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Subject: Stormwater Treatment Practice Operation and Maintenance Costs

Members of the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding municipal stormwater programs on February 14, 2019. During my testimony, I was asked to follow up with information on the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) costs associated with Stormwater Treatment Practices (STPs). These costs are significant and are not included in the values we currently provide when we discuss the cost to clean up Lake Champlain. In addition, it is typically assumed that these costs will be borne by municipalities, which means that any on-going O&M costs are paid for by tax payers or utility rate payers.

I have two sources of information that I'd like to share with you on this topic. The first is a study completed by staff at the UNH stormwater center. It compares the maintenance costs between Low Impact Development (LID) and conventional stormwater management practices. The full paper can be found on-line at:

https://www.unh.edu/unhsc/sites/unh.edu.unhsc/files/Houle_JEE_July-2013.pdf

The second source of information is included in the attached spreadsheet. I created this spreadsheet based on our experience in South Burlington. We maintain over 60 stormwater treatment practices and have a very good understanding of what it takes to keep these systems operating effectively. The spreadsheet is based on a generic/typical stormwater detention pond, stormwater treatment wetland, or swirl separator. Inputs (e.g. labor rates, hours to mow, etc) can be adjusted as needed, but the default values provided are typical of what we experience today.

It would take some work, but it would be possible for us to estimate these costs based on other parameters (e.g. annual O&M cost / square foot of STP footprint, annual maintenance cost / impervious acre treated, etc). I'd be happy to work with the Legislature, Vermont DEC, or others to develop these values if it is something that would be used in future legislation or cost calculations.

Sincerely,
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