

What is required by the easement?

- Within the river corridor, a 50' buffer must be maintained along all watercourses. The 50' buffer moves with the channel.
- Agricultural and forest activities may continue outside of the buffer zone within the river corridor.
- Within the RCE area there can be little or no manipulation of the natural watercourses, wetlands or other water bodies. The river will be free to move within the zone set aside.
- No new permanent structures or improvements other than fences and at-grade fords of streams, both for agricultural purposes only.

Compensation

Easements may be donated or purchased. Limited funding sources are available and may be pursued to purchase the easement. Contact your regional river scientist about options available for your specific property.

How do I put my land in an easement?

Step 1. Determine who will hold the easement (this may be a local land trust, the VT river conservancy, or the VT land trust),

Step 2. The site is surveyed, and the corridor boundaries finalized,

Step 3. Deed is updated to reflect the conditions of the easement,

Step 4. Closing processes with easement holder transferring rights over to the easement holder.

For more information, visit

<http://www.vtwaterquality.org/rivers.htm>

Or, contact your regional river scientist:

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VT River Corridor Easements





In Vermont, many rivers' slopes and channels have been significantly altered to accommodate transportation, agriculture, and other land uses. This has intensified the impacts of flooding and has decreased water and habitat quality in Vermont.



Why put land in an easement?

A **River Corridor Easement (RCE)** is the lowest cost alternative to channel management with the greatest benefit to the water resource. In a stable channel, the river will meander freely and overflow into the floodplain nearly every spring. As the water floods the adjacent lands it slows down the flow and loses its erosive force, depositing sediment onto the floodplain. Due to human alterations such as armoring, straightening, and dredging, over 75% of rivers in Vermont have limited access to their floodplains and are largely straight. This causes intensified erosion during flood events and decreases water quality.

The **Vermont Rivers Program** seeks to re-establish healthy river systems by preserving river corridors in key locations, allowing the river enough space to migrate naturally within a defined corridor. This is called "dynamic equilibrium."

By establishing dynamic equilibrium, we can:

- Reduce erosion rates
- Improve water quality
- Improve habitat, and,
- Reduce hazards to human safety and infrastructure in flood events.

By putting your land in an easement, you will have a huge effect on the people, wildlife, and infrastructure in your watershed.

What is an easement?

An easement is a specific set of restrictions placed on the property that stays with the property forever. A River Corridor Easement (RCE) involves the sale or donation of an easement on land adjacent to the river that would restrict the uses within the area outlined.

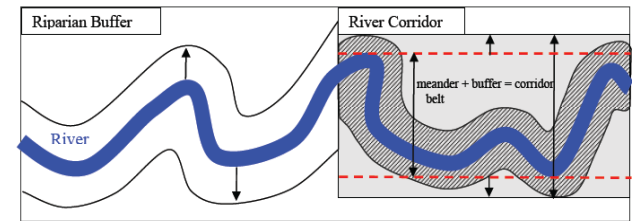


Fig adapted from Ohio DNR, 2006.

Why was my land chosen for an easement?

Your land was identified as a priority location for an easement because it is an important area in the watershed to help restore the natural functions of the river. It is likely a dynamic area where the river is moving, and sediment is being mobilized, which may create water quality issues downstream. Or it may be an area that is likely to migrate and may therefore create a hazard to human safety or infrastructure if encroached upon. Ask your regional river scientist for more information about why your property was chosen for an easement.