



Department of Environmental Conservation – Initial Committee Update for 2026



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Today's Discussion Points

- New Years Updates
- Some Clean Water Highlights
- DEC's Approach to Streamlining Permitting
- Gov. Scott's Housing Exec. Order
- DEC Proposed Miscellaneous Provisions – Introduction
- Other Bills DEC is Tracking

Happy New Year

- Thank you for the individual meetings/communications on issues!
- 2025 Outcomes
 - Act 67 CAFO Bill
 - Act 37 Three Acre Stormwater Bill
 - Dam Safety Program Updates

New Year Update

- Act 37 Three AC SW Bill
 - Several meetings with individual landowners and related legislators
 - Developed and are implementing the Stormwater Regional Utility Study (this afternoon is meeting 4)
 - Worked thru the CW Board Process to implement funding provisions; including meetings with VEDA and a number of municipal stakeholders.

New Year Update – Dam Safety



- Phase II DSP Rules are DEC's TOP priority for policy development.
- GRR: ~\$600K Report submitted and costs quantified.
- Act 121: Emergency Operations Planning and FERC Determination Reports complete.
- Act 57 Dam Drawdown for Flood Events: Process developed and State-owned dams evaluated.
- ANR is presently responsible for the operation and maintenance of about 100 dams, with annual project or capital needs in the millions of dollars. Waterbury Dam: \$76M capital; \$200K annual.

New Year Update

- Act 67 CAFO

- DEC is placing a top priority on stakeholder engagement. Note the Act requires an MOU be published, then re-published based on stakeholder feedback. First MOU is with EPA presently.
- CAFO Program hiring: final two hires completed November. DEC is emphasizing onboarding and training to build capacity, program development.
- Remaining deadlines depend on stakeholder outcomes and decisions about agency roles and the scope of regulations.
- Stakeholder process is on track for a Mid-March report, being expertly facilitated, and will potentially outline major changes to how VT regulates farms.
- Note that when you heard from LCC on this matter two days ago, DEC staff *were meeting at the same time with LCC and CLF on these exact issues.*

Clean Water Highlights

- TMDL Progress
- Clean Water Service Providers
- Lake Carmi

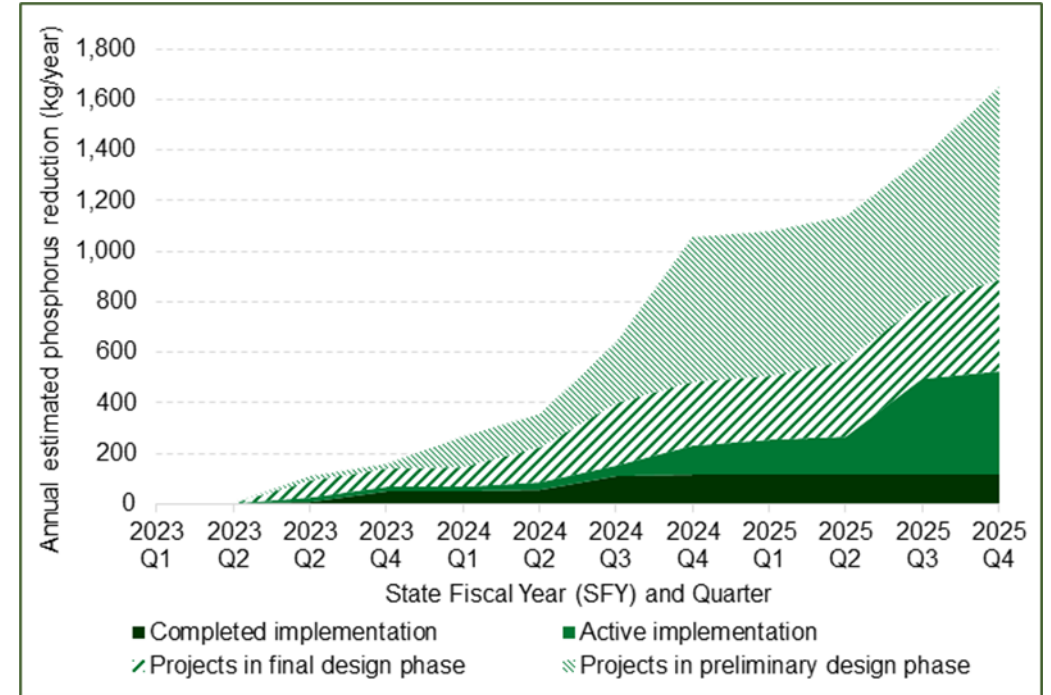


Clean Water Highlights

- TMDL: Clean Water Performance Report
 - Nearly 20 Metric Ton reduction in total P relative to 2024
 - That's ~900 50# bags of triple phosphate fertilizer.
 - At the 50% mark of the TMDL, we have accomplished 35% of the reduction.
 - Continued acceleration in the pace of clean water project implementation.
 - Newly updated reporting methodologies.
 - Increase reliability in the “reporting lag.”
 - Report will issue by Jan 15th.

Clean Water Highlights

- TMDL: Clean Water Service Providers
 - Substantial increase in project identification; design; implementation.
 - Reappointment of the North Lake Champlain CWSP
 - Sustained investment in non-regulatory projects is producing 1.6 MT projected reductions.



Clean Water Highlights

- Lake Carmi

- \$3.7M intervention completed in October, 2025
- Expected to produce similar results to Lake Morey; dramatic and lasting improvement.
- Superior partnership of Franklin Watershed Committee, Lake Carmi Campers, Town of Franklin, DEC, and FPR.





Permit Process Assistance

Vermont Environmental Permit Assistance Center

- DEC manages a high volume of permit programs critical to balancing Vermont's development with environmental protection.
- As regulatory complexity has grown, our internal silos have occasionally led to project delays and public frustration.

Vermont Environmental Permit Assistance Center

- “VEPAC” is established to move DEC from a reliance on the "Permit Navigator" automated tool to a human-centered support model.
- VEPAC will serve as a strategic "front door" for DEC permit assistance, increasing predictability for applicants.
- Senior DEC staff are presently scoping the program, and attendant technology.

Executive Order 06-25 and Wetlands

- Order directs DEC to regulate Class 2 wetlands “to maps,” in designated areas (and related), and to limit regulatory buffers to 25 feet.
- DEC determined that a rule amendment was necessary to implement the directive.
- Draft amendment establishes housing in the EO designated areas an allowed use and provides for 25ft buffers in these situations.
- Two hearings held to date, plus meetings. Comment deadline is 1/15. DEC expects that review of comments will require legal and technical analysis.

DEC's Miscellaneous Change Requests

POLICY:

- Healthy Homes “PII”
- Fuel storage tanks. Clarification for “red-tagging.”
- Clean Water Project Accounting. Noticing provisions/timelines
- Stream Alteration. Jurisdictional Threshold
- CAFO. EPA-requested changes that strengthen and clarify language
- Stormwater Impact Fees. Elimination of impact fees for “three-acre” retrofits.
- Emergency rulemaking authority to preserve abrogated Federal rules
- Vehicle Emissions Repair Program. Clarify income eligibility guidelines to align to Federal guidelines.

DEC's Miscellaneous Change Requests

DATES:

- Battery Recycling stewardship report (2026 to 2027).
- River corridor basemap amendments (2026 to 2027).
- River corridor rules (2027 to 2028; adjust permit obtainment go-live 6 mo.).
- Expand period of educational outreach for reporting to GA and E.J. Adv. Council (from 2025 to 2028).
- True up CAFO deliverables to Stakeholder Process outcomes.

Other bills DEC is tracking

- DSP-Emergency Operations Planning
- WW Bill(s)
- Chloride
- Restoration Permitting
- Alum usage in Lakes
- Regional utilities
- Lake management and classification

Report Links

[Tactical Basin Planning](#)

[Green River Reservoir](#)

[FERC Determinations](#)

[Dams - Emergency Action Planning](#)

[Clean Water Performance Report](#)