



Vermont's Clean Water Initiative

Taking Action to Restore Local Streams and Lake Champlain

Vermonters love Lake Champlain and the streams that flow into it. Clean water, and a clean Lake protects the health, economy, and natural beauty of Vermont.

Phosphorus pollution poses the greatest threat to a healthy Lake Champlain. Phosphorus can turn water green and cause algae blooms, which disrupt recreation and tourism, increase water treatment costs, pose public health risks, and hurt the Lake's ecological health.

The state of Vermont and its partners have been working for decades to reduce phosphorus pollution to Lake Champlain. However, more needs to be done to restore Lake Champlain, and it needs to happen at the source of the pollution; eroded soil and runoff from parking lots, roads, farm fields, barnyards, stream banks, logging roads, and wastewater discharges all contain phosphorous pollution. We also need to protect and enhance wetlands to prevent phosphorus from reaching the Lake. The state's new Clean Water Initiative is a call to action for everyone — municipalities, farmers, loggers, and landowners — to all do our part to help restore and safeguard wetlands and local streams to ultimately restore the health of Lake Champlain.

Wetlands filter and retain sediment and pollutants such as phosphorus, store floodwaters which minimize flood impacts, and provide habitat that supports recreational uses such as fishing and hunting. This factsheet summarizes actions to reduce phosphorus pollution by restoring and protecting wetlands as part of the State's Clean Water Initiative. See other factsheets that describe additional actions to reduce phosphorus.



Restored wetlands provide phosphorus and sediment retention, enhance flood resilience, and help to reduce erosion during flooding



Actions in State Plan to Reduce Phosphorus Pollution by Restoring and Protecting Wetlands:

- Expand support and financial assistance to landowners in wetland restoration and protection;
- Partner with federal and state agencies, local partners and landowners to identify and undertake wetland restoration projects;
- Increase inspections to achieve greater wetland permit compliance;
- Target critical wetlands for State Class I wetlands protection for flood resilience and phosphorus reduction.