

1                                    **ANR Suggested Changes to Proposed Language**

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3            Sec. \_\_FINDINGS

4            (1)        The Agency of Natural Resources has examined potential  
5            options for continuing the operation of the Salisbury fish hatchery, including  
6            maintaining any necessary permits.

7            (2)        The examination included hiring a consultant in 2012 to  
8            determine how much it would cost to upgrade the facility for state-of-the-art  
9            discharge treatment. The cost was estimated to be \$10,000,000 to  
10           \$12,000,000. The cost for upgrade today would likely be more than  
11           \$16,000,000.

12           (3)        The Agency of Natural Resources also hired a consultant to  
13           assess whether lower cost operation and maintenance adjustments could be  
14           utilized to achieve compliance with the Vermont Water Quality Standards.  
15           This assessment cost \$280,000 and resulted in the successful issuance of a  
16           five-year NPDES discharge permit by DEC (2023-2027). However, these  
17           adjustments are not likely to achieve compliance with all necessary discharge  
18           permit requirements in the future and have resulted in higher operational costs  
19           for the Salisbury facility.

20           (4)        There are significant costs associated with transferring the  
21           stocking capacity, broodstock, and egg production of the Salisbury fish

1 hatchery to other state fish hatcheries; both in terms of facility infrastructure  
2 upgrades and staffing. For example, additional infrastructure investments  
3 required at the Grand Isle to establish equivalent capacity is estimated to be  
4 \$5,000,000; increasing production at this facility would also require 2-3  
5 additional staff and increased annual operating costs. As such, given  
6 Department budget constraints, a transfer is not proposed.

7 (5) Delaying the closure of Salisbury may result in the loss of staff  
8 and positions. The Department can currently transfer existing staff to three-  
9 year positions that are paid for with federal funding, but these funds need to be  
10 obligated quickly.

11 Sec. \_\_. LEGISLATIVE INTENT; SALISBURY FISH HATCHERY

12 It is the intent of the General Assembly that:

13 (1) The Salisbury fish hatchery shall, subject to annual appropriations,  
14 continue operating through fiscal year 2027.

15 (2) The Salisbury fish hatchery shall close if the facility is unable to  
16 obtain all necessary permits.

17 Sec. \_\_. SALISBURY FISH HATCHERY; ANNUAL REPORT

18 On or before January 15 of 2025, 2026, and 2027, the Secretary of Natural  
19 Resources shall submit a written report to the Senate Committees on  
20 Institutions and on Natural Resources and Energy and the House Committees  
21 on Corrections and Institutions and on Environment and Energy regarding

1 efforts undertaken and progress made with respect to sustaining the fish  
2 production and stocking capacity of Vermont’s State-operated fish hatcheries,  
3 including:

4 (1) efforts to maintain permits necessary to continue operating the  
5 Salisbury fish hatchery after December 2027;

6 (2) the potential for transferring the stocking capacity of the Salisbury  
7 fish hatchery to one or more State-operated or federally-operated fish  
8 hatcheries, including estimated costs; and

9 (3) the potential for transferring the fish broodstock of the Salisbury fish  
10 hatchery to one or more State-operated fish hatcheries for the purpose of  
11 replacing the Salisbury fish hatchery’s egg production, including estimated  
12 costs.

13 Sec. APPROPRIATION **[PLACEHOLDER LANGUAGE]**

14 The amount of \$2,500,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the  
15 Agency of Natural Resources for purposes of operating the Salisbury fish  
16 hatchery through December 2027.