

Vermont Clean Water Board Meeting Minutes

Date/Time: Monday, October 9, 2023, 3:00-4:30 pm

Virtual Option to Attend: [Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

Physical Location to Attend In-Person: Agency of Natural Resources, One National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT 05620-3510 in the Catamount Room (Davis Building, 2nd Floor, Room D215).

Meeting details, materials, and recordings available at: <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/cwi/board/meetings>

Clean Water Board Members/Designees:

Douglas Farnham, Agency of Administration (AoA) Deputy Secretary and Designated Clean Water Board Chair (Present)

Tayt Brooks, Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) Deputy Secretary (Present)

Alison Conant, public member (Present)

Bob Flint, public member (Present)

Joe Flynn, Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Secretary (Present)

Jim Giffin, public member (Absent)

Julie Moore, Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Secretary (Present)

Anson Tebbetts, Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (AAFM) Secretary (Present)

Chad Tyler, public member (Present)

1. Welcome

Recording Time Stamp 2:10¹

Douglas Farnham, Agency of Administration Deputy Secretary and Clean Water Board Chair

The Chair, AoA Deputy Secretary Douglas Farnham convened the meeting at 3:00 pm and invited any edits to the February 22, 2023 meeting minutes. No edits were offered, and minutes were adopted through consent.

2. Review State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 Clean Water Budget process

Recording Time Stamp 4:48

Gianna Petito, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Clean Water Initiative Program (CWIP) Grants Supervisor

Gianna Petito presented the budgeting timeline and highlighted key dates for public comment and future Clean Water Board meetings.

3. Review Clean Water Fund operating statement

Recording Time Stamp 9:16

Nick Kramer, Department of Finance and Management Budget Analyst

Nick Kramer provided an overview of the Clean Water Fund operating statement, including actuals for State Fiscal Year 2023, and updated forecasts for State Fiscal Year 2024, 2025, and 2026. He also gave an overview of an updated escheats, or unreturned bottle deposits, revenue projection methodology. The Clean Water Fund operating statement, including the updated revenue projection approach for escheats, will be added to the consent agenda for the December Board meeting.

¹ Please refer to the available meeting recording to learn more about discussion content under each agenda item. Recording Time Stamps are highlighted to direct focus on the recording. Recording can be directly accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IS02CxI43Pw&t=1913s>

4. **Review draft SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget recommendation** **Recording Time Stamp 34:00**
Gianna Petito, Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Clean Water Initiative Program (CWIP) Grants Supervisor
 Gianna Petito presented the draft budget recommendation and budget drafting approach. Dan Albrecht asked how the funds for road erosion will be allocated. Emily Bird answered that the dollars will be appropriated through the Agency of Transportation and administered as grants to municipalities through the municipal Mitigation Assistance Program. Angie Englehart asked if the funds budgeted for the alum treatment will be used exclusively for Lake Carmi. This was confirmed by Secretary Moore. Peter Lafley asked if the Clean Water Board has any legislative protection to the unallocated surplus from one year to the next. AoA Deputy Secretary Douglas Farnham acknowledged some risk in leaving unallocated funds on the bottom line.
5. **SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget public comment communications plan** **Recording Time Stamp 56:45**
Colleen Miller, DEC CWIP American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Coordinator
 Colleen Miller highlighted public comment period dates and opportunities for the public to provide feedback on the draft SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget. This includes a Story Map to introduce an interactive learning element and updates to the Public Comment Questionnaire to reflect feedback on SFY 2024's questionnaire. The November 2nd Public Hearing will begin with a showing of a pre-recorded presentation of the Clean Water Budget line-items developed by Agency partners before a live session to hear public comment.
6. **Update on availability of federal funds for water quality work in Vermont**
Neil Kamman, DEC Water Investment Division Director
 Item addressed offline by emailing the report to the Board. See supporting materials #8 listed below for link to report.
7. **Public comment** **Recording Time Stamp 1:03:07**
 - Lake Carmi Campers Association –
 - Ernie Englehart – Expressed concerns for Lake Carmi. See meeting recording.
 - Pete Benevento – Expressed concerns for Lake Carmi. See meeting recording.
 - John Costa – Expressed concerns for Lake Carmi. See meeting recording.
 - Bruce McGurk – Expressed concerns for Lake Carmi. See meeting recording.
 - Dan Albrecht – Commented about Municipal Roads Grants in Aid Program and Water Quality Restoration Formula Grant Program. See meeting recording.
 - Marguerite Adelman – Expressed concerns about PFOAs. See meeting recording.
 - Lindsey Waterhouse – Commented on overall budget approach and data analysis. See meeting recording.
 - Jill Arace from chat - Expressed a question about return on investment on Clean Water projects.
 - See attached for public comment submitted via email.
8. **Discuss and approve draft SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget** **Recording Time Stamp 1:24:12**
Full Board
 Bob Flint moved to pass the draft SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget for public comment as presented today. VTrans Secretary Joe Flynn seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion passed.
9. **Adjourn** **Recording Time Stamp 1:27:27**
 Meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Attached Materials²:

- Public comment received via email from Sylvia Knight, October 2
- Public comment received via email from Bruce McGurk, October 5
- Public comment received via email from Lindsey Waterhouse, October 9

² Attachments are attached to responsiveness summary. See December 5, 2023 Clean Water Board Meeting Materials pages 37-40.

Clean Water Fund Operating Statement - Appropriation Basis - September 2023

| | Jan 2023 Rev. update & BAA | Actual | Jan 2023 Rev. Update 1/20/23 Gov Rec. Budget | July 2023 Rev. Update | Jan 2023 Rev. Update | July 2023 Rev. Update & Prelim. FY25 Budget | July 2023 Rev. Update |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------|--|--------------------------|----------------------|---|--------------------------|
| Revenue | FY2023 | FY2023 | FY 2024 | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2025 | FY 2026 |
| (a) Clean Water Surcharge (PTT) | 10,310,000 | 9,197,201 | 9,120,000 | 7,900,000 | 8,800,000 | 7,340,000 | 7,500,000 |
| (b) Interest Income | - | 1,516,339 | - | - | - | - | - |
| (c) Reversions | - | - | - | 100,000 | - | - | - |
| (d) Donations | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| (e) Escheats | 2,985,808 | 3,548,336 | 2,985,808 | 3,420,761 | 2,985,808 | 3,507,887 | 3,492,328 |
| (f) Meals and Rooms Tax | 13,932,000 | 14,259,513 | 14,130,000 | 14,514,000 | 14,556,000 | 14,928,000 | 15,396,000 |
| (g) Subtotal Sources | 27,227,808 | 28,521,390 | 26,235,808 | 25,934,761 | 26,341,808 | 25,775,887 | 26,388,328 |
| Appropriations | | | | | | | |
| Base Appropriations | | | | | | | |
| (h) DEC | 15,360,540 | 15,360,540 | 14,813,750 | 14,813,750 | | 13,890,000 | |
| (i) DEC Adjustments | - | - | - | - | | - | |
| (ii) Fish & Wildlife | - | - | - | - | | - | |
| (j) ACCD | 200,000 | 200,000 | - | - | | - | |
| (k) ACCD Adjustments | - | - | - | - | | - | |
| (l) VCGI | - | - | - | - | | - | |
| (m) VTRANS | 4,317,498 | 4,317,498 | 4,000,000 | 4,000,000 | | 4,000,000 | |
| (n) VTRANS Adjustments | - | - | - | - | | - | |
| (o) FPR | 110,000 | 110,000 | 50,000 | 143,613 | | 144,000 | |
| (p) AOA | 25,000 | 25,000 | - | - | | 25,000 | |
| (pp) VHCB | | | | | | 2,800,000 | |
| (q) Subtotal Base Appropriations | 20,013,038 | 20,013,038 | 18,863,750 | 18,957,363 | | 20,859,000 | |
| (r) One-Time Appropriations | | | | | | | |
| (s) DEC | | | 1,751,250 | 1,751,250 | | 2,600,000 | |
| (t) AOA | | | 100,000 | 100,000 | | - | |
| (u) VTRANS | | | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | | 1,000,000 | |
| (v) FPR | | | 93,613 | - | | - | |
| (w) Subtotal One-Time Appropriations | - | - | 2,944,863 | 2,851,250 | 5,986,910 | 3,600,000 | - |
| (x) Subtotal All Appropriations | 20,013,038 | 20,013,038 | 21,808,613 | 21,808,613 | 5,986,910 | 24,459,000 | - |
| (y) Revenue Surplus/Deficit | 7,214,770 | 8,508,352 | 4,427,195 | 4,126,148 | 20,354,898 | 1,316,887 | 26,388,328 |
| Transfers (To)/From | | | | | | | |
| (z) Transfer (to) Agriculture CWF | (5,816,111) | (5,816,111) | (6,684,880) | (6,684,880) | | (9,010,000) | |
| (aa) AAFM Adjustment | - | - | - | - | | - | |
| (ab) Transfer (to) Lakes in Crisis Fund | (50,000) | (50,000) | (120,000) | (120,000) | | (120,000) | |
| (ac) Transfer (to)/From Contingency Reserve | - | - | (2,000,000) | (2,000,000) | | - | |
| (ad) Subtotal Transfers | (5,866,111) | (5,866,111) | (8,804,880) | (8,804,880) | - | (9,130,000) | |
| (ae) Current Year Unallocated/Unreserved | 1,348,659 | 2,642,241 | (4,377,685) | (4,678,732) | 20,354,898 | (7,813,113) | 26,388,328 |
| Reserve | | | | | | | |
| (af) Contingency Reserve | 500,000 | 500,000 | 2,500,000 | 2,500,000 | 2,500,000 | 2,500,000 | 2,500,000 |
| Available Funds | | | | | | | |
| (ag) Prior Year Balance Unreserved/Unallocated | 10,838,160 | 10,838,160 | 12,186,819 | 13,480,401 | 7,809,134 | 8,801,669 | 988,556 |
| (ah) Current Year Unallocated/Unreserved | 1,348,659 | 2,642,241 | (4,377,685) | (4,678,732) | 20,354,898 | (7,813,113) | 26,388,328 |
| (ai) Summary of Unallocated/Unreserved | 12,186,819 | 13,480,401 | 7,809,134 | 8,801,669 | 28,164,032 | 988,556 | 27,376,884 |

MEMORANDUM

To: The Clean Water Board

From: Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Clean Water Initiative Program (CWIP)

Through: Julie Moore, Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Secretary

Date: November 30, 2023

Subject: State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 Clean Water Budget Public Comment Responsiveness Summary

Attached to this memorandum, please find the public comments received during the SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget public comment period. This memorandum summarizes key questions and comments from the public for the Clean Water Board's consideration in finalizing its SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget recommendation. Overall, one change to the budget is recommended (see Category 3 for more details).

Compilation of Public Comment

The Clean Water Board posted its draft SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget for public comment October 20-November 20, 2023. Input on budget priorities and comments were collected via a Clean Water Budget public hearing on November 2, 2023, attended by 12 with 2 commenters, and via an online questionnaire. Fourteen individuals responded to the questionnaire and 8 email correspondence letters were received. Attachments to this memorandum include:

- November 2, 2023 SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget public hearing draft minutes and public comment transcript
- Copy of the original online questionnaire for reference
- Compiled public comment online questionnaire results
- Compiled public comment letters submitted via email

Approach to Responding to Public Comment

This responsiveness summary focuses on comments received on the draft SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget before and during the public comment period, addressing input recommendations within the purview/influence of the Clean Water Board.

Approach:

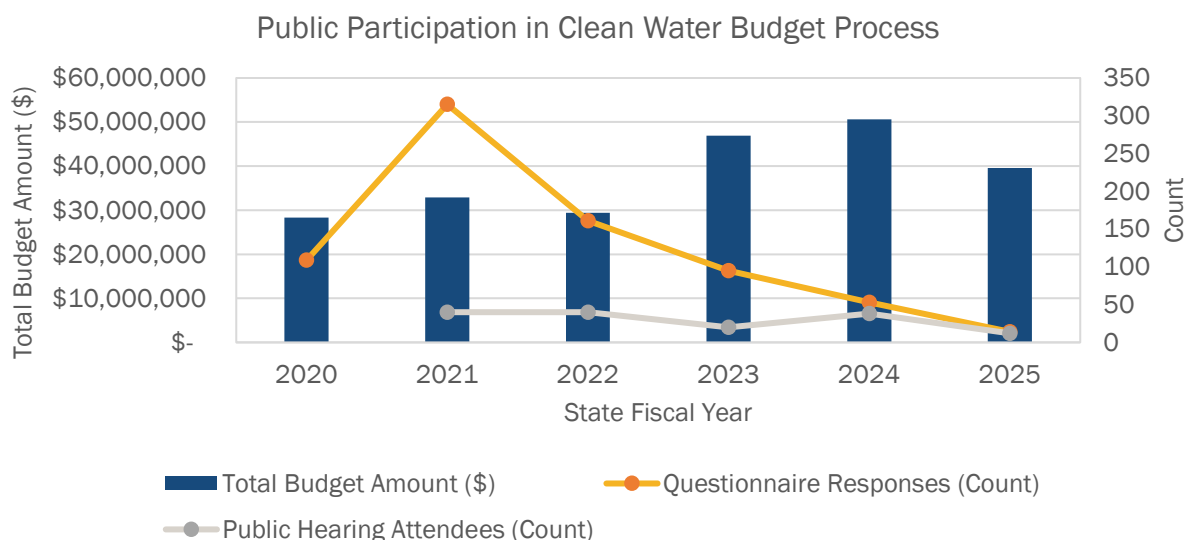
- Compile and summarize all comments received for review.
- Synthesize comments into topical categories.

- Identify categories of comments that are within the purview of the Clean Water Board and Clean Water Budget to be addressed.
 - Comment categories identified as outside the purview of the Clean Water Board and Clean Water Budget are acknowledged and shared with the relevant agency programmatic staff.
- Propose response to each category, including determination of whether comments compel an edit to the proposed budget.

A Note on Public Comment Participation

Public comment participation on the draft SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget was at historically low levels this year with only 14 questionnaire participants and 12 public hearing attendees. See figure below for summary of Clean Water Budget public participation over time. While this is consistent with a decreasing trend in participation since the draft SFY 2021 Clean Water Budget, these low numbers challenge the Board's ability to draw any significant conclusions regarding possible budget adjustments. As such, the responses outlined in this responsiveness summary are clustered around categories but should not be interpreted as themes or trends given the low sample size. In the coming year, the DEC Clean Water Initiative Program plans to learn more about the causes of this decrease in participation to inform and improve public engagement in the SFY 2026 Clean Water Budget process. Some possible reasons for limited participation may include:

- Complexity of the Clean Water Budget and supporting materials;
- Reach and effectiveness of publicizing the public comment period;
- Increased volume of funding in the system and capacity of the public to engage and respond; and
- Increased comfort levels with draft budget recommendations proposed by the Board.



The demographic spread for the comments received is limited, heavily weighting Lake Champlain basin counties, concerned residents and recreational users, and audiences who are likely already connected to the Clean Water Stakeholder Listserv (as opposed to new audiences).

Information on the participation rates and demographics of participants is important context for the Clean Water Board to consider when reviewing this responsiveness summary.

Public Comment Categories and Proposed Responses

1. Category: Total Clean Water Fund (CWF) annual revenue

Summary of Comment: The online questionnaire asked, “Do you believe there is sufficient revenue in the Clean Water Fund for SFY 2025 to support the Clean Water Budget priorities? (\$25.8 million forecasted revenue within the \$39.6 million budget)?” Twenty nine percent answered “yes” (similar to 30% for SFY 2024), forty three percent answered “no” (up from 32% for SFY 2024), and twenty nine percent answered “unsure” (down from 32% for SFY 2024).

Response: A slight majority (eight out of fourteen respondents) either said “yes” or “unsure,” to question 1, indicating no strong opposition to current annual revenue. The percentage of questionnaire respondents who indicated “no” (and believe the revenue is insufficient for the Clean Water Fund) increased this year over last year. While the Clean Water Fund revenue did decrease slightly this year compared to last year, the change was only roughly \$100,000 and so it’s possible that this increased concern (percentagewise) is either due to a smaller sample size or a notably smaller overall Clean Water Budget compared to SFY 2024. No budget change is proposed.

2. Category: Percent of funding across the tiers

Summary of Comment: Questions 3, 6, 9 and 11 of the online questionnaire asked whether respondents agreed with the proportion of funds allocated to Tiers 1, 2, 3, and Other respectively. Most respondents either answered “yes” or “unsure” to all these questions.

Response: Responses suggest a lack of strong opposition to the current breakdown of funding across the tiers. No budget change is proposed.

3. Category: Funding requests addressing specific line items

Summary of Comment: Commenters requested more funding for the following line items.

- Line 1.2 Basin Planning, Basin Water Quality Council Participation, Education, and Outreach. Emailed comment representing roughly 40 entities statewide requesting to increase base funding from \$650,000 to \$850,000 to account for cost increase pressures including inflation and increased workload associated with serving on Water Quality Restoration Formula Grant Basin Water Quality Councils.
- Line 2.3 Water Quality Farm Improvement and Retirement Projects. One comment from the questionnaire that this line looks generally underfunded.

- Lines 4.4/4.5 State Match to Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Federal Grant/Municipal Pollution Control Grants. One comment from the questionnaire requesting more funding for municipal sewage infrastructure.

Response: Requests to increase Lines 2.3 and 4.4/4.5 come from singular questionnaire respondents. Without sufficient participation to determine whether this is a broadly desirable change, no budget change is proposed for Lines 2.3, 4.4, and 4.5.

Regarding Line 1.2 Basin Planning, Basin Water Quality Council Participation, Education, and Outreach, the DEC acknowledges:

- The valuable role that statutory partners (i.e., regional planning commissions, natural resource conservation districts, and watershed organizations) play in supporting the state's Tactical Basin Planning efforts and serving on the Basin Water Quality Councils.¹
- That inflationary pressures can reduce the volume of work that can come from a level-funded line item.

The following is important context for the Board's consideration on this requested increase:

- The Tactical Basin Planning awards are a long-term commitment to support participatory watershed-level planning. As such, DEC believes this request should be considered as a requested increase in base funding levels as opposed to a one-time request.
- The Board may wish to consider whether any increase in base funding levels is likely to be sustainable in the long term and the impact/costs to other budget priorities.
- It is unclear if the Tactical Basin Planning funding gap amounts to \$200,000 (a 30% increase), considering the ongoing influx of Workforce Capacity Development Block Grant funding that will become available to partners in the coming year.

As such, DEC proposes the Clean Water Board adjust the budget by increasing Line 1.2 Basin Planning, Basin Water Quality Council Participation, Education, and Outreach base funding by \$100,000 from \$650,000 to \$750,000 (a 15% increase). The increase to Line 1.2 is recommended to come from a decrease in Line 1.52 Program and Partner Support. (This recommendation is reflected in the December 5, 2023 Final Recommended SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget sheet.) DEC also recommends the Board commit to revisit base funding levels if further adjustment to Line 1.2 is warranted in SFY 2026.

4. **Category:** General funding requests (not specific to individual line items)

Summary of Comment: Three comments requested additional funding for a specific partner type or practice unrelated to a line item. One questionnaire respondent requested more funding for natural resource conservation districts. Another questionnaire respondent requested more funding for culvert upsizing. An emailed comment requested more equipment purchase support to municipalities to reduce road salt applications and chloride pollution.

¹ [10 V.S.A. § 1253\(d\)\(3\)](#)

Response: All listed suggestions fall outside the purview of the Clean Water Board. The Clean Water Board recommends allocation of funds at the line item/funding program-level. The Clean Water Board does not oversee individual project selection for funds.

Natural resource conservation districts can access project and program funding through several line items including the following:

- Line 1.1 Water Quality Restoration Formula Grants to Clean Water Service Providers & O&M
- Line 1.2 Basin Planning, Basin Water Quality Council Participation, Education, and Outreach
- Line 1.31 Statewide Non-regulatory Clean Water Projects
- Line 1.4 Water Quality Grants to Partners and Farmers
- Line 1.52 Program and Partner Support

Culvert upsizing projects can access funding through several line items including the following:

- Line 1.1 Water Quality Restoration Formula Grants to Clean Water Service Providers & O&M
- Line 1.31 Statewide Non-regulatory Clean Water Projects
- Line 2.12 Implement BMPs at State Forests, Parks, and Recreational Access Roads
- Line 2.21 Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid (MRGP) (road drainage culverts only)
- Line 2.22 Municipal Better Roads (MRGP)

The request for equipment support to reduce road salt application and chloride pollution has been shared with the Agency of Transportation for consideration. Note that VTrans line items in the Clean Water Budget largely focus on implementation of the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP) which does not regulate road salt application.

No budget change is proposed.

5. **Category:** About the Clean Water Board and budget approach

Summary of Comment: The Board received a few questions or comments pertaining to the Board structure and operations. An emailed comment asked about Board representation, expertise, and assignment terms. One questionnaire respondent suggested that the Board adopt a five-year budget planning cycle to increase predictability and stability. Another questionnaire respondent requested more information on the basis for priority assignment.

Response: The structure and make-up of the Clean Water Board and the Clean Water Budget's prioritization framework are defined in statute.²

The Clean Water Fund statutory priorities establish Tier 1, 2, and 3 priorities for the Clean Water Budget. See the SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget Overview Document for more information on the basis for priority assignment.

² [10 V.S.A. § 1389](#)

The Vermont State Legislature intentionally selected agency secretaries of Administration; Agriculture, Food and Markets; Commerce and Community Development; Natural Resources; and Transportation to serve on the Board, acknowledging Vermont's Clean Water Initiative must be an interagency partnership. Each agency provides leadership in its own sector, including providing technical and financial assistance for Vermont's clean water efforts. Public members of the Clean Water Board are appointed by the Governor. The Governor's Office facilitates a formal application process and reviews applicants' credentials. Information on this application and appointment process can be found here: <https://governor.vermont.gov/boards-commissions>.

The Clean Water Budget process is conducted annually to align with the state's annual budgeting cycle. In December of each year the Clean Water Board formalizes a Clean Water Budget recommendation which then gets integrated into the Governor's annual budget request to the Legislature in the following legislative session. Given the uncertainty with revenue forecasting over multiple years, the Clean Water Board has cautioned against budget planning beyond this annual window.

No budget change is proposed.

6. **Category:** Geographic distribution of funding

Summary of Comment: One questionnaire respondent indicated concern for an overemphasis of funding within the Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog basins leaving the Connecticut and Hudson River basins insufficiently funded.

Response: Although only one respondent indicated a concern for geographic inequity this year, this concern has been raised in prior year budgeting cycles as well. As of the Vermont Clean Water Initiative 2022 Performance Report (released January 2023), about one third of all state clean water investments goes towards the Hudson and Connecticut River watersheds and two thirds goes towards the Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog basins. While this is not a precisely equal distribution, there are some statutorily driven priorities for the Clean Water Board that result in heavier investments in Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog. This includes:

- Line 1.1 Water Quality Restoration Formula Grants, which currently are only available to target phosphorus reductions in the Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog basins; and
- Line 2.24 Municipal Three-Acre General Permit and Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) funding programs, which provides financial assistance for regulations currently mainly applicable in the Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog basins.

Line 1.31 Statewide Non-regulatory Clean Water Projects is a suite of sub-initiatives which are required to emphasize and/or prioritize funding outside of the Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog basins to support geographic equity and it is currently funded at its statutory maximum. No budget change is proposed.

7. **Category:** Lake Carmi alum treatment feasibility study and application

Summary of Comment: There was slightly mixed feedback from the Lake Carmi community regarding the alum treatment work. Public hearing representation and submitted email comments indicated appreciation for the \$750,000 that the Clean Water Board set aside in Line

2.4 Innovative and Alternative Technologies or Practices to support potential implementation of the alum treatment pending feasibility study results and permitting. There were also a few comments on the online questionnaire asking the Clean Water Board to skip the feasibility study and jump straight to implementation, as well as one indicating concern for insufficient funding for Lake Carmi.

Response: The state is following a stepwise process for planning and potentially implementing alum treatment in Lake Carmi. This process relies on careful feasibility planning and permitting assessments. The additional \$750,000 in one-time funding to support potential alum treatment implementation demonstrates the state's commitment to incrementally implementing the Lake Carmi Crisis Response Plan. No budget change is proposed.

8. Category: Conventional agricultural systems, agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, and agricultural regulations/enforcement

Summary of Comment: The Board received one email comment and an additional email indicating concurrence that focused on the role of conventional agriculture in water quality management. Key takeaways from the email include concern that conventional (non-organic) agriculture is a major contributor to Vermont's greenhouse gas emissions and water pollution challenges, and concern that Clean Water Budget doesn't force or encourage transitions towards organic management. There were also a few comments in the online questionnaire that requested more focus on industrial farm runoff and agricultural enforcement.

Response:

- Regulatory enforcement of any kind is outside the purview of the Clean Water Board, although the State of Vermont acknowledges the importance of funding technical assistance efforts to aid regulated communities in complying with regulations. Additionally, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets' (AAFM) Program Support Line Item 1.51 funds a portion of AAFM water quality staff responsible for conducting farm inspections and technical assistance.
- Addressing greenhouse gas emissions is beyond the scope of the Clean Water Board when prioritizing funding but there are greenhouse gas emission reduction co-benefits associated with the implementation of many clean water projects.
- Within the Clean Water Budget, Line 1.4 Water Quality Grants to Partners and Farmers and Line 2.3 Water Quality Farm Improvement and Retirement Projects fund well researched and vetted best management practices known to reduce agricultural runoff and improve water quality.
- The Clean Water Budget also provides funding under Line 2.3 Water Quality Farm Improvement and Retirement Projects for farm retirement and easement projects where there is a significant water quality benefit to removing or restricting agricultural production.
- Outside of the Clean Water Budget, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service has unprecedented funding for water quality improvement, greenhouse gas mitigation, and transition planning to organic production.

No budget change is proposed.

9. **Category:** Results of clean water investments

Summary of Comment: A few questions were received asking about the results of investments made from the Clean Water Budget, such as outputs/outcomes of clean water projects and impact on water quality. An emailed comment addressed the need to consider water quality monitoring data in addition to modeled estimates of projects pollution reduction performance. A comment also asked about results of funding/financing for municipal wastewater treatment facility infrastructure, including improved treatment of wastewater and abatement of combined sewer overflows.

Response: Please refer to the [Vermont Clean Water Initiative Annual Performance Report](#) and the [Clean Water Interactive Dashboard](#) for a summary of data on the State of Vermont's clean water efforts and how investments are making a difference in water quality of Vermont's waters (e.g., rivers, lakes, and wetlands). The Annual Performance Report includes investments from the Clean Water Budget (i.e., Clean Water Fund, Capital Bill, and federal American Rescue Plan Act sources) and other clean water funding sources administered by the State of Vermont. Several funding sources are leveraged beyond what appears in the Clean Water Budget to support wastewater treatment infrastructure, including the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund and additional federal American Rescue Plan Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds. For more information, refer to Annual Performance Report chapters/sections on:

- Statewide clean water investments and results, organized by land use sector, including a section on wastewater treatment projects;
- Monitored total phosphorus load from Vermont wastewater treatment facilities in the Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog basins; and
- Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog water quality, summarizing ecosystem indicators' status and trends based on monitored data for Lake Champlain and Lake Memphremagog.

The State of Vermont monitors water quality to assess the status and trends of its surface waters, posts data online, and reports status of Vermont's waters on a biennial basis. Monitoring programs are supported with Federal Clean Water Act funds, Vermont's Clean Water Fund, Vermont General Funds, and Lake Champlain Basin Program funds. These data are integrated into State of Vermont Tactical Basin Plans, which inform clean water funding and project implementation strategies. [Visit the Department of Environmental Conservation's Monitoring and Assessment webpage for more information.](#) The State of Vermont also supports local monitoring initiatives through its [LaRosa Partnership Program](#), and participates in the Lake Champlain Basin Program's Long Term Monitoring Project to monitor the water quality conditions of Lake Champlain, including status and trends of phosphorus loading. [Visit the Lake Champlain Long Term Monitoring Project webpage for more information.](#)

No budget change is proposed.

10. **Category:** Recommended improvements to the annual Clean Water Budget public comment process

Summary of Comment: Some commenters recommended continued improvement to the annual Clean Water Budget documents to improve public understanding and accessibility of the content, such as employing plain language and digital accessibility best practices.

Response: The State of Vermont is promoting improved language access, digital accessibility, and plain language best practices into its decision making and communications processes. We appreciate and agree with the recommendation for these improvements and will continue to incorporate improvements for next year's budget process.

No budget change is proposed.

**Vermont Clean Water Board Meeting
State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget Public Hearing Minutes**

Date/Time: Thursday, November 2, 2023, 2:30–4:00 pm

Virtual Option to Attend: [Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

Physical Location to Attend In-Person: Agency of Natural Resources, One National Life Drive, Montpelier, VT 05602 in the Catamount Room (Davis Building, 2nd Floor, Room D215)

Meeting details, materials, and recordings available at: <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/cwi/board/meetings>

Clean Water Board Members/Designees:

Douglas Farnham, Agency of Administration (AoA) Chief Recovery Officer and Designated Clean Water Board Chair (Present)

Tayt Brooks, Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) Deputy Secretary (Present)

Alison Conant, public member (Present)

Bob Flint, public member (Present)

Joe Flynn, Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Secretary (Absent)

Neil Kamman, Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Water Investment Division Director on behalf of Julie Moore, Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Secretary (Present)

Jim Giffin, public member (Present)

Anson Tebbetts, Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (AAFM) Secretary (Present)

Chad Tyler, public member (Present)

1. **Showing of pre-recorded [State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget presentation](#)**
Optional for those who viewed the pre-recorded presentation on their own schedule

2. **Welcome** **Recording Time Stamp 1:13¹**
Douglas Farnham, Chief Recovery Officer and Clean Water Board Chair
The Chair, Chief Recovery Officer, Douglas Farnham convened the meeting at 2:30 pm. Chair Farnham provided a clarification that Sarah Clark was appointed as Deputy Secretary of Administration, Chair Farnham's previously vacated role. However, Chair Farnham will continue as Secretary Clouser's appointee as the Clean Water Board Chair.

3. **Clarifying questions and answers on draft State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget Meeting Recording** **Recording Time Stamp 4:23**
Emily Bird, Department of Environmental Conservation Clean Water Initiative Program Manager
There were no clarifying questions on the draft State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget meeting recording.

4. **Public comment** **Recording Time Stamp 6:26**

¹ Please refer to the available meeting recording to learn more about discussion content under each agenda item. Recording Time Stamps are highlighted to direct focus on the recording. Recording can be directly accessed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX_IeM4u9mQ

Commenters:

1. Albert Perry: Commented on Lake Carmi, see meeting recording.
2. John Costa: Commented on Lake Carmi and shared photos, see meeting recording.

Chair Farnham remarked that while poor water quality can impact localized property values and the town's grand list, impacts can also be felt statewide given the structure of how Vermont taxes and funds education. Deputy Secretary Tayt Brooks thanked John Costa for providing the pictures of Lake Carmi to the Board.

5. Wrap-up, summarize next steps

Recording Time Stamp 19:58

Emily Bird, Department of Environmental Conservation Clean Water Initiative Program Manager

Emily Bird summarized the ways that the public can participate in the public comment process. They may voice their comments at the public hearing, send written comments to the clean water email address (ANR.cleanwaterVT@vermont.gov), or fill out the State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget Public Comment questionnaire. She also mentioned that the public comment period will run until November 20, 2023 and the Board may make adjustments to the budget based on the results of those comments. The Board will reconvene on December 5th to consider public comment and finalize the State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget recommendation.

6. Adjourn

Recording Time Stamp 22:00

The Clean Water Board adjourned at 3:43 pm.

November 2, 2023 SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget Public Hearing--Public Comment Transcript

Albert Perry: Meeting Recording Time Stamp¹ 7:29

Thank you very much for this opportunity and I'll try to get this said within two minutes. I've been using Lake Carmi for just about every year for the last 75 years and that's given me my appreciation of what's the perspective over that period of time. Many of the years in my early life, until about 25 years ago, the situation in Lake Carmi was more or less accepted, unchanging. Green blue algae, lake turnover every late summer. That was ordinary, accepted for the last 25 or so years. The campers and other people in the area became more and more concerned and in contact with state authorities to try to get something done. But I must say, from my perspective, it wasn't until 10 or 15 years ago that we started getting some response and recognition. And I think the Clean Water Initiative of legislation, several years ago, along with the designation by the legislature of Lake Carmi as a lake in crisis has changed the concern of the state to catch up with the concern of the local population. Uh, what's happening now, including this proposed clean water budget is very positive and very encouraging, but we're not there yet. I think the alum treatment study feasibility study is absolutely necessary and important. But it's not the answer. It will hopefully give us the opportunity to treat the lake and I just want to say thank you to everyone involved and bringing us to this point. So, we can solve a long-standing problem and restore this resource for the good of the community and the state.

Emily Bird thanked Albert for his comment and participation.

John Costa: Meeting Recording Time Stamp 11:54

John shared pictures of blue green algae in Lake Carmi to accompany his comment.

My name is John Costa. I'm representing Lake Carmi Campers Association and I'm here today advocating, obviously, for Lake Carmi. I want to start by saying we are extremely thankful for the work that's been done to date, especially given the events worldwide and most recently, the flooding in the State of Vermont this past summer. The issues facing Lake Carmi, it's U.S. and Canadian residents and the surrounding communities could maybe be considered by some as a nuisance issue. So far really a question of lack of use of a body of water would be understandable to perhaps just walk away. But Lake Carmi represents a systemic problem facing not only Vermont but the world in general. Mankind the great builder is also its greatest destroyer. As we continue to reap havoc across the world and the sky above us. Last January I appeared before this Board in person in an attempt to convey the significance of the plague facing Lake Carmi. I presented a photo array of just how grave the problem was - has been and continues to become with each new year. This year, the first time ever the lake experienced severe aquatic life kill to thousands of mussels, clams and crayfish. So, in my opinion, just walking away is not an option. As the cyanobacteria blooms plaguing Lake Carmi represent a number of issues. Number one is serious health concerns both in the water and then the air we breathe. Devaluation of property values that represent significant income to the state in the town of Franklin. Tourism revenue losses across the state and the region abutting Lake Carmi lost at the state's largest State Park and further acceleration of the cyanobacteria blooms in Lake Champlain as Lake Carmi continues to feed its destruction. During my remarks, you've been treated to an array of photos which were taken at Lake Carmi over Labor Day weekend. The photos

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX_1eM4u9mQ&t=799s

are important because it is said one photo is worth 1000 words. You just watched 24,000 words. Thank you for your time.

Emily Bird thanked John for his comment and participation.

DRAFT State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget Public Comment Questionnaire

Thank you for participating in the Clean Water Board's public comment period on the proposed State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2025 Clean Water Budget. State Fiscal Year 2025 begins July 1, 2024 and ends June 30, 2025. The public comment period is open October 20 through November 20, 2023.

The Clean Water Board is asking the public to provide feedback, through this online questionnaire, on whether you believe funding levels are sufficient and whether you agree with the Board's proposed prioritization of funding across programs. The Clean Water Board will consider public input before making its final Clean Water Budget recommendation in December 2023.

This online questionnaire has two sections:

1. The first section requests input on the allocation and prioritization of funds proposed in the State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget. There are opportunities to provide additional comments below each question.**

***This section will ask about how the money is allocated in tiers. The Clean Water Board separates funding programs into Tiers 1-3 and Other, where the highest priority programs are considered Tier 1 and the lowest priority programs are considered Tier 3. Statute determines for the Board which types of programs are first, second, and third priority under 10 V.S.A. § 1389 (e). "Other" refers to programs not listed in 10 V.S.A. § 1389 (e), however, the Other Priorities Tier line items are included in the budget to support other statutory priorities and/or to leverage federal funding. You can find out more about each tier and what funding programs fall under the tier in the State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget Overview Document or the State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget Story Map both available here: <https://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/cwi/board>*

2. The second section is intended to collect feedback on the questionnaire process, suggestions for improvement, and gather information about individuals who responded to the questionnaire.

Clean Water Budget Public Comment

1

Do you believe there is sufficient revenue in the Clean Water Fund for State Fiscal Year 2025 to support the Clean Water Budget priorities? (\$25.8 million forecasted revenue within the \$39.6 million budget)? *

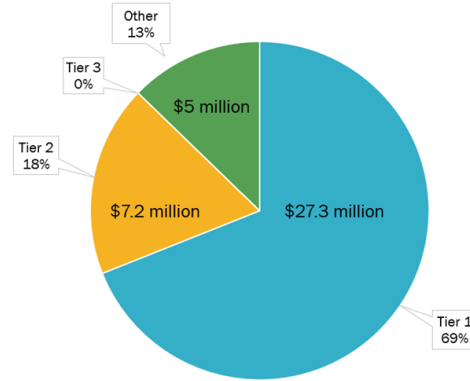
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

2

Please provide any comments, if applicable, on Clean Water Fund revenue/funding levels to share with the Clean Water Board:

3

Do you agree with the proportion (69%/\$27.3 million) of funds allocated to **Priority Tier 1** of the proposed State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget? State Law (10 V.S.A. § 1389) directs the Clean Water Board to fund Tier 1 programs as its first priority.



- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

4

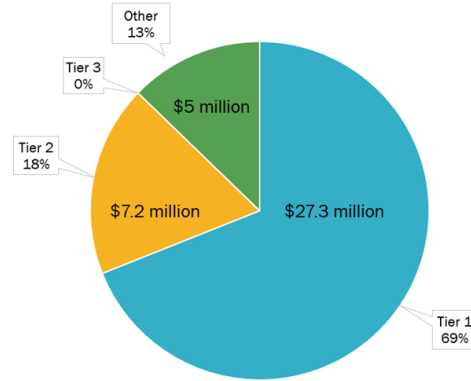
Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to Priority Tier 1 of the proposed Clean Water Budget:

5

Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the individual Tier 1 line items of the proposed Clean Water Budget:

6

Do you agree with the proportion (18%/\$7.2 million) of funds allocated to **Priority Tier 2** of the proposed State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget? State Law (10 V.S.A. § 1389) directs the Clean Water Board to fund Tier 2 programs as its next priority, after reviewing requests for Tier 1 programs. *



- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

7

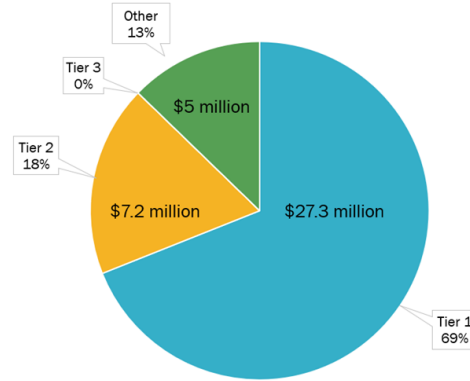
Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to Priority Tier 2 of the proposed Clean Water Budget:

8

Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the individual Tier 2 line items of the proposed Clean Water Budget:

9

Do you agree with the proportion (0%/\$0) of funds allocated to **Priority Tier 3** of the proposed State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget? State Law (10 V.S.A. § 1389) directs the Clean Water Board to fund Tier 3 programs as its next priority, after reviewing requests for Tier 1 and Tier 2 programs. *



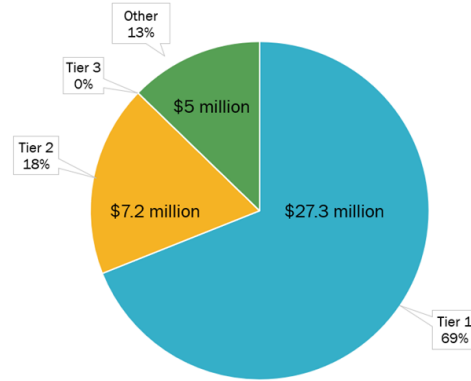
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

10

Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to Priority Tier 3 or the individual Tier 3 line item of the proposed Clean Water Budget:

11

Do you agree with the proportion (13%/\$5 million) of funds allocated to the **Other Priorities Tier** of the proposed State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget? The Other Priorities Tier includes activities not explicitly reflected as a tiered priority for Clean Water Fund spending pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 1389 (e). However, the Other Priorities Tier line items are included in the budget to support other statutory priorities and/or to leverage federal funding. *



- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

12

Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to the Other Priority Tier of the proposed Clean Water Budget:

13

Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the individual Other Priority Tier line items of the proposed Clean Water Budget:

14

Please provide any other specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall draft State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget to share with the Clean Water Board. Please include here any comments on clean water funding needs in response to the Summer 2023 flooding and rain events.

Questionnaire Evaluation and Participant Demographics

In this section, we are interested to know who is completing this questionnaire. Please take a moment to answer questions to help us improve future questionnaires and evaluate the effectiveness of our communication statewide and to a diverse audience.

15

Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the Clean Water Budget comment period and online questionnaire. *

16

How did you hear of this questionnaire (select all that apply)? *

- ☐ Email
- ☐ Online forum (like Front Porch Forum)
- ☐ Print, radio, or television news source
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Vermont Clean Water Stakeholder Listserv from the Clean Water Initiative Program
- ☐ Website
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Other

17

Please enter your zip code to help us understand the statewide distribution of response to this questionnaire. *

The value must be a number

18

Which groups do you belong to or identify with? Select all that may apply. *

- ☐ Agricultural Producer/Farmer
- ☐ Business Owner
- ☐ Concerned Resident
- ☐ Forester/Forest Landowner
- ☐ Municipal Employee/Representative
- ☐ Natural Resources Conservation District
- ☐ Recreational User
- ☐ Regional Planning Commission
- ☐ State Legislator
- ☐ Student
- ☐ Watershed Group or other Nongovernmental Organization
- ☐ Other

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State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget Compilation of Public Comment Questionnaire Results

The State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget was posted for public comment from October 20 through November 20, 2023, and a total of 14 individuals responded to the questionnaire. Below are the compiled/summarized results of responses for each question.

Clean Water Fund Revenue

1. Do you believe there is sufficient revenue in the Clean Water Fund for State Fiscal Year 2025 to support the Clean Water Budget priorities? (\$25.8 million forecasted revenue within the \$39.6 million budget)? (14 responses)



2. Please provide any comments, if applicable, on Clean Water Fund revenue/funding levels to share with the Clean Water Board (8 responses):

More funds should be allocated to nrcds so they can accomplish the clean water goals of the state. Local, community- driven districts are great for connecting projects to land stewards. This local connection can help implement the desired clean water projects.

Hard to see how money is really spent, even upon reading fine details. Clean water administration complex (cwac) seems well funded.

Accessibility and accommodations services advancement technology opportunity for industry to advance clean water technology.¹

My concerns of funding are in connections with lake carmi, a lake in crisis. The actions taken to make this lake useable as a summer retreat requires finances that don't seem to be in the today budget. When a lake is in crises and can't be used because of blue green algae that threatens our health we need to try to save our nature's beauty and resources. Where and what will we become with a dying nature and a collapsing ecosystem.

¹ Response flagged as potentially auto-generated. CWIP is investigating and will address in final responsiveness summary.

2. Please provide any comments, if applicable, on Clean Water Fund revenue/funding levels to share with the Clean Water Board (8 responses):

Focus on actual spread of alum in lakes with bg algae. Do not waste \$\$ or time on "feasibility" study! Just look around at success of other lakes in nys and see how they did it. Enlist volunteer campers association boaters to help with spreading!

Funds should be used not to clean up our beautiful lake champlain but to stop the need to clean it up .

Industrial farm runoff is the largest known polluter to vermont's waterways, ie lake champlain. The emphasis of spending should be correcting this problem.

The total cw amount proposed for fy 25 may be adequate, but it requires too large a share of the total, owing to the very limited total, compared to either last year, or a continuing program of restoration, improvement, and protection of our public waters.

Tier 1

3. Do you agree with the proportion (69%/\$27.3 million) of funds allocated to **Priority Tier 1** of the proposed State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget? State Law (10 V.S.A. § 1389) directs the Clean Water Board to fund Tier 1 programs as its first priority.

(14 responses)



4. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to Priority Tier 1 of the proposed Clean Water Budget (8 responses):

Culverts should also be funded similarly to priority tier 1. There are so many undersized culverts that are low on the priority list, yet they are endangering wildlife and human habitations.

Some good programs being implemented, but no teeth (enforcement). If we want clean water we must use carrots and the occasional stick.

4. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to Priority Tier 1 of the proposed Clean Water Budget (8 responses):

Accessibility and accommodations services options for advanced water technology²

The amount of funding targeted to lake champlain & memphremagog are far beyond the funding for the connecticut and hudson rivers. This inequity has existed since clean water funding began and must be addressed.

Do alum spreading promptly. Do not waste time and \$\$ with feasibility study!

I would like to see more funds for cleaning up farms, not just a grant program. Also, what basin are you referring to in the list on tier 1 projects?

Use any and all funds to stop the pollution, no more kick the can down the road studies

More funds are needed, in fy 25 (and every year) to the work needed throughout the state

5. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the individual Tier 1 line items of the proposed Clean Water Budget (3 responses):

Accessibility and accommodations services options for advanced water technology³

Lake carmi

Tier 1 share is⁴

² Response flagged as potentially auto-generated. CWIP is investigating and will address in final responsiveness summary.

³ Response flagged as potentially auto-generated. CWIP is investigating and will address in final responsiveness summary.

⁴ Response submitted as incomplete.

Tier 2

6. Do you agree with the proportion (18%/\$7.2 million) of funds allocated to **Priority Tier 2** of the proposed State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget? State Law (10 V.S.A. § 1389) directs the Clean Water Board to fund Tier 2 programs as its next priority, after reviewing requests for Tier 1 programs. (14 responses)

| | |
|----------|---|
| ● Yes | 8 |
| ● No | 3 |
| ● Unsure | 3 |



7. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to Priority Tier 2 of the proposed Clean Water Budget (2 responses):

Accessibility and accommodations services options for advanced water technology⁵

See previous comments

8. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the individual Tier 2 line items of the proposed Clean Water Budget (3 responses):

Water quality farm and retirement projects look underfunded. Some farms on the edge of waterways need to be taken out of service.

Accessibility and accommodations services options for advanced water technology⁶

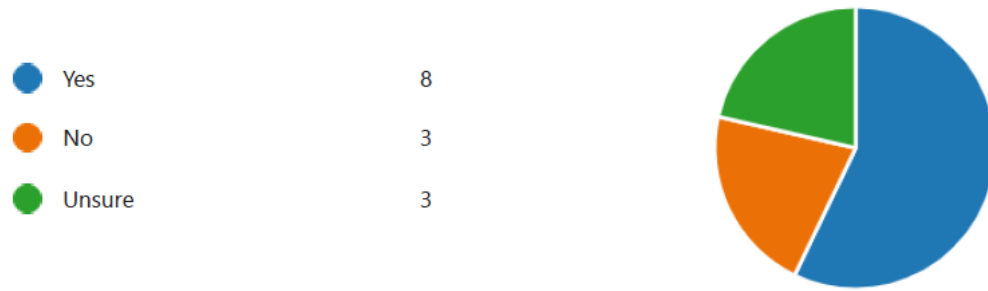
See previous comments

⁵ Response flagged as potentially auto-generated. CWIP is investigating and will address in final responsiveness summary.

⁶ Response flagged as potentially auto-generated. CWIP is investigating and will address in final responsiveness summary.

Tier 3

9. Do you agree with the proportion (0%/\$0) of funds allocated to **Priority Tier 3** of the proposed State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget? State Law (10 V.S.A. § 1389) directs the Clean Water Board to fund Tier 3 programs as its next priority, after reviewing requests for Tier 1 and Tier 2 programs. (14 responses)



10. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to Priority Tier 3 or the individual Tier 3 line item of the proposed Clean Water Budget (4 responses):

Though these are lowest priority, they should be given funding by the state.

I'd like see more for municipalities sewage infrastructure. Lots of new housing getting plugged into existing, antiquated systems. The north ave burlington repeat break is shameful.

Accessibility and accommodations services options for advanced water technology

\$0 is no priority at all!

Other Priorities

11. Do you agree with the proportion (13%/\$5 million) of funds allocated to the **Other Priorities Tier** of the proposed State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget? The Other Priorities Tier includes activities not explicitly reflected as a tiered priority for Clean Water Fund spending pursuant to 10 V.S.A. § 1389 (e). However, the Other Priorities Tier line items are included in the budget to support other statutory priorities and/or to leverage federal funding. (14 responses)



12. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall allocation of funds to the Other Priority Tier of the proposed Clean Water Budget (2 responses):

Accessibility and accommodations services options for advanced water technology⁷

Just not enough. It seems like the process starts with how much is available for clean water in a given year, rather than starting is how much is needed to impement and comply with the clean water act and its purpose. Given the comprehensive purpose of the act, the fact that we are trying to "catch up" after nears of no clean water act, and the ongoing and growing needs. I recommend adopting a five year plan as a basis for annual budgeting, to provide more stability and predictability in the annual process.

13. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the individual Other Priority Tier line items of the proposed clean water budget (3 responses):

I'd like see more for municipalities sewage infrastructure. Lots of new housing getting plugged into existing, antiquated systems. The north ave burlington repeat break is shameful.

Accessibility and accommodations services options for advanced water technology⁸

I am grateful for the proposed investment in alum treatment to correct the problem of legacy phosphorus and major blue green algae problem in lake carmi

⁷ Response flagged as potentially auto-generated. CWIP is investigating and will address in final responsiveness summary.

⁸ Response flagged as potentially auto-generated. CWIP is investigating and will address in final responsiveness summary.

General Comments on Clean Water Budget

14. Please provide any other specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the overall draft State Fiscal Year 2025 Clean Water Budget to share with the Clean Water Board. Please include here any comments on clean water funding needs in response to the Summer 2023 flooding and rain events. (6 responses)

Don't blame climate change as the prime reason for poor water quality. Non-enforcement of farming BMPs, courtesy of the Agency of Agriculture, is a bigger culprit with a long history.

Accessibility And Accommodations Services Options for advanced water technology⁹

Lake Carmi is a dying lake it needs help now! Society (we) needs to fix the damage caused by us. We need to preserve nature's beauty and the ecosystem isn't that what in big parts Vermont is about?

Spread Alum in lakes. Do NOT waste more time with Feasibility study! Utilize volunteer boaters

The emphasis of spending needs to be on stopping the pollution from industrial farms into Lake Champlain and other waterways. I can't comment on the individual tiers as I am not familiar with what each item entails.

My basic comment is that the Total Clean Water Budget for SFY 25 is insufficient to make adequate progress on the overall mission of the Clean Water Act. This is true for the current year also, but even more of a concern for FY 25, given the major decrease from FY 24, and the growing needs for restoration, improvement and protection of Vermont's Public Waters, and the major impact of this Summer's floods.

Feedback on Online Questionnaire/Public Comment Period Process

15. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the Clean Water Budget comment period and online questionnaire. (14 responses)

seems appropriate to me

Well advertised and easy to fill out

Referring back to the dashboard, it would be great to see how the CWSP funds are being spent on identification, various design levels, and implementation to get an idea of how much work is being accomplished on the ground.

A lot of fuzzy language in the details. Simplify it, provide metrics for concise brevity...

⁹ Response flagged as potentially auto-generated. CWIP is investigating and will address in final responsiveness summary.

15. Please provide any specific comments/recommendations, if applicable, on the Clean Water Budget comment period and online questionnaire. (14 responses)

Accessibility And Accommodations plain language service for quiznors and evaluation of effectiveness in communication Statewide of project plan 5-year water climate funding projects across the state Statewide to clarify on projects wanted from the public to input on.

Explain Tiers 1 - 3 in the question

None

Vermont has numerous bodies of water that require attention.

Accessibility And Accommodations Services Options for individuals with disability

Spread Alum in lakes with BG Algae. Do NOT waste time with "Feasibility" study. JUST DO IT! I taught in Community Colleges, took a course in Limnology from foremost scientist on the topic. And reviewed the success of the NYS alum treatments in the 1980s and 1990's. I proposed this to the Lake Carmi Campers assoc but people ddragged their feet and fishermen did NOT want ANY "chemical" added to the lake. Now, Lake Carmi is so bad with BG Algae, it may take a couple alum treatments to manage it. The lake is so smelly that people seldom use it.

i found it almost impossible to provide input. A document needs to be included that explains the budget in laymen's terms

Have been actively fighting this problem in our area for the last 7 years.

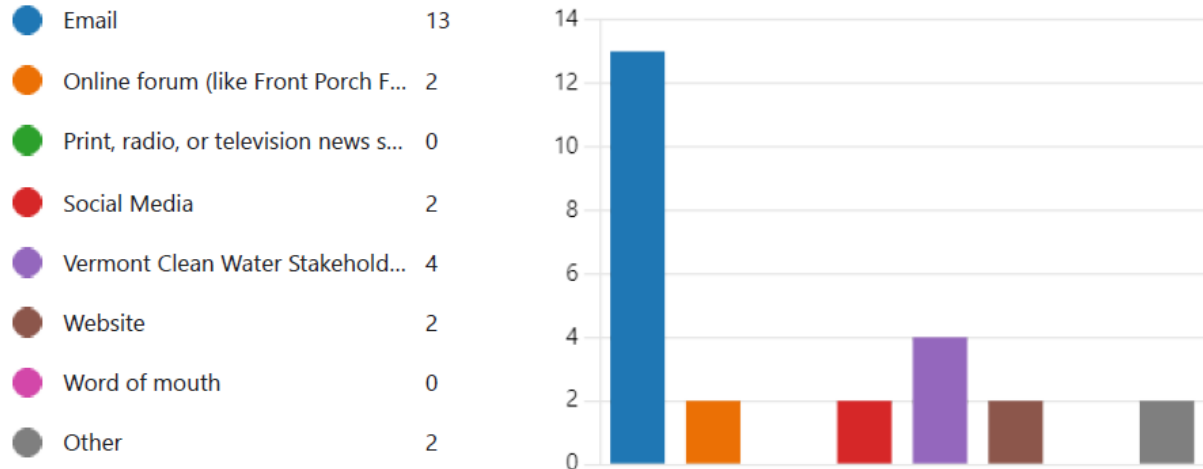
Spend the money where we will see results and turn around the downward spiraling quality of our waterways. Invest in branding Vermont as a place to enjoy clean fresh air, water and natural beauty!

The comment period is adequate. However, I believe the CW budget review period and process is too late to have any impact on the total funding. The briefing is helpful to explain what is proposed, but not very helpful regarding the basis for priority assignment

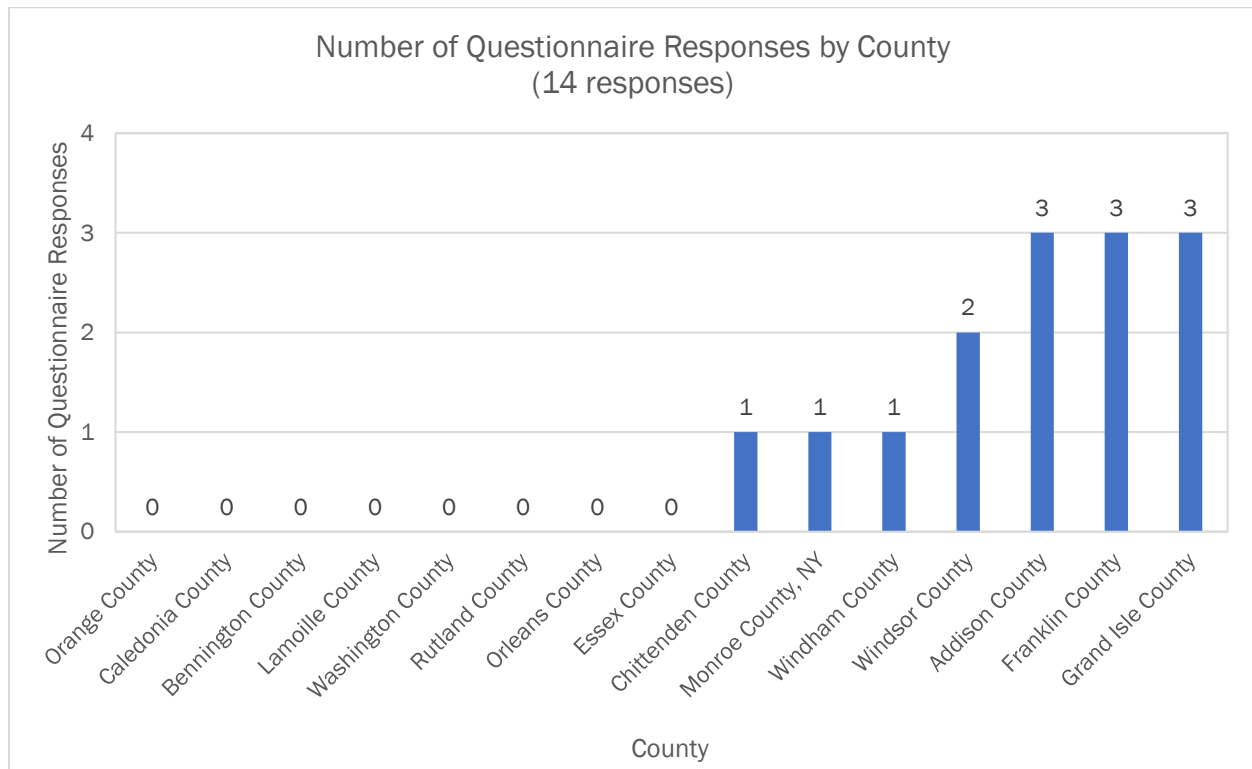
Demographics of Respondents

16. How did you hear of this questionnaire (select all that apply)?

(14 responses, participants could choose multiple responses)



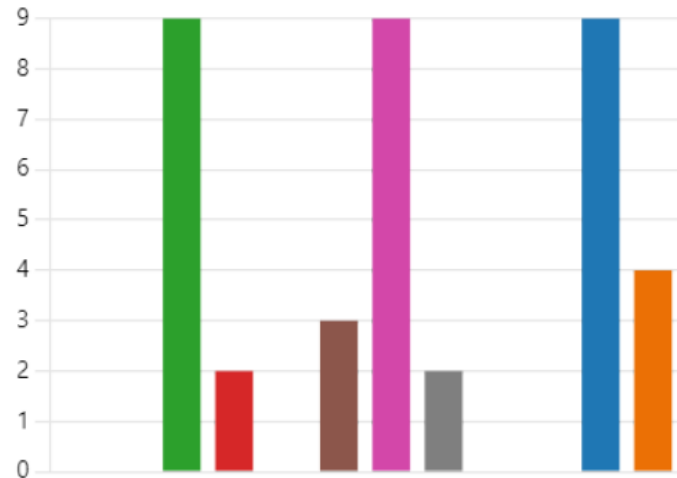
17. Please enter your zip code to help us understand the statewide distribution of response to this questionnaire.



18. Which groups do you belong to or identify with? Select all that may apply.

(14 responses, participants could choose multiple responses)

| | |
|--|---|
| ● Agricultural Producer/Farmer | 0 |
| ● Business Owner | 0 |
| ● Concerned Resident | 9 |
| ● Forester/Forest Landowner | 2 |
| ● Municipal Employee/Representa... | 0 |
| ● Natural Resources Conservation... | 3 |
| ● Recreational User | 9 |
| ● Regional Planning Commission | 2 |
| ● State Legislator | 0 |
| ● Student | 0 |
| ● Watershed Group or other Non... | 9 |
| ● Other | 4 |



Public Comment Email/Letter 1 of 8

From: [Sylvia Knight](#)
To: [ANR - Clean Water VT](#)
Cc: [James Ehlers](#); [madel51353](#); [Mason Overstreet](#); [Julie Silverman](#); [Robert Wright](#); [PamLadds](#); [Annette Smith](#)
Subject: clean water: meeting 10/9/23
Date: Monday, October 2, 2023 3:44:56 PM

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EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

To the Clean Water Board:

I have noted the announced meeting for October 9. Due to other commitments I am not able to join this meeting. My comments follow.

1. My husband and I live in the Lake Champlain watershed, near the confluence of Winooski River and the Lake.
2. I receive disturbing reports - frequently - from ANR of permitted overflows from wastewater treatment facilities and other discharges affecting Lake Champlain and other water bodies in Vermont. Rutland has the most WWTF combined sewage overflows (CSOs) of any community in the Champlain Watershed. Burlington has its share as do Middlebury and Vergennes. Thousands to hundreds of thousands of gallons of partially treated or *untreated* sewage are released to our watershed EVERY TIME IT RAINS. This means that pesticides, PFAS, heavy metals co-mingled with sewage are released into Lake Champlain.
Question: How can the state justify using streams and lakes to "dilute the pollution", contrary to the intent of the Clean Water Act?
3. The water supply for Burlington is now contaminated with PFOS (9ppt) and PFOA (18ppt) (2022 test results). EPA *lifetime health advisory levels* for these contaminants are **.02ppt and .004ppt** respectively. The City is relying on New Jersey standards because EPA has not established clear standards in water. Clean water? See [Annual Drinking Water Quality Report for the year 2023.pdf](#)
4. Just how can we call water "clean" as long as PFAS, leachate, heavy metals, sludge and endocrine-disrupting pesticides are released to waters of the state and international waters via inadequately maintained Wastewater Treatment Facilities (WWTFs)?
5. What efforts were undertaken in the Otter Creek watershed - when federal \$\$ were flowing for water infrastructure -- to remedy and upgrade WWTFs with constant problems managing their systems?
6. What expenditures have taken place regarding any upgrade to the Newport VT WWTF subsequent to releases of toxic leachate to the Black River or Lake

Memphramagog, an international body of water?

7. Questions regarding the Clean Water Board:

- a. Who represents the different state agencies on the Clean Water Board? Do they have conflicting roles in their agencies?
- b. What expertise do they have in maintaining systems for protecting water quality?
- c. What fields of work or relevant experience do the public members have?
- d. Why are all the public members leaving the same year? Why aren't the terms of tenure overlapped to provide continuity?

Please send your response to all copied here by November 1, 2023.

With deep concern and gratitude,

Sylvia Knight

Earth Community Advocate & Researcher

Burlington, VT 05408

sknightinv73@gmail.com

pronouns: she, her

We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them. Albert Einstein.

["We aren't going to have peace on Earth until we recognize the basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality."](#)

[Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)

Public Comment Email/Letter 2 of 8

From: [Bruce McGurk](#)
To: [ANR - Clean Water VT](#)
Cc: [Peter Benevento](#)
Subject: 10/9 Clean Water Board Meeting
Date: Thursday, October 5, 2023 6:43:04 PM

You don't often get email from brucemcgurk@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Hello Board Members and staff,

As a property owner at Lake Carmi, I have been very grateful for Board interest and support in understanding and solving the blue-green algae and cyanobacteria problems in our recreational lake. With Board support, we have collected lake chemistry and oxygen information and installed and operated an aeration system. That system did not achieve the desired results, and a feasibility study on implementing an alum treatment is starting.

We in the Campers Associated are incredibly excited about the likely wonderful outcome from an alum treatment. The legacy phosphorus would be locked up chemically, and the improvements that are being done in farm management, road improvements, and shoreline protection will avoid having the problem return.

Please continue to support activities at Lake Carmi for a few more years so we can finally get to a successful conclusion and end the blooms that make use of the Lake in August infeasible.

Best Regards

Bruce

Bruce McGurk, PhD, P.H. (he/him)
 McGurk Hydrologic
 Cert. Prof. Hydrologist #730
 Orinda, CA 94563
 email: brucemcgurk@comcast.net
 Cell: 925-698-4683

Public Comment Email/Letter 3 of 8

From: [Lindsey Waterhouse](#)
To: [ANR - Clean Water VT](#)
Subject: 10/9 Clean Water Board Meeting
Date: Monday, October 9, 2023 2:52:00 PM

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Greetings -

My question is based upon the outcomes of all of the targeted environmental spending. In the 2022 summary of achievements, all of the data and graphics are based upon estimates of reduction, specifically TMDL reduction given accomplished projects completed and what is believed achievable. Where is the sampling data that would demonstrate phosphorus trends each year to support the 20 year goal? Estimates are exactly that. Valid water quality testing is needed to validate the anticipated outcome. How is that happening and where is the data?

Public Comment Email/Letter 4 of 8

[Written public comment submitted from John Costa on 11.1.2023. John Costa also presented these comments live at the November 2, 2023 Public Hearing on the SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget].

Secretary Moore, members of the Clean Water Board.
Thank you for this opportunity to speak.

Given recent events worldwide and, most recently, the flooding in the state of Vermont this past summer, the issues facing Lake Carmi, its U.S. and Canadian residents and the surrounding communities could, and may be considered, by some, as a nuisance issue.

If it were merely a question of lack of use of a body of water, it would be understandable to, perhaps, just walk away.

But Lake Carmi represents a systemic problem facing, not only Vermont, but our world in general. Mankind, the great builder, is also its greatest destroyer as we continue to reap destruction across the world and the sky above us.

Last January, I appeared before this board in person in an attempt to convey the significance of the plight facing Lake Carmi. I presented a photo array of just how grave

the problem has been and continues to become with each new year. This year, and, for the first time ever, the lake experienced a severe aquatic life kill to thousands of mussels, clams and crayfish.

So, just walking away is not an option as the cyanobacteria blooms plaguing Lake Carmi represent a number of issues:

- Serious health concerns, both in the water and the air we breathe.
- Devaluation of property values that represent significant income to the state and the Town of Franklin
- Tourism revenue losses across the state and the region abutting Lake Carmi
- Loss of the state's largest state park
- Further acceleration of cyanobacteria blooms in Lake Champlain as Lake Carmi continues to feed its destruction.

As we await the results of the upcoming feasibility study and a possible solution to the devastation presented by these blooms, I'd like to close with another photo array of Lake Carmi over Labor weekend this year because one photo is worth a thousand words. Here are 24,000 words!

Thank you for your time.

[Photos and videos shared with Clean Water Board at the November 2nd Public Hearing via Teams screen share.

Below are snapshots retrieved from Public Hearing Recording (available here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX_IeM4u9mQ&t=1169s. Snapshots added to this document by Clean Water Initiative Staff 11.20.2023]

















Public Comment Email/Letter 5 of 8

November 4, 2023

**Re: DRAFT STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025 (SFY25) CLEAN WATER BUDGET
Recommended by the Clean Water Board (10/9/2023)**

Comments by James H Maroney, Jr.

1. Vermont estimates that GHG emissions comprise a contribution of 16% from “agriculture,” which in Vermont means—but scrupulously fails to say—conventional dairy. Other authorities on this subject put the contribution from conventional farming higher, between 20-25%.
2. The Global Warming Solutions Act mandates that Vermonters collectively reduce GHG emissions 26% by January 2025; 40% by January 2030 and 80% by January 2050.
3. All state efforts to my knowledge are concentrated on finding reductions in transportation and heating.
4. No state efforts to my knowledge are directed at finding reductions in agriculture; the state has promulgated no rules for farmers to follow in order to meet the targets.

In the decade after WWII the Haber Bosch process, which converts atmospheric nitrogen (N₂) to ammonia (NH₃) by a reaction with hydrogen (H₂), was no longer needed to manufacture munitions. In the 1950s the process was adjusted to make synthetic urea (fertilizer). The process imports C, H and N derived from fossil fuels and combines them to produce artificial soil nutrients. Early adopters regarded the system as miraculous. The application of these nutrients to crop land reduced farm costs by (roughly) half and (roughly) doubled yields, which gains are referred to as “efficiencies,” an expression of the belief that the system’s gains were greater than its costs. Vermont farmers were somewhat slow to adopt the process but by the 1980s its adoption was virtually universal. Consequently, the application of the process over three generations shifted perceptions of the balance between the system’s costs and benefits, while at the same time that American dairy farmers were consolidating and expanding to increase production, American consumers were steadily reducing demand for milk. The most conspicuous results of these two countervailing trends are:

1. Endemic dairy farm attrition (1950-2023) 96%
2. Rural economic decay (in states like Vermont, where the application of the paradigm is marginal, agriculture has a negative influence on GDP)
3. Agriculture is now the leading contributor to lake pollution (45%) and a not insignificant contributor to GHG emissions (16-20%)

It is important to understand that the new farming paradigm was designed to be a prodigious user of fossil fuels at a time when fossil fuels were cheap and plentiful and at a time when the consequences of their use were either not well understood or felicitously ignored. The state knows this but chooses not to understand it. In fact, the state has not only enshrined the dairy industry’s heavy reliance on fossil fuels into the so-called Required Agricultural Practices without mentioning that dairy farming’s “Best Practices” are exquisitely the same practices that are the driver of the three results listed above, today it engages in a campaign to gas light the

public by suggesting that conventional dairy is not a major cause of GHG emissions, it is part of the solution.

USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack said recently that 2022 US farm yields and income were up even though only 7% of farmers received 89% of the gains. Secretary Vilsack does not apparently see that the numbers reveal a very troublesome trend; 89% of farmers should be earning a 7% gain.

From a certain point of view, Vermont concentrates on transportation and heating because these are the two largest contributors. But there is a major difference between transportation and heating and agriculture. Incontrovertibly, we are not going to stop going to the bathroom, we are not going to stop driving and it is not going to stop raining. We are all collectively responsible for some part of GHG emissions from transportation and heating and to some extent they are unavoidable. Agriculture, on the other hand, is voluntary. I don't mean agriculture is avoidable; I mean *Vermont* conventional agriculture is avoidable. It is voluntary. Vermont imports somewhere between 80-90% of its food. We do not, in other words, farm in order to eat: we farm for appearances. That means Vermont farmers do not need to farm for maximum yields and do not need to utilize the conventional farm paradigm.

In looking over the DRAFT STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025 (SFY25) CLEAN WATER BUDGET, I do not see one line item that is *intended* to address water and atmospheric pollution caused by farming. They all either try to distract attention away from the root cause or to spend money on programs designed to compensate for it.

The 2025 CLEAN WATER BUDGET states that its plan for agriculture is “Cost-effective, Supports the agricultural economy and Improves soil health.” It does none of these. The 2025 Clean Water Budget is an expression of VAAFM's refusal to acknowledge that the environmental, economic and social costs of conventional farming far exceed its benefits. Notwithstanding, the authors of the 2025 Clean Water Budget have made the decision to double down on their support for conventional farmers to help them maintain yields, to help them over produce milk markets, to help them lower farm income, to help them drive farm attrition and to help them destroy soil health. The only way to arrest these trends is to *stop* farming conventionally and to convert all Vermont farming to organic. All farmers who agree to convert must be compensated.

I completely understand why Vermont conventional farmers do not want to do this. They have large investments in their farms and they want to farm as their industry leaders, their agriculture agency and their extension service all advise them to farm. But conventional farming is entirely dependent upon fossil fuels and upon the nutrients they contain. Roughly half of those nutrients are converted to milk or beef; the other half resides in the soil, whence it flows downhill into our rivers and streams or rises as GHG into the atmosphere. The paradigm cannot be tweaked to make it ‘climate friendly.’ Conventional farming was *designed* to externalize its wastes into the environment: its results are inalienable to it. They are not caused by a few sloppy farmers or a few inveterate rule breakers.

Here is the unavoidable truth: Conventional farming is the *proximate cause* of over production, low milk prices, farm attrition, water and atmospheric pollution and rural economic decay, and if

Vermont permits its farmers to continue to farm conventionally, these results will obtain. The 2025 Clean Water Budget makes no effort to manage the cause of these results or even to acknowledge it. Consequently, THE STATE OF VERMONT IS NOT ON TRACK TO MEET ITS GWSA TARGETS.

I invite those who disagree with my analysis to give me substantive reasons why it is not correct. But those who disagree must keep in mind that the GWSA targets are not guidance, they are mandates, and the deadline for “Vermont agriculture” to reduce its GHG emissions 26% is January 2025, the deadline to achieve a reduction of 40% is January 2030 and the deadline to achieve a reduction of 80% is January 2050.

Sincerely,

James H. Maroney, Jr.

Public Comment Email/Letter 6 of 8

From: [James Ehlers](#)
To: [James Maroney](#)
Cc: [ANR - Clean Water VT](#); [Chase Whiting](#); [Elena Mihaly](#)
Subject: Re: SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget Public Comment
Date: Saturday, October 21, 2023 12:47:52 PM

You don't often get email from jamesehlersvt@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Please note in the record that I support the comments of my colleague, Mr. Maroney.

With gratitude, on behalf of those downstream,
 James Ehlers
 Lake Champlain International

But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word “tension.” I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension which is necessary for growth.
 —The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

On Sat, Oct 21, 2023 at 12:22 James Maroney <maroney.james@gmail.com> wrote:

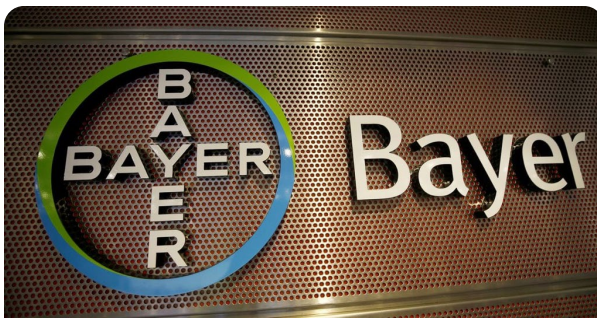
James H. Maroney, Jr.
 1033 Bullock Road
 Leicester, VT 05733
 (802) 236-7431
<http://www.jamesmaroney.com>

Public Comment Email/Letter 5 of 8 ATTACHMENTS

From: [James Maroney](#)
To: [ANR - Clean Water VT](#)
Cc: [James Ehlers](#); [Chase Whiting](#); [Elena Mihaly](#)
Subject: Re: SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget Public Comment
Date: Monday, November 20, 2023 10:01:09 AM

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Thank you Gianna. And please if you don't mind add this last file to my comments.



Bayer ordered to pay \$1.56 billion in latest US trial loss over Roundup weedkiller
[reuters.com](#)

James H. Maroney, Jr.
1033 Bullock Road
Leicester, VT 05733
(802) 236-7431
www.jamesmaroney.com

On Nov 20, 2023, at 9:46 AM, ANR - Clean Water VT
<ANR.CleanWaterVT@vermont.gov> wrote:

Good morning, James Maroney,

Thank you for submitting your comments to the Clean Water Board. We will file with public comment for the Board's review. James Ehlers, we have incorporated your voiced support as well.

Best,
Gianna

Gianna Petito (she/her) | Grants Supervisor
Vermont Agency of Natural Resources | Department of Environmental Conservation
Water Investment Division | Clean Water Initiative Program
One National Life Drive, Davis 3 | Montpelier, VT 05620-3510

802-636-7547 office/cell
gianna.petito@vermont.gov
<http://dec.vermont.gov/water-investment/cwi>

The Agency of Natural Resources supports telework, and there are times when I may be working from another office location. I am available to connect by phone and email. I am also available to connect in-person upon request.

From: James Maroney <maroney.james@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2023 8:54 AM
To: ANR - Clean Water VT <ANR.CleanWaterVT@vermont.gov>
Cc: James Ehlers <jamesehlersvt@gmail.com>; Chase Whiting <cwhiting@clf.org>; Elena Mihaly <emihaly@clf.org>
Subject: Re: SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget Public Comment

EXTERNAL SENDER: Do not open attachments or click on links unless you recognize and trust the sender.

Please add this article from Reuters to my comments

<image001.jpg>

Comment: Our food system is racking up \$10 trillion in hidden costs. It's time to cut that bill
[reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com)

On Oct 21, 2023, at 7:03 PM, James Maroney
 <maroney.james@gmail.com> wrote:

Please add this Guardian article to my comments. James

Impact of farming on climate crisis will be a key Cop topic – finally | Food | The Guardian
amp.theguardian.com <favicon-32x32.ico>

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Society & Equity | Industry Insight | Social Impact

Comment: Our food system is racking up \$10 trillion in hidden costs. It's time to cut that bill

By **Maximo Torero**

November 8, 2023 3:22 AM EST · Updated 12 days ago



Industry Insight from Ethical Corporation Magazine, a part of Thomson Reuters.



A tractor applies liquid nitrogen fertilizer to a wheat field in Germany. Over-application of farm inputs can cause environmental damage. REUTERS/Michaela Rehle [Acquire Licensing Rights](#)

November 7 - They say that politicians should know the price of a carton of milk, or a loaf of bread. Not hard, you might think. But what about the true cost of these everyday items? That's something many of us would be less sure of.

Access to food is a right. It is something we need to survive. It is integral to the everyday human experience. Food has shaped cultures and civilisations. It has made some countries and regions rich. It unites families, features in religious rituals and is a strong current in politics, whether that's the strength of the farm lobby, the concentrated market structures in key food-producing countries or the destabilising power of consumers unhappy about [soaring prices](#).

We know food, and the farming that produces it, is important. And if we watch our household budget, or are aspiring politicians, we'll know precisely how much a carton of milk costs. But we don't often think about the true cost of our agrifood systems.


Markets are efficient and smart, but also imperfect and incomplete. They don't price and can't value everything. The tag on a loaf of bread reflects the inputs – the cost of wheat and the fertiliser used to grow it; production in the factory; transport from farm to food store; marketing and packaging. It also reflects how much people want bread (the demand) and whether there is enough to go round (supply).

SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget | Compilation of Public Comment Emails/Letters Received**21 of 33**

11/20/23, 9:49 AM

Comment: Our food system is racking up \$10 trillion in hidden costs. It's time to cut that bill | Reuters

But what is not priced in is the impact of the production of this food on the environment, or the societal cost of unhealthy foods. Furthermore, prices don't take into account the need for workers in the agrifood system to earn a living wage, whether that's packing shelves in a warehouse or toiling in the fields.

A man eats a burger in a shop in Tokyo. Over 70% of hidden costs associated with food are driven by unhealthy produce. REUTERS/Yuya Shino [Acquire Licensing Rights](#) 


The United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organization's report, the [State of Food and Agriculture 2023](#), attempts to value these things properly and reaches a staggering conclusion: the hidden costs in our global agrifood system are at least \$10 trillion. That's around 10% of global gross domestic product every year. Just take a moment to reflect on that. It's quite a lot for a politician to miss.

The vast majority – over 70% – of those costs are driven by unhealthy foods, ultra-processed, high in fats and sugars, which lead to [obesity and non-communicable diseases](#). These cause labour productivity losses and are particularly large in high- and upper-middle-income countries.

More than a fifth of the total hidden costs are environmental, from greenhouse gas and nitrogen emissions, land-use change and water use. We're possibly most familiar with these costs, not least because the green movement has called our attention to the impact of farming on our countryside and average global temperatures. They're probably underestimated, because of limitations in the data, and the conceptual and technical difficulty of putting a value on nature. But we know they affect us all, and are growing.

Low incomes in the agrifood sector are another hidden cost, particularly in less-developed countries, where they are driving poverty and under-nourishment. In these countries, hidden agrifood system costs represent more than a quarter of their GDP, and the human toll is huge.

In middle-income countries, the hidden costs of agrifood systems represent less than 12% of GDP, and in high-income countries it's less than 8%. But that is still a lot. And, now that we know the magnitude of these hidden costs, it would be unwise not to do something to address them.

Farmers tend to a rice field in Kampong Chhnang province, Cambodia. Low incomes in the agrifood sector are a hidden cost, particularly in less-developed countries. REUTERS/Chor Sokunthea DCS/CN [Acquire Licensing Rights](#) 

Our report uses what is known as true cost accounting to assess the overall scale of hidden costs. It is the first study to do this at a national level for 154 countries, enabling comparisons and paving the way for country-specific solutions. Next year's report will use in-depth, targeted evaluations to determine the best measures for policymakers to take to reduce the unwanted impacts of the agrifood system, and promote positive social, environmental and health outcomes instead.

Options they might consider include subsidy reform, taxes on unhealthy foods, dietary guidelines, labelling or regulation. These could promote people's health, but also support ecosystems and encourage strategic investments. Critically, this does not mean that the price of all food will go up. Indeed, prices may, in some cases, become a better signal of true value and as a consequence reduce these costs. Spending patterns might change but overall household budgets won't necessarily need to increase.

True cost accounting can also highlight when action will be cheaper than inaction. For instance, investing in proper information on soils, smart fertiliser products and proper training for farmers is less costly for society than the impact of nitrogenous pollution linked to over-application of farm inputs. These solutions are already supported by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, in collaboration with many countries, but showing their true benefits is critical to motivate decision-makers around the world

True cost accounting can also increase access to healthy diets, if policies align with the true costs of unhealthy foods, and this could reduce the 3.1 billion people who don't have access to healthy diets today. We hope this will be a turning point for how we think about the cost of food: not just what it says on the label but what it's really worth. And that such a holistic view will guide better decisions, in all our interests.

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Maximo Torero

Maximo Torero is the chief economist of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Before joining the FAO in 2019, he served at the World Bank Group in Washington, D.C. He is a professor at the University of the Pacific, Peru (on leave) and Alexander von Humboldt Fellow at the University of Bonn, Germany, and has published more than 40 peer-reviewed academic articles analysing poverty, inequality and behavioral economics in top journals.

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Impact of farming on climate crisis will be a key Cop topic – finally

Cop28 will discuss how global food production must become sustainable to stay within 1.5C

[Ex-officials at UN farming body say work on methane emissions was censored](#)

[‘The anti-livestock people are a pest’: how UN food body played down role of farming in climate change](#)

Fiona Harvey *Environment editor*

Fri 20 Oct 2023 06.00 EDT



A third of the world's food production is at risk from the climate crisis, [research has found](#) – but at the same time our food systems are one of the key contributors to climate breakdown. Greenhouse gas emissions

from farming and the land use change that often accompanies it, such as clearing forests and drying out wetlands to make room for crops and livestock, amount to more than a fifth of global carbon output, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

But discussions of the world's food systems, their vulnerability and their impacts, are confined to the sidelines of the annual UN climate change negotiations and given scant attention.

In part this is due to the divided nature of UN responsibilities, with food under the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which has its own summit machinery, such as the Food System Summit that took place in Rome in July. Climate is just one aspect of the threats to food systems, where economics and geopolitics traditionally play out very differently than in the climate talks.

This year promises to be different. For the first time there will be a dedicated food day, and food, agriculture and water will be the focus of at least 22 major events during the fortnight of Cop28 talks in Dubai, from 30 November to 13 December, presided over by the United Arab Emirates. There will also be a dedicated Food4Climate pavilion in ExpoCity, where the talks will be held.

For the first time, too, the FAO will outline how food systems must change for the world to stay within the globally agreed goal of limiting temperature rises to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, beyond which the impacts of the climate crisis on food systems will rapidly become catastrophic, and in some cases potentially irreversible.

This research is expected to show that animal farming, for meat and dairy, must be reined back from its continued growth around the world, if targets to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 are to be met.

“Cops have, historically, significantly overlooked the role of farming, both as a major contributor to global climate change, as a potential solution to climate change, and also in the context of the significant impact climate change is having - and will have - on farming communities across the world,” said Edward Davey of the World Resources Institute. If world leaders could come together to discuss commitments to looking at the link between food and climate, this would be historic, he said.

Any action would need to go far beyond a declaration, and include finance for adaptation and loss and damage to be directed towards smallholder farmers in the developing world, while farming subsidies in the west should be reformed to reduce methane emissions in particular, according to campaigners.

More on this topic

'Let's see what we can do': the market garden in a rewilding project

Davey said: “For many countries in the wealthier parts of the world – such as the US and the EU – significant reductions in meat and dairy consumption should absolutely be part of the commitments our nations make to addressing the climate crisis. But for other, poorer nations, where rates of per capita meat and dairy consumption are often very low, the main story on food and farming is much more to do with food security, nutrition, adaptation and resilience; a dynamic which the proposed declaration addresses head on.”

It is worth noting that Sultan Al Jaber, the UAE’s minister for advanced technology, as well as the chief executive of its national oil company, Adnoc, and the Cop president designate – a dual role for which he has been heavily criticised – takes a keen interest in food issues. He has told the Guardian in interviews that it is not enough to focus on the emissions from fossil fuels, and that emissions from all sectors, including agriculture and land use change, must be taken into account.

“It’s not only oil and gas that contributes to climate change by the way. And you know that 30% comes from industry, another 30% comes from agriculture. We need to be a little careful here in defining the sources of carbon emissions. So we need to get the world to unite, in solidarity, against carbon emissions. We need to stay focused, laser focused on decarbonisation.”

Food experts caution that hi-tech solutions, no matter how appealing to politicians, must not be a substitute for tackling the real issue of western diets and their impact, in terms of methane from livestock production for food and dairy, and the waste and careless overuse of resources involved.

“From treating cow burps to robotic weeders, none of the false solutions on offer at [Cop27](#) come close to stopping the industrial food production from being an engine of planetary destruction,” said Raj Patel, food justice scholar and author of *Stuffed and Starved*.

“Agribusiness and governments offered a series of patented patches designed not to transform the food system, but to keep it the same.”

Campaigners will be hoping that **Cop28** supplies instead a real discussion of why the current western diet, being exported around the world to developing and middle-income countries, is inherently unsustainable, and what can be done about that.

“How we farm sustainably and ensure the people that need food the most can get it, should be a major priority for leaders in Dubai,” said Jennifer Larbie, the head of UK advocacy and campaigns at Christian Aid. “The emissions from farming is a huge driver of the climate crisis and one which needs to be tackled at Cop28 if we are to keep global heating in check.”

\$314,887
contributions

\$1,500,000
our goal

A message from Betsy Reed, editor of the Guardian US

As we head into 2024, our journalists are already hard at work preparing for one of the most consequential news cycles of our lifetimes. I’m interrupting you now because we need to raise \$1.5m to fund our reporting next year as we take on these high-stakes challenges:

- **The 2024 election:** With the threat of another Trump presidency looming, there are countless angles to cover around next year’s election: extremism, misinformation, reproductive rights, the economy, foreign policy, immigration and democracy itself. We’ll be there to explain, contextualize and report on it all with our unique global perspective.
- **War in the Middle East:** Our reporters are on the ground providing urgent reporting on Israel-Palestine, while our US team tracks the upheaval at home.
- **Technology:** We’re entering a new age with artificial intelligence that will have sweeping implications for our society. Our deeply sourced reporting team is poised to tackle this topic with the nimbleness and expertise it requires.

- The climate crisis: We're getting ready for another year of record heat, floods, wildfires and other natural disasters. We plan to cover the devastating impact of extreme weather while exposing the forces that are fueling global heating.
- Investigations: Our reporters will continue uncovering abuses of power, from money in politics to corporate abuse and more.

We'll be counting on readers like you during this year-end fundraiser to help keep us independent, beholden to no outside influence and accessible to everyone - whether they can afford to pay for news, or not. **If you can, please consider supporting us with a year-end gift from \$1. Thank you.**

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Bayer ordered to pay \$1.56 billion in latest US trial loss over Roundup weedkiller

By Tom Hals

November 20, 2023 4:54 AM EST · Updated 5 hours ago



Logo of Bayer AG is pictured at the annual results news conference of the German drugmaker in Leverkusen, Germany February 27, 2019. REUTERS/Wolfgang Rattay [Acquire Licensing Rights](#)

Companies

Bayer AG

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Nov 19 (Reuters) - A Missouri jury ordered Bayer ([BAYGn.DE](#)) to pay \$1.56 billion to four plaintiffs who claimed the company's Roundup weedkiller caused injuries including cancer, a verdict that could intensify investor pressure on the German drugs and agricultural chemicals company to change its legal strategy.

The Cole County, Missouri jury found on Friday that Bayer's Monsanto business was liable for claims of negligence, design defects and failing to warn plaintiffs of the potential dangers of using Roundup, according to court documents.

11/20/23, 10:04 AM

Bayer ordered to pay \$1.56 billion in latest US trial loss over Roundup weedkiller | Reuters

Valorie Gunther of New York, Jimmy Draeger of Missouri and Daniel Anderson of California were awarded a combined \$61.1 million in compensatory damages and \$500 million each in punitive damages. Each was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma that they alleged was caused by using Roundup on their family property. Draeger's wife Brenda was awarded \$100,000 for the harm she allegedly suffered from her husband's disease.

The punitive damages could be reduced on appeal as it exceeds U.S. Supreme Court guidance.

Bayer has said that decades of studies have shown Roundup and its active ingredient, glyphosate, are safe for human use.

The verdict is the fourth straight loss in court for Bayer, after the company had been found not liable to plaintiffs in nine consecutive trials. Earlier this month, Union Investment, one of Bayer's top 10 shareholders, called on the company to consider trying to engage with plaintiffs to settle more cases.

Bart Rankin, partner at Forrest Weldon which represented the plaintiffs, said in a statement the victory was the first of many on behalf of thousands of plaintiffs.

Bayer said in a statement that it has strong arguments to get the recent verdicts overturned on appeal.

It said in the recent trials that have gone against the company, courts have improperly permitted plaintiffs to misrepresent the European Union's renewal process for glyphosate and the safety assessment by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The EU Commission said last week it would renew its approval of glyphosate based on safety assessments of the European Food Agency and European Chemicals Agency after EU member states failed to give a clear opinion on the renewal.

Around 165,000 claims have been made against the company for personal injuries allegedly caused by Roundup, which Bayer acquired as part of its \$63 billion purchase of agrochemical company Monsanto in 2018.

In 2020, Bayer settled most of the then-pending Roundup cases for up to \$10.9 billion. Around 50,000 claims remain pending, according to regulatory filings.

Reporting by Tom Hals in Wilmington, Delaware; Editing by Bill Berkrot

Our Standards: [The Thomson Reuters Trust Principles.](#)

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Tom Hals
Thomson Reuters

Tom Hals is an award-winning reporter with 25 years of experience working in Asia, Europe and the United States. Since 2009 he has covered legal issues and high-stakes court battles, ranging from challenges to pandemic policies to Elon Musk's campaign to end his deal for Twitter. Contact: +6462002558

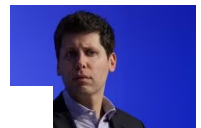


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Technology

OpenAI appoints new boss as Sam Altman joins Microsoft in Silicon Valley twist

7:02 PM UTC



Disrupted

Governments race to regulate AI tools

6:47 PM UTC



Public Comment Email/Letter 7 of 8



Comments on the SFY25 Clean Water Budget

From the Town of Williston's Stormwater Program

Lakes in North America have rising salt concentrations due to the use of deicing road salts¹. This salinization increases the chloride concentration of freshwater bodies, degrades water quality, and threatens healthy ecosystems and ecosystem services to humans, like drinking water. There are chloride-impaired waterbodies in Vermont, but there are limited efforts to reduce chloride pollution by updating our road deicing practices. 70% of municipalities surveyed in the Lake Champlain Basin reported that funding to purchase updated equipment would be the best way to support salt reduction efforts². Therefore, the end of the equipment purchase grant program causes serious concerns as this change in funding leaves municipalities with negligible state support for their efforts to reduce road salt use and chloride pollution. Highway Departments are typically funded by Municipal General Funds, rather than utilities, which makes the upfront costs of equipment upgrades more difficult. Therefore, grant funding is critical for supporting progress towards salt reduction.

While we acknowledge that VTtrans may continue a similar equipment purchasing program in the future, the Town of Williston's Stormwater Program is concerned that the end of the equipment purchase program leaves a gap in resources to support municipalities in reducing their impacts on water quality. Specifically, efforts to reduce chloride pollution are not eligible for many other grants as these efforts require the purchase of expensive equipment, rather than the implementation of structural BMPs.

There are examples within Vermont of the benefits of investing in updated road salting equipment. The Town of Hyde Park decreased its total salt usage by approximately 47%, and the City of South Burlington decreased its salt use per lane mile by 40%. These significant decreases in salt use are due to Hyde Park's brine-making equipment and South Burlington's upgraded plow blades. Hyde Park can now make their own brine (liquid deicer made with water and salt) at the precise concentration needed for effective use. They had to invest in brine-making equipment, as well as updated equipment for their truck to allow them to safely, and efficiently, utilize the brine, including sensors to measure the pavement temperature. South Burlington's upgraded plow blades greatly improve snow removal, which prevents ice from forming and bonding to the road and reduces the amount of salt needed to make their roads safe. These investments led to reduced salt use, and therefore reduced chloride runoff, but required up-front investments that are cost-prohibitive for many municipalities in Vermont.

Equipment purchase grants can support other municipalities' efforts to reduce their salt usage, which will help conserve our drinking water sources and healthy, diverse ecosystems. Therefore, we support continuing the equipment purchase program or otherwise establishing SFY25 Clean Water funding to support municipal purchases of equipment to reduce chloride pollution.

¹ Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies. (n.d.). *Tracking the salinization of freshwaters*.
<https://www.caryinstitute.org/our-expertise/freshwater/road-salt/tracking-salinization-freshwaters>

² Stepenuck, K. (2023, October 26). *Understanding winter maintenance practices of Lake Champlain Basin communities* [In-person slideshow presentation]. Snow Fighters Salt Training, Hyde Park, VT.

Public Comment Email/Letter 8 of 8



November 20, 2023

Dear Clean Water Board,

Thank you for your efforts administering the Clean Water Fund. The Clean Water Fund supports essential statewide efforts towards clean water and healthy and resilient watersheds here in Vermont, and we all benefit from this work daily.

We are writing to ask the Clean Water Board to consider an increase in the FY 2025 budget from \$650,000 to \$850,000 for the Tactical Basin Planning support to statutory partners outlined in 10 V.S.A. § 1253 (The State Natural Resources Conservation Council, Watersheds United Vermont, and the Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies). This line item is listed in the FY 2025 budget as *Basin Planning, Basin Water Quality Council Participation, Education, and Outreach*, and is a Tier 1 priority. These funds support approximately 40 Natural Resources Conservation Districts, watershed groups, and Regional Planning Commissions in their important efforts to assist the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) with both the development and implementation of the state's Tactical Basin Plans – the guiding documents for water restoration and protection in the state. We believe this small increase will have a large impact.

Tactical Basin Planning funds are carefully allocated through a DEC approved workplan process to ensure that the work supported is a priority for DEC's Watershed Planners. The funds enable organizations to provide key information and input into the development of the Tactical Basin Plans including providing important water quality monitoring data. Additionally, these Tactical Basin Planning grants support technical assistance and outreach to landowners and targeted engagement with communities and municipalities, which are key for implementing the strategies in the Tactical Basin Plans. This work is the foundation for building the pipeline of projects for future development, design, and implementation. Tactical Basin Planning grants also support regional coordination among the statutory partners to ensure collaboration on clean water efforts.

The Tactical Basin Planning grant amount has not increased in three years. And, even three years ago, the additional \$50,000 added was to account for a new mandate for groups to participate in Basin Water Quality Councils (BWQCs) established through Act 76. This level-funding has meant that, in reality, the funding available for Tactical Basin Planning work has decreased over the last three years, especially given high inflation. Therefore, groups are able to do less outreach, technical assistance, municipal bylaw outreach, water quality monitoring, and regional coordination compared to three years ago. As the Clean Water Fund has ramped up funding for project design and implementation efforts, this

lack of funding at the front end to develop and address priorities is slowing down the ability to address key water quality concerns.

Additionally, the funding support for Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC) participation has not been sufficient for the time needed. If we want the roll out of Act 76 to be successful, we need the BWQCs to have the time needed to evaluate clean water projects in their basins. It is also important that we provide an opportunity for a few additional watershed groups to contribute to the Tactical Basin Planning efforts in FY 2025. In several parts of the state, there have been gaps with regards to watershed groups; in some cases, groups are ready to engage in the Tactical Basin Planning efforts. It is a benefit to clean water efforts to strengthen work in underserved watersheds in the state. If we keep the FY 2025 Tactical Basin Plan budget constant, any support to new groups/efforts will take away funds from existing workplans instead of increasing the size of the pie to ensure more equitable work statewide.

Currently, groups are being asked to cap and cut their Tactical Basin Planning workplan requests even when tasks are deemed important for the development and implementation of the Tactical Basin Plans. If the budget is held constant in FY 2025 as well, this will require further cuts to workplans, even while local-level organizations have expressed a strong need to do more in this space. The state is investing significant dollars in the Clean Water Fund for the development, design, and implementation of clean water projects. In order to have projects ready for design and implementation, and to address the full suite of strategies in our Tactical Basin Plans, we must invest in the Tactical Basin Planning efforts. This critical engagement with communities in our local watersheds is the foundation for successful restoration and protection efforts.

We understand that the Clean Water Fund supports a broad range of project types and that there are different factors that go into the prioritization and allocation of those funds. In considering this requested increase, we hope that other categories of funding that support front-end community engagement, project identification and planning can be maintained at their current budgeted levels. This includes funding for project development and partner support through organizational workforce capacity grants.

Thank you for considering an increase in the FY 2025 Tactical Basin Planning allocation from \$650,000 to \$850,000. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Lyn Munno
Director
Watersheds United Vermont

D. Jill Arace
Executive Director
Vermont Association of Conservation Districts

Catherine Dimitruk
Chair
Vermont Association of Planning and Development Agencies

FINAL STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025 (SFY25) CLEAN WATER BUDGET RECOMMENDATION

Recommended by the Clean Water Board on (12/5/2023)

| | | | SFY25 BASE FUNDS | | | | SFY25 ONE-TIME FUNDS | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--|------------------|--|--|---------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| No. | Agency | Activity | Clean Water Fund | Capital Bill (SFY25 Capital Budget Target = \$6m) ¹ | Filling the \$4m Base Gap from SFY25 Capital Bill with Clean Water Fund Unallocated/Unreserved | Subtotal Base Funds | SFY25 Compared to SFY24 Base Funds | Clean Water Fund Prior Year Unallocated/Unreserved | American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) ² | Subtotal One-Time Funds | SFY25 Compared to SFY24 One-Time Funds | Total SFY25 (Base + One-Time) | SFY25 Total Compared to SFY24 Total |
| Clean Water Budget Statutory Priority Tier 1 (Items of Equal Priority) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1 | ANR-DEC (CWIP) | Water Quality Restoration Formula Grants to Clean Water Service Providers & O&M | 7,210,000 | | | 7,210,000 | - | 1,150,000 | | 1,150,000 | - | 8,360,000 | |
| 1.2 | ANR-DEC (CWIP) | Basin Planning, Basin Water Quality Council Participation, Education, and Outreach | 750,000 | | | 750,000 | 100,000 | | | - | - | 750,000 | 100,000 |
| 1.3 Water Quality Enhancement Grants | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.31 | ANR-DEC (CWIP) | Statewide Non-regulatory Clean Water Projects | 5,000,000 | | | 5,000,000 | - | | | - | - | 5,000,000 | |
| 1.32 | VHCB | Land Conservation and Water Quality Projects | | | 2,000,000 | 2,000,000 | - | | | - | - | 2,000,000 | |
| 1.4 | AAFM | Water Quality Grants to Partners and Farmers | 6,696,887 | 550,000 | 1,200,000 | 8,446,887 | 426,238 | 213,113 | | 213,113 | (2,786,887) | 8,660,000 | (2,360,649) |
| 1.5 Agency and Partner Operating Support | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.51 | AAFM | Program Support | 900,000 | | | 900,000 | 33,750 | | | - | - | 900,000 | 33,750 |
| 1.52 | ANR-DEC (CWIP) | Program and Partner Support | 930,000 | | | 930,000 | (23,750) | 700,000 | | 700,000 | 298,750 | 1,630,000 | 275,000 |
| Tier 1 SUBTOTAL | | | 21,486,887 | 550,000 | 3,200,000 | 25,236,887 | 536,238 | 2,063,113 | - | 2,063,113 | (2,488,137) | 27,300,000 | (1,951,898) |
| Tier 1 % of Total | | | 83% | 9% | 88% | 71% | | 54% | | 54% | | | 69% |
| Clean Water Budget Statutory Priority Tier 2 (Items of Equal Priority) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.1 Outreach and Implementation of Forestry Accessible Management Practices for Maintaining Water Quality | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.11 | ANR-FPR | Forestry Water Quality Practices and Portable Sluider Bridges | 144,000 | | | 144,000 | 387 | | | - | - | 144,000 | 387 |
| 2.12 | ANR-FPR | Implement BMPs at State Forests, Parks, and Recreational Access Roads | | 550,000 | | 550,000 | - | | | - | - | 550,000 | - |
| 2.2 Municipal Stormwater Implementation | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.21 | VTrans | Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid (MRGP) | 3,000,000 | | | 3,000,000 | - | | | - | - | 3,000,000 | - |
| 2.22 | VTrans | Municipal Better Roads (MRGP) | 1,000,000 | | | 1,000,000 | - | 1,000,000 | | 1,000,000 | 1,000,000 | 2,000,000 | 1,000,000 |
| 2.23 | VTrans | Missisquoi Bay Federal Earmark (Non-Federal Match) ³ | | | | - | - | | | - | (1,000,000) | - | (1,000,000) |
| 2.24 | ANR-DEC (CWIP) | Municipal Three-Acre General Permit and MS4 ⁴ | | | | - | (1,000,000) | | | - | (7,000,000) | - | (8,000,000) |
| 2.3 | VHCB | Water Quality Farm Improvement and Retirement Projects | | | 800,000 | 800,000 | - | | | - | - | 800,000 | - |
| 2.4 | ANR-DEC (CWIP) | Innovative or Alternative Technologies or Practices to Improve Water Quality | | | | - | - | 750,000 | | 750,000 | 550,000 | 750,000 | 550,000 |
| Tier 2 SUBTOTAL | | | 4,144,000 | 550,000 | 800,000 | 5,494,000 | (999,613) | 1,750,000 | - | 1,750,000 | (6,450,000) | 7,244,000 | (7,449,613) |
| Tier 2 % of Total | | | 16% | 9% | 20% | 19% | | 46% | | 46% | | | 18% |
| Clean Water Budget Statutory Priority Tier 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | ANR-DEC (WIFP) | Developed Lands Implementation Grants ⁵ | | | | - | - | | | - | - | - | - |
| Tier 3 SUBTOTAL | | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Tier 3 % of Total | | | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | | 0% | | 0% | | | 0% |
| Clean Water Budget Other Priorities | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.1 | ANR-DEC (Lakes) | Lakes in Crisis Fund | 120,000 | | | 120,000 | - | | | - | - | 120,000 | - |
| 4.2 | AcA | Stormwater Utility Payments (\$25K each) | 25,000 | | | 25,000 | 25,000 | | | - | (100,000) | 25,000 | (75,000) |
| 4.3 | ACCD | Better Connections and Downtown Transportation Fund | | | | - | - | | | - | - | - | - |
| Capital Bill Priorities | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4.4 | ANR-DEC (WIFP) | State Match to Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) Federal Grant ⁶ | | 1,600,000 | | 1,600,000 | 1,267,019 | | | - | - | 1,600,000 | 1,267,019 |
| 4.5 | ANR-DEC (WIFP) | Municipal Pollution Control Grants | | 3,300,000 | | 3,300,000 | (700,000) | | | - | - | 3,300,000 | (700,000) |
| Other SUBTOTAL | | | 145,000 | 4,900,000 | - | 5,045,000 | 592,019 | - | - | - | (100,000) | 5,045,000 | 492,019 |
| Other % of Total | | | 0.6% | 82% | 0% | 14% | | 0% | | 0% | | | 13% |
| Total Proposed for Appropriation ⁷ | | | 25,775,887 | 6,000,000 | 4,000,000 | 35,775,887 | 128,644 | 3,813,113 | - | 3,813,113 | (9,038,137) | 39,595,000 | (8,909,493) |
| Anticipated SFY25 Revenue/Sources | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | 25,775,887 | 6,000,000 | | 31,775,887 | | | | - | - | 31,775,887 | |
| | | Estimated Unallocated/Unreserved Clean Water Fund Revenue | | | 4,000,000 | 4,000,000 | | 4,701,669 | | 4,701,669 | | 8,701,669 | |
| | | Anticipated Total Available ⁸ | 25,775,887 | 6,000,000 | 4,000,000 | 35,775,887 | | 4,701,669 | - | 4,701,669 | | 40,477,556 | |
| | | Balance=Total Available-Total Requested | - | - | - | - | | 888,556 | - | 888,556 | | 888,556 | |

Final SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget Recommendation by Agency

| Final SFY 2025 Clean Water Budget Recommendation by Agency | | SFY25 BASE FUNDS | | | | SFY25 ONE-TIME FUNDS | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|--|--|---------------------|---|--|---|----------------------------|--|----------------------------------|---|
| | | | Capital Bill (SFY25 Capital Budget Target = \$6m) | Filling the \$4m Base Gap from SFY25 Capital Bill with Clean Water Fund Prior Year Unallocated/ Unreserved | | SFY25 Base Compared to SFY24 Base | Clean Water Fund Prior Year Unallocated/ Unreserved | American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) ⁷ | | | | |
| Agency | Clean Water Fund | | | | Subtotal Base Funds | | | | Subtotal One-Time Funds | SFY25 Compared to SFY24 One-Time Funds | Total SFY25 (Base + One-Time) | SFY25 Total Compared to SFY24 Total |
| AAFM | 7,596,887 | 550,000 | | 1,200,000 | 9,346,887 | 459,988 | 213,113 | - | 213,113 | (2,786,887) | 9,660,000 | (2,326,889) |
| ACCD | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| ANR (DEC) | 14,910,000 | 4,900,000 | - | | 19,810,000 | (358,731) | 2,600,000 | - | 2,600,000 | (6,151,250) | 21,615,000 | (6,507,981) |
| ANR (FPR) | 144,000 | 550,000 | - | | 694,000 | 387 | - | - | - | - | 694,000 | 387 |
| AcA | 25,000 | - | - | - | 25,000 | 25,000 | - | - | - | (100,000) | 25,000 | (75,000) |
| VHCB | - | - | - | 2,800,000 | 2,800,000 | - | - | - | - | - | 2,800,000 | - |
| VTrans | 4,000,000 | - | - | - | 4,000,000 | - | 1,000,000 | - | 1,000,000 | - | 5,000,000 | - |
| Total Proposed for Appropriation ⁷ | | 25,775,887 | 6,000,000 | 4,000,000 | 35,775,887 | 128,644 | 3,813,113 | - | 3,813,113 | (9,038,137) | 39,595,000 | (8,909,493) |

Footnotes:

¹ - The Capital Bill operates on a biennial basis, with the 2023 Capital Bill covering SFY24-25. The Capital Bill "as passed" (Act 69 of 2023) reduced the SFY25 total for allocation by the Clean Water Board in the SFY25 Clean Water Budget from the roughly \$10-12 million target to \$6 million.

² - The State of Vermont Legislature appropriated American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to be recommended for allocation by the Clean Water Board in SFY22, SFY23, and SFY24. ARPA funds are no longer available in SFY25. The ARPA column is included in this SFY25 Clean Water Budget sheet for purposes of comparison to the SFY24 Clean Water Budget.

³ - The "Missisquoi Bay Federal Earmark (Non-Federal Match)" line item was a one-time expense in SFY24 and is not needed to continue in SFY25. It is included here for purposes of comparison between SFY24 and SFY25. See SFY24 Clean Water Budget materials for more information.

⁴ - The "Municipal Three-Acre General Permit and MS4" line item was primarily funded with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars, no longer available in SFY25, but will be encumbered/dependent through December 2026. In SFY25, activities previously supported by this line item will transition to a combination of Lake Champlain Basin Program federal funding and CWSRF financing.

⁵ - Three-Acre General Permit projects, which are the focus of the "Developed Lands Implementation Grants" line item, were primarily funded with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars. ARPA dollars are no longer available for budgeting in SFY25, but will be encumbered/dependent through December 2026. Three-Acre General Permit projects will eventually transition to a financing structure.

⁶ - The SFY24 Appropriations Bill as enacted (Act 78 of 2023) established a "Cash Fund for Capital and Essential Investments" to cover required state match to secure Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) resources through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). In SFY25, \$2.208 million in match has been authorized by the General Assembly under the SFY25 Capital Bill from the Cash Fund to draw down BIL CWSRF resources.

⁷ - The SFY24 Clean Water Budget total amount proposed for appropriation was \$48,498,493, shown here for purposes of comparison between SFY24 and SFY25 Clean Water Budgets. In addition to the total proposed for appropriation, \$2 million were transferred in the SFY24 Clean Water Budget to the Clean Water Fund Contingency Risk Reserve. Total SFY24 Clean Water Budget appropriations and transfers was \$50,498,493.

⁸ - Projected SFY25 Clean Water Fund revenue are based on the consensus revenue forecast adopted by the Vermont Emergency Board at its July 2023 meeting, summarized in the August 2023 Clean Water Fund operating statement. Unallocated/Unreserved Clean Water Fund revenue are determined based on the difference between total revenue and total appropriations.

Total SFY24 and SFY25 Clean Water Budget Appropriations

| Funding Source | SFY24 | SFY25 | SFY25 Compared to SFY24 |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Clean Water Fund Revenue | 25,762,243 | 25,775,887 | 13,644 |
| Capital Bill | 9,885,000 | 6,000,000 | (3,885,000) |
| Clean Water Fund Revenue - Unallocated/Unreserved | - | 4,000,000 | 4,000,000 |
| Base Appropriation Subtotal | 35,647,243 | 35,775,887 | 128,644 |
| ARPA | 10,000,000 | - | (10,000,000) |
| Clean Water Fund Revenue - Unallocated/Unreserved | 2,851,250 | 3,813,113 | 961,863 |
| One-Time Appropriation Subtotal | 12,851,250 | 3,813,113 | (9,038,137) |
| Total Appropriation | 48,498,493 | 39,589,000 | (8,909,493) |