

HB559_Letter_the_saga_continues

From: "Bob Dufresne" <Bob@ConceptCommUSA.com>

Subject: HB559 Letter... the saga continues

Date: Wednesday, February 25, 2009 4:53 PM

Hello Friends of NHWF,

First let me apologize for the flurry of emails over the last few weeks, but it appears our animal rights activist "friends" are still at it. As you may know, only one House Rep needs to pull HB559 off the consent calendar to have it debated and voted on the floor of the House.

while we still have friends in the House that will oppose this bill, if the House were to vote down party lines we would lose and HB559 would then need to be attacked in the Senate.

HB559 is currently on the Calendar for 3/4/09. Perhaps between now and then you can call or write your reps one last time and implore them to oppose HB559 if necessary.

As you will see from the letter (below) Ms. Fournier now refers to herself as a "Specialist on Fish and Game Issues," and not as a "militant animal rights activist" as she is more rightly known.

Best Regards,
Bob Dufresne
NHWF, Communications Chair
603.305.7629 Mobile

From: Suzanne at Solutions

Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2009 5:34 PM

To: Honorable NH Representatives

Subject: Fish & Game Performance Audit Recommendations Need Your Help

Date: February 24, 2009

From: Suzanne L. Fournier, Specialist on Fish and Game Issues

RE: Request for your support to implement key Fish & Game performance audit recommendations; HB 559 needs your help

Dear Honorable Representative:

The recommendations in the NH Fish & Game Performance Audit Report, published more than a year ago in January 2008 and aimed at improving the Fish & Game Department, need your help. House Bill 559 would begin to implement Audit Recommendation #1, the first and the single most important recommendation that resulted from the audit. HB 559 would also begin to implement recommendation #3 to open up F&G to F&G's other, largely unheard constituencies, that is, people who care about wild places and wild animals, though they do not hunt or fish them.

Because of major problems identified by the auditors with the functioning of the exclusive Commission of hunters and anglers, Audit Recommendation #1 would change the all-volunteer, non-professional Fish & Game Commission from a policy-making body that currently rules over the F&G Department, to an advisory body. With this change, the voices of traditional users of F&G services, the hunters and anglers, would no longer have excessive influence over decision-making at the Department that more and more is involved in Nongame issues as exemplified in F&G's statewide "Wildlife Action Plan." With Audit Recommendation #1 implemented, the overbearing pressure of hunters and anglers on the F&G Department would be lessened so as to allow a balance of policy to meet the needs of wildlife and other stakeholders like hikers and wildlife watchers.

However, the House Fish & Game & Marine Resources Committee voted ITL (15-0) the same day as the hearing on HB 559 in a knee-jerk reaction to the intense pressure placed upon Committee members by hunters and anglers fearful of any change that might reduce their "ownership" and "control" of the F&G Department. The Committee also placed HB 559 on the Consent Calendar for March 4th in an attempt to prevent the Full House from considering the

HB559_Letter_the_saga_continues

merits of HB 559. The Prime Sponsor, Rep. Carla Skinder, would actually like HB 559 to be retained in Committee to be worked on for the best ways to implement the audit's recommendations.

If you agree that HB 559 at least deserves to be discussed by the Full House on March 4th, would you consider requesting removing it from the Consent Calendar and consider talking in favor of sending this bill for retention for further work to the Fish & Game & Marine Resources Committee, or, to the second committee to consider such audit bills, the Executive Departments & Administration Committee? If you do want to play a role, please contact Rep. Carla Skinder directly.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I welcome your comments and questions about HB 559 or about the F&G Performance Audit. For convenience, I am pasting below the first four Audit Recommendations that pertain to changing F&G.

Sincerely,
Suzanne L. Fournier, MS.

(1) The policy-making body of F&G, the F&G Commission, is a mess of inconsistent powers and duties, and the fix is to remove the policy-making powers of the Commission and allow it to be an advisory-body only;

(2) the name "Fish and Game" Department no longer reflects all the duties and responsibilities of F&G such as nongame wildlife and serving non-game activity enthusiasts, like wildlife watchers, and the fix is to change the name possibly to "Fish and wildlife" Department;

(3) F&G would benefit from inclusion on the F&G Commission of other user groups who have vested interest in F&G policy, in addition to the traditional fish and game enthusiasts;

(4) New user groups have been poorly represented on the Commission and in policy decisions, even though their number is much higher now than that of the traditional user groups. The fixes are to conduct a stakeholder analysis of the expanded constituency in order to consider their needs when setting priorities and when establishing and managing programs; and to have a study commission to evaluate the future, long-term direction of F&G.

=====