

CHAPTER 132
HB 1425-FN - FINAL VERSION

5Mar2026... 0528h

2026 SESSION

26-2457
04/09

HOUSE BILL

1425-FN

AN ACT relative to the development of an online wetlands permit processing system.

SPONSORS: Rep. Donnelly, Rock. 25

COMMITTEE: Resources, Recreation and Development

ANALYSIS

This bill simplifies wetland permitting for small projects and gives the department of environmental services the authority to create an alternative adaptive permitting process for emergency or natural disaster response.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears [in brackets and struckthrough.]
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Six

AN ACT relative to the development of an online wetlands permit processing system.

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

1 132:1 Water Management and Protection; Wetland Permitting Procedures. Amend RSA 482-A:11, III
2 to read as follows:

3 III.(a) Upon written notification to the department by a municipal conservation commission[;] *or* a
4 local river management advisory committee[; ~~or the New Hampshire Rivers Council~~] that it intends to
5 investigate any notice received by it pursuant to RSA 482-A:3, the department shall not make its decision
6 on the application that is the subject of the notice until it has received and acknowledged receipt of a
7 written report from such commission[;] *or* local river management advisory committee[; ~~or the council~~], or
8 until 40 days from the date of filing with the municipal clerk of such notice, whichever occurs earlier. In
9 connection with any local investigation, a conservation commission may hold a public informational
10 meeting or a public hearing, the record of which shall be made a part of the record of the department. If a
11 conservation commission[;] *or* a local river management advisory committee[; ~~or the New Hampshire
12 Rivers Council~~] makes a recommendation to the department in its report, the department shall specifically
13 consider such recommendation and shall make written findings with respect to each issue raised in such
14 report which is contrary to the decision of the department. If notification by a local conservation
15 commission[;] *or* local river management advisory committee[; ~~or the New Hampshire Rivers Council~~]
16 pursuant to this paragraph, is not received by the department within 14 days following the date the notice
17 is filed with the municipal clerk, the department shall not suspend its normal action, but shall proceed as if
18 no notification has been made.

19 (b) Relative to any [expedited] permit *by notification* under *rules adopted in accordance with*
20 paragraph [VI] *VI-a*, the provisions of subparagraph (a) shall be modified as follows:

21 (1) The 40-day suspended action limit is reduced to 21 days; and

22 (2) The notification by a municipal conservation commission, *or local river management*
23 *advisory committee, where applicable*, of intended investigation shall be assumed unless the [application
24 filed under RSA 482-A:3] *notification* was signed by the conservation commission, or, if one has not been
25 established in the municipality, by the local governing body, *and where applicable, by the local river*
26 *management advisory committee*, in which case the provisions of subparagraph (a) shall not apply.

27 132:2 Water Management and Protection; Emergency Response Wetland Permitting. Amend RSA
28 482-A:11, VI and VI-a to read as follows:

29 VI. The commissioner shall adopt rules pursuant to RSA 541-A establishing [an expedited
30 application and permitting process for certain minimum impact projects. The provisions of RSA 482-A:3, I
31 and paragraph III of this section shall apply.] *an alternative, adaptive permitting process to authorize*
32 *activities required to respond to an emergency or natural disaster. Such rules may allow for the ability to*

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1 *conduct certain activities prior to receiving authorization as necessary to protect public safety and*
2 *property.*

3 VI-a. The commissioner shall adopt rules pursuant to RSA 541-A establishing a permit by
4 notification process for certain *minor projects determined to have* minimum impact [~~projects.—The~~
5 ~~provisions of RSA 482-A:3, I(a) and (c) shall apply~~].

6 132:3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

Approved: June 12, 2026
Effective Date: August 11, 2026

