

The Composting Association of Vermont proposes adding references to soil in the Stormwater Management section of H.35. The reason: The problem described throughout H.35 is "stormwater." Looked at another way, the problem is how we 'mine' our soils. As water flows over and through soil its ability to disturb that soil depends on 'soil health.' That is, the soil's resiliency, its capacity to 'bounce back' after a storm event, is present and functioning. This means it is vegetated and has the essential components of organic and inorganic matter, living and non-living material. One cannot stop water from running down hill. One can protect soil quality via effective regulatory compliance: education, practice and enforcement.

This approach is also supported in forthcoming updates to the Stormwater Management Manual that will require the use of nonstructural practices such as amending soils with organic matter to improve filtration, texture, root growth, and water holding capacity. Adding one percent organic matter increases the water holding capacity of an acre by 15,000 gallons, or more.

CAV proposes the following additions to the Stormwater Management section of H.3 Page references are from the 3.1 draft.

- Page 9 line 12 — 14and shall implement and enforce soil health and agricultural land use practices that reduce the amount of agricultural pollutants entering the waters of the State. These soil health and agricultural practices

- Page 62(a) Findings and Intent.

Insert: Line 2

(1) Findings. "The General Assembly finds that soil protection and management is a primary goal of state government and the citizenry. It further finds that stormwater flows represent an existing threat to the economic, societal and ecological functions of soils."

Replace: The General Assembly finds that healthy soil is essential to manage stormwater, and to reduce stream channel instability.....

- Page 62, line 8

REPLACE with: "Protect the health and function of soils, thereby reducing the adverse effects of stormwater runoff."g

- Page 69, (f) Rulemaking. Line 12

Replace: "The Secretary shall adopt rules to protect, maintain and improve the economic, societal and ecological functions of soil."

Line 14 — 16

Reword: "Ensure post development compliance with Vermont Water Quality Standards mirrors as nearly as possible predevelopment runoff characteristics".

- Throughout the Stormwater Management section add "soils," "soil health," or "healthy soil" wherever it makes sense when the term "stormwater" is used.

- Consider rewording Purpose to:

Sec 1. PURPOSE: IMPROVE SOIL HEALTH AND WATER QUALITY

"It is the purpose of this act to improve the quality of Vermont's waters and soils".

- Consider adding a definition of Soil Health: Soil health, also referred to as soil quality, is defined as the continued capacity of soil to function as a vital living ecosystem that sustains plants, animals, and humans.

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Thank you. Submitted by: Pat Sagui, Director, Composting Association of Vermont,