



Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

**CVRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC)
Meeting Minutes – 12 September 2024**

CWAC Members: ✓

Commissioner Representatives	
	John Brabant
✓	Mitch Osieki
✓	Ron Krauth
✓	Rich Turner
✓	Alice Peal

Municipal Representatives	
	John Hoogenboom
	Joyce Manchester
✓	Emily Ruff
	Jeff Schulz
	Joseph Whelan

CVRPC Staff: Brian Voigt, Lincoln Frasca

Other Attendees: Keith Fritschie (Department of Environmental Committee - DEC)

Call to Order & Roll Call

B. Voigt called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.

R. Krauth inquired about the recent VT Digger article, ["EPA orders Vermont to change how the state regulates some farmers."](#) K. Fritschie offered to keep committee members informed on future implications of this change as more information becomes available.

Updates to agenda: None

Approval of November minutes

R. Turner moved to approve the minutes of the 9 May 2024 meeting. R. Krauth seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

A. Peal nominated herself for Chair. All were in favor with none opposed and no abstentions. A. Peal was elected chair.

R. Turner nominated himself for Vice Chair. All were in favor with none opposed and no abstentions. R. Turner was elected Vice Chair.

FY25 Tactical Basin Plan (see slides)

K. Fritschie gave a brief presentation on the [2024 Tactical Basin Plan](#) Implementation Table. He will provide a shortened strategies table for the Committee to review and select topics that they are most interested in pursuing. The table shows strategies, potential partners, and funding sources that address pollution sources by sector across agricultural, developed lands, wastewater and natural resources. The following sector strategies were discussed:

Agriculture: A. Peal asked whether there are agricultural strategies that limit the use of chemical fertilizer and manure spreading. K. Fritschie responded that the focus of these strategies is on nonregulatory projects that help prevent soil erosion, and phosphorus runoff. The DEC also supports the work of the Natural Resource Conservation Districts in nutrient management planning. If a more in-depth agricultural discussion is of interest that could be a future meeting topic.

Stormwater: Most towns in the Basin have Stormwater Master Plans completed. There is now the need to identify appropriate funding sources for the identified projects from those reports. Certain outreach campaigns are included as strategies in the Tactical Basin Plan such as [Storm Smart](#) and [Rethink Runoff](#). These programs target individual homeowners and promote best management practices for slowing the flow of stormwater from their property. Salt management strategies are also included especially for Chittenden County. Certain salt impaired streams have received Total Maximum Daily Load limits in the past year.

Developed Lands – Roads: Strategies support updated Road Erosion Inventories and the increase of Aquatic Organism Passage. A Private Road Network Approach for the Municipal Roads General Permit Program is being developed. These new tools will facilitate the identification and implementation of clean water projects on private roads.

Wastewater: Strategies support municipalities in the implementation of their wastewater plans. Much of this work is regulatory and critical to overall Basin water quality. Assisting smaller towns without wastewater treatment plants is a priority. DEC led Wastewater Workshops engage landowners on shorelines of lakes and rivers and promote best practices and maintenance techniques for individual septic systems. Currently Wastewater Workshops are planned for Nelson and Sabin Ponds in in the

Mad River Valley. Woodbury and Calais. There are also plans for CVRPC to host a Wastewater Workshop

Natural Resource Protection: Strategies in this sector are diverse including dam removal, floodplain restoration, and tree plantings. This could be a good place for the Committee to focus their efforts. The main goal is to restore rivers to their natural state while protecting and restoring water quality. Such project types as culvert replacements and planting projects may be good projects for municipalities to engage with. Recreation access to rivers is also a part of this work and partners such as the [Barre City River Access Taskforce](#) are working to improve access while at the same time restoring water quality. [Stream Wise](#) and [Lake Wise](#) are two programs that give awards to river and shoreland landowners for implementing best management practices on their property to reduce erosion. Reclassifying water bodies is another strategy municipalities can engage with through petitioning to add further protection to water bodies with high water quality. Lakeshore communities can participate through creating a Lake Watershed Action Plan and through the Lake Wise program. Currently the Lake Wise program is active in the Nelson and Sabin Pond communities.

Wetlands: The Wetlands Department will be releasing a Wetland Restoration Guide in the next month. This will be useful for landowners in combination with new wetlands mapping that is also becoming available soon.

Forests: The DEC is developing new tools for identifying legacy erosion from forest lands. These new tools will aid in the identification of old skid trails and legacy trails contributing to erosion. Town forests could be a good place to pilot these projects.

B. Voigt emphasized that the Tactical Basin Plan strategies directly inform the CVRPC workplan. The Clean Water Advisory Committee is charged with providing input and guidance on which strategies CVRPC should be directing their efforts. Priority topics from the last Committee meeting of FY24 included:

- ◇ FEMA map updates / Flood Hazard & River Corridor Bylaws
- ◇ Wetlands Mapping & Reclassification
- ◇ Forest Road Inventories / Town Forest Management
- ◇ Municipal Wastewater Assistance & Workshops

B. Voigt presented on CVRPC's role as the Winooski Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP). As the CWSP, CVRPC interacts with all towns in the Winooski River Basin to achieve Phosphorus reduction targets set by the Lake Champlain Total Maximum Daily Load. CVRPC has been in the CWSP role for about two and half years. Project development efforts have been underway to increase projects in the pipeline. Recent project development efforts may lead to the implementation of several projects and provide necessary Phosphorus credits to meet the approximately 70 kilogram per year target. The CWSP is available to work with your town to identify projects. Municipalities in the Region that are engaged with the CWSP program include Barre City, Waitsfield, Plainfield, Berlin, and Calais. A. Peal is working with the CWSP to develop floodplain restoration projects for Waitsfield. *Please reach out if you are interested in developing a project in your town.*

B. Voigt explained that while CWSP money is focused on Phosphorus reduction, eligible projects may have co-benefits such as stormwater reduction. CVRPC can work with towns to identify stormwater priorities alongside local champions. Stormwater projects managed by CVRPC and funded through Design Implementation Block Grants include the Barre City Auditorium (Final Design), Moretown Town Office & Elementary School (Complete), East Calais Post Office and Moscow Woods Gully. The East Calais Post Office and Moscow Woods Gully projects are awaiting permit decisions from DEC and the Town of Calais. Both projects will be going out to bid this fall and construction may spill over into the spring.

CVRPC also receives funding as part of the 604b program to assist the Water Quality Division of the Agency of Natural Resources. In 2023 this work involved reviewing existing assessments such as Stormwater Master Plans and Stormwater Infrastructure Map Reports for the 20 Washington County municipalities served by CVRPC. This review led to the identification of 57 projects for entry into the Watershed Projects Database as well as updates to 28 projects with discrepancies. The Watershed Project Database is central clearinghouse for DEC water quality projects. CVRPC works with the Basin Planner to look at specific projects within municipal boundaries for outreach purposes. CWSP money is available to fund certain eligible projects in the database. CVRPC is still waiting on 604b funding for this year and is open to suggestions on how to use this money.

A. Peal asked how flooding is affecting these programs? Including the backward trends of Phosphorus into Lake Champlain. K. Fritschie responded that flooding certainly impacts water quality with increased sediment runoff. The DEC has been verifying how projects have been holding up to the increase in flooding. Moving forward, flood resilience needs to be a bigger part of Tactical Basin Planning process. We need to plan projects that will accommodate and withstand big floods. The

intersection of flood and water quality projects is a conversation that is currently happening.

B. Voigt added that the CWSP money, roughly \$1,000,000 per year, is for prioritizing Phosphorus reduction. However, we need to do water quality and flood protection work simultaneously. The best-case scenario is finding projects that do both. For example, there could be opportunities for adopting old projects and improving past stormwater projects with CWSP funds. Project adoption may be cost efficient for Phosphorus and for stormwater management basin wide.

A. Peal has been working with the Department of Public Health for the Climate Action Plan. A 2017 study has shown that water quality has been identified as a high hazard in relationship to climate change. Waitsfield's current project development effort to identify floodplain reconnections will have Phosphorus credits and help mitigate flooding.

K. Fritschie explained that many Phosphorus projects increase flood mitigation. There is a current UVM study modeling floodplain restoration projects that will measure the degree in which downstream flood risk is being mitigated.

Upcoming Meetings (discussion)

B. Voigt explained that topics can be guided by Committee interest and should align with strategies in the Tactical Basin Plan. The 14 November 2024 meeting topic will be on FEMA map updates / Flood Hazard and River Corridor Bylaws & Hazard Mitigation Funding. Presentations will be given by the Regional Flood Manager, Ned Swanberg, and by the State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Stephanie Smith.

R. Krauth spoke to the news he heard regarding funding being cut for flood gauge stations. He emphasized the importance of measuring flood levels on small tributaries that quickly change in flash floods and can have extremely high maximum flows. He inquired about the possibility of funding low-cost maximum flow detectors for individuals to help monitor flood levels. The current gauge stations are not necessarily in the most ideal locations for measuring crest flows on smaller tributaries.

B. Voigt suggested a citizen science session to address low-cost instrumentation for tracking maximum flows. He mentioned similar work being done to study runoff during rain on snow events. This could be in partnership with our watershed organizations who may already doing this work and are connected to willing landowners and have established trainings.

L. Frasca asked the Committee for assistance in publicizing future meetings. He recommended choosing a couple of topics to focus on. It is important that these meetings are relevant for members and attract municipalities that are working

through these issues and could directly benefit from the meeting topic and professional assistance.

Municipal Technical Assistance (discussion)

B. Voigt described the state funding received by Regional Planning Commission's to assist towns without the inhouse capacity to navigate certain programs and associated administrative tasks. CVRPC is currently assisting Middlesex and Marshfield with the administration of the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. Middlesex, Woodbury, and Waitsfield are seeking funding for the 2024 storm. CVRPC will be coordinating assistance for Middlesex and Woodbury. *If your town is need of assistance, especially for emergency response, please reach out.*

Announcements (see slides)

[FEMA Bylaw Updates:](#) CVRPC assistance: [schedule meeting here](#)

[Winooski Clean Water Service Provider:](#) [schedule meeting here](#)

[Tree Maintenance & Removal Grants:](#) One-time allocation due January 2025

[Community Tree Planting Grants:](#) Round 2 applications due January 2025

[2024 DEC Clean Water Conversations](#)

- 3/7/24 - Phosphorus Loading into Lake Champlain Post 2023 Flooding
- 8/1/24 - American Rescue Plan Act - Funded Clean Water Projects Panel

Adjourn: *R. Krauth moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 PM. R. Turner seconded. Motion carried unanimously.*

The next meeting is scheduled for 14 November 2024.