

Functions & Values of Wetlands



As much as **90%** of sediments in water may be removed by the filtration by natural wetlands.



43% of rare species in the U.S. rely on wetlands for survival.

80% of US bird species rely on wetlands for breeding habitat

Wetlands host **31%** of the world's plants



Wetlands Every Year:

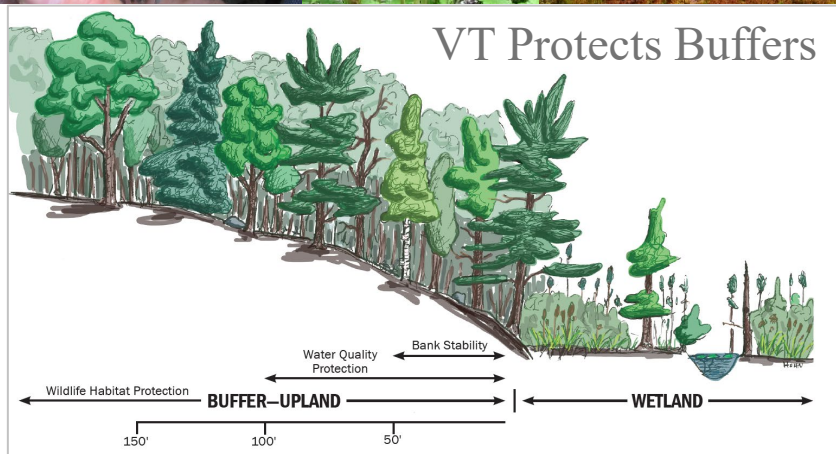
Save Middlebury at least **\$126,000** from potential flood damages



\$590 in flood protection and habitat services with just one acre



\$10 million is generated nationwide from bird photography and observation



Vermont Wetland Rules regulate activities in protected wetlands

VT Wetland Classification System:

Class I: Exceptional function and value

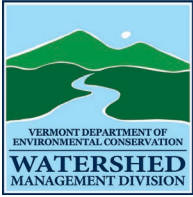
Class II: Significant function and value

Class III: Not significant, no regulation

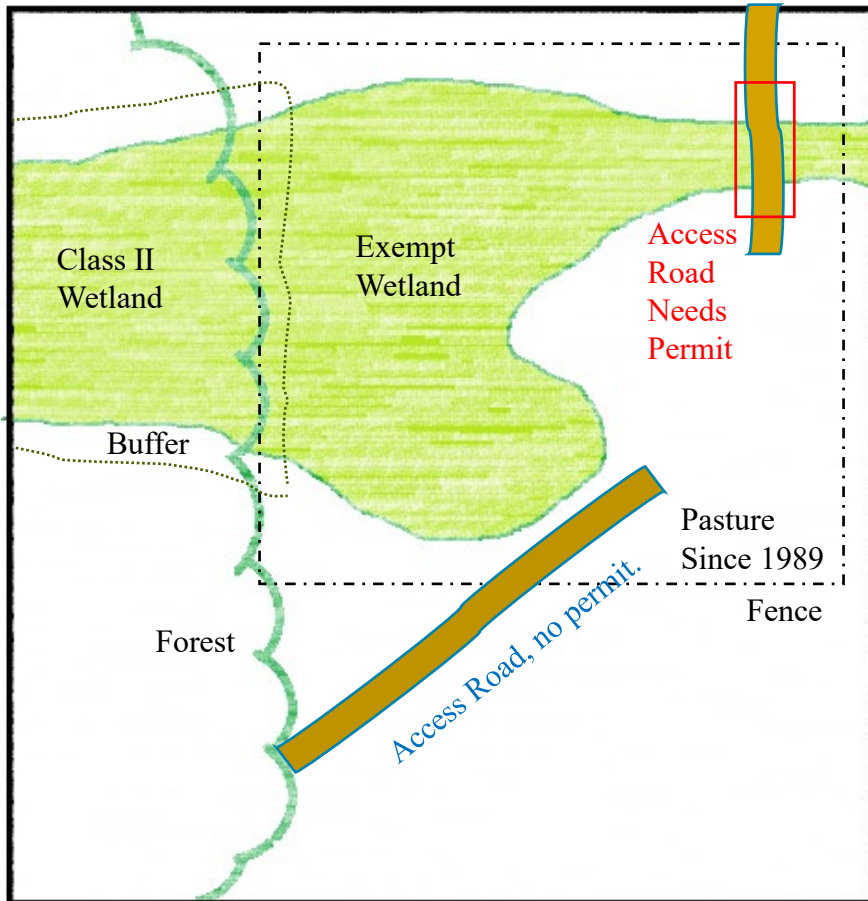
6 Review Staff
 200+ Permits
 >1,100 Projects
 Reviewed Annually

Permits are issued when an activity cannot be placed elsewhere and there are no adverse effects to functions and values.

The Wetlands Program also incentivizes voluntary restoration of wetlands to increase wetland functions such as water quality protection, flood control, and wildlife habitat.



Current Wetland Rule Farming Exemption



Exemption Expiration: whenever the area is no longer used to grow food or crops or in ordinary rotation.

Expired exemption areas would still need to meet the Class II wetland definition to require permits.

Many wet agricultural soils were historically drained and would not be Class II wetland.

Also Exempt (allowed use under Rules): Maintenance of existing structures and facilities. Non-substantial expansion or modification of existing structures or facilities.

E.g. when in wetland or wetland buffer you may:

- ✓Fix an existing road
- ✓Keep using your barn, silo, stables
- ✓Improve manure pit in its existing footprint