

WATERSHED PLANNING

»» ACT 76 NEWS ««



A STATE OF VERMONT NEWSLETTER

»» INTRODUCTION TO KATHARYN HASSAN

Hi everyone! My name is Katharyn Hassan, and I am the new Watershed Planning Program ECO for the 2024-2025 service term. During my service as the WPP Communications Specialist, I will be highlighting some of the amazing work going on in the watershed world. Outside of the Act 76 newsletters, I will be participating in the DEC Social Media Team, researching DEIJ best practices, creating trainings, editing our state website, and learning as much as I can through site and field visits. I am always looking for new work to feature! Please reach out if you have any projects or events that you would like to be included in our team's outreach. I can be reached at my state email, Katharyn.Hassan@vermont.gov, and my state phone, (802) 522-7232.



WHAT TO EXPECT IN THE NEWSLETTER:

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GREETINGS FROM ECO WORLD!

»»» A COLLABORATION IN THE SOIL

When planting a native pollinator garden, have you ever considered what state to get your seeds from? To finish off September, I served with two other ECO (Environmental Career Opportunities) AmeriCorps members to help build an experimental pollinator garden at Sunrise Organic Farm in Hartford, VT. After a long day of dirt, hay, and woodchips, we successfully finished the fifth of six research gardens for the Vermont Center for Ecostudies Common Garden Experiment. The research aims to unveil how well plants do when grown from seeds sourced from different regions of the United States, and whether pollinators have a preference between native plants grown from seeds sourced from their home state or sourced from a different part of the country. Learn more at [VT Center for Ecostudies Common Garden Experiment webpage!](#)

POLLINATOR FUN FACT

According to [Shelburne Farms](#), there are 356 species of native bees in Vermont- as many as there are days in the year!



THINGS HAVE HAPPENED, WITH EVEN MORE THINGS HAPPENING

➤➤➤ HERE'S A QUICK LOOK AT SOME OF THE ACT 76 PROGRESS THAT HAS BEEN MADE SO FAR:

- Issued three years of Formula Grant funds to Clean Water Service Providers.
- Drafted all 9 Guidance Chapters.
- Proposed revisions to Chapter 3 of Guidance that streamline two provisions that relate to sole sourcing and subawardee procurement.
- CWIP prepared a Guide to Phosphorus Accounting.
- Operations and Maintenance – Adoption available as of the new 2025 fiscal year.
- Improvements have been made to the Site Access License Agreement.
- Developed/provided guidance on strategic wood addition projects.
- Develop phosphorus accounting methodologies and policy for Forest Trails and Roads (in progress).
- Develop phosphorus accounting methodologies and policy for private roads (in progress).



HOT OFF THE PRESS

»»» CHAPTER 3 PUBLIC COMMENT

Two small revisions have been proposed to Chapter 3 of Guidance. One removes the requirement that subawardees of Formula Grants obtain 3 bids, while the other allows CWSPs to sole source contracts up to \$25,000.00 in value. More information can be found in the [Clean Water Delivery Service Act webpage](#).

»»» ACRPC SURVEY

Addison County Regional Planning Commission is seeking re-appointment as the Clean Water Service Provider for the Otter Creek basin (Basin 3). As part of this process, DEC is collecting feedback on ACRPC's work as a CWSP. If you have direct experience working with ACRPC in this role that you would like to share, please consider filling out the survey! We are looking to collect feedback through October 31, 2024. The survey can be taken at the linked [Microsoft Forms](#).

»»» PSA

[The O&M Site Access License Template](#) has been reworked and simplified! The new template is now live.

A CWSP UPDATE

➤➤➤ BASIN 17: MEMPHREMAGOG

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board serves as the CWSP for Memphremagog and currently has seven active projects, two of which were approved this year for funding. One project—Valley Brook Phase I—was completed last October, as well as a beaver dam analogue project. Another lakeshore restoration project in the Crystal Lake state park just completed construction the first week of this October. The majority of the remaining projects are in preliminary phases and are mostly stream and floodplain restoration projects and one forest road improvements project. These nine projects are estimated to reduce a total of approximately 130 kg of phosphorus per year.

Valley Brook Phase I was a multi-faceted project that involved a variety of partners and funding sources. VHCB provided funds to the Fish and Wildlife Department to acquire this former dairy farm, which allowed for a more streamlined process to restore the property to a more natural state through the Formula Grant program. This year, VHCB developed a new program called the Leahy Memphremagog Clean Water Program, funded by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. This new program allowed partners in the Memphremagog Basin to hire more staff and purchase much-needed equipment, such as surveying equipment and vehicles to more effectively manage and implement clean water projects. VHCB was also able to fund the FWD to acquire eight additional riparian parcels. The Memphremagog Watershed Association recently proposed a restoration project to the Basin Water Quality Council on one of these parcels. Using these two programs in tandem has helped address the bottlenecks of organizational capacity and landowner support, as well as provide matching funds in order to get more projects on the ground through the Formula Grant.



The image to the left depicts Sarah Damsell, Orleans County Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCD) District Manager, explaining how the Conservation District manages lakeshore restoration projects.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION: LAKESHORE BUILDING TRAINING

On September 24th, the Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District hosted the “Digging Near Our Shorelines” training at Crystal Lake State Park. The training was centered around a shoreline restoration project funded by the Memphremagog CWSP, where the NorthWoods Stewardship Center work crew will be installing fiber coir rolls, followed by encapsulated soil lifts further down the shoreline where there is a steeper section of shoreline erosion. Thirty contractors, landscape designers, and lakeshore restoration partners attended the training with the goal of bringing increased interest to lakeshore restoration projects and improving implementers’ capacity to design and install them.



Ben Copans, Watershed Planner, and Meg Carter, Conservation Science Director at NorthWoods Stewardship Center, begin the installation of the base coir roll for an encapsulated soil lift.



Meg Carter explains the steps of building up a shoreland using renaturalization processes, as Ben Copans chimes in.