

Selectmen Meeting August 26, 2026

Reinstalling previous shoreland department that existed from 2016-2024 and adding erosion control team.

Selectmen and fellow citizens, the purpose of my website www.wakefieldlakes.com and the various meetings I have done this year is to address the protection of Wakefield's number one asset. Since 1984, I have sent out letters of information on how to protect these assets. In recent years, I worked with the selectmen in 2016 to create a shoreland officer that became full-time until his departure in 2024. Since that time, Wakefield has gone backward and thrown the job back at the building inspector's office, which is already doing yeoman's work to oversee the building needs of the town. In 2021, I sent out a survey in which people were asked: **Are you in favor of a Warrant article to create a separate department with budget, staff, equipment, and materials to protect the main source of income, as we do with all departments that ensure the health and safety of this unique town of WAKEFIELD!** I presented the results to the selectmen in September of 2021. The respondents had to give me their name and address, and most of them were residents, as I only mailed to the residents.

The response was great, over 4-1 in favor, and a total of 120 contacts. Now, that doesn't seem like a lot, but keep in mind the yearly town meeting doesn't usually get that many. So here we are in 2026 without a department to protect our R-2 zone (shoreland zone), which is our most important revenue generator. To quickly go over how important this department is, it provides the lion's share of our yearly budget, now at 23 million dollars, up 4.3 million dollars since 2021. The breakdown

is, the school budget has increased 16.3% and the municipal budget has increased 34.3% over that time. I believe the main reason for this increase on the municipal side, is the need to retain employees at competitive pay rates. On my website, you will see charts and information showing you that this shoreland zone produces 66% of all real estate taxes and 33% of all income to the town. What you must consider is that the great majority of these properties are owned by part-time nonresidents. Therefore, my guess would be these properties are actually supplying more than 50% of our yearly budget. How, you ask? Well, since schools are a larger part of the budget than the municipal side, these part-time, revenue-generating properties do not have children in our system. Their use of our roads, transfer station, police, fire/ambulance, recreation department, town hall, and any other budgetary needs of the town is limited compared to those of us who live here year-round. Also, by recreating this department, we will be prepared for the day when there are enough people living year-round on all these miles of lake roads that they will have the voting power to require the town to take control of these now private roads.

I will now address the subject that comes up quite a bit about the state's responsibility. The state has 3 or 4 shoreland people at most in the field any day, of a team of 6. These handful of people have close to 5 million lineal feet of property to work. Over many years, I worked with the Department of Environmental Services, and they are doing the best they can with the people they have. On www.wakefieldlakes.com, I show that the entire fund at the beginning of this year was at \$200,000 to protect all of the state's water bodies. That amount can barely ease the problems of cyanobacteria, which is getting worse every year with continuous nutrient-laden gravel being brought into camp roads as well

as increasing New Hampshire temperatures that help feed the cyanobacteria problem. Our state has seen 7 of the 10 warmest years on record since 2010. [See below.](#)

Now, the main reason we have to remain financially diligent is that our current state legislature has eliminated funding that, for 100 years, was vital to our overall town tax rate. The Interest and Dividends Tax, paid by only 8% of New Hampshire tax filings, is now gone as of January 1, 2025. On my website, I go into great lengths to explain the loss of this money. I will now quickly explain how it affects Wakefield residents' real estate tax bills. By removing this tax, which was never paid by 92% of New Hampshire tax filers, I calculate that Wakefield is losing 1.28 million dollars a year, either in services not available from the state or in direct tax increases to our town budget. You have 234 municipalities in the state, and a loss of \$ 300 million a year would equal 1.28 million dollars for Wakefield. With a state population of 1.4 million people divided by 234 municipalities, that comes out to 6,000 people per community, which is about where Wakefield's population is today. Another thing this current legislative body is doing is promoting the Education Freedom Account, which has grown from 8.1 million dollars to 51.6 million dollars since 2021-2022. This money is for less than 7% of New Hampshire students. At this rate of growth, we can only speculate where we will be in another 5 years. Also, most of the students receiving this money were already outside of our public schools. Lastly, there is no income limit to who receives the funding. You may be in favor of both of these instances of lost revenue for most taxpayers. Still, nonetheless, it can only lead to higher real estate taxes for the vast majority who do not benefit from these legislative moves.

I hope this gives you all some cause to understand why I am pushing to protect the income our lakes provide, help me get this most important department back on its feet, and control the erosion, which is our number one threat.

Clean water will be appreciated in the future as Wakefield grows to a population of 15,000 or more, and these waters become vital to our town as drinking water.

One last item: What the state is currently doing. Senate bill 598 is a study group that is mostly window-dressing and won't solve any of these major problems. It mainly robs existing DES funds, which are minimal to begin with. You can go to my website, click the Jim Miller Interview link, and hear me go into it in more detail on this subject as well as many others. [See below.](#)

I will also post this letter on the website along with this meeting. Now on to the budget, hold your breath!

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Log In



US National Weather Service Gray ME

January 1, 2024 ·

2023 looks to be the warmest year on record at Concord, NH since records began in 1869. It was also the 7th wettest year on record. Portland, ME tied 2021 for the 4th warmest year on record since records began in 1941. It was also the 13th wettest year on record since records began in 1871.



Warm and Wet 2023



Concord, NH

Rank	Year	Mean Avg Temperature
1	2023	49.4
2	2016	49.3
3	1878	49.2
4	2021	49.1
-	2012	49.1
-	1877	49.1
7	2020	48.9
8	1880	48.8
9	2010	48.7
-	1998	48.7

Rank	Year	Total Precipitation
1	2008	57.97
2	2005	57.20
3	2006	55.24
4	2011	54.77
5	2018	53.30
6	1888	52.33
7	2023	50.59
8	1897	50.05
9	1951	49.27
10	1936	48.79

Portland, ME

Rank	Year	Mean Avg Temperature
1	2020	49.4
2	2012	49.2
-	2010	49.2
4	2023	48.8
-	2021	48.8
6	2016	48.5
-	2006	48.5
8	1998	48.3
9	2022	48.2
10	1990	48.1

Rank	Year	Total Precipitation
1	2005	66.40
2	1983	66.33
3	2008	61.24
4	1979	61.15
5	2006	60.85
6	1920	59.69
7	1888	59.24
8	2009	58.61
9	1996	58.39
10	1933	58.08
11	1977	57.63
12	1991	57.14
13	2023	56.67
14	1951	56.04

Weather Forecast Office
Gray ME

weather.gov/gyx | @NWSGray



2024 is the warmest year on record at 49.6 degrees, since NH record keeping began in 1869.

7 of the 10 warmest years have happened since 2010 and this trend is heavily damaging to our lakes.

CHAPTER 140
SB 598 - FINAL VERSION

03/05/2026 0780s
05/07/2026 1889EBA

26-2256
08/09

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT establishing the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund task force.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

140:1 New Section; Cyanobacteria Mitigation Loan and Grant Fund Task Force. Amend RSA 485-A by inserting after section 61 the following new section:

485-A:62 Cyanobacteria Mitigation Loan and Grant Fund Task Force.

I. There is established a task force to study developing a sustainable funding source for the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund established in RSA 485-A:58.

II. Notwithstanding RSA 14:49, the members of the task force shall be as follows:

(a) One member of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate.

(b) Two members of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.

(c) The governor, or designee.

(d) The commissioner of the department of transportation, or designee.

(e) The director of the department of environmental services' subsurface systems bureau.

(f) The director of the department of environmental services' limnology center.

(g) The executive director of the fish and game department, or designee.

(h) A member of the marine patrol, appointed by the director of the division of state police.

(i) A director of a river association or their designee, appointed by the president of the senate.

(j) A director of a lake association or their designee, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.

III. Legislative members of the task force shall receive mileage at the legislative rate when attending to the duties of the task force.

IV. The task force shall:

(a) Explore including a ~~voluntary~~ decal program to be displayed on non-motorized watercraft, allowing people to donate to the fund by selecting a check box on their motorized boat and sailboat registrations and mooring decal permits. Such program shall be patterned after the New Hampshire voluntary hike safe card under RSA 206:26-bb. **VOLUNTARY!**

(b) Explore establishing a license plate decal.

(c) Explore other ~~voluntary~~ funding sources. **WHAT? VOLUNTARY!**

(d) Explore the direction of a portion of the failed septic design application fee to be transferred to the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund.

(e) Explore reallocating a percentage, to be determined by the department of transportation, of mitigation funds resulting from transportation drainage impacts that are currently allocated to the

CHAPTER 140
SB 598 - FINAL VERSION
- Page 2 -

1 aquatic resource compensatory mitigation fund established in RSA 482-A:29 to the cyanobacteria
2 mitigation loan and grant fund.

3 (f) Explore the establishment of a program at the department of transportation for the
4 purpose of improving and/or upgrading culverts, drainage features, or other stormwater infrastructure in
5 the same watershed as the impacts with the goal of reducing cyanobacteria in New Hampshire water
6 bodies.

7 (g) Explore any other issues the task force discovers may lead to a sustainable funding
8 source for the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund.

9 V. The members of the task force shall elect a chairperson from among the members. The first
10 meeting of the task force shall be called by the first-named senate member. The first meeting of the task
11 force shall be held within 45 days of the effective date of this section. Four members of the task force
12 shall constitute a quorum.

13 VI. The task force shall report its findings and any recommendations for proposed legislation to
14 the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the senate clerk, the house clerk,
15 the governor, and the state library on or before January 1, 2027.

16 140:2 Repeal. RSA 485-A:62, relative to the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund task force,
17 is repealed.

18 140:3 Effective Date.

19 I. Section 2 of this act shall take effect January 1, 2027.

II. The remainder of this act shall take effect upon its passage.

Approved: June 12, 2026

Effective Date:

I. Section 2 effective January 1, 2027

II. Remainder effective June 12, 2026

TAKING FROM PETER TO PAY PAUL



Bill Text: NH SB598 | 2026 | Regular Session | Enrolled New Hampshire Senate Bill 598

Bill Title: Establishing the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund task force.

Sponsorship: Moderate Partisan Bill (Republican 6-1)

Status: (*Passed*) 2026-06-22 - II. Remainder Effective 06/12/2026 [SB598 Detail]

Download: New_Hampshire-2026-SB598-Enrolled.html

SB 598 - VERSION ADOPTED BY BOTH BODIES

03/05/2026 0780s

2026 SESSION

26-2256

08/09

SENATE BILL **598**

AN ACT establishing the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund task force.

SPONSORS: Sen. McConkey, Dist 3; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Lang, Dist 2; Rep. Peternel, Carr. 6; Rep. J. MacDonald, Carr. 6; Rep. Taylor, Carr. 8; Rep. Crawford, Carr. 3

COMMITTEE: Energy and Natural Resources

ANALYSIS

This bill establishes the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund task force.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.

Matter removed from current law appears ~~in brackets and struck through~~.

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

03/05/2026 0780s 26-2256

08/09

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II. Notwithstanding RSA 14:49 the members of the task force shall be as follows:

- (a) One member of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate.
- (b) Two members of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.
- (c) The governor, or designee.
- (d) The commissioner of the department of transportation, or designee.
- (e) The director of the department of environmental services subsurface systems bureau.

(f) The director of the department of environmental services limnology center.

(g) The executive director of the fish and game department, or designee.

(h) A member of the marine patrol, appointed by the director of the division of state police.

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III. Legislative members of the task force shall receive mileage at the legislative rate when attending to the duties of the task force.

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(b) Explore establishing a license plate decal.

(c) Explore other voluntary funding sources.

(d) Explore the direction of a portion of the failed septic design application fee to be transferred to the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund.

(e) Explore reallocating a percentage, to be determined by the department of transportation, of mitigation funds resulting from transportation drainage impacts that are currently allocated to the aquatic resource compensatory mitigation fund established in RSA 482-A:29 to the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund.

(f) Explore the establishment of a program at the department of transportation for the purpose of improving and/or upgrading culverts, drainage features, or other storm water infrastructure in the same watershed as the impacts with the goal of reducing cyanobacteria in New Hampshire water bodies.

(g) Explore any other issues the task force discovers may lead to a sustainable funding source for the cyanobacteria mitigation loan and grant fund.

V. The members of the study task force shall elect a chairperson from among the members. The first meeting of the task force shall be called by the first-named senate member. The first meeting of the task force shall be held within 45 days of the effective date of this section. Four members of the task force shall constitute a quorum.

VI. The task force shall report its findings and any recommendations for proposed legislation to the president of the senate, the speaker of the house of representatives, the senate clerk, the house clerk, the governor, and the state library on or before January 1, 2027.

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