

Act 76 Subgroup Newsletter 4

To be released early June, covering May 2022 content

This newsletter is intended to provide updates, information, and resources on Act 76 Subgroups. If you would like to be removed from the subgroup newsletter listserv, wish to add a recipient, or have any questions, please email Rachel Wood at rachel.wood@vermont.gov.

Newsletter Content: (click to jump to sections): covers subgroup meetings that occurred in May 2022.

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Chapters 2-4 Guidance

- **Team Lead Contacts:** Chris Rottler, Ethan Swift, Ben Copans
- **Subgroup Purpose:** Review draft chapters of CWSP guidance as chapter language is available.
- **Meeting Summary:** No meeting held in May.
- **Next Meeting**
 - Date: Potential meeting date hold for first [Guidance Chapter 6 workgroup meeting](#) on June 30, 2022, 1-3 pm. More details and date confirmation to come.
- **Public Notice Announcement:** DEC is requesting public input on three DRAFT CWSP Guidance chapters from May 26 through June 27, 2022. Visit the [Act 76 webpage Public Notice section](#) to view DRAFT Guidance Chapters 2, 3 and 4 and learn how to engage in this public process.

Data Management and Reporting

- **Team Lead Contacts:** Helen Carr and Claire Madden
- **Subgroup Purpose:** Review clean water project data management (funding, performance measures, phosphorus reductions, and reporting).
- **Meeting Summary:**
 - Date: 5/5/2022
 - Summary:
 - Note phosphorus accounting methods for Agriculture, Developed Lands and Natural Resources have completed the public notice period, we received comments from 2 people on developed lands SOPs that we will address before finalizing these methods.
 - We will not be able to have the online calculator tools that we had hoped for ready for the start of formula grants. This was delayed when our developer, Tim Pricer moved on to another position. The position is planned to be filled Mid-June.
 - Here is the current plan for interim phosphorus calculator tools:
 - STP Calculator can be used for Stormwater practices

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- The phosphorus accounting portion of FFI tool will be available in July
 - The tools for other project types will be within a spreadsheet tool.
 - We plan to develop trainings on these tools.
- DEC is working to move forward on WPD ANR online forms
 - We plan to have the New Clean Water Project Entry Form and a Clean Water Project Update Form ready for roll out by the end of June.
- **Next Meeting:**
 - Date: 6/6/2022
 - Agenda:
 - Discuss Data standards
 - Demonstrate data submission via online forms
 - New Project form
 - Project Update form
 - What resources/information do CWSPs need?
 - Confirm next meeting date/time

Enhancement Grant Structure

- **Team Lead Contact:** Gianna Petito
- **Subgroup Purpose:** To cover distinction from formula grants, eligible project types, prioritization, grant-making structure (i.e., block grants?), and project phasing.
- **Meeting Summary:**
 - Date: 5/3/2022
 - Summary: Group provided input on granting and budget structures for the Enhancement sub-initiative to ensure flexibility and that a diversity of clean water projects is advanced. Decision points will be documented in the Enhancement Grant Summary Document Draft to be released for further input (potentially from the broader Act 76 Advisory Group) late summer 2022. Project identification and assessments have been pulled out of the sub-initiative block grant and will proceed as status quo (administered by State staff). Sub-initiative block grant will include project development, design, and implementation.
- **Next Meeting:**
 - Date: 6/7/2022
 - Agenda:
 - Project eligibility
 - Discussion of statutory goals in relation to eligibility/prioritization/budget guidance
 - Project prioritization guidance and co-benefits (time permitting)

Formula Grant and Fund Allocations

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- **Team Lead Contacts:** Emily Bird and Ben Copans
- **Subgroup Purpose:** to build stakeholder understanding of targets and fund allocation methodology and to gather and address stakeholder input prior to posting methodology for 30-day public notice/comment.
- **Meeting Summaries:** Not applicable.
- **Public Comment Period Status:** The Final Draft Water Quality Restoration Formula Grant Targets and Fund Allocation Methodology was posted for public comment March 28-May 2, 2022 and a public meeting was held on April 12, 2022 (see: [Presentation Slides and Agenda](#), [Meeting Recording](#), and [Final Meeting Minutes](#)). VTDEC compiled comments received on the methodology and produced a [comment response summary](#). The [Final Water Quality Restoration Formula Grant Targets and Fund Allocation Methodology](#) was posted on June 3, 2022. Information is posted on the [Clean Water Service Delivery Act—Minutes, Newsletter and Other Resources webpage](#).
- **Special thanks to the members of this subgroup and those who commented for providing their time, expertise, and input on this methodology!**

Operation and Maintenance (O&M)

- **Team Lead Contacts:** Helen Carr and Jill Sarazen
- **Subgroup Purpose:** To review Operation and Maintenance manual, develop training structure and data management for Operation and Maintenance Verification.
- **Meeting Summary:**
 - Date: 5/17/22 2:00 pm
 - Summary: Discussion related to site access agreement forms and options, allocation of O&M funds and use the first year, and review of verification program and using Survey123 checklists.
 - Standard access forms will help CWSPs but allow for edits depending on different situations.
 - We will follow up with DEC attorney and internal DEC group on the feedback we received on these forms.
 - DEC will follow up on guidance for an easement trigger for high-cost projects
 - Some CWSPs will want to use year 1 O&M funds for inventory of current projects, verification, or actual maintenance. So, DEC should keep options for spending these funds flexible, if possible.
- **Next Meeting:**
 - Date: 6/28/22 2:00 pm
 - Agenda:
 - Updates and discussion on site access agreement

Resources and Trainings

- **The Act 76 Webpage has some new features.** The original page ([same URL](#)) is now the landing page for three new sub-pages that outline:
 - [The Clean Water Service Provider Network and Contacts](#)

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- [Minutes, Newsletters, and Other Resources](#)
- [Background on Act 76 Law and CWSP Rule and Guidance](#)
- **Clean water project proponents/implementers are invited to attend an “Abenaki Perspectives on Water” training (attend in person or online):**
 - **Training Purpose:** a presentation and conversation on the Vermont Abenaki perspective on water for the Clean Water Service Delivery Act (Act 76 of 2019) clean water network, including Clean Water Service Providers, Basin Water Quality Councils, and project implementers, such as watershed groups, conservation districts, and other interested partners.
 - **Date/Time:** Friday, June 17, 2022, 9:00 am (estimated to conclude at 10:30 am)
 - **RSVP:** Please RSVP by completing this [online RSVP form](#), preferred by Friday, June 10, 2022 at 12:00 pm.
 - **Attend In-Person option:** In-person meeting location is the Williams Family Room at the University of Vermont Dudley H. Davis Center, 590 Main St, Burlington, VT 05401. Lake Champlain Sea Grant may be able to provide parking permits for a limited number of vehicles. Please indicate, using the online RSVP form linked above, if you will be driving a vehicle and require parking. A printable permit will be emailed before the event. If you are carpooling, please coordinate among your carpool for only one attendee to answer yes to this question in the RSVP form.
 - **Attend Remotely option:** A Zoom meeting link will be emailed to those who RSVP to attend virtually prior to the training
 - **Prepare:** It is recommended that attendees view the [Nebi film](#) prior to attending this event.
 - **Recording:** The training event will be recorded and posted on the [Vermont Clean Water Initiative YouTube page](#).
 - **Contact** Chris Rottler, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation’s Clean Water Service Provider Coordinator, at chris.rottler@vermont.gov with subject line “6/17 Abenaki Perspectives on Water Training” with questions about this training event.
- **Wetland Restoration Workshops, July 12 and July 14, 2022**
 - The Two Rivers-Ottaquechee Regional Commission will be hosting two wetland restoration workshops in Plymouth, Vermont this summer!
 - Join us at Coolidge State Park on Route 100A on Tuesday, July 12th and Pingree Flats on Route 100 on Thursday, July 14th from 9:30 am-2:30 pm in Plymouth.
 - Attendees will learn how to assess a site for its wetland restoration potential, account for specific site considerations such as native and invasive plants, site limitations, soils and hydrology, plan restoration strategies and manage restoration projects. You will gain valuable in-the-field experience with assessing sites and planning wetland restoration projects!

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- Our hosts include Julie Follensbee, District Wetlands Ecologist for the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), Grace Glynn, Field Naturalist/Wetland Scientist at Dubois & King, Inc., Bob Hyams, founder of HRS/Riverscape Ecology, and Marie Caduto, Watershed Planner at DEC. For more information or to register please email Sage Doviak sdoviak@trorc.org

Other News

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