

What is the Wetland Protection and Restoration Program?

The goal of the Wetland Protection and Restoration Program (WPRP) is to help protect the water quality of Lake Champlain through the restoration and protection of wetlands. Wetlands play a vital role in protecting the water quality of our rivers and lakes. Since colonial times Vermont has lost an estimated 35 percent of its wetlands.



Protected wetland, Bolton, VT

The WPRP was created in 2006 as part of Governor Douglas' Clean and Clear Action Plan. The program is administered by the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation.

The WPRP is a **voluntary** program designed to provide financial and technical assistance to landowners for restoring and protecting wetlands.

What are the landowner benefits of the program?

- **Financial incentives, such as:**
 - payment for purchase of wetland portion of property
 - payment for wetland easements
 - payment for incorporating the wetland into an existing easement
 - fully funded wetland restoration design and implementation
 - leverage of other funding sources
- **Creation of wildlife habitat**
- **Enhanced recreational opportunities**

The Department often works jointly with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's Wetland Reserve Program to make supplementary resources available to the landowner. Additional project partners include the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, the Vermont Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy, the Trust for Public Land, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, and others.



Potential restoration site, Pittsford, VT



Floodplain restoration site, Benson, VT

How can a landowner become involved?

The Department is actively seeking wetland restoration and protection opportunities. Ideal wetland restoration sites are those that historically functioned as wetlands but were converted to other uses through ditching and draining. The Department is also looking to protect intact wetlands that have a significant water quality protection function. If you think you may have land that meets these criteria, contact the Department at the number listed below for more information.



AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Department of Forests, Parks, & Recreation
103 South Main Street, 10 south
Waterbury, VT 05671-0601
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www.vtfpr.org/wprp/
www.anr.state.vt.us/cleanandclear/

Why is protecting wetlands important?

In addition to water quality protection, wetlands provide many important functions, such as:

- wildlife and fisheries habitat
- sediment and nutrient retention and export
- flood control
- groundwater replenishment
- shoreline stabilization and storm protection
- climate change mitigation
- water purification
- reservoirs of biodiversity
- wetland products
- recreation and tourism
- cultural value



Protected wetland, Swanton, VT

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