

## Legislative Committee Update – March 2026

By Tom Fargo

Below is a list of 2026 NH General Court (House and Senate) Bills that are potentially relevant to members of the Geological Society of New Hampshire. This table lists bills identified by keyword searches completed on March 12, 2026.

Bill Number	Title	Bill Description	Bill Status
<b>Key Word “Environ”</b>			
HB 97-FN Held over from 2025 session	making an appropriation to the department of environmental services for wastewater infrastructure projects.	This bill makes an appropriation (currently listed as \$15 Million) to the department of environmental services for eligible wastewater projects.	Voted Inexpedient to Legislate by full House 01/07/2026.
HB 392 Held over from 2025 session	(New Title) directing the dissolution of the department of health and human services' office of health access and the department of environmental services' functions for environmental justice.	This bill directs the dissolution of the department of health and human services' office of health access and the department of environmental services' functions for environmental justice, and requires certain programs administered by the office of health access to be transferred to other divisions or offices.	Voted Inexpedient to Legislate by full Senate 02/18/2026.
HB 1089	extending the authorization of the department of environmental services for the evaluation and mitigation of new community water system contamination risks.	Under this bill, the department shall adopt rules pursuant to RSA 541-A specifying criteria and procedures to ensure a groundwater withdrawal less than 57,600 gallons over any 24-hour period from a new source of water for a community water system as defined by RSA 485:1-a and subject to RSA 485:8 does not cause an unmitigated impact to an existing private water supply well in accordance with RSA 485-C:21, V-c(a), <i>RSA 485-C:21, V-c(j)</i> , or <i>RSA 485-C:21, V-c(c)</i> .	Voted Ought to Pass by full House on 02/19/2026. Currently in Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
HB 1426-FN	requiring the department of environmental services to employ certified personnel in each program area.	This bill states: The department of environmental services shall seek, through recruitment and retention efforts, training, or state contracting to ensure that each of its program areas that have licenses or certifications have at least one certified individual, either as a direct employee or through a contracted arrangement, to address program-related matters and any issues that may arise in the course of its operations. The department may use existing appropriations, federal grants, or program fees for costs associated with training and certification under this section. A certified individual shall be an employee who holds a current, valid certification or license in and from the program area they serve. Certified individuals employed by or contracted with a department	Voted Ought to Pass with Amendment by full House on 01/28/2026. Referred to House Finance Committee on 02/12/2026.

		of environmental services program area shall not be required to comply with certification maintenance requirements that present a conflict of interest, including but not limited to submitting work product to the department to maintain hours of work experience. Certified individuals employed by the department of environmental services shall not be responsible for paying licensing or certification fees to a department of environmental services program while so employed. No certified individual shall be liable for damages arising from their duties to carry out the statutory duty and regulatory requirements of their respective program at the department of environmental services	
HB 1478-FN	requiring the department of environmental services to revise the rules for proposed new landfills	This bill requires: No solid waste permit shall be issued by any division of the department for the siting of a new landfill if any part of the actual solid waste disposal area is proposed to be located sufficiently close to any existing drinking water well, perennial river, lake, or coastal water of New Hampshire, as defined in RSA 483-B:4, XVI, such that groundwater on the landfill site would be able to reach the water body within 5 years of migrating off-site due to any leak, spill, or other failure. In addition: The department shall establish a site-specific setback distance for any proposed new landfill from any drinking water wells, perennial river, lake, or coastal water of New Hampshire, as defined in RSA 483-B:4, XVI. The setback distance shall be sufficient to prevent any contaminated groundwater at any part of the landfill footprint or leachate storage or piping infrastructure from reaching any existing drinking water wells, perennial river, lake, or coastal water of New Hampshire within 5 years. The bill further specifies how these limitations shall be implemented.	Voted Ought to Pass with Amendment by full House on 03/11/2026
HB 1621-FN	requiring a baseline environmental impact study to be completed prior to development of certain manufacturing and storage facilities.	Under this bill: (a) "Baseline environmental study" means a comprehensive assessment of the existing environmental conditions at the time of application. It shall serve as the reference point for evaluating the potential environmental impacts of the proposed development and shall be conducted in accordance with standards established by the department. The study shall include data on water, air, soil, noise, and light. (b) "Manufacturing facility" means any building, structure, or premises used for the industrial-scale processing, preparation, assembly, packaging, or fabrication of goods, materials, or products, including but not limited to food, chemicals, electronics, or machinery. (c) "Storage facility" means any building, structure, or premises used for the commercial or industrial storage of goods, materials, equipment, or hazardous substances, including self-service	Voted Inexpedient to Legislate by full House 02/19/2026.

		storage units, warehouses, and underground storage tanks, whether for temporary or long-term use.	
<b>Key Word “Water”</b>			
SB 541-FN-A	making an appropriation to the department of environmental services to fund regional drinking water infrastructure.	This bill makes an appropriation to the department of environmental services of \$16,500,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2027 for the purpose of funding regional drinking water infrastructure as part of Phase 2 of the Southern New Hampshire Regional Water Project to increase water supply by over 2 million gallons per day to multiple towns impacted by per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance contamination and growing water demands.	Referred to Senate Finance Committee, Hearing was held 01/20/2026
<b>Key Word “Waste”</b>			
HB 707 Held over from 2025 Session; and with nearly identical bills: HB 1189-FN and: SB 356-FN	establishing a solid waste site evaluation committee	This bill creates the solid waste facility site evaluation committee in order to evaluate applications for solid waste facility siting and to grant or deny such applications. This legislation establishes a preference for siting of new landfill capacity on land adjacent to existing permitted landfill capacity and gives the department of environmental services comprehensive exclusive authority to approve the siting of such new capacity. In addition: This legislation leaves unchanged current law regarding siting of new landfill capacity on land that is not adjacent to existing permitted landfill capacity. The bill established the New Hampshire solid waste facility site evaluation committee consisting of 7 members, the Commissioners of department of business and economic affairs and the department of environmental services, and five members appointed by the governor with expertise in municipal planning, in achieving natural resource protection in the context of large project development, in the private waste management industry, who serves on the state conservation commission, and who is representative of the business community. No person shall commence construction of any major solid waste disposal facility within the state unless it has obtained a certificate pursuant to this subdivision.	Voted Ought to Pass with Amendment by both full House and full Senate. Referred to Senate Finance Committee for hearing and approval vote on 01/27/2026.  HB 1189-FN voted Ought to Pass with Amendment by full House on 03/11/2026  SB 356-FN referred to Interim Study, by full Senate on 02/19/2026
HB 1138	limiting the placement of out-of-state waste going into New Hampshire landfills.	This bill requires that any landfill operator permitted under this chapter on or prior to December 31, 2025, shall accept out-of-state solid waste as no more than 30 percent of its total solid waste. Any landfill operator who receives a permit on or after January 1, 2026, under this chapter shall accept out-of-state solid waste as no more than 15 percent of its total solid waste.	Voted Ought to Pass by full House on 03/05/2026. Referred to Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee
HB 1622-FN	relative to the state's solid waste disposal capacity	This bill directs the Department of Environmental Services: In its consideration of applications for additional landfill capacity in the state, the department shall give first preference to expansions, where appropriate, in accordance with existing statutes and rules	Voted Ought to Pass with Amendment by full House on 02/19/2026. Referred to House Finance Committee

		and consistent with any existing municipal agreements. Second preference shall be given to development of brownfield sites, where appropriate, in accordance with existing statutes and rules and consistent with any existing municipal agreements. If a greenfield application is received, and there are no pending applications for an expansion or brownfield development, the department may process the greenfield application after the developer reviews and explains the choice of a greenfield site with reference to the list of sites developed by the department. Using existing data, the department shall compile a list of all existing landfills in operation and all known closed landfills. The department shall use the tools at its disposal to determine, to the best of its ability, which sites would be unsuitable for future development because they are too close to schools, homes, airports, surface waterbodies, or other features to align with department setback regulations. A final list, excluding the sites deemed unsuitable for development, shall be made public. In addition the department shall evaluate existing capacity at currently operating landfills in the state, and shall report on potential future capacity for these operations in the event of future expansion.	
SB 226 Held over from 2025 Session	relative to suspending applications for new landfills and establishing a committee to study the feasibility of incinerating solid waste.	This bill suspends applications for new landfills and establishes a committee to study the feasibility of incinerating solid waste. The Department of Environmental Services indicates the bill would prohibit the Department from issuing new landfill permits until July 1, 2031. Additionally, this bill does not prohibit the Department from issuing expansions or permit modifications for landfills located on a site where a RCRA Subtitle D landfill exists, as of December 1, 2022, provided such landfill has been fully permitted. The bill also establishes a committee to study the feasibility of incinerating solid waste. This committee shall review the permit process; current prohibitions; the environmental impact include effects on air, soil and water; and the impact incineration solid waste would have on landfill capacity.	Full Senate voted to refer this bill to interim study on 01/07/2026.
<b>Key Word “PFAS or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances”</b>			
HB 1275	relative to the effects of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances on agriculture	This bill creates the agricultural PFAS remediation fund in order to assist farmers in New Hampshire who have suffered losses or incurred costs resulting from the actual or suspected presence of PFAS in soil, water, or agricultural products as a result of standard agricultural practices, including the land application of sludge or biosolids. This bill also imposes a 5 year moratorium on the spreading and application of sludge and biosolids for agricultural use.	Voted Ought to Pass with Amendments by full House on 03/11/2026

		An approved House floor amendment requires: By June 30, 2027, the department shall initiate rulemaking under RSA 541-A to develop concentration-based standards for PFAS in biosolids at land-application sites. Such standards shall be set for those PFAS compounds for which an ambient groundwater quality standard has been established under RSA 485-C. Such rulemaking shall include requirements for PFAS soil testing at land-application sites. Land application shall not occur if biosolid or soil PFAS concentrations exceed the applicable standards. Funds to assist with agricultural soil testing may be available from the agricultural PFAS relief fund under RSA 485-H:7	
HB 1389	relative to PFAS facility liability	This bill provides for perfluoroalkyls (PFAS) facility liability for contaminations of groundwater quality standards according to federal regulations. Any person who owns or operates a PFAS facility where a release of PFAS at or from such PFAS facility has resulted in total combined concentrations in groundwater or surface water of 500 parts per trillion or greater of PFAS compounds for which ambient groundwater quality standards have been established pursuant to RSA 485-C, or who owned or operated a PFAS facility at the time of such a release, shall be subject to the provisions of federal regulations in 40 CFR 265.111 and 265.114. Such provisions shall apply to the closure, removal from service, or decommissioning of: (a) All tanks, piping, containers, manufacturing equipment, waste or wastewater treatment infrastructure, and air pollution control devices used to handle, convey, or otherwise manage materials or wastes containing PFAS; and (b) The interior and exterior surfaces of PFAS facility buildings and structures where materials or wastes containing PFAS are or have been used, stored, treated or otherwise managed. Nothing in this paragraph shall be interpreted to limit the applicability of RSA 147-B:10 or RSA 147-B:10-a to releases of PFAS otherwise subject to such sections.	This bill is currently in the House Judiciary Committee. The Majority voted Inexpedient to Legislate on 03/04/2026. The minority voted Ought to Pass with Amendment. The bill will likely fail along party lines.

Key word searches with no returns: **professional, geology, mineral, rock, soil**