

# Watershed Partner Update: LAKE CHAMPLAIN BASIN PROGRAM

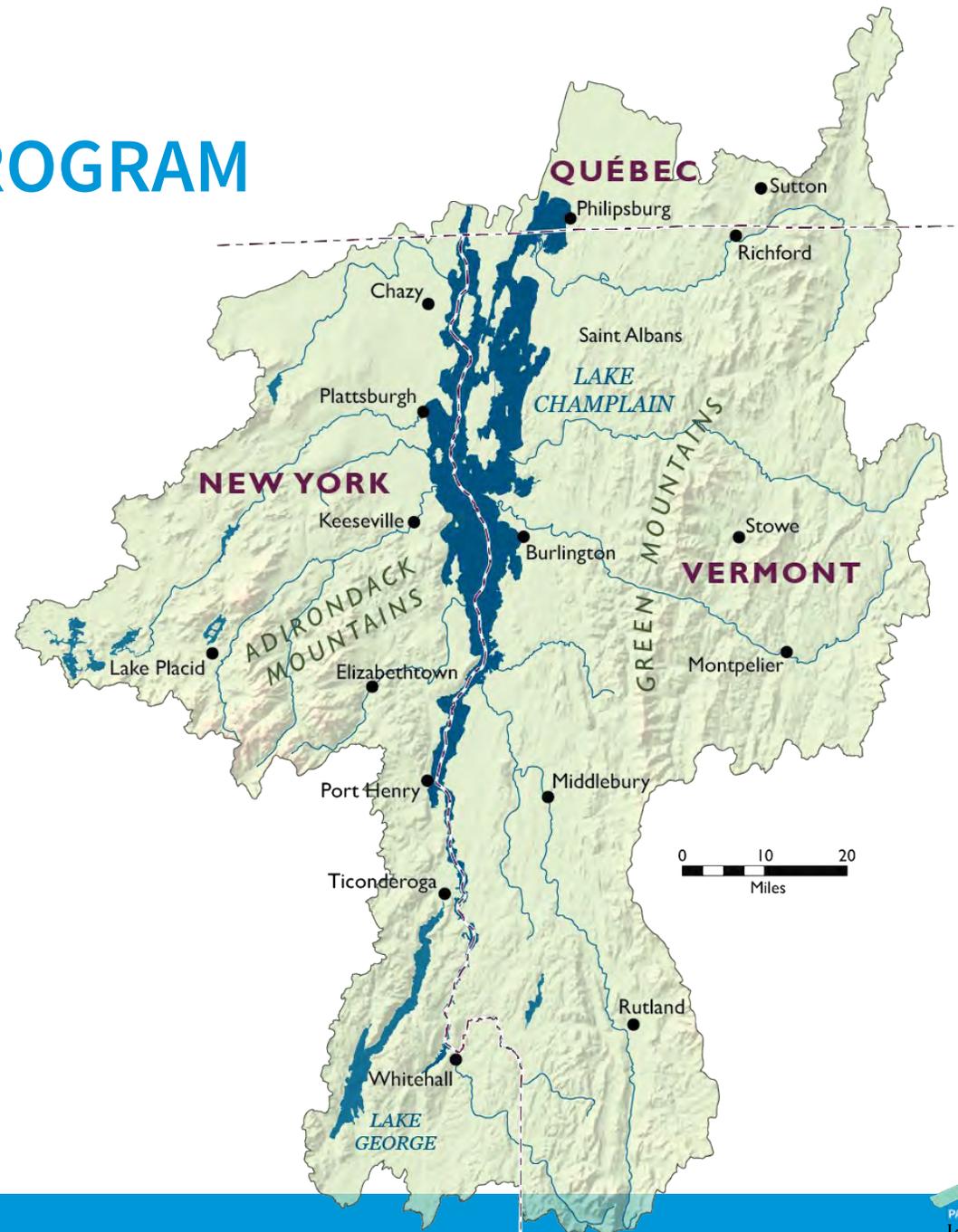


**PATRICK LEAHY**

**Lake Champlain  
Basin Program**

**Presentation for**  
CVRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee  
March 12, 2026

**Presentation by**  
Lauren Jenness Kneen, Environmental Analyst  
Lake Champlain Basin Program  
[ljenness@lcbp.org](mailto:ljenness@lcbp.org)



# ABOUT THE LCBP

---

**T**he Patrick Leahy Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) coordinates and funds efforts that benefit the Lake Champlain Basin's water quality, fisheries, wetlands, wildlife, recreation, and cultural resources, in partnership with government agencies from New York, Vermont, and Québec, private organizations, local communities, and individuals.

The LCBP was created in 1992 at the recommendation of the Lake Champlain Management Conference. The Management Conference was a multi-jurisdictional effort led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) upon the signing of the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act, under Section 120 of the U.S. Clean Water Act on November 5, 1990. Sponsored by Senators Leahy and Jeffords from Vermont and Senators Moynihan and D'Amato from New York, this legislation designated Lake Champlain as a resource of national significance and required examina-

tion of water quality, fisheries, wildlife, recreational, and economic issues.

Before passage of the Act, natural resource managers faced the challenge of addressing specific problems requiring immediate action while also charting a comprehensive, integrated plan for the future of the Lake Champlain Basin. To address this challenge, the Lake Champlain Special Designation Act authorized funding through the US EPA to the States of Vermont and New York, and to NEIWPCC in support of the LCBP to work collaboratively to implement a management plan for the Lake. *Opportunities for Action* has since been the plan that guides the LCBP's work.

NEIWPCC—a regional commission that helps the states of the Northeast preserve and advance water quality—serves as the primary program administrator of LCBP at the request of the Lake Champlain Steering Committee, and administers the program's personnel and finances. LCBP is a program partner of NEIWPCC.

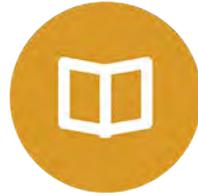
# OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION



Clean  
Water



Healthy  
Ecosystems



Informed and  
Involved Public



Thriving  
Communities

## Primary Funding Sources include:

- U.S. EPA
- Great Lakes Fishery Commission
- National Park Service

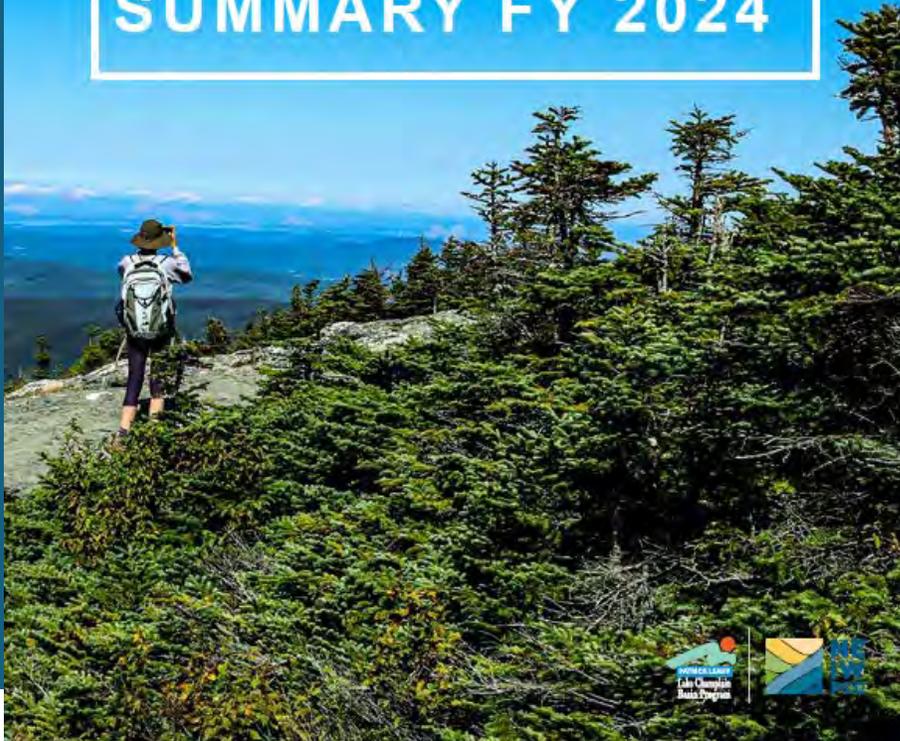
## Lake Champlain Steering Committee

- provides representation across jurisdictions, sectors





# REPORT OF ACTIVITIES SUMMARY FY 2024



## Federal 2024 Funding and Investments

### Federal Appropriations

EPA Base	\$16,891,000
EPA TMDL	8,000,000
EPA I/JA	7,437,000
GLFC	2,000,000
NPS (CVNHP)	500,000

**\$34,828,000**

### Funds Distribution

LCBP Priority Programs	\$11,649,073
VT TMDL Implementation	8,000,000
Core Projects	5,715,058
LCBP Key Functions	3,924,169
Directed to State of VT	3,521,700
NY TMDL Implementation	1,500,000
Directed to State of NY	500,000

**\$34,828,000**

### Budget Allocations

Clean Water	\$12,917,736
Healthy Ecosystems	10,941,055
Key Functions	4,800,382
Thriving Communities	3,830,304
Informed & Involved Public	2,338,523

**\$34,828,000**

# LAKE CHAMPLAIN BASIN PROGRAM OPERATING STRUCTURE



# Vermont Citizens Advisory Committee (VTCAC)

- 14-member committee (10 community members + 4 legislatures)
- Amplifies community voices in the management of the Lake Champlain Basin
- Serves as a forum for citizens, interest groups, and local government to discuss Lake issues
- Creates and presents annual action plan to the Governor and legislative committees
- Holds monthly public meetings, typically 5 – 7pm via Zoom
- For more information or to be notified of upcoming meetings, please contact Mary Perchlik [mary.perchlik@vermont.gov](mailto:mary.perchlik@vermont.gov)

VERMONT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN'S FUTURE

CLEAN WATER

BIODIVERSITY

HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

HEALTHY LAKE

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

RESTORATION

CLIMATE RESILIENCE

2026 LAKE CHAMPLAIN  
ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Lake Champlain reflects more than the surrounding landscape — it reflects our choices, our habits, and our collective priorities. The challenges facing Lake Champlain and its watershed are complex, interconnected, and increasingly urgent. Harmful cyanobacteria blooms, more frequent and intense flooding and drought, chloride and other contaminant pollution, and

invasive aquatic species are having serious impacts on our environment, communities, and economy. These challenges will intensify in a changing climate. This crisis did not emerge overnight and neither will the solutions. Yet, with sustained commitment and bold, proactive action, we can ensure a healthier lake and watershed that provides immeasurable value to current and future generations.

## Grants & Request for Proposals

Since 1992, the LCBP has awarded more than 1,500 grants totaling more than \$17.02 million to local organizations to support a variety of pollution prevention, habitat restoration, and other projects that improve the quality of Lake Champlain. In that same time, the LCBP and its partner organizations also have funded numerous projects conducted by universities, consultants, research foundations, nonprofit organizations, and others. These projects include scientific research, best management demonstration projects, education and outreach efforts, and other initiatives that are key to implementing *Opportunities for Action*.

- **Research and Technical Grants**
- **Clean Water Planning and Implementation Grants**
- **Aquatic Organism Passage – IIJA Funding**
- **Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention Grants**
- **Habitat and Native Species Conservation Grants**
- **Native Tree Nursery – IIJA Funding**
- **Education and Outreach Grants – Large and Small**
- **Stream Wise/Educational Property Assessments**
- **Organizational Support**
- **Professional Development mini-grants**
- **Educator mini-grants**
- **Artist-in- Residence**
- **Cultural Heritage and Recreation – NPS Funding**  
– *internships, collections, interpretive theme*



[www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/](http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/)

# The *Colleen Hickey* Lake Champlain Resource Room



## Visiting the Resource Room

Resource Room staff are available to answer questions about Lake Champlain by email [resourceroom@lcbp.org](mailto:resourceroom@lcbp.org), by phone (802) 864-1848 ext. 109, and in person at [ECHO, Leahy Center for Lake Champlain](#).

The LCBP Resource Room is open the same hours as ECHO. Free Resource Room passes (does not include admission to ECHO) are available to visit the room for research. To obtain one, call the Resource Room in advance to schedule an appointment at (802) 864-1848 ext. 109.



# Lake Champlain Long-Term Water Quality and Biological Monitoring Project (LTMP)



**[Data.lcbp.org](https://data.lcbp.org)**

**[https://dec.vermont.gov/  
watershed/lakes-  
ponds/monitor/lake-  
champlain-long-term-  
monitoring-project](https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/lakes-ponds/monitor/lake-champlain-long-term-monitoring-project)**



# Boat Launch Steward Survey Results 2020-2025

**223,722** individuals reached

**101,563** watercraft surveyed

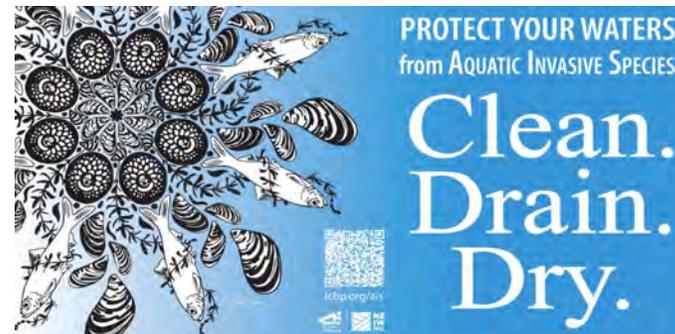
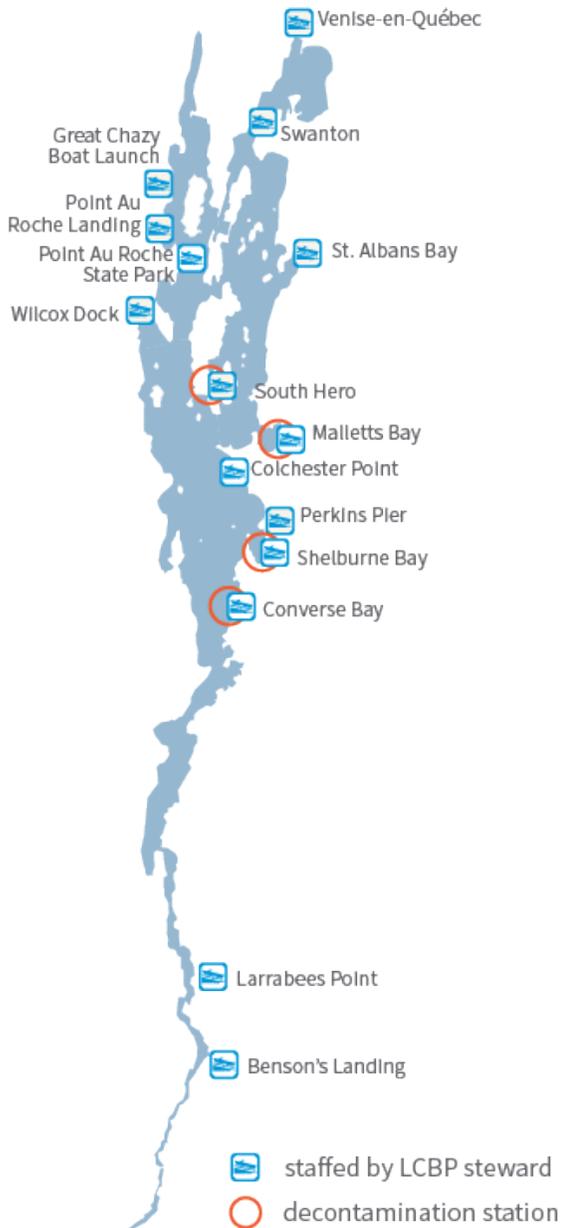
**10.94%** of surveyed watercraft carried aquatic hitchhikers

**4,161** AIS interceptions on takeout

**976** AIS interceptions on launch

**67.4%** of boaters took spread prevention measures

More than **2,265** watercraft decontaminations performed



# Aquatic Invasive Species Spread Prevention

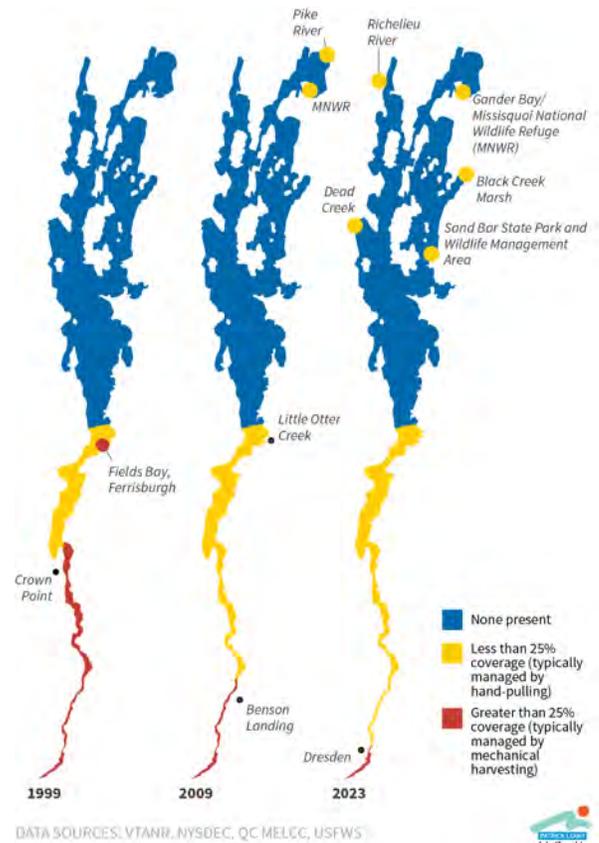
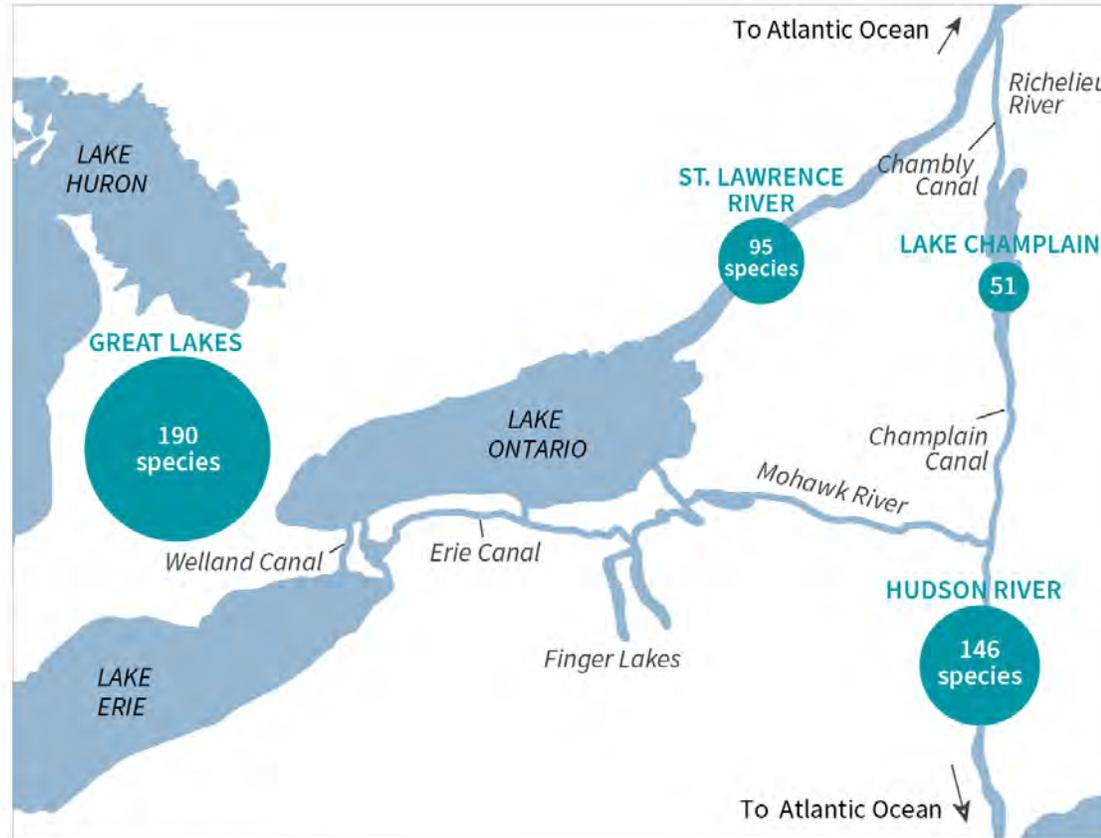


Figure 19 | Invasive water chestnut coverage in Lake Champlain



NOTE: Waterways contain some overlap of species.  
 DATA SOURCES: UVM, LCBP, Lake Champlain Sea Grant, Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory, Lafontaine and Costan 2002, Strayer 2012, GLANSIS 2024, McGill University, personal communication 2024



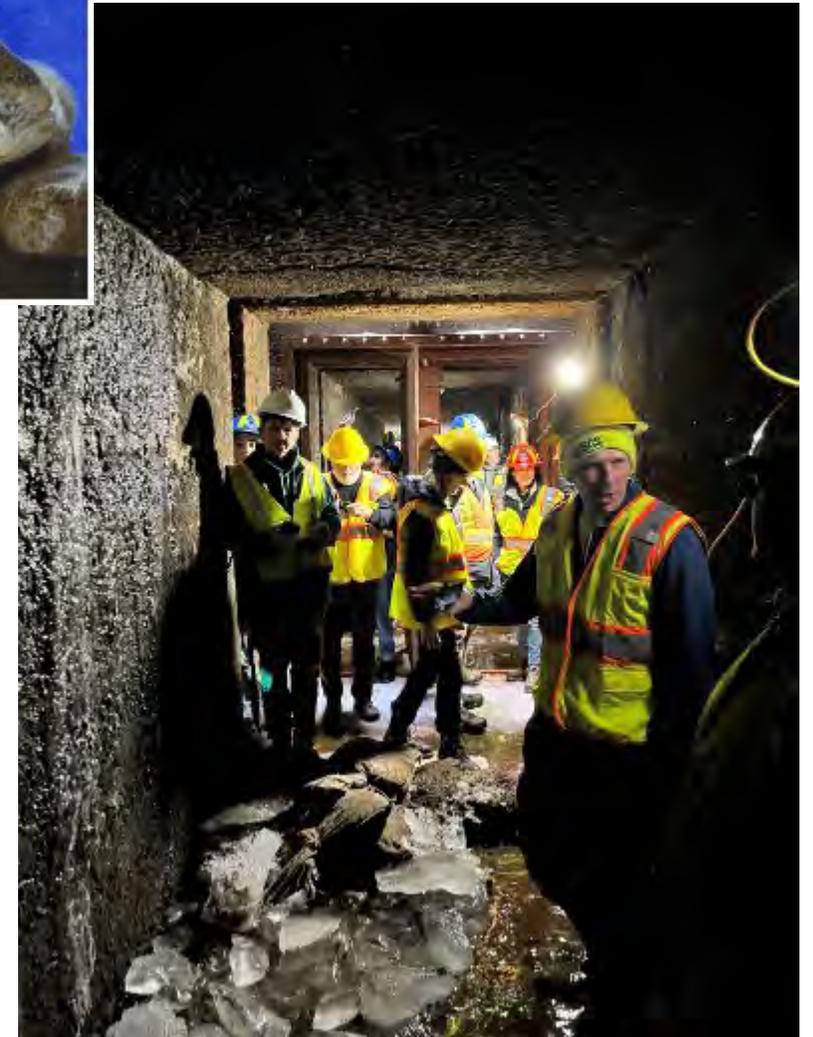
Figure 16 | Non-native species in Lake Champlain and connected waterways

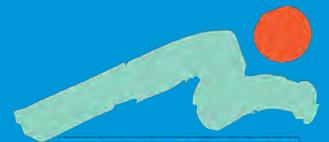
**~70% ADK**  
 waterbodies  
 with no AIS

**~75% VT**  
 waterbodies  
 with no AIS



# Champlain Canal AIS barrier – invasive Round goby





PATRICK LEAHY

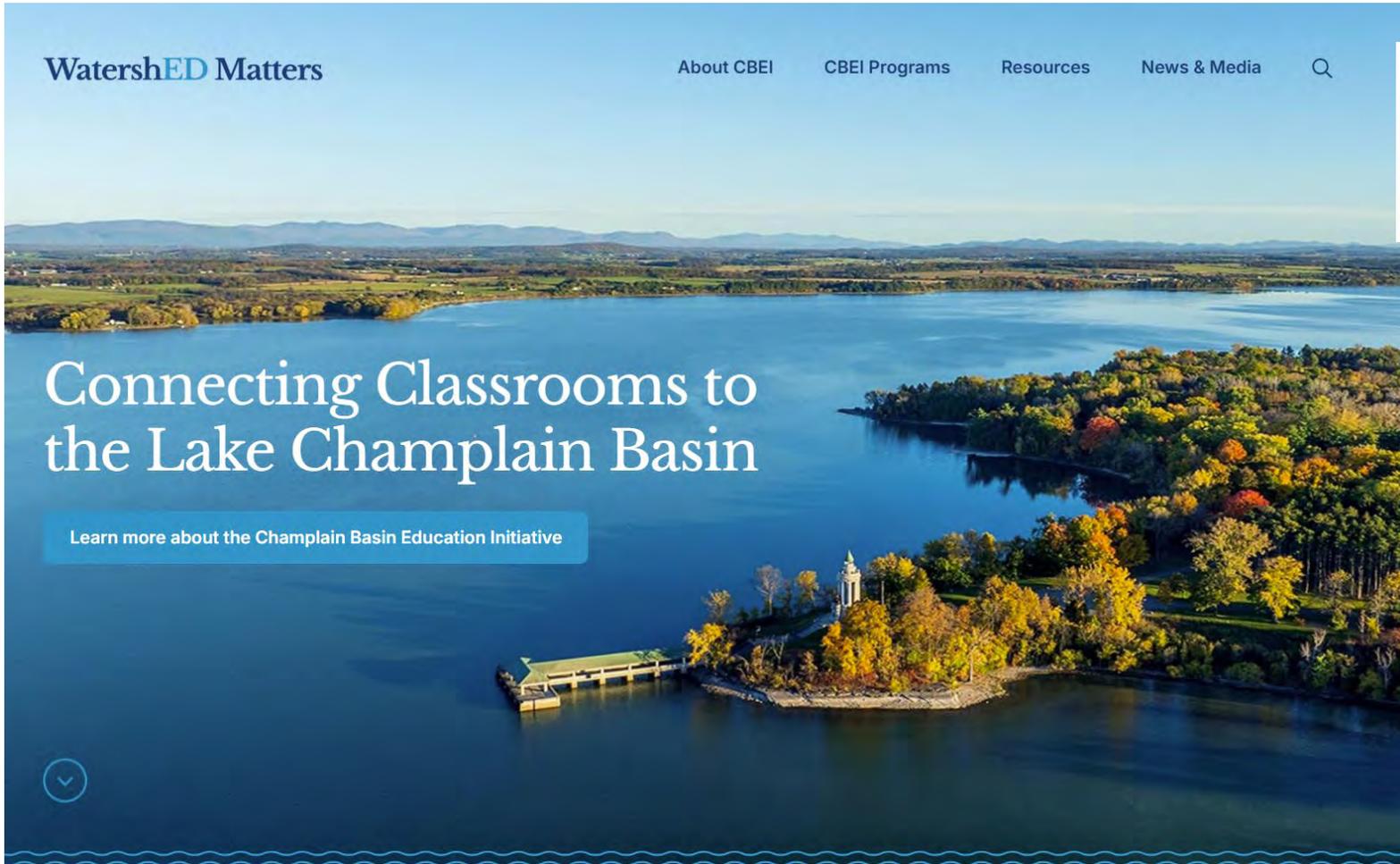
Lake Champlain  
Basin Program

# *Lake Champlain*

## **2024 STATE of the LAKE and Ecosystem Indicators Report**



[sol.lcbp.org](http://sol.lcbp.org)



<https://watershedmatters.org/>

## Watershed for Every Classroom

Applications are open!

Applications for Watershed for Every Classroom are due **March 23, 2026**.



<https://watershedmatters.org/cbei-programs/watershed-for-every-classroom/>

## World Water Day

### Event Details

Location: Champlain Centre  
Plattsburgh, NY

Date: Saturday, March 21

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Come celebrate the waters of the Lake Champlain Basin!

**Free Event**  
SATURDAY | 60 Southfield Blvd.  
**MARCH 21** Champlain Centre Mall  
11 AM - 3 PM | Plattsburgh, NY

More than 30 activities, exhibits, art, and other water topics will be on hand to celebrate water and water quality.

**World Water Day 2026**

- Dive In** with hands-on activities and exhibits celebrating water.
- Explore** the Lake Champlain Basin giant map.
- See** fly tying demonstrations by expert Trout Unlimited anglers.
- View** the gallery of student art, media and writing.
- Free** Stewart's Shops scoop card to the first 100 people to get their passport filled.

This local World Water Day outdoor event will be part of a world-wide celebration held each March to highlight the importance of fresh water.

For further information, contact Stephanie Larkin at the Lake Champlain Basin Program: 303.Nix2026.org or call (518) 272-2212.





# LAWN TO LAKE

<https://lawntolake.org/>



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT  
EXTENSION

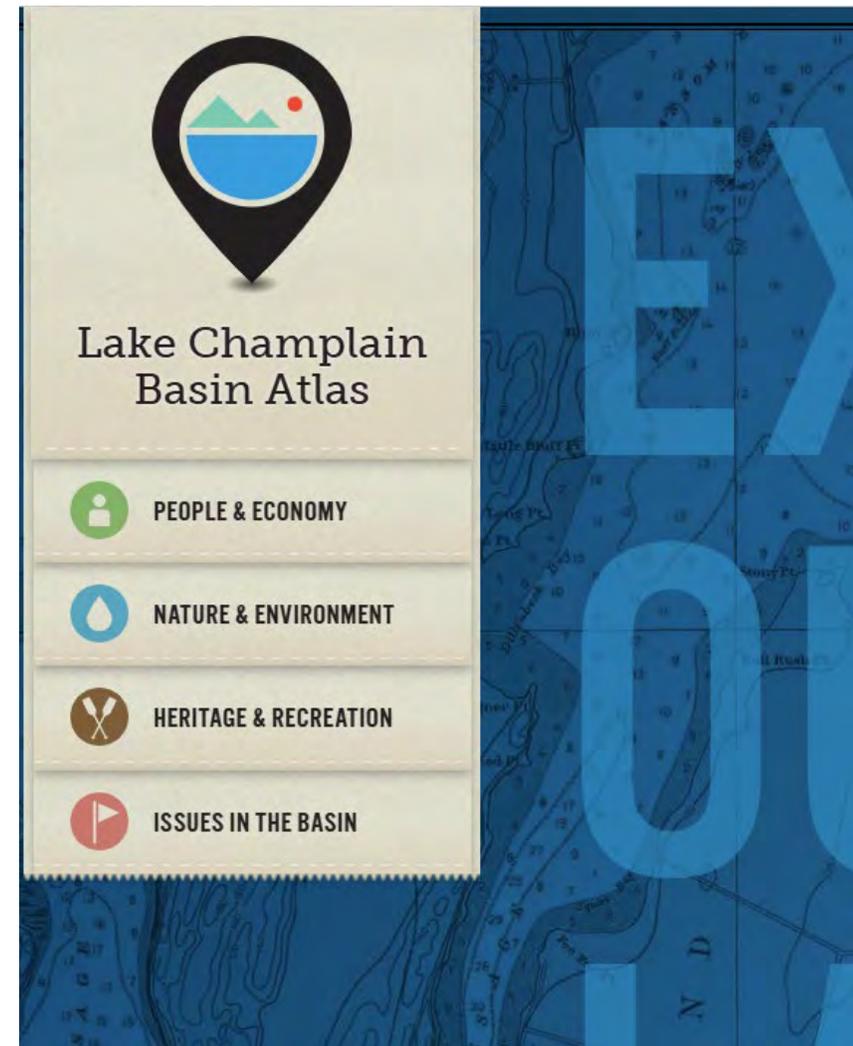


VERMONT

AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES



<https://cleanwatercommitment.org/>



[Atlas.lcbp.org](https://atlas.lcbp.org)



Tab

Site A

Existi

Criter

Soluti

Techn

Stream

### Stream Wise Report

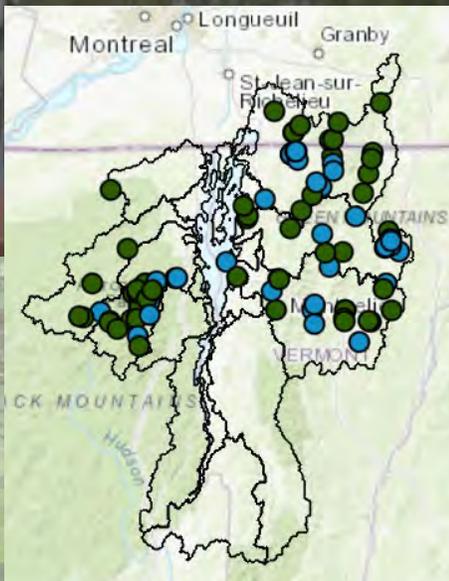
Thank you for participating in the Stream Wise Assessment. You are a valuable part of your watershed!

<b>Host Organization</b>	<b>Date of Assessment</b>
FRANKLIN COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION DISTRICT	07/19/2023
<b>Evaluator</b>	<b>Stream/River, Basin</b>
Mel Auffredou Dorothy Kinney-Landis	Unnamed stream, Direct Lake Drainage
<b>Did you receive the Stream Wise Award?</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Yet <input type="checkbox"/> Very Close

Credit: Green Mountain Drone

# About Stream Wise

Stream Wise engages streamside property owners in the Lake Champlain basin to enhance and protect vegetated stream buffers, increasing flood resiliency and benefiting water quality and natural habitat.



## BENEFITS OF A BUFFER

streamwisechamplain.org

streamwisechamplain

## Process



Local Outreach



Property Assessment



Certification & Award



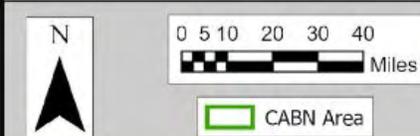
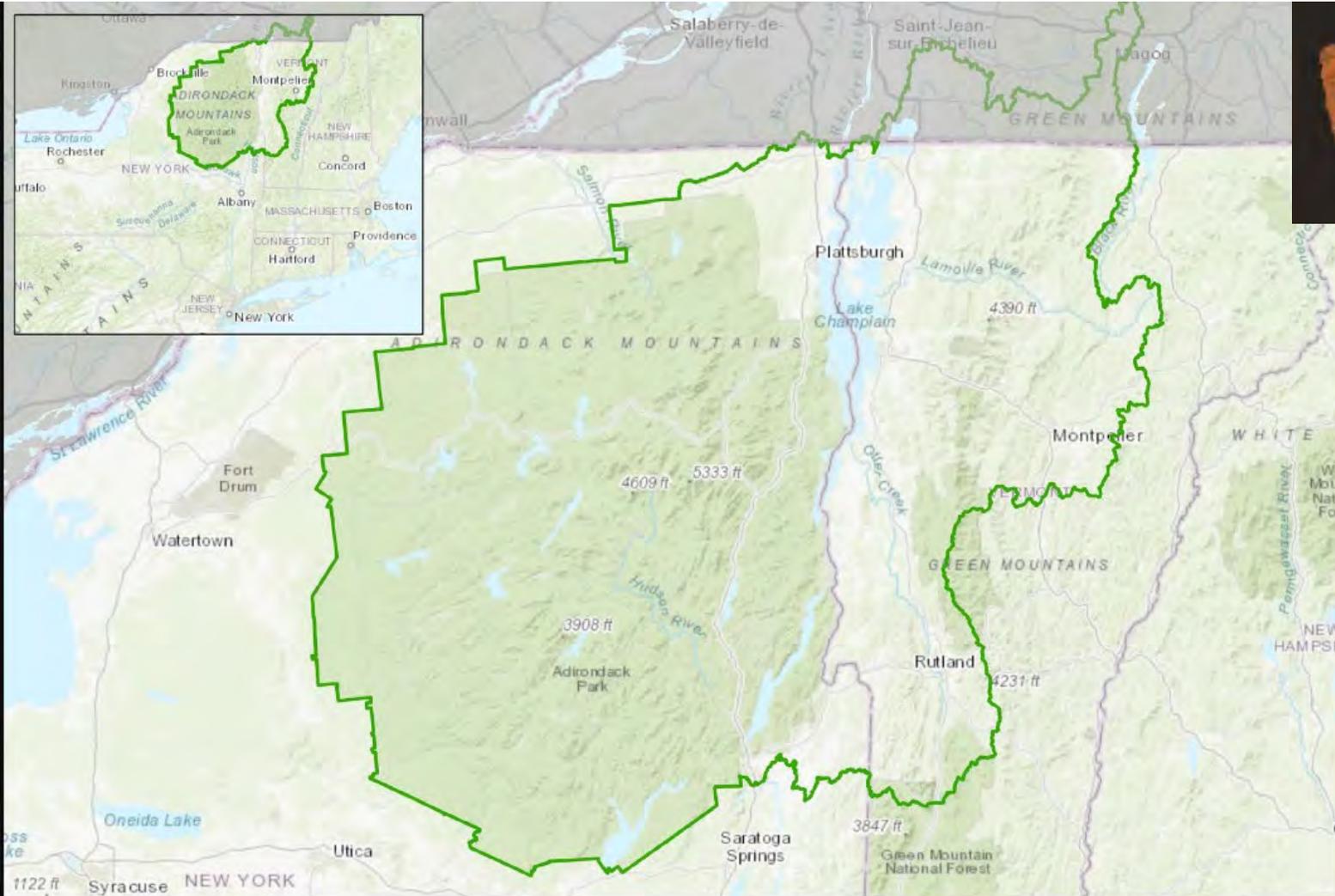
Next Steps & Technical Assistance



Follow-Up & Reassessment



<https://streamwisechamplain.org/>



**Champlain-Adirondack  
Biosphere Region**



<https://champlainvalleynhp.org/>



INTERNATIONAL  
YEAR OF THE SALMON

CHAMPLAIN CANAL  
BICENTENNIAL  
TRAVELING EXHIBIT

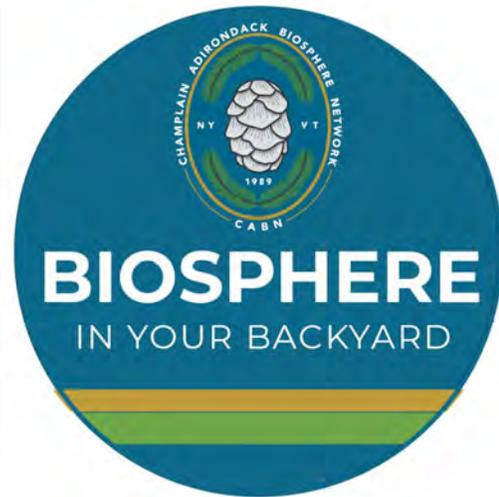


The Great Carrying Place

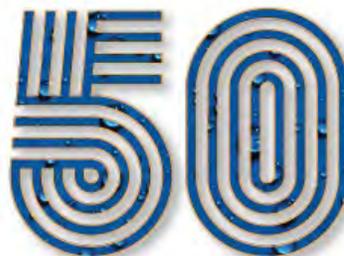
The Champlain Canal is a vital link between the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean. It was the first artificial waterway to connect the two bodies of water, and it played a crucial role in the development of the Champlain Valley. The canal was built by the Champlain Canal Company, which was formed by a group of investors from New York and Vermont. The canal was completed in 1823, and it has since become one of the most important waterways in the region. Today, the canal is used for a variety of purposes, including shipping, recreation, and irrigation. It is also a major source of water for the region's agriculture and industry.



Champlain Valley  
NAT... SHIP



CLEAN  
WATER  
ACT



1972 - 2022

We Can Do It!



Celebrate  
Suffrage  
in the  
CVNHP!

Women's' Suffrage



Prohibition Centennial

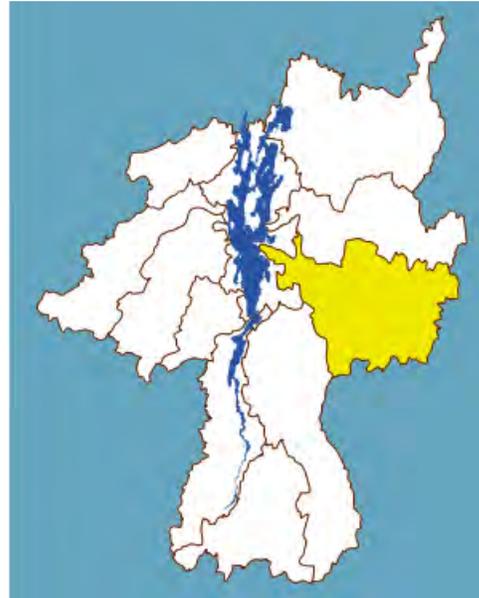




# Focus on the Winooski Watershed:

- 67 recent grants
- \$6,471,201 in funding

Grant Category (generalized)	Amount Awarded
Artist-in-Residence	\$40,000
Organizational Support	\$79,451
Clean Water - Planning	\$85,492
Stream Wise / Property Assessments	\$88,161
Public Waterfront Access Improvement	\$182,253
Native Tree Nursery (IIJA)	\$470,394
Land Acquisition and Conservation	\$572,720
Education and Outreach	\$597,480
Clean Water - Implementation	\$902,202
Habitat and Native Species Conservation	\$944,369
Aquatic Organism Passage Restoration (IIJA)	\$1,178,696
Research	\$1,329,983



- Adirondack Explorer
- Alnobaiwi
- Audubon Vermont
- Burlington City Arts Foundation, Inc
- Champlain College, Inc
- City of Barre
- City of Montpelier c/o Montpelier Conservation Commission
- Dartmouth College
- Ecolibrium, LLC
- Friends of the Mad River x9**
- Friends of the Winooski River, Inc. x11**
- Intervale Center x4**
- Lake Champlain Maritime Museum
- Mad River Valley Recreation District
- Montpelier Parks and Trees
- Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC)
- North Branch Nature Center
- Northern Forest Canoe Trail
- Redstart Inc.
- Stone Environmental, Inc. x3**
- The Federation of Vermont Lakes and Ponds
- The Orienne Society
- The Winooski News
- Town of Waitsfield x2**
- University of Vermont x4**
- Vermont Land Trust x2**
- Vermont Natural Resources Council
- Vermont River Conservancy x6**
- Very Merry Theatre
- Weathered Tree LLC
- Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District x3**
- Winooski Valley Park District

# Watershed Partner Update: LAKE CHAMPLAIN BASIN PROGRAM

## Any Questions?

**Presentation for**  
CVRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee  
March 12, 2026

**Presentation by**  
Lauren Jenness Kneen, Environmental Analyst  
Lake Champlain Basin Program  
[ljenness@lcbp.org](mailto:ljenness@lcbp.org)

