Vermont Wetlands Program

October 2019

June 2020
In-State Communication

- Regular (2-5 years) cross-training with: Stormwater, Lakes & Ponds, Rivers, Fish and Wildlife, State Foresters, Septic design permiters, Agriculture, Transportation, basin planners, natural heritage.
Communications with Professionals

- Treat them as partners
- Help them serve their clients better by:
  - Keeping them updated on program changes and pending changes.
  - Reminding them of common errors
  - Setting program expectations
  - Point to resources where they can learn more

Vermont Wetland Program Updates

Covid-19 Business: The Governor has extended the “Stay Home, Stay Safe” Order until May 15th. Following the Order to prevent the spread and flatten the curve of Covid-19, Wetlands Program Staff will not be conducting any fieldwork until the Order is lifted. If you are working on a project that is ‘critical to public health and safety, as well as economic and national security’ (see ACCD guidance) we ask that you follow the Classification Guidance and take ample photographs, ACCE Wetland Determination forms, and notes for the Program to process for regulatory purposes. Please remember to communicate with our staff electronically or via phone to the greatest extent possible since our processing of postal mail may be delayed during this period. You may now submit permit applications, compliance reports and fee payments through our new online form to expedite its receipt and review. [https://www.naturalhistory.vermont.gov/wetlands/permit-process/intake](https://www.naturalhistory.vermont.gov/wetlands/permit-process/intake).

New Allowed Use Guidance Document: We have finalized a guidance document pertaining to the Vermont Wetland Rules allowed use Sections 6.1-6.5 which applies to agriculture. Among other details, the document explains that the clearing of forest to develop does not qualify for this allowed use. Vermont Wetland Rule guidance and procedure documents may be found listed on our [Vermont Wetland Rule webpage](https://www.naturalhistory.vermont.gov/wetlands/rule-page).

Vermont Wetland Rule Edits: The Wetlands Program is working with a group of Stakeholders, founded in 2016, to revise the Vermont Wetland Rules. Rule changes, including a public comment process, is expected this fall.

Vermont’s Wetland Consultant Webinar Slides: The webinar from the April 8th webinar have been posted on our [Education, Training and Outreach](https://www.naturalhistory.vermont.gov/wetlands/education) website. Topics include wetland delineations, classifications, and tips for filling out a permit application. The slides include weblinks where you may learn more about a particular topic of interest.

Vernal Pool Season: While in many areas of Vermont we are still awaiting the start of the growing season, vernal pool amphibian activity has begun in most places. In collaboration with VT Fish and Wildlife (VTFW), the Program has posted [guidance](https://www.naturalhistory.vermont.gov/wetlands/vernal-pool) on conducting surveys and we have also posted VTFW’s evaluation form.

Email List: If your colleague forwarded this message and would like to receive them directly, you may subscribe by entering your email address to the “Subscribe to our Program Mailing List” section of our [homepage](https://www.naturalhistory.vermont.gov/wetlands/).
Communicating Possible New Regulation to the Public and Landowners

- Purpose
- Process
- Impact
- Key Players

Section 6 of the Vermont Wetland Rules lists all of the activities which are allowed without a wetland permit and are therefore allowed within a Class I wetland.

SECTION 6: ALLOWED USES

The following uses shall be allowed in a Class I or Class II wetland and in its buffer zone without a permit, provided that the configuration of the wetland's outlet or the flow of water into or out of the wetland is not altered and that no draining, dredging, filling, or grading occurs except as may be provided for in subsections 5.01, 5.02, 5.03, 5.04, 5.07, 5.08, 5.11, 5.12, 5.13, 5.14, 6.15, 6.16, and 6.22 below. Designation of allowed uses in these rules shall not provide relief from liability for violations that commenced prior to the effective date of each such rule.

6.1 Subcultural activities which:


b. Comply with subcultural standards for deer watering yards, established jointly by the Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Forests, Parks and Recreation, when occurring in significant wetlands or adjacent buffer zones containing deer watering yards mapped by the Fish and Wildlife Department;

c. Restrict equipment maintenance and the storing or changing of oil, grease, or other petroleum products to logging yards;

6.2 The restoration, reconstruction, rehabilitation, or upgrading of existing roads used solely for subcultural purposes provided that such roads are not increased in width by more than 20%.
Communication with Technology

- simplicity is key
Wetland Function Visible from Space

https://weather.cod.edu/satrad/