SYNOPSIS

Makes supplemental appropriation of $10 million for grants for certain lake management activities for recreation and conservation purposes.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.
A SUPPLEMENT to the Fiscal Year 2021 appropriations act,
P.L.2020, c.97.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and the General Assembly of the
State of New Jersey:

1. In addition to the amounts appropriated under P.L.2020, c.97, the annual appropriations act for Fiscal Year 2020-2021, there is appropriated the following sum for the purposes specified:

42 DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
40 Community Development and Environmental Management
43 Science and Technical Programs

GRANTS-IN-AID

| 06-4850 | Water Monitoring.................................................. | $10,000,000 |
| Total Grants-In-Aid Appropriation, |
| Stormwater Management Grants | $10,000,000 |

Grants-In-Aid:

06  Stormwater Management Grants
................................................. ($10,000,000)

The amounts hereinabove appropriated shall be used for providing grants to assist qualified entities to pay the cost of development of lands for the management and maintenance of lakes for recreation and conservation purposes pursuant to section 2 of this act.

2. a. The amounts appropriated in section 1 of this act shall be used for providing grants to assist qualified entities to pay the cost of development of lands for the management and maintenance of lakes for recreation and conservation purposes pursuant to the provisions of this section.

b. The department shall establish a program for the purpose of providing grants with the moneys allocated pursuant to section 1 of this act to assist qualified entities to pay certain costs associated with the management and maintenance of lakes for recreation and conservation purposes.

c. (1) In establishing the program required pursuant to this section, the department shall develop criteria for the evaluation and ranking of applications to provide priority to projects:

(a) submitted by qualified entities located in the Highlands Region and pinelands area; and

(b) to improve water quality and increase recreational access and use of lakes, including projects to control nutrient levels in lakes in order to prevent future harmful algal blooms.

(2) A grant issued pursuant to this section may be used for stormwater and nonpoint source pollution management activities that would, as determined by the department, directly enhance,
improve, or protect the use of a lake for recreation and conservation purposes.

(3) (a) An application received by the department from the Greenwood Lake Commission for funding pursuant to this section shall be approved by the department and shall receive a minimum grant award of $750,000. A grant awarded to the Greenwood Lake Commission pursuant to this section shall be used solely for that part of Greenwood Lake which lies within the State, and may be utilized without matching funds from substantially similar legislation by the State of New York.

   (b) An application received by the department from the Lake Hopatcong Commission for funding pursuant to this section shall be approved by the department and shall receive a minimum grant award of $750,000.

(4) The Commissioner of Environmental Protection shall develop an application by which a qualified entity may apply for a grant pursuant to this section, and criteria by which to rank the applications received by the department. The commissioner shall provide notice of the availability of funding for this program and make the application available on the department’s Internet website.

d. As used in this section:
   “Greenwood Lake Commission” means the commission created pursuant to section 3 of P.L.1999, c.402 (C.32:20A-3).
   “Highlands Region” means the region as defined pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2004, c.120 (C.13:20-3).
   “Lake Hopatcong Commission” means the commission created pursuant to section 3 of P.L.2000, c.175 (C.54:4B-3).
   “Qualified entity” means the Greenwood Lake Commission, the Lake Hopatcong Commission, or a local government unit.
   “Pinelands area” means the pinelands area as defined pursuant to section 3 of P.L.1979, c.111 (C.13:18A-3).

3. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill makes a one-time supplemental appropriation of $10 million for Fiscal Year 2021 to the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) from the General Fund. The bill directs the DEP to establish a program to use these funds for grants to assist qualified entities to pay certain costs associated with the management and maintenance of lakes for recreation and conservation purposes.

The bill requires the DEP to develop criteria for the evaluation and ranking of applications to provide priority to projects located in the Highlands Region and pinelands area and to improve water quality and increase recreational access and use of lakes, including
projects to control nutrient levels in lakes in order to prevent future harmful algal blooms. The bill provides priority for funding for projects located in the Highlands Region and pinelands area in recognition of the critical role lakes in these ecologically significant locations provide in the supply of drinking water to residents throughout the State, watershed protection, and for recreation and conservation purposes.

The bill provides that a grant issued pursuant to the bill may be used for stormwater and nonpoint source pollution management activities, if the DEP determines that those activities would directly enhance, improve, or protect the use of a lake for recreation and conservation purposes. Harmful algal blooms occur when colonies of microscopic algae or bacteria grow at exponential rates and produce toxins harmful to humans and animals. Exposure to these algal blooms can cause a range of health effects, including skin rashes, allergy-like reactions, flu-like symptoms, gastroenteritis, respiratory irritation and eye irritation. The issuance by the DEP of “no contact” advisories or other warnings cautioning against contact with the water in certain lakes due to the presence of harmful algal blooms directly impacts the public’s use of lakes for recreation and conservation purposes. Certain stormwater and nonpoint source pollution management activities may control harmful algal blooms, which would result in improvements to water quality and increase recreational access to lakes.

The Greenwood Lake Commission, the Lake Hopatcong Commission, and local government units may apply for grants pursuant to the bill. The DEP would be required to approve any application submitted by the Greenwood Lake Commission and the Lake Hopatcong Commission, and each commission would receive a minimum grant award of $750,000.