

M. O'Grady
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S. 49

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds that:

- (1) Within the borders of Vermont there are 7,100 miles of rivers and streams and 812 lakes and ponds of at least five acres in size.
- (2) Vermont's surface waters are vital assets that provide the citizens of the State with clean water, recreation, and economic opportunity.
- (3) The federal Clean Water Act and the Vermont Water Quality Standards require that waters in the State shall not be degraded and instead shall be managed to protect, maintain and improve water quality;
- (4) To prevent degradation of waters and to preserve the uses, benefits, and values of the lakes, rivers, and streams of Vermont, the Vermont Water Quality Standards provide that it is the policy of the State to prevent, abate, or control all activities harmful to water;
- (5) Despite the State and federal mandates to maintain and prevent degradation of State waters, multiple lakes, rivers, and streams in all regions of the State are impaired, at risk of impairment, or subject to water quality stressors, as indicated by the fact that:
 - (A) There are 81 waters or segments of waters in the State that are impaired and require a total maximum daily load (TMDL) plan;
 - (B) There are 114 waters or segments of waters in the State that are impaired and that have been issued a TMDL;
 - (C) There are at least 115 waters or water segments in the State that are stressed, meaning that there is one or more factor or influence that prohibits the water from maintaining a higher quality;