briefly mentioned in the introduction to the Strategic Plan, as follows: “Although many of the bureau’s routine activities fit into the goals and objectives, the focus was on new and innovative action items. The action items for each objective have been reviewed by all bureau members and have been

incorporated into a DES database designed to track programs and our work outputs” (Source [2]). There is no further explanation of the NHDES tracking database.

8. NEEDS, CHALLENGES AND CRITICAL PRIORITIES - INTERVIEW INSIGHTS

As presented in the Primer and in the Summary, there are four key water resources issues facing the state: landscape change and increased demand for water related to population and economic growth; climate change causing increasing temperature, more frequent and intense storms, etc.; aging and inadequate water infrastructure; information needs including water quantity and quality data collection, analysis and management. Geographically, the southeast portion of the state is experiencing development that is constrained by inadequate water infrastructure and supply.

The state has learned that a more integrated approach to problem solving works best, i.e. considering both water quality and water quantity and other interrelated issues. They recognize that water issues affect the quality of life in their state, and this is the main point they want to communicate with N.H. residents and businesses. They are focused on getting public buy-in on their initiatives for statewide planning so that they have a good chance of implementing their plan once it is written. The language of their water documents (the Primer and ultimately the Plan) need to be understandable to the public and to legislators who will ultimately decide what gets put into law. The Water Division within NHDES makes it easier for water people in all sectors (wastewater, dams, etc) to collaborate by keeping them close and integrated. One significant challenge facing the state is that land use decisions and planning are done at the municipal level, but the outcomes affect entire watersheds.

Climate change is one of the four key issues that NH has identified. They recognize the relationship it has to seacoast flooding and resulting water quality impairments. The state’s Climate Change Policy Task Force released an Action Plan in March 2009 that includes a number of points related to water resources issues.

The federal government has not been directly involved with New Hampshire’s water planning process. The state has worked very successfully with the USGS on water-related projects in the past. New Hampshire would like to see USACE involvement in local water projects, such as Salem, NH, where they are having a water use/needs problem.

9. REFERENCES

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