

The Vermont Functioning Floodplain Initiative (FFI)

Restoring floodplain function
in Vermont's Lake Champlain Basin



August 2, 2022



<https://dec.vermont.gov/rivers/ffi>

Project Team

Government



Non-Profit



Academia



Consultants



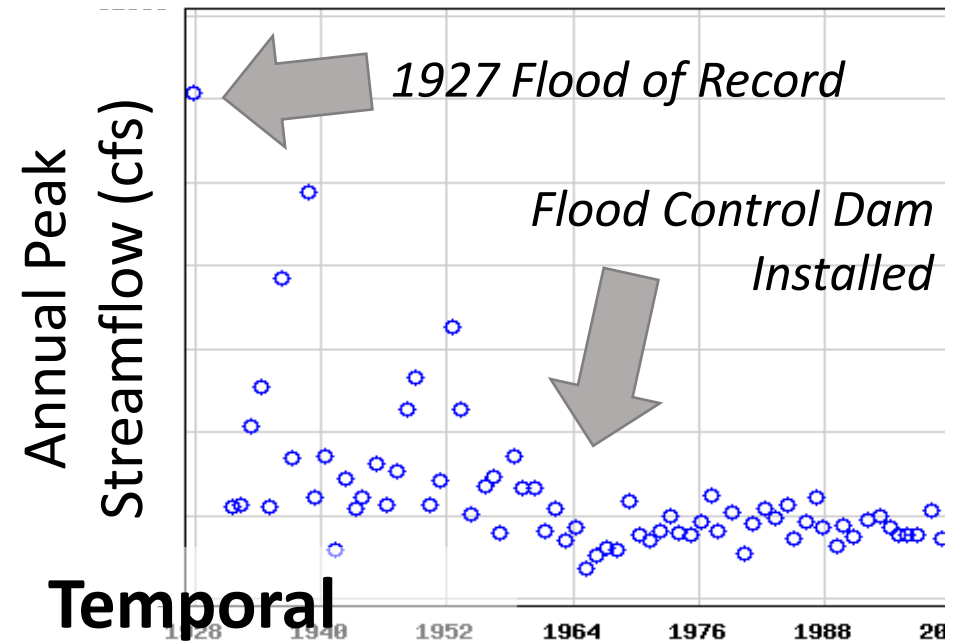
Fitzgerald
Environmental
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South Mountain Research & Consulting



Historic land uses have disconnected rivers and floodplains



Disconnection has increased sediment/nutrient export



LCBP



Mansfield Heliflight

Early Floodplain Reconnection Example

Reconnecting the Black Creek Floodplain Along the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail in 2007

Railroad Embankment Disconnecting Floodplain

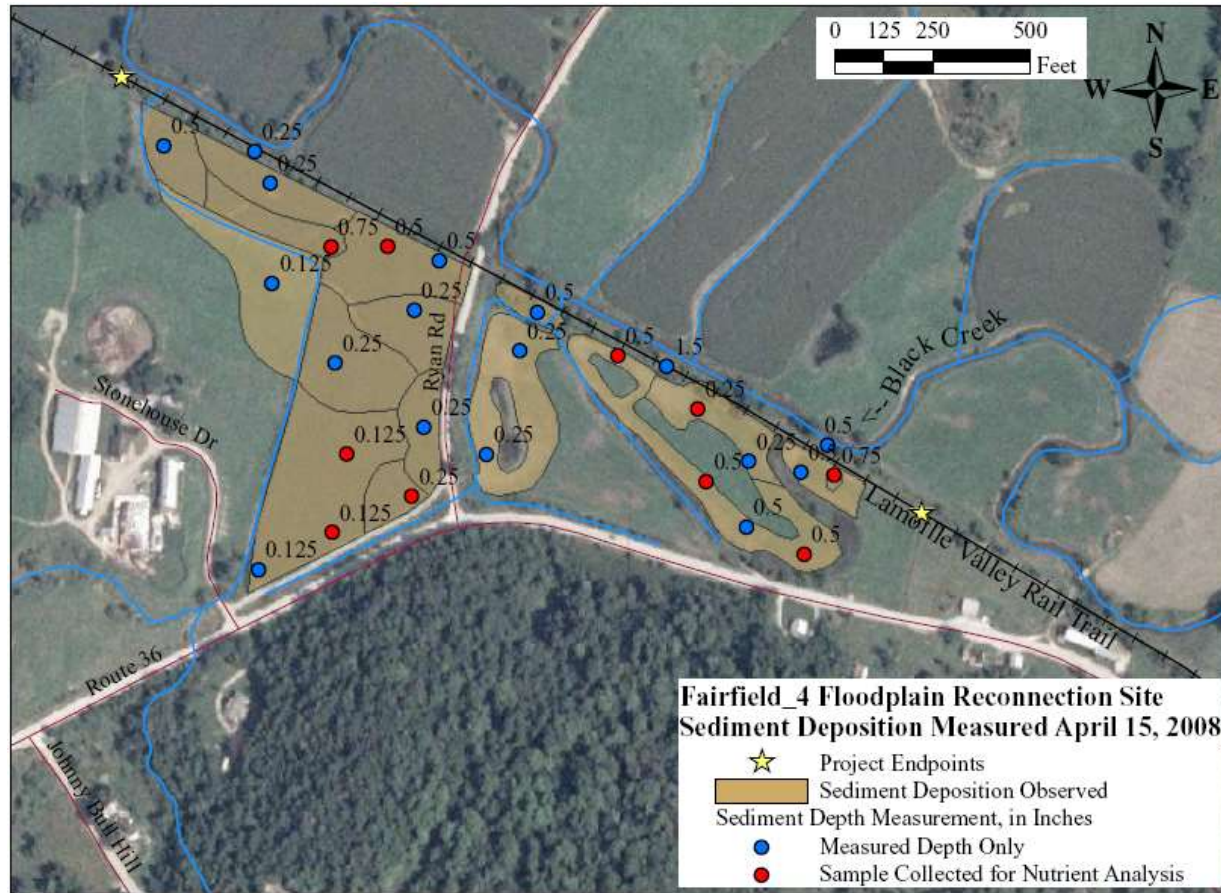


Embankment removal in Fletcher, VT
Photos by R. Schiff
2007

Lowered Railroad Embankment to Connect Floodplain

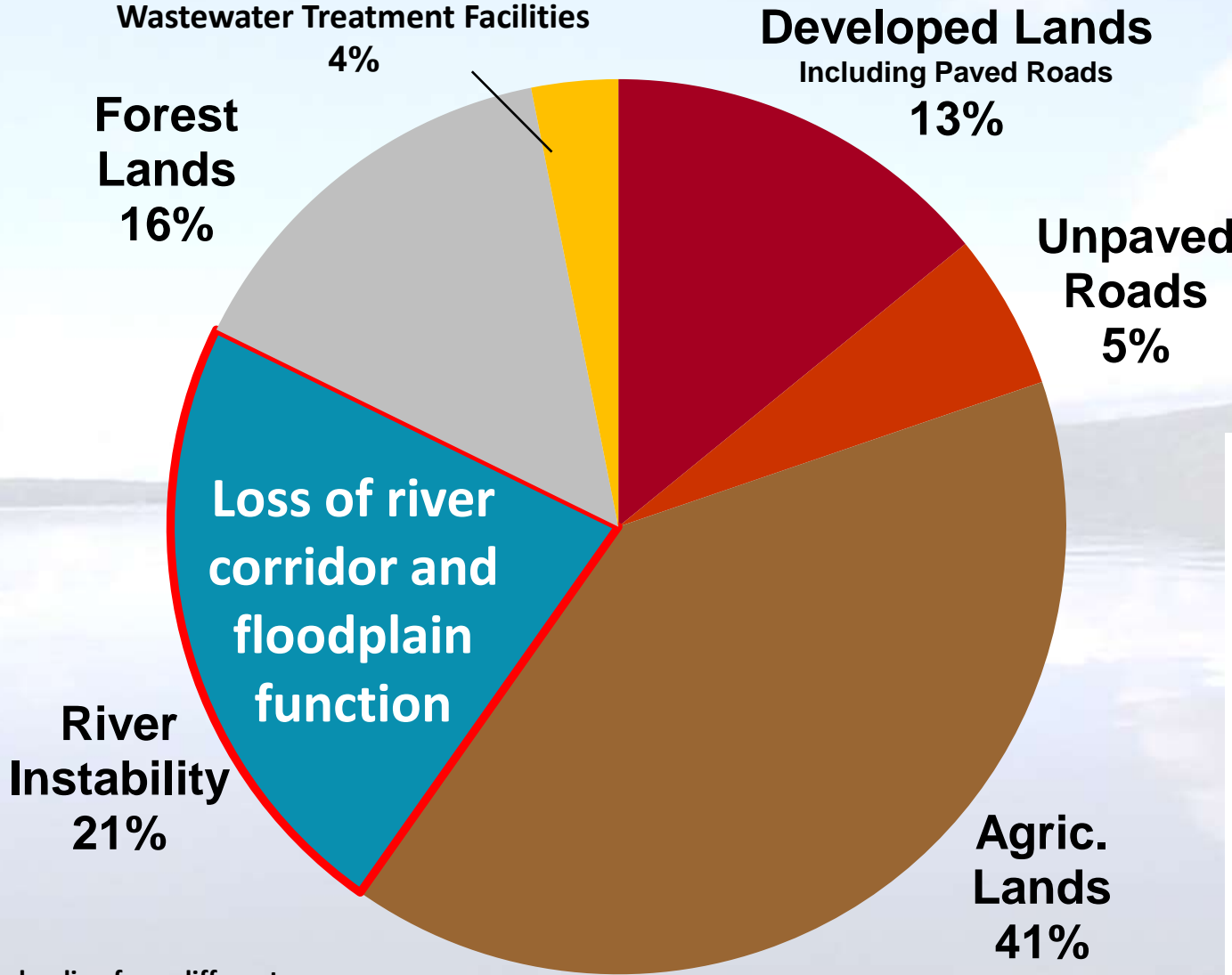


Early Floodplain Reconnection Example



(MMI, 2008)

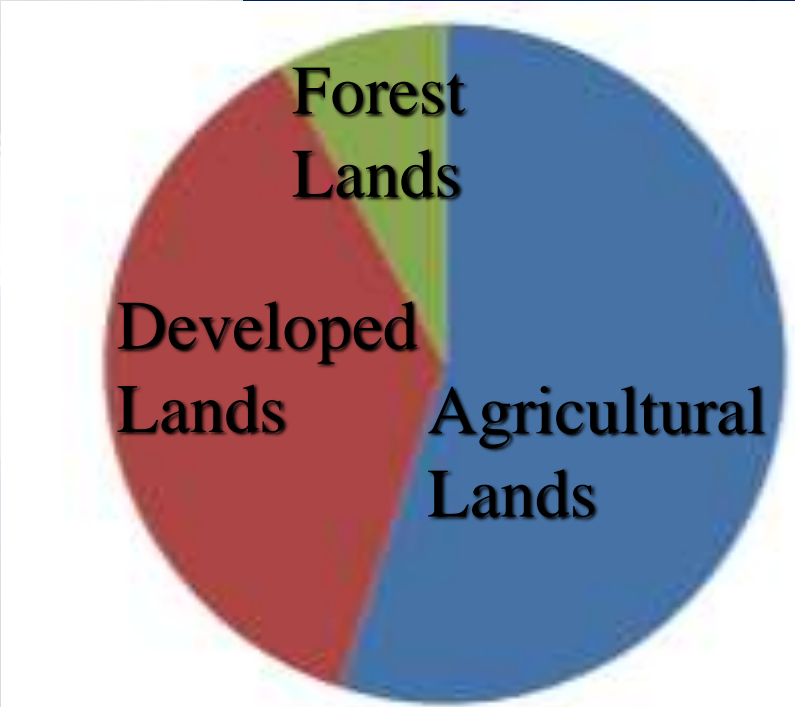
Lake Champlain TMDL



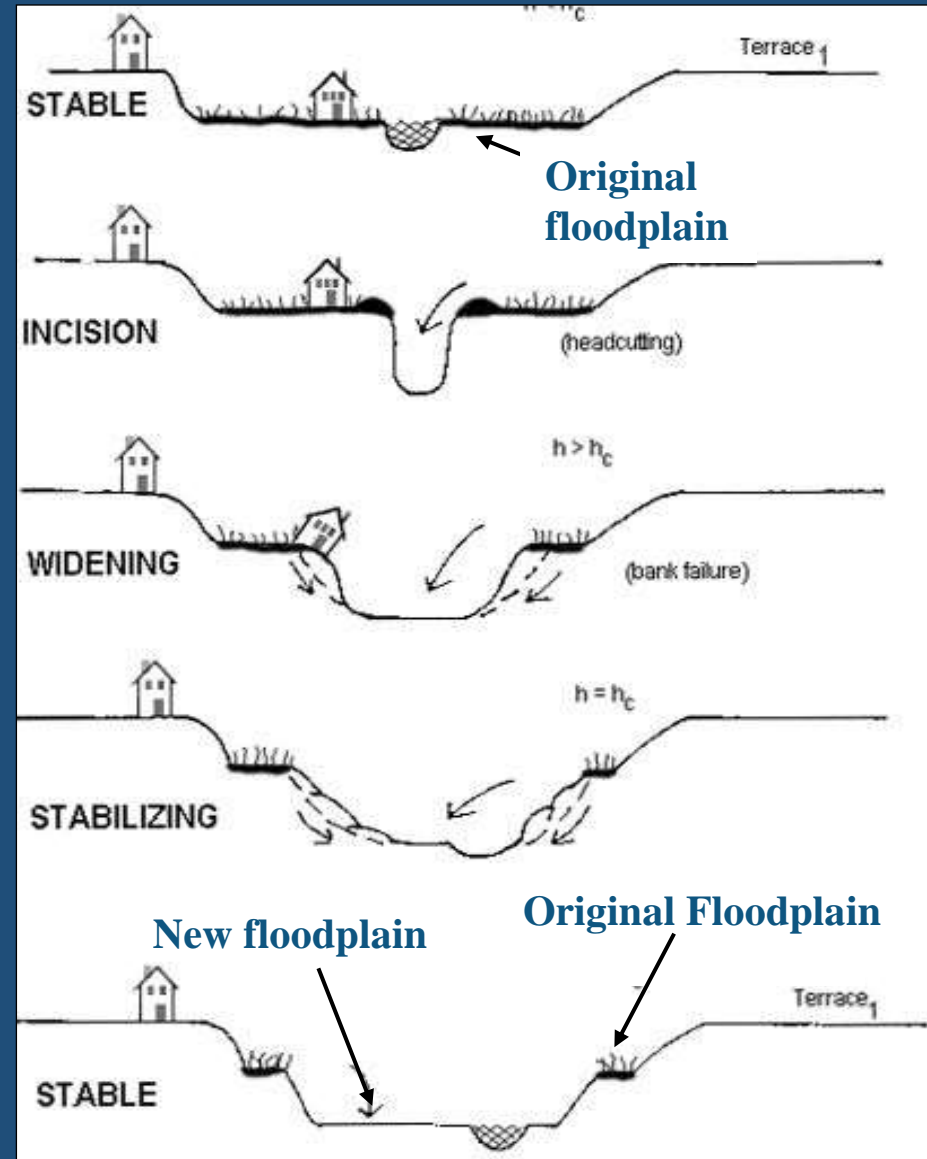
Estimated phosphorus loading from different sources in the Vermont portion of the Lake Champlain watershed

Excess Phosphorus causing algal blooms in the Lake

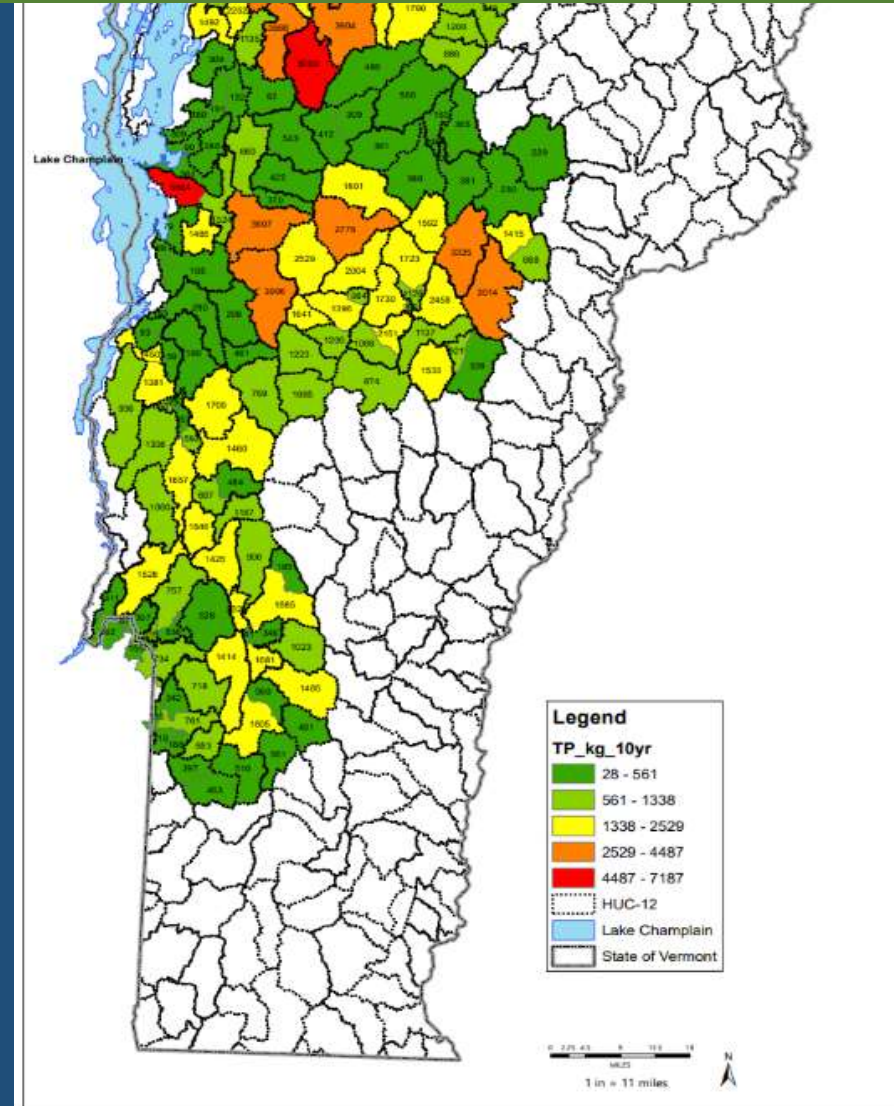
2002 L. Champlain TMDL Loadings



The TMDL quantifies P loading from unstable streams

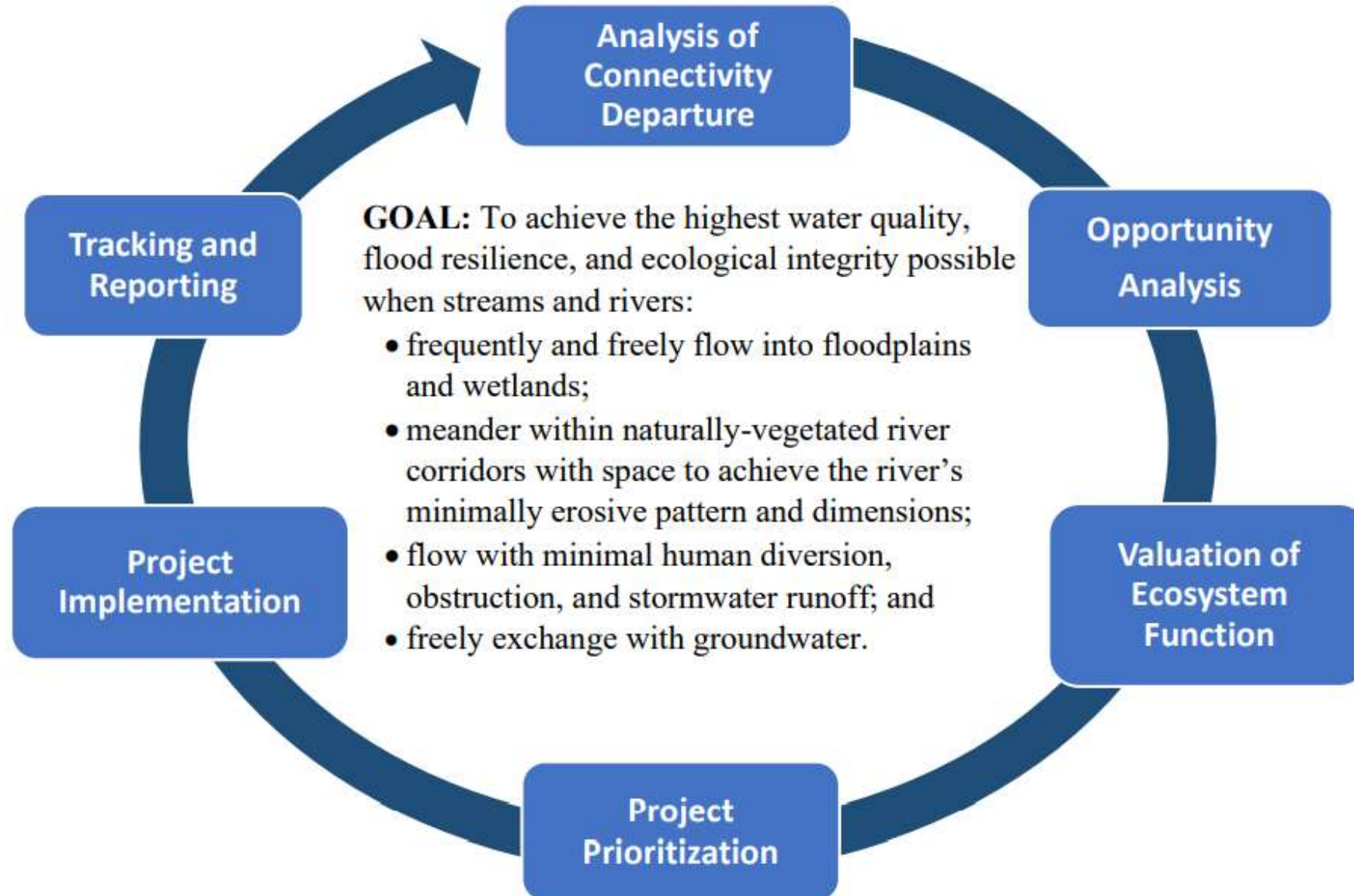


.....and assigns an allocation to each Lake Champlain watershed based on stage of evolution toward floodplain function.



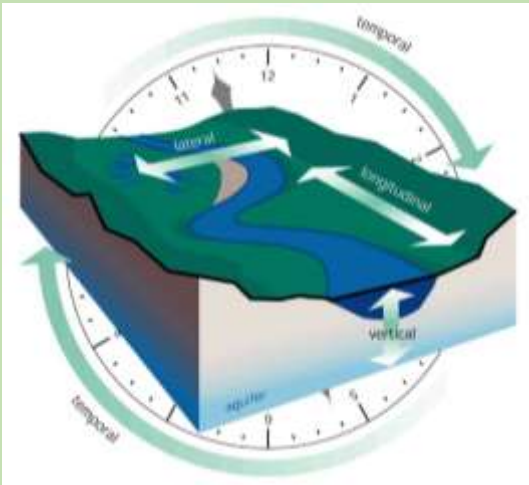
Lake Champlain Sub-basin phosphorus load allocations (Source: VTANR).

Vermont's Functioning Floodplain Initiative



Floodplain Reconnection Projects

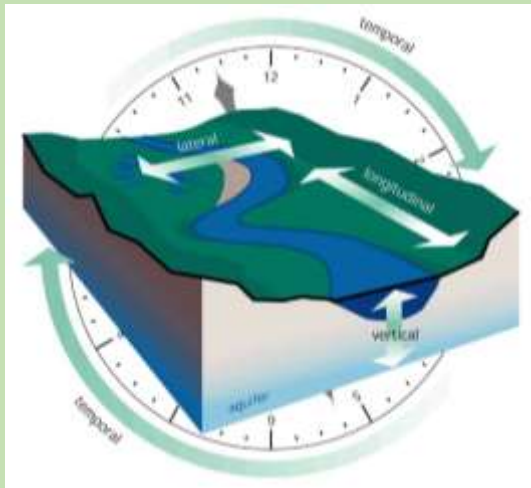
Lateral – Vertical Reconnection



APPROACH	PROJECT
No Action	No Action
Restore Connectivity	Lower floodplain ^a
	Reconnect flood chute ^b
	Create flood bench ^c
	Restore channel slope and pattern ^d
	Restore channel roughness ^e
	Raise channel ^f
	Remove berm ^g
	Restore wetland ^h
Remove Constraints	Remove major constraint ⁱ
	Remove minor constraint ^j
Protection	Implement river corridor easement
	Conserve wetlands (e.g., NRCS Wetland Reserve)
	Adopt river corridor bylaws
Re-vegetation	Plant woody 50-foot buffer
	Plant woody river corridor / floodplain

Stream Reconnection Projects

Longitudinal – Temporal Reconnection



APPROACH	PROJECT
Remove Dams	Remove Large Flood Control Dam
	Remove/Convert Large Peaking Hydro Dam
	Remove Large Run of River (ROR) Dam
	Remove/Convert Medium Peaking Hydro Dam
	Remove Medium ROR Dam
	Remove Medium Breached Dam
	Remove Small Intact ROR Dam
	Remove Small Breached Dam
Replace Bridges & Culverts	Replace Bridge (Wbkf>100%)
	Replace Bridge (50%>Wbkf>100%)
	Replace Bridge (Wbkf<50%), shallow channel (< 2%)
	Replace Bridge (Wbkf<50%), steep channel (> 2%)
	Replace Culvert (Wbkf>100%)
	Replace Culvert (50%>Wbkf>100%), shallow
	Replace Culvert (50%>Wbkf>100%), steep
	Replace Culvert (Wbkf<50%), shallow
	Replace Culvert (Wbkf<50%), steep
Mitigate Hydrologic Alterations	Remove Re-Permit Diversion / Withdrawal
	Remove Groundwater Extraction (commercial, wells)
	Stabilize Headcut in Perennial Stream
	Stabilize Gully
	Stabilize Gully w-Treatment of Stormwater
	Disconnect Municipal or Private Road Ditch
	Treat Legacy Forest Trail/Road Drainage
	Backwater Culvert with Weir or Other Approach
	Place Baffles in Culvert

Lake Champlain TMDL Context

P in the
TMDL

Channel Stability



Floodplain Storage



P not in
TMDL

Legacy Sediments - Floodplains



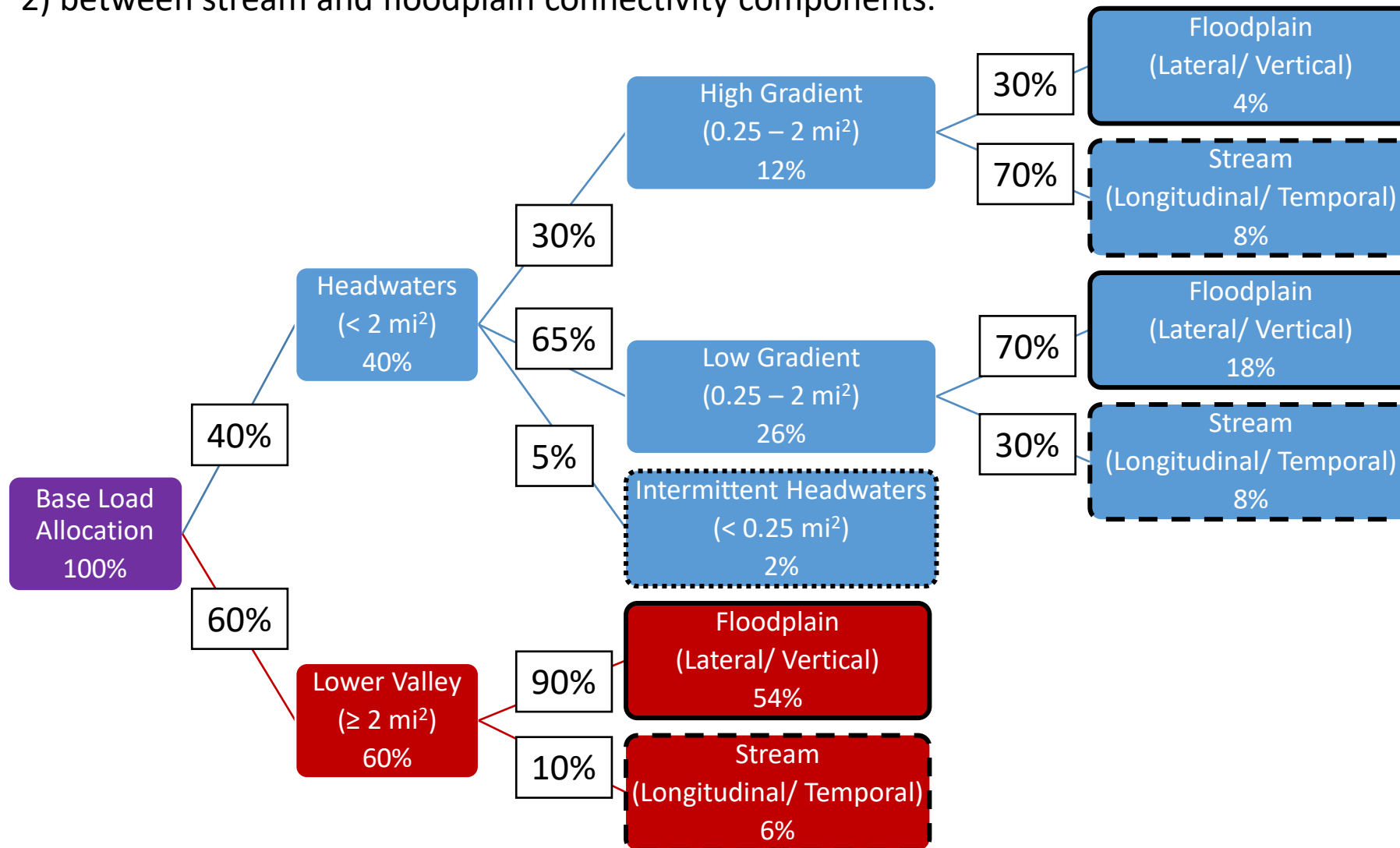
Legacy Sediments - Dams



Departure Analysis and P Crediting

HUC 12 stream stability allocations are distributed:

- 1) between headwaters and lower valley stream and rivers
- 2) between stream and floodplain connectivity components.



Example #1 - Dog River Floodplain Restoration



Dog Floodplain
Northfield, VT
Photo by Isaac Maddox-
White
11/13/2017

Dog River Floodplain Restoration Example

FFI Project Crediting - Floodplain Connectivity

12/20/2021

Project Example

Project Reach, Segment or Subunit		
ID	M13, M12B	
Area (Acres)	78.6	RC(x) (acres)
50' Buffer Area (Acres)	24	BFR50 (acres)
TMDL P Base Load Allocation	(kg/yr)	(lb/yr)
Total Connectivity Allocation	71.2	156.9
Lateral	29.7	65.5
Vertical	41.5	91.4

Proposed Connectivity Credit (Score):	2.4
Proposed Lateral Connectivity Credit (% of EX):	6%
Proposed Vertical Connectivity Credit (% of EX):	3%
Lateral P Reduction Credit (kg/yr):	1.8
Vertical P Reduction Credit (kg/yr):	1.3
P Reduction Credit (kg/yr):	3.1
P Reduction Credit (lb/yr):	6.8

Project Description: Berm removal/floodplain lowering reconnecting 3.1 acres of floodplain, with easement, hard constraint removal, and buffer.								
		Connected Corridor (Acres)	Robust Protection (Acres)	Moderate Protection (Acres)	Low Protection (Acres)	No Protection (Acres)	Naturally Veg Buffer (Acres)	Incision Ratio
	Existing	25	5	30	28.6	15	12	1.9
	Project	3.1	3.1	0	0	-3.1	1	1.2
	Proposed (Post-Project)	28.1	8.1	30	28.6	11.9	13	1.87

Dog River Floodplain Restoration Example

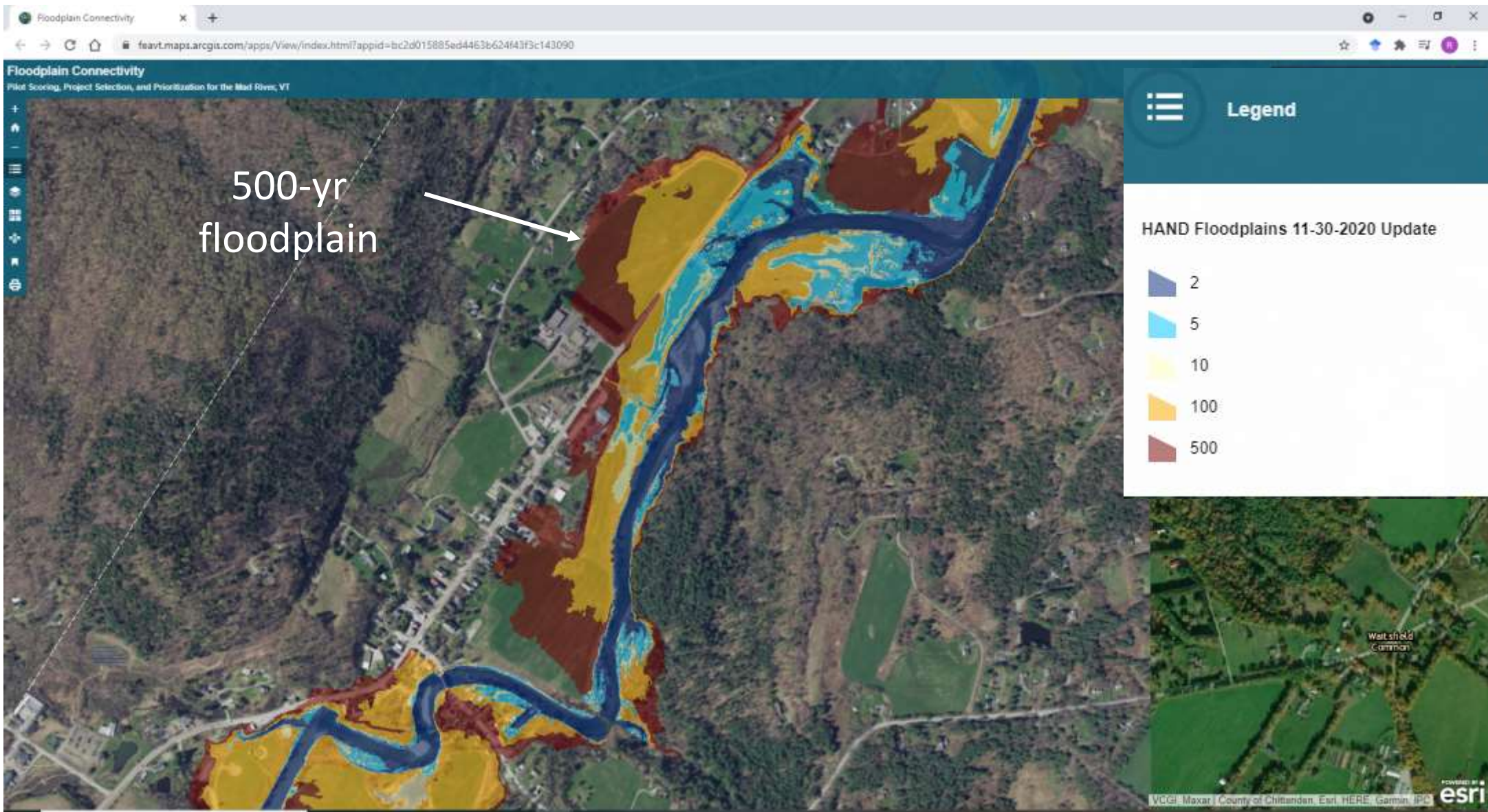
FFI Project Crediting - P Storage 8/3/2021		(Dog River Floodplain Restoration Example)		
Project reach, segment or subunit		Estimated TP Storage Credit (lb/yr)		
ID	M13, M12B	Year 1	Year 2+	
Connectivity project	Floodplain restoration	62	31	
Project Area (acres)	3.1			
Existing connectivity in Project Area	Low			
Proposed connectivity in Project Area	High	Default TP Storage Credits (lb/ac/yr)*		
		Low to High	Low to Moderate	Moderate to High
		20	15	10
		10	7	5
*To be updated by project specific measurements or future research.				

Dog River Floodplain Restoration Example

FFI Project Crediting - Summary					
12/20/2021					
Case 5a Project: Lateral/vertical on the same footprint (Case 2a) + longitudinal/temporal (Case 4)					
Project Name	Dog River Floodplain Restoration Project		ESTIMATED PHOSPHORUS CREDITING		
River	Dog River and Union Brook				
Town	Northfield, VT				
Location	Water Street			Year 1	Years 2+
Project reach, segment or subunit ID(s)	M13, M12B		Floodplain (lb/yr)	6.8	6.8
Project reach, segment or subunit(s) Area (acres)	78.6		Stream (lb/yr)	0.1	0.1
<u>Connectivity project components</u>	<u>Area (acres)</u>		Storage (lb/yr)	62.0	31.0
Constraint (house) removal	3.1		TOTAL	69.0	38.0
Floodplain lowering / berm removal	3.1				
Buffer planting	3.1				
River Corridor easement	3.1				

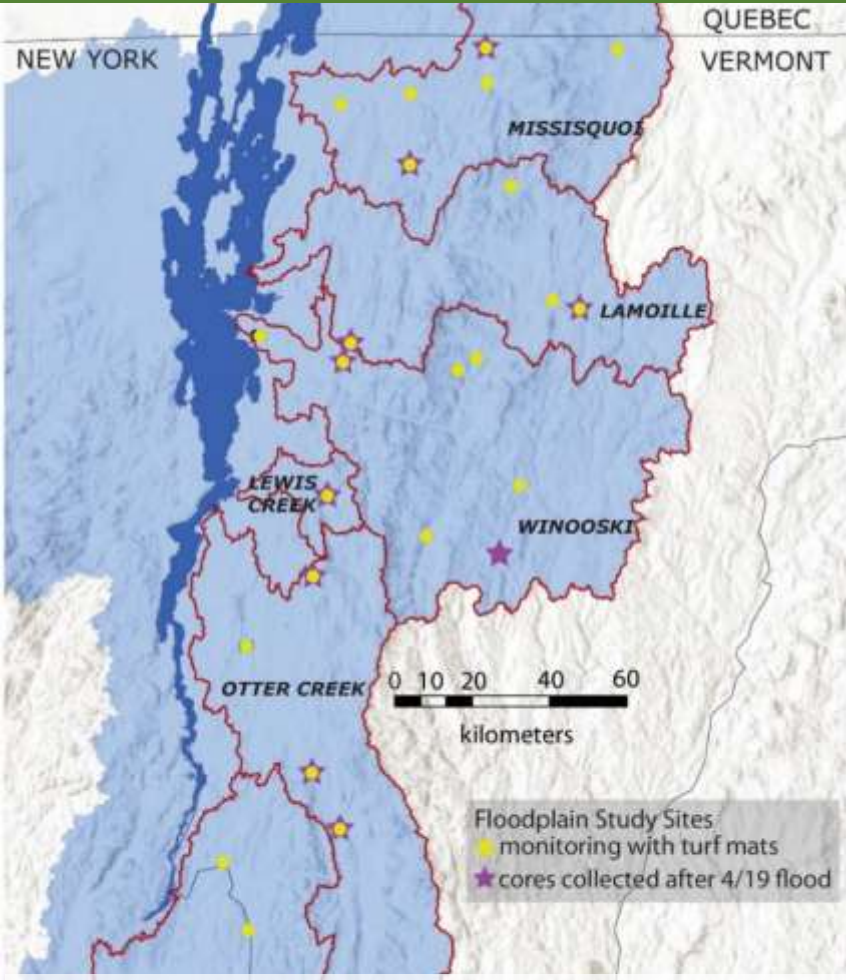
- Floodplain credit of 6.8 LB TP/ YR
- Stream credit of 0.1 LB TP / YR
- Storage credit Low to High connectivity; 62 LB TP / YR1; 31 LB TP / YR2+
- \$14,378 / LB TP (Total project cost / annual year 2+ TP credit)

Floodplain Mapping for the Lake Champlain Basin



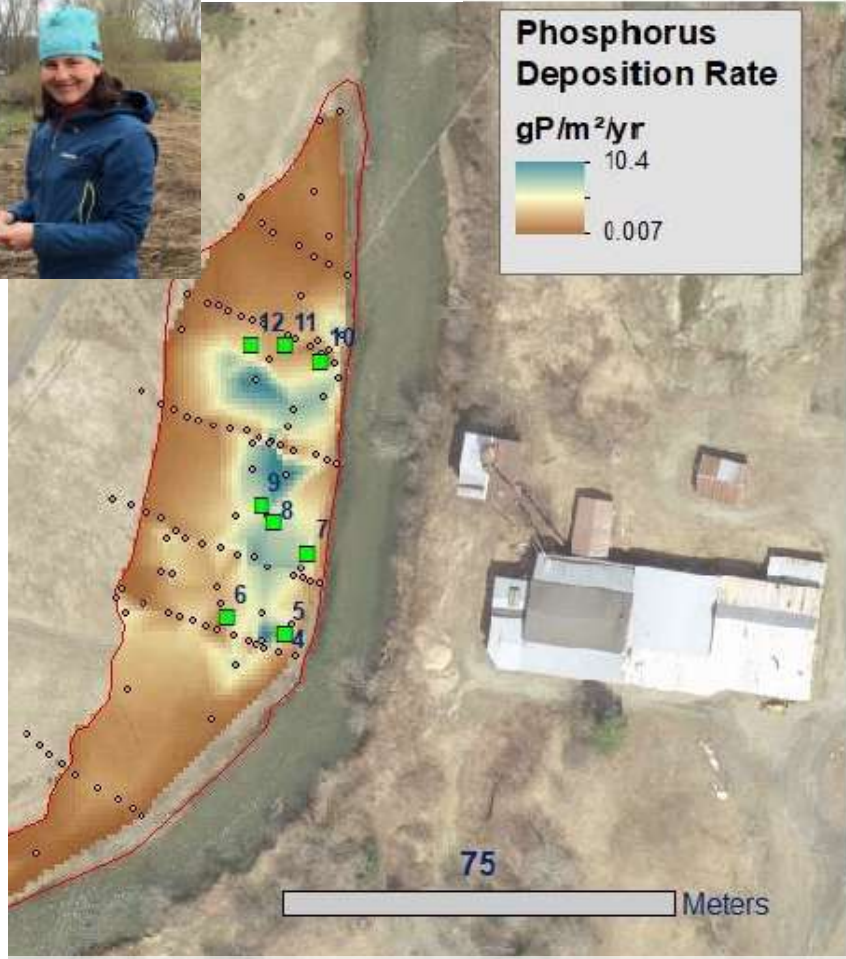
Diehl, R., J. Gourevitch, S. Drago, B. Wemple, 2021. Improving flood hazard datasets using a low-complexity, probabilistic floodplain mapping approach, PLOS ONE, p1-20.

Empirical data set of sediment and P floodplain deposition



+ 170 plots at 24 sites
+ Measure event-scale sedimentation

Flood events in 2018 and 2019 captured between 0.2 and 30 lb phosphorus / acre / year.

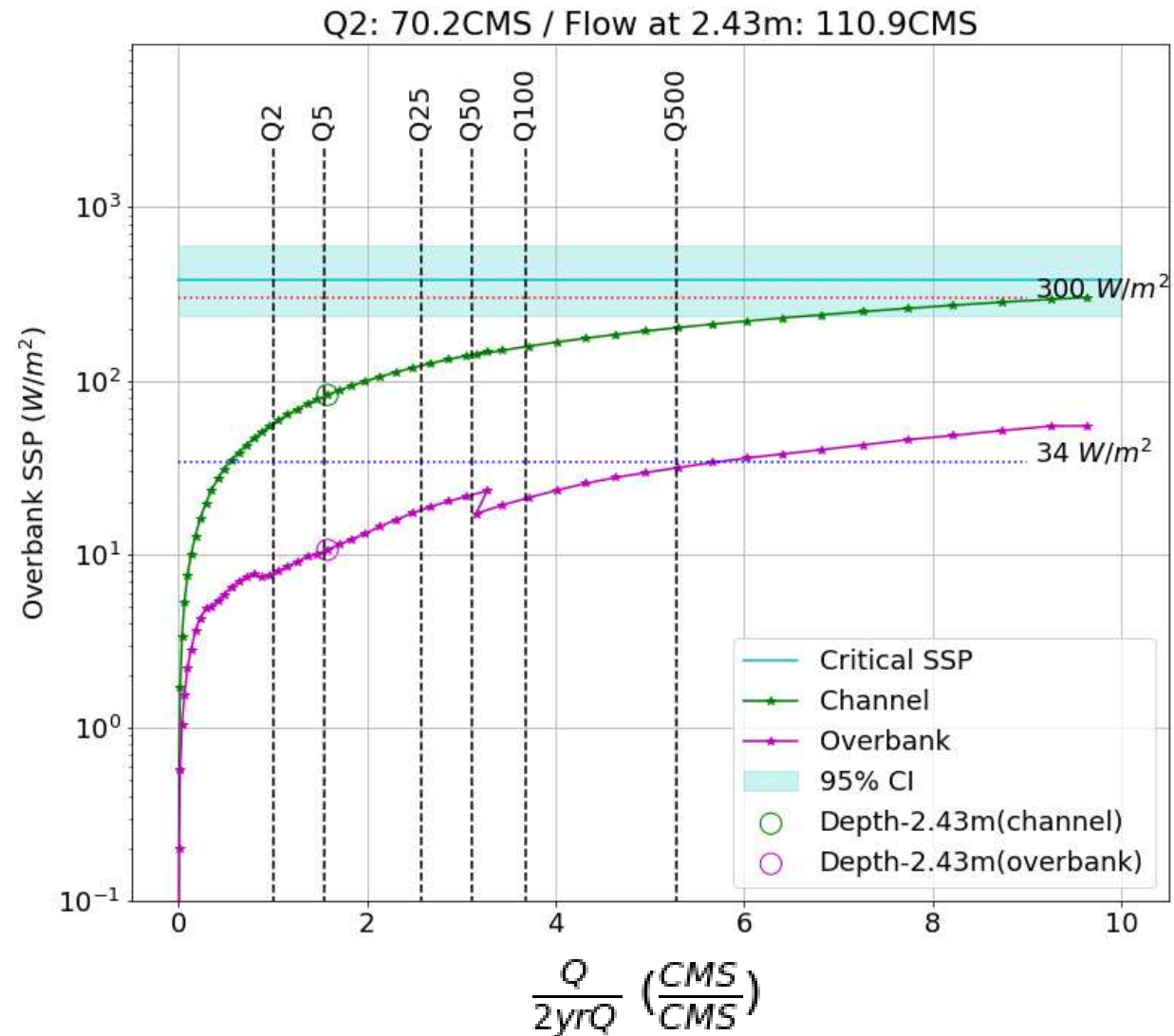
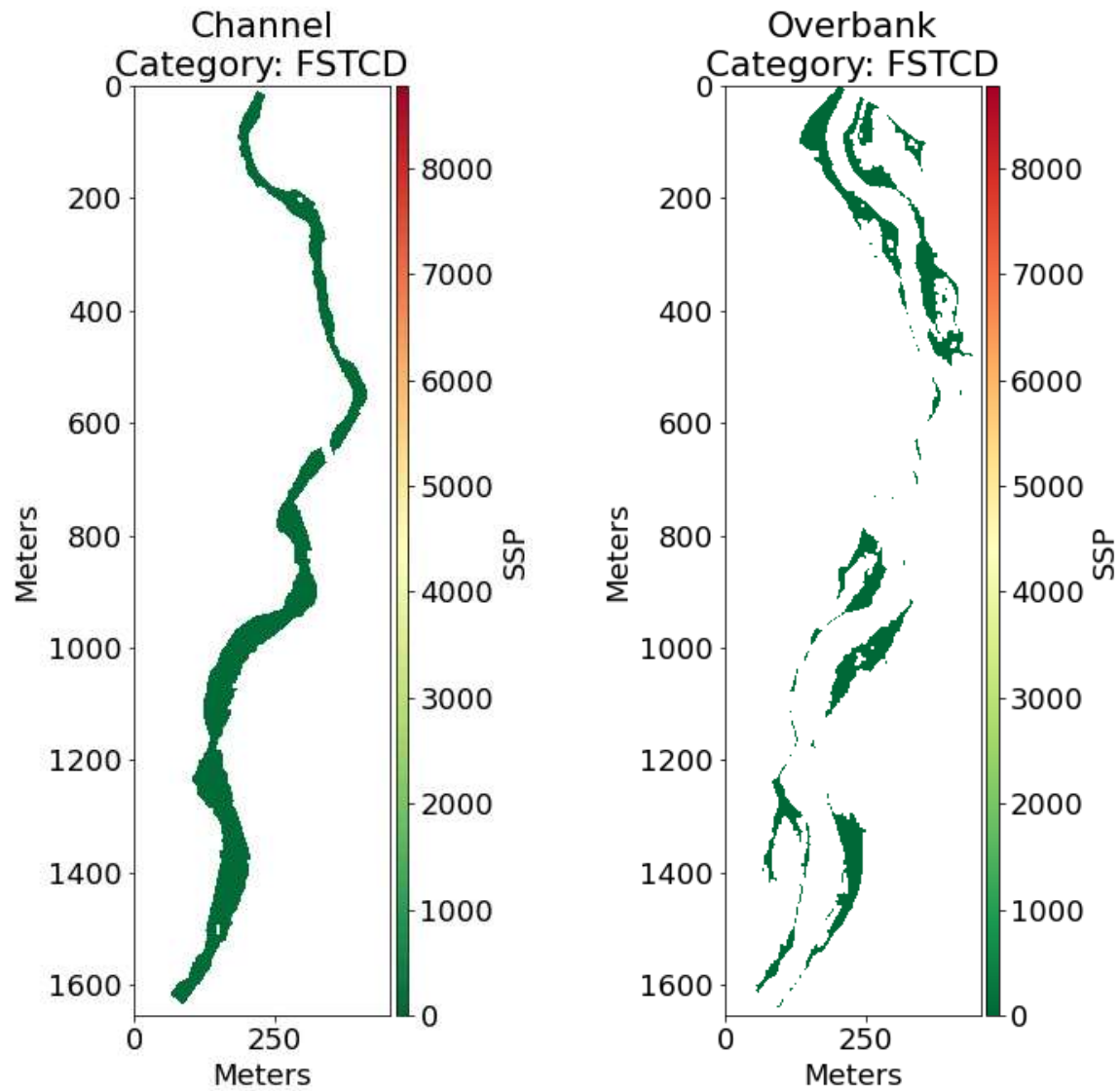


Water Street Park, Dog River, Northfield



Diehl, R.M., Wemple, B.C., Underwood, K.L., Ross, D. (2021). Evaluating floodplain potential for sediment and phosphorus deposition: Development of a framework to assist in Lake Champlain Basin planning. Lake Champlain Basin Technical Report.

Stream Power v Resistance to Evaluate Erosion Potential



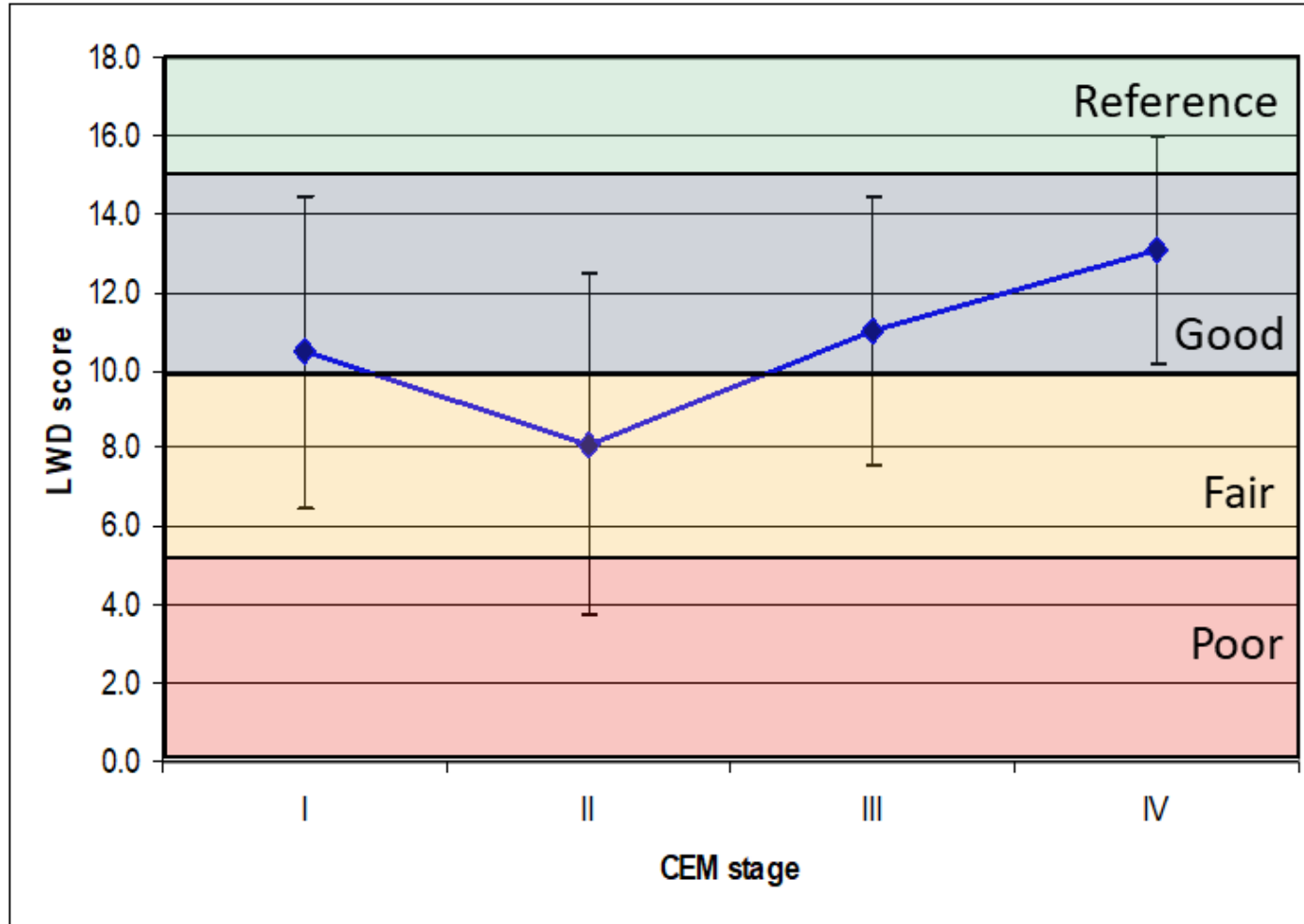
Habitat

Understanding Floodplain Function/Connectivity through the Lens of Habitat

- Three scales:
 - In-channel
 - Near-bank riparian area
 - Floodplain and upland connections



Instream Habitat

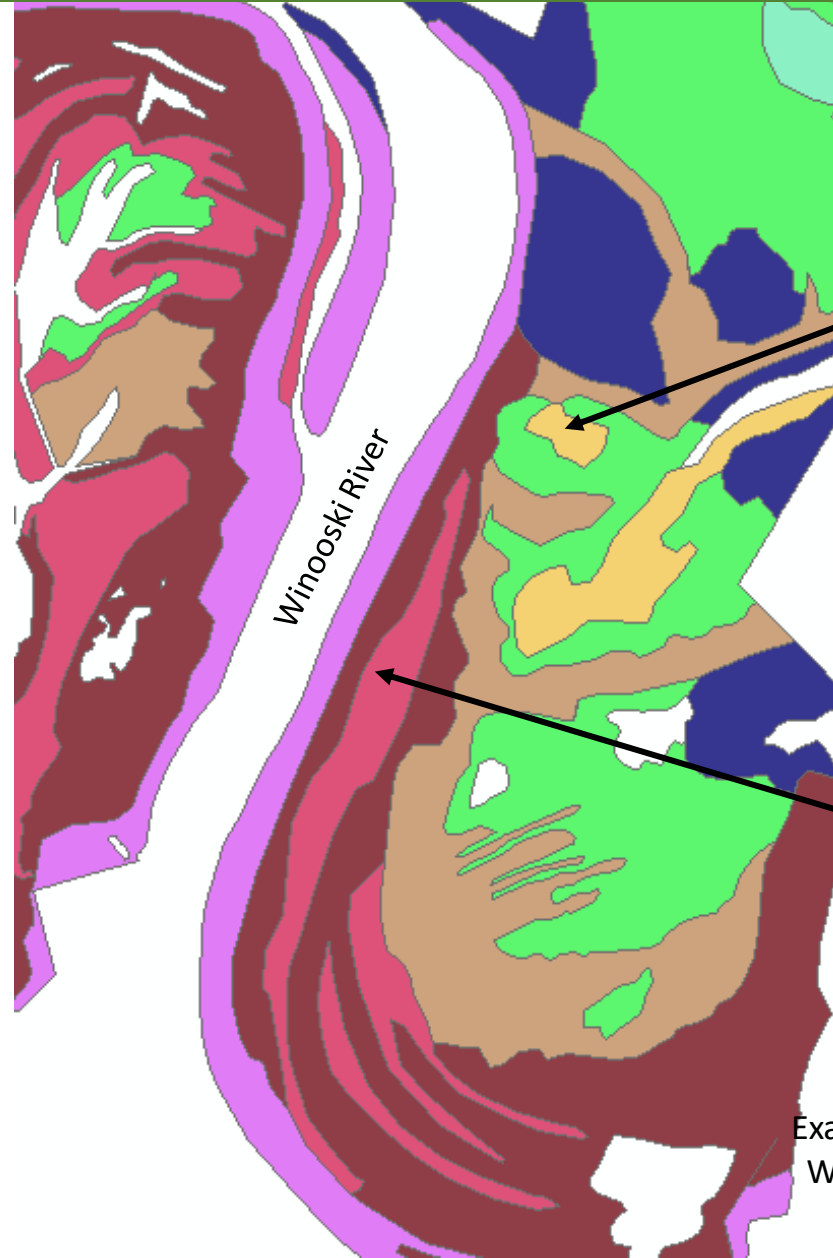
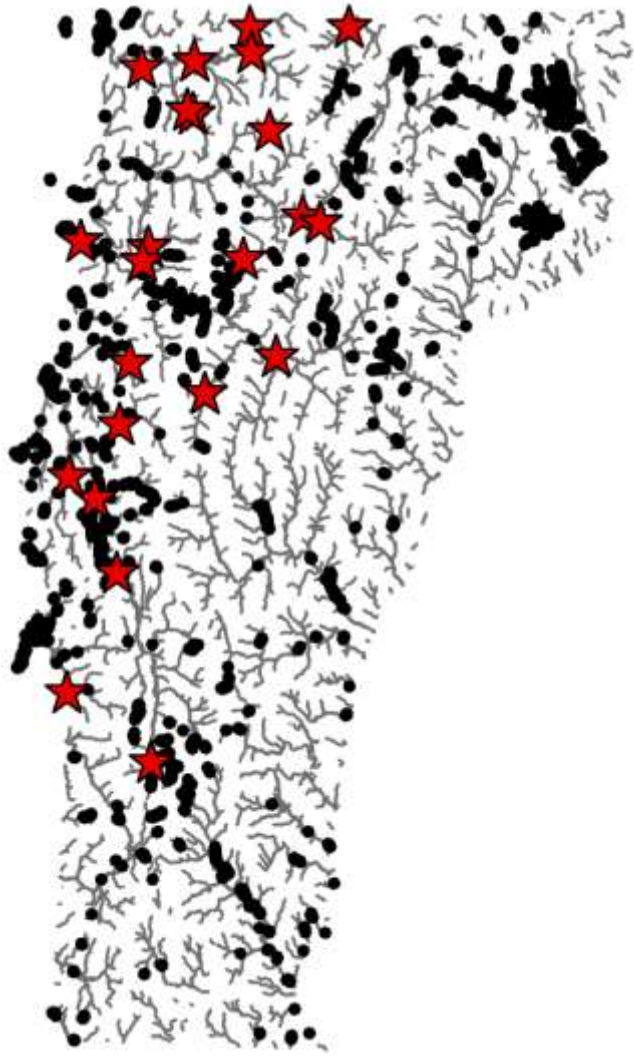


CEM Stage II

- Incised condition
- Increased power
- Reduced LWD retention



Floodplain Habitat



Cattail Marsh

Silver Maple-Ostrich
Fern Floodplain



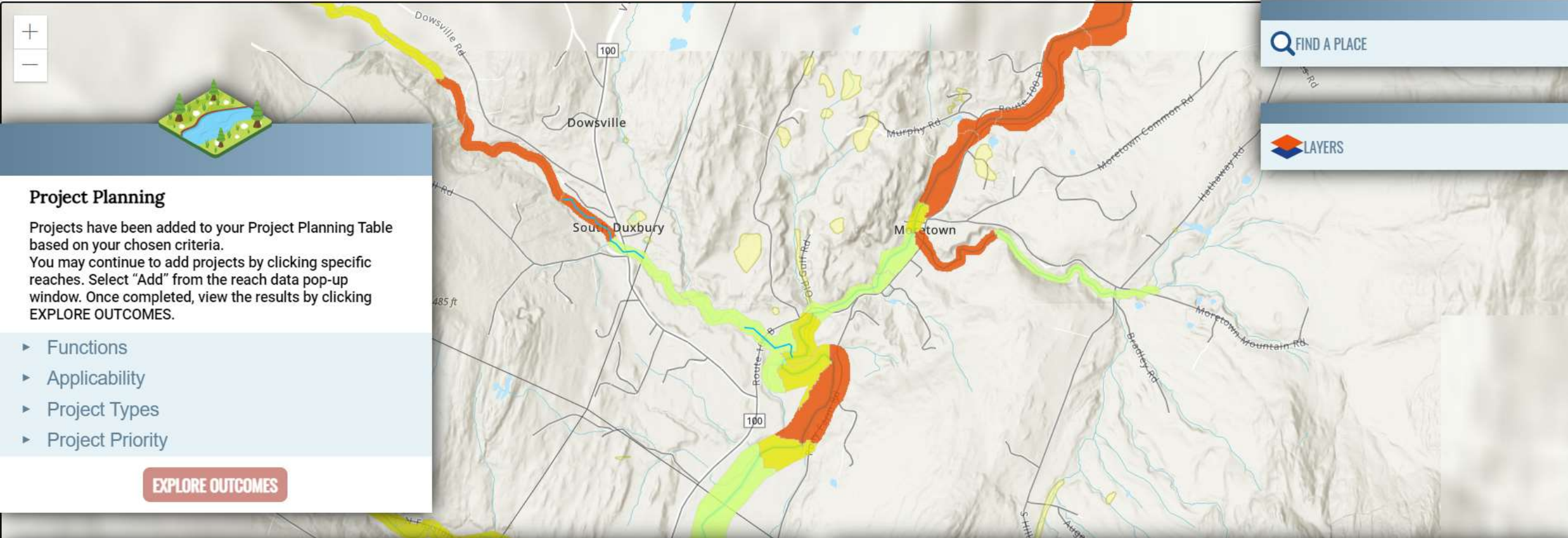
Example of mapped natural communities on the
Winooski River floodplain near Lake Champlain

Treatment Cost-Effectiveness

Project Class	Project Type	Practice	Cost-Effectiveness (\$USD/lb TP/yr)
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Floodplain Restoration	Berm Removal	\$ 2,050
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Buffers	Buffers	\$ 2,786
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Corridor easement	Corridor easement	\$ 5,944
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Floodplain Restoration	Create Flood Bench	\$ 12,351
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Infiltration Practices	Surface Infiltration	\$ 12,500
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Dam removal	Medium ROR Dam	\$ 13,438
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Floodplain Restoration	Lower Floodplain	\$ 14,017
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Infiltration Practices	Subsurface Infiltration	\$ 15,000
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Infiltration Practices	Infiltration Trench	\$ 15,000
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Floodplain Restoration	Raise Channel	\$ 16,224
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Infiltration Practices	Rain Garden (no underdrain)	\$ 17,500
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Dam removal	Medium Breached Dam	\$ 19,814
Natural Resource / Re-Connection Project	Dam removal	Small ROR Dam	\$ 20,519
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Filtering Practices	Constructed Wetlands	\$ 30,000
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Ponds	Wet Pond	\$ 30,000
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Filtering Practices	Gravel Wetland	\$ 35,000
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Filtering Practices	Rain Garden (with underdrain)	\$ 40,000
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Filtering Practices	Sand Filter	\$ 52,500
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Filtering Practices	Grass Conveyance Swale	\$ 60,000
Stormwater Best Management Practice	Ponds	Extended Dry Detention Pond	\$ 135,000

Web Application – Project Planning

HOME EXPLORE DATA PROJECT PLANNING WATERSHED REPORTING



Project Planning

Projects have been added to your Project Planning Table based on your chosen criteria. You may continue to add projects by clicking specific reaches. Select "Add" from the reach data pop-up window. Once completed, view the results by clicking EXPLORE OUTCOMES.

- ▶ Functions
- ▶ Applicability
- ▶ Project Types
- ▶ Project Priority

EXPLORE OUTCOMES

FIND A PLACE

LAYERS

PROJECT PLANNING TABLE

OUTCOME TABLE

Web Application – Project Planning



Project Planning
Projects have been added to your Project Planning Table based on your chosen criteria.

- PROJECT SCREENING
- CALCULATION INPUTS
- WATER QUALITY BENEFIT**
- RESILIENCY BENEFIT
- HABITAT BENEFIT
- BENEFIT SUMMARY
- COST EFFECTIVENESS

Total Phosphorus Credit for Stream Stability and Storage

SubUnit(s) IDs: 36_M12-3_C00, 36_T7.01_1_C00, 36_M12-
Town: Waitsfield
Projects Included: River corridor easment, riparian buffer planting, floodplain planting, culvert replacement

Stream Stability and Storage Credit Summary

	Year 1 Credit (kg/yr)	Years 2+ Credit (kg/yr)	Estimated 15-yr Lifespan Credit (kg/yr)
Floodplain Connectivity (Lateral-Vertical)			
Stream Stability	6.84	6.84	102.65
Storage	62.00	31.00	465.00
Stream Connectivity (Longitudinal-Temporal)			
Stream Stability	0.13	0.13	1.92
TOTAL	68.97	37.97	569.58

Web Application – User Groups



- VTDEC River Scientist/Clean Water Initiative Analysts focused on river and floodplain restoration will track progress towards achieving TMDL to improve water quality.
- VTrans Planner focused on the transportation network will identify resiliency projects along roads that also have water quality and habitat co-benefits.

Thank You

<https://dec.vermont.gov/rivers/ffi>



Source: Lars Gange &
[Mansfield Heliflight](#),
August 31, 2011

Extra Slides

Dog River Floodplain Restoration Example

FFI Project Crediting - Stream Connectivity
10/18/2021

Project reach, segment or subunit			Web Map Variable Name:	Project Description:					IR	Incision Ratio
				and Erosion Deduction + LONG IR Deduction	TEMP Structure and Erosion Deduction + TEMP IR Deduction	TEMP Existing-dev-rds	TEMP Existing-ag %	IR		
ID	M13, M12B		Existing	Longitudinal Deductions (Structures and IR)	Temporal Deductions (Structures and IR)	HUC12 roads/dev LU (mi/mi ₂)	HUC12 ag LU/DA (%)_Tile	Incision Ratio	Column	
			Project	-40	-60	5	50	1.9	yes	
			IR	0	0	0	0	1.2	no	
TMDL P Base Load Allocation	(kg/yr)	(lb/yr)	Proposed (Post-Project)	0.8	0.3					
			Maximum Values in Basin	-39.2	-59.7	5.00	50.00	1.2		
Stream	5.21	11.49				7.7	108.6			
								<i>Will the project disconnect tile drains or ditches in an agricultural setting?</i>	no	
								Land Use Change Area (Acres)	0.0	
								<i>Is the incision ratio changing?</i>	yes	
				Longitudinal Score	Temporal Deductions Score	Temporal Roads Score	Temporal Ag Score			
Corridor Area for Segment/Reach (acres)	78.6		Existing	60.0	40.0	35.1	54.0	Existing IR deduction	-20.0	-8.0
Area (Acres) with Vertical Change	3.1		Proposed (Post-Project)	60.8	40.3	35.1	54.0	Proposed IR deduction	0.0	0.0
Percent Area with Vertical Change	3.9%							Area Weighted IR deduction	-19.2	-7.7
								Change in score	0.8	0.3
				Longitudinal	Temporal	Stream				
			Existing Connectivity Score:	60	42.7	53.09				
			Existing Connectivity Departure:	40	57.3	46.9				
			Proposed Connectivity Score:	60.8	42.9	53.61				
			Proposed Connectivity Departure:	39.2	57.1	46.4				
				Proposed Connectivity Credit (Score):			0.52			
				Proposed Connectivity Credit (% of EX):			1.1%			
				Stream Connectivity P Credit (kg/yr):			0.058			
				Stream Connectivity P Credit (lb/yr):			0.128			

Incision	Incision Ratio ^a	Longitudinal Score Deduction	Temporal Score Deduction
Minor	IR < 1.3	0	0
Moderate	1.3 ≤ IR < 1.5	-10	-5
High	1.5 ≤ IR < 2.0	-20	-8
Severe	IR ≥ 2.0	-30	-10

Simulated P Crediting

Simulated Project	Median P Reduction Credit	P Credit Units
Floodplain Restoration with buffer revegetation	1.6	lb/ac/yr
Floodplain Restoration with buffer revegetation and easement	2.1	lb/ac/yr
Large/medium dam removal with floodplain restoration	2.0	lb/ac/yr
Small/medium intact ROR or breached dam removal with floodplain restoration	2.1	lb/ac/yr
Wood addition in 1st and 2nd order streams with vertical reconnection	1.7	lb/ac/yr
Wood addition in 3rd and 4th order streams with vertical reconnection	0.6	lb/ac/yr
Remove hard constraint	1.1	lb/ac/yr
Passive restoration - easement and buffer revegetation	0.8	lb/ac/yr
Adopt corridor bylaws	0.2	lb/ac/yr
Buffer revegetation	0.6	lb/ac/yr
Replace culverts - undersized with shallow slope	2.0	lb/culvert/yr
Stabilize gully on perennial stream	2.6	lb/project/yr

Treatment Cost-Effectiveness

NR Project Type	NR Practice	NR Practice Cost (\$US/lb TP)	Stormwater BMP Cost Comparison to Natrual Resource Projects (Stormwater \$US/lb TP - NR \$US/lb TP)											
			Infiltration Practices				Filtering Practices						Ponds	
			Surface Infiltration	Subsurface Infiltration	Infiltration Trench	Rain Garden (no underdrain)	Gravel Wetland	Constructed Wetlands	Grass Conveyance Swale	Rain Garden (with underdrain)	Sand Filter	Wet Pond	Extended Dry Detention Pond	
Floodplain Restoration	Berm Removal	\$ 2,050	\$ 10,450	\$ 12,950	\$ 12,950	\$ 15,450	\$ 32,950	\$ 27,950	\$ 57,950	\$ 37,950	\$ 50,450	\$ 27,950	\$ 132,950	
	Lower Floodplain	\$ 14,019	-\$ 1,517	\$ 983	\$ 983	\$ 3,483	\$ 20,983	\$ 15,983	\$ 45,983	\$ 25,983	\$ 38,483	\$ 15,983	\$ 120,983	
	Raise Channel	\$ 16,455	-\$ 3,724	-\$ 1,224	-\$ 1,224	\$ 1,276	\$ 18,776	\$ 13,776	\$ 43,776	\$ 23,776	\$ 36,276	\$ 13,776	\$ 118,776	
	Create Flood Bench	\$ 12,351	\$ 149	\$ 2,649	\$ 2,649	\$ 5,149	\$ 22,649	\$ 17,649	\$ 47,649	\$ 27,649	\$ 40,149	\$ 17,649	\$ 122,649	
Dam removal	Small ROR Dam	\$ 20,519	-\$ 8,019	-\$ 5,519	-\$ 5,519	-\$ 3,019	\$ 14,481	\$ 9,481	\$ 39,481	\$ 19,481	\$ 31,981	\$ 9,481	\$ 114,481	
	Medium ROR Dam	\$ 13,438	-\$ 938	\$ 1,562	\$ 1,562	\$ 4,062	\$ 21,562	\$ 16,562	\$ 46,562	\$ 26,562	\$ 39,062	\$ 16,562	\$ 121,562	
	Medium Breached Dam	\$ 19,892	-\$ 7,314	-\$ 4,814	-\$ 4,814	-\$ 2,314	\$ 15,186	\$ 10,186	\$ 40,186	\$ 20,186	\$ 32,686	\$ 10,186	\$ 115,186	
Buffers		\$ 2,786	\$ 9,714	\$ 12,214	\$ 12,214	\$ 14,714	\$ 32,214	\$ 27,214	\$ 57,214	\$ 37,214	\$ 49,714	\$ 27,214	\$ 132,214	
Corridor easement		\$ 8,321	\$ 6,556	\$ 9,056	\$ 9,056	\$ 11,556	\$ 29,056	\$ 24,056	\$ 54,056	\$ 34,056	\$ 46,556	\$ 24,056	\$ 129,056	

Resiliency

Project Planning
Projects have been added to your Project Planning Table based on your chosen criteria.

FEATURE DATA

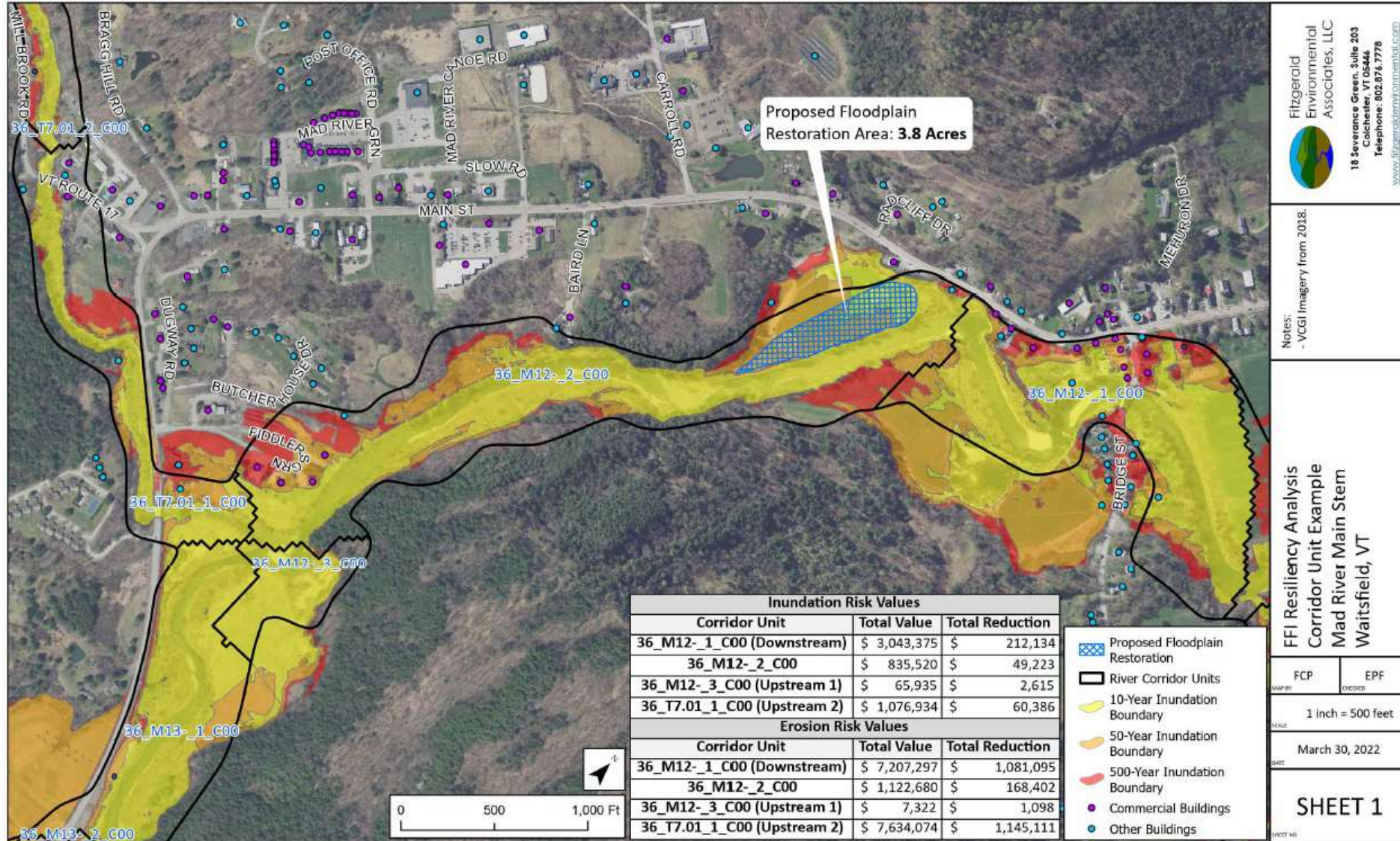
PROJECT SCREENING | CALCULATION INPUTS | **WATER QUALITY BENEFIT** | RESILIENCY BENEFIT | HABITAT BENEFIT | BENEFIT SUMMARY | COST EFFECTIVENESS

Predicted Resiliency Benefit

Inundation Risk Exposure and Potential Benefit						
Location	Corridor Unit	Building Value	Transportation Value	Agriculture Value	Total Value	Potential Benefit
Downstream	36_M12-_1_C00	\$ 3,575,383	\$ 192,443	\$ 33,924	\$ 3,801,750	\$ 321,282
Local	36_M12-_2_C00	\$ 724,795	\$ 92,697	\$ 9,268	\$ 826,759	\$ 48,872
Upstream 1	36_M12-_3_C00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12,319	\$ 12,319	\$ 471
Further Upstream 2	36_T7.01_1_C00	\$ 861,189	\$ 275,239	\$ 5,537	\$ 1,141,965	\$ 62,987
Project Totals	n/a	\$ 5,161,366	\$ 560,379	\$ 61,048	\$ 5,782,794	\$ 433,612

Erosion Risk Exposure and Potential Benefit						
Location	Corridor Unit	Building Value	Transportation Value	Agriculture Value	Total Value	Potential Benefit
Downstream	36_M12-_1_C00	\$ 4,042,918	\$ 3,148,225	\$ 16,154	\$ 7,207,297	\$ 1,081,095
Local	36_M12-_2_C00	\$ 1,011,699	\$ 99,550	\$ 11,431	\$ 1,122,680	\$ 168,402
Upstream 1	36_M12-_3_C00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,233	\$ 7,233	\$ 1,085
Further Upstream 2	36_T7.01_1_C00	\$ 1,082,609	\$ 6,548,812	\$ 2,654	\$ 7,634,074	\$ 1,145,111
Project Totals	n/a	\$ 6,137,226	\$ 9,796,588	\$ 37,472	\$15,971,285	\$ 2,395,693

Resiliency



Fitzgerald Environmental Associates, LLC
 18 Severance Green, Suite 203
 Colchester, VT 05444
 Telephone: 802.876.7778
www.fitzgeraldenv.com/membership

Notes:
 - VCGI Imagery from 2018.

FFI Resiliency Analysis
 Corridor Unit Example
 Mad River Main Stem
 Waitsfield, VT

FCP EPF
 PREPARED BY: [Redacted] CHECKED BY: [Redacted]