



**VPA Comments:  
H. 509 (January 2010 Draft)**

**To: House Fish, Wildlife & Water Resources  
February 5, 2010**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed draft. VPA will continue to work with the committee, at your request, to address specific details of proposed legislation.

**VPA supports:**

- 1) The Committee's intent to protect water quality in Lake Champlain by strengthening incentives and requirements for managing onsite sources of phosphorous pollution.
- 2) Fortifying incentives and assistance for improved agricultural management practices to reduce erosion and to contain phosphorous onsite.
- 3) Requiring the adoption of water quality best management practices aimed at reducing impacts associated with erosion and polluted stormwater runoff as related to roadway construction and maintenance.

**More specific comments and recommendations are provided as follows:**

**Section 4900, Vermont Agricultural Buffer Program:**

- Subsection (a) has new language referring to "installing conservation practices in ditch networks." The term "conservation practice" needs to be clarified. Does this refer to NRCS defined practices, or is it something else?

**Section 4951, Farm Agronomic Practices Program:**

- Similar to above, subsections (a) (9) & (10), "alternative manure application techniques" and "additional soil erosion reduction practices" need specificity.

**Section 996, Highway Construction, Maintenance, and Repair Best Management Practices:**

- Regarding the adoption of best management practices relating to stormwater management and erosion control for roadway maintenance and construction, AOT has a couple of local resources:
  - Construction site standards pertaining to erosion control and stormwater management that are applicable statewide can be found in general permit #3-9020.
    - The general permit is a resource for technical standards to be met.
  - NRCS's "Better Backroads" program more specifically addresses roadway BMPs.
    - Better Backroads articulates a number of best management practices (as opposed to technical standards).
    - Local experience has found that the up front cost of implementing the BMPs generally pays for itself in reduce long-term maintenance costs.
    - Most towns that have worked with the program have adopted the BMPs for all

road maintenance work.

- As of 2008, 154 VT towns have participated in the program since its 1997 inception.
- Of the 154 total, 84 towns are in the Champlain Basin.
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