

Vermont Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant-in-Aid Program, 2021

Lakes and Ponds Management and Protection Program Overview

The Lakes and Ponds Management and Protection Program of the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) works to protect, maintain, enhance, and restore Vermont lakes and the public uses that healthy lake ecosystems provide through outreach and education, monitoring and assessment, and regulatory programs. The program consists of four sub-programs:

Aquatic Invasive Species Program

The Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program coordinates management activities associated with both aquatic invasive and nuisance species. Staff survey, monitor, and maintain aquatic invasive population information, as well as implement management and spread prevention efforts to prevent negative effects associated with nuisance species. These may include habitat loss and a reduction in native biodiversity along with adverse social and economic impacts and impacts to public health and safety. The program works collaboratively with other divisions of the Department, the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, and various partners to provide guidance and technical and financial assistance to municipalities and lake associations. The program assists with the implementation of many effective programs, including nuisance species management plans, Public Access Greeter Programs, and education and outreach initiatives. For more information, please visit the Program's website at: <http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/aquatic-invasives>.

➤ **Vermont Invasive Patrollers**

The AIS Program oversees the Vermont Invasive Patrollers (VIPs), which is an invasive species early-detection program centered on engaging and training a network of volunteers to survey lakes for new infestations of invasive species.

➤ **Vermont Public Access Greeter Program**

Because spread prevention is the most effective method for mitigating the potential impacts of invasive species, the AIS Program oversees the Public Access Greeter Program, which is primarily concerned with educating water users and stopping the spread of AIS through watercraft inspections. Greeter Programs at individual waterbodies are coordinated by local municipalities, and the State provides training and all necessary equipment to each program. Costs associated with establishment and maintenance of a Greeter Program are eligible for Grant-in-aid funding.

Vermont Lake Wise Program

The Lake Wise Program goal is to teach lake shore owners how to implement best management practices that are lake friendly and effectively protect the lake's water quality, shoreline stability, and wildlife habitat. Through this program, participants receive technical assistance and certification for controlling runoff, preventing erosion, and restoring natural landscapes. The Lake Wise Program certifies lake-friendly shoreland properties, including state parks, town beaches, and private homes and businesses that are well managed. The Program encourages the use of shoreland Best Management Practices that are maintained to care for the lake. For more information, go to:

<http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/lakeshores-lake-wise>

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Vermont Lake Assessment & Water Quality Monitoring Program

The primary function of the lake assessment program is to monitor the status and trends of Vermont's waters, including inland waterbodies and Lake Champlain and its tributaries. DEC Scientists annually monitor, survey, and assess various parameters to measure the condition of Vermont waterways. These assessments provide the foundation for the EPA National Aquatic Resource Surveys, water quality standards development, surveillance and enforcement actions, and inform public information efforts. Assessment results are uploaded to the Vermont Inland Lake Score Card, a user-friendly interface to share available data on overall lake health with lake users.

<http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/data-maps/scorecard>.

➤ Vermont Lay Monitoring Program

The Lay Monitoring Program (LMP) is a statewide program consisting of dedicated volunteers who have sampled more than 90 inland lakes and 40 stations on Lake Champlain since 1979. Volunteer monitoring provides essential data on phosphorus, chlorophyll, and water clarity. LMP volunteers collect weekly water quality samples and complete public perception surveys during June, July, and August to establish baseline nutrient conditions, detect trends, determine compliance with nutrient criteria, inform basin plans, and engage lake users and residents in a lake management communication network.

<http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/monitor>.

Lakes and Ponds Permitting

Several near- and in-lake activities are regulated by the State to ensure the protection of Vermont's aquatic resources. The Lakes and Ponds Program provides technical assistance to those undertaking a regulated activity, and issues permits for applicable projects on a Lake or Pond. More information concerning Lake and Ponds Program permits can be found at <http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/permit>. The following is a summary of permits provided by the Program:

- [Aquatic Nuisance Control](#) - A permit is required for activities used to control nuisance aquatic plants, insects, or other aquatic life (including lamprey) in Vermont's waterbodies (this does not include manual removal techniques, i.e. hand-pulling nuisance vegetation). Examples include use of herbicides/pesticides, chemicals other than pesticides, powered mechanical devices, bottom barriers, and structural and biological controls. Aquatic Nuisance Control Permits are issued under 10 V.S.A. Chapter 50, §1455.
- [Pesticide General Permit](#) - Discharges from the application of pesticides to waters of the state for the following pesticide use patterns require coverage under Vermont's Pesticide General Permit: (1) mosquito and other flying insect pest control; (2) weed and algae control; (3) animal pest control; and (4) forest canopy pest control.
- [Lake Encroachment](#) - Projects encroaching on public waters (from mean water level towards the lake) such as docks, walls, boathouses, bridges, water intakes, cables, dredging, or fill may require a permit. Lake Encroachment Permits are issued under 29 V.S.A. Chapter 11.
- [Shoreland Protection](#) - As of July 1, 2014, changes to land use within 250 feet of a lake's mean water level (also known as the Protected Shoreland Area), such as any new development, redevelopment, or vegetation removal, may require a permit. Shoreland Permits are issued under 10 V.S.A Chapter 49A, §1441–1449 et seq.

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Special Use Permit for Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife Access Areas

A permit is required before stationing a Greeter Program at a public access if the access is State-owned. The Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife Department (VTDFW) requires a Special Use Permit (SUP) for **Vermont Fish and Wildlife Access Areas** every season at least thirty-days in advance of the implementation of such a program. SUPs can be applied for at <https://anrweb.vt.gov/FPR/FPRLicensing/>. Contact Mike Wichrowski, VTDFW Facility and Lands Manager, at mike.wichrowski@vermont.gov or (802) 917-1347 with questions.

Additional VT Agency of Natural Resources Permits

Knowing all the permits required before you begin your project can help prevent delays. You may wish to consult with a regional permit specialist to help determine if your project may require any other permits (e.g. wetlands, wastewater). Vermont Agency of Natural Resources permit specialists can assist with the identification of needed permits <http://dec.vermont.gov/environmental-assistance/permits>