

# The Clean Water Coalition Plan to Fund Restoration of Vermont's Waters

- **What is the Clean Water Coalition?**

*The Clean Water Coalition is an informal coalition of business organizations, environmental groups, municipalities and regional planners who have joined together to demand responsible action on clean water funding.*

- **What does the Clean Water Coalition want?**

*The Clean Water Coalition is advocating for two key priorities: (1) long term, stable funding to invest in Vermont's clean water future, and (2) the creation of an independent, but politically accountable "clean water authority" to manage those investments.*

- **How should revenue be raised for clean water investments?**

*In her January, 2017 report to the General Assembly, Vermont Treasurer Beth Pearce identified modest, parcel-based assessments as an equitable and practical way to raise the needed revenue for needed clean water investments. The Clean Water Coalition agrees that parcel-based assessments have the closest nexus to the problem of stormwater pollution, they could be applied to all properties in a fair manner to keep fees low, and they could be useful in promoting mitigation.*

- **What would a clean water "authority" do?**

*The clean water authority would provide independent leadership and accountability for investments in clean water. It would promote and provide education regarding the importance of the State's clean water investments, ensure transparency and public process in the development of clean water budgets and assessment of fees, identify and pursue innovative implementation opportunities nimbly and creatively, and coordinate efforts at the statewide regional and local levels to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of these efforts.*

- **Could the clean water authority implement and collect parcel-based assessments to raise the needed revenue?**

*Yes, as conceived by the Clean Water Coalition, a Clean Water Authority would be responsible to develop clean water investment budgets, propose an appropriate fee structure to raise needed revenue and then it would collect those fees directly.*

- **How would the clean water authority be responsible to the people of Vermont?**

*Working with responsible programs in the Executive Branch, the clean water authority would propose a five year investment strategy, budget and fee structure to the General Assembly as part of the appropriations process. It would report annually on the progress of that work and deliver a five year program audit at the end of each investment cycle. It would hold open*

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*meetings on a regular basis and provide opportunities for robust public input into the investment strategy. Progress would be tracked and results published online for all interested parties to see.*

- **What needs to be done in the 2018 Legislative Session?**

*The Clean Water Coalition is urging the House of Representatives to strengthen S.260. Action is needed, not more study! We urge the House to amend the bill to form a clean water authority now, constitute its board and task that board to develop a sunrise report outlining how it will establish investment priorities, set a five year investment strategy and appropriate fee structure, and how it would collect those fees in the most efficient manner possible.*

## **Clean Water Coalition Members**

Vermont League of Cities and Towns

Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce

City of Burlington (representing municipalities with stormwater utilities)

Town of Williston (representing municipalities with stormwater utilities)

Town of Colchester (representing municipalities with stormwater utilities)

City of St. Albans

Vermont Natural Resources Council

Lake Champlain Committee

Vermont Conservation Voters.