



2016 Lake Champlain Action Plan

The Vermont Citizens Advisory Committee (VTAC) on Lake Champlain's Future vigorously recommends increased state investments in clean water to support a vibrant economy.

Sediment and phosphorus-laden stormwater flows over Otter Creek falls into Lake Champlain.

Clean Water Fund

Act 64, Vermont's 2015 Clean Water Act, validates that healthy waters are essential to our economy, health, property values, recreation, fisheries and wildlife, and the Vermont brand. As this new law is implemented, there must be clear reporting requirements to track our continued investments in clean water and increase accountability and transparency to the public for expenditures from the Clean Water Fund.

The state must: Establish new, immediate, perpetual, and dedicated funding sources for the Clean Water Fund.

This stand-alone fund must be sustained by not less than \$25 million new dollars annually in state resources to implement water quality improvement projects and strengthen regulatory enforcement and technical assistance. Clean Water Fund revenues, generated as a portion of the property transfer tax, are unpredictable and insufficient to provide long-term resources.

The state must: Restructure the Clean Water Fund Board to include a majority of members from outside state government.

Current Board membership is limited to state agency secretaries and commissioners with their respective programmatic agendas that may diverge from public priorities for action.

Agricultural Compliance and Enforcement

The state must assure that agriculture on highly erodible or sensitive lands employs best agronomic practices to eliminate water quality impacts, or the state must require conversion of these marginal lands to natural riparian functions.

The state must: Invest in more agricultural enforcement.

While the Accepted Agricultural Practices (AAPs) are being replaced with Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) under Act 64, enforcing RAPs requires additional staff dedicated to compliance assistance and on-farm inspections.

The state must: Prohibit manure or phosphorus fertilizer application on fields with excessive soil test phosphorus (STP) levels.

Research has shown a direct relationship between STP levels and phosphorus concentrations in field runoff. Excessive STP levels indicate there is no added agronomic value to manure or phosphorus fertilizer application.

The state must: Expand the pool of experts providing agronomic assistance in anticipation of future Nutrient Management Plan requirements.

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