### 1. Ahead of the Storm (AOTS)

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- b. Project Description
- c. Project Partners & Funders

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- a. AOTS Demonstration Site Locations
- b. Roads, Waterways, Subsheds
- c. Water Quality Conditions

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- b. Location Name/Address/Watershed
- c. Stormwater Problems
- d. Potential Implementation Designs

### 4. Design Principles for Optimal Conservation Practices (OCPs)

### 5. Explanation of Site Assessment and Design Process

#### 6. AOTS Demonstration Site Materials

- a. Charlotte Library
- b. Charlotte Senior Center
- c. Charlotte Park & Wildlife Refuge
- d. Horsford Nursery, Charlotte
- e. Charlotte Congregational Church
- f. Big Oak Lane Neighborhood, Charlotte
- g. Dubrul Home and Greenbush Road, Charlotte
- h. Mack Farm and East Thompson's Point Road, Charlotte
- i. Hinesburg Town Garage
- j. LaPlatte Headwaters Town Forest, Hinesburg
- k. Charlotte Central School
- I. Shelburne Community School
- m. Brook Lane Neighborhood, Shelburne
- n. Champlain Valley Union High School (CVUHS), Hinesburg

### 7. Contact Information and Resources



### **1. AHEAD OF THE STORM**

In 2014, members of the Charlotte Congregational Church and the Lewis Creek Association (LCA) joined together to discuss the serious decline of Lake Champlain's health and water quality, and to identify steps communities could take to reduce their contribution to that decline. *Ahead of the Storm* (AOTS) grew



out of this meeting: a group of concerned citizens from Charlotte, Hinesburg, and Shelburne representing municipal, school, church, and civic organizations, with representatives from state agencies.

AOTS is committed to helping communities change the way stormwater is managed on properties in order to reduce water pollution and to be more prepared for extreme weather events. Stormwater runoff from driveways, fields, parking areas and lawns is a major factor in the deterioration of our water quality. Heavier and more frequent rainfalls are accelerating the rate of erosion and the flow of pollutants into our streams and Lake Champlain.

#### **Project Description**

The goal of AOTS is to showcase examples of positive land stewardship throughout the LaPlatte watershed region, including the McCabe's Brook, the LaPlatte River, and adjacent smaller streams draining to Lake Champlain. According to the South Chittenden River Watch stream monitoring program, this region has documented overall poor water quality conditions. To accomplish the AOTS goal, 14 municipal, commercial and private properties were selected to become demonstration sites on which to learn about more optimal or robust conservation practices in a variety of landscape settings across our watershed region. Sites were chosen because of their ideal location for easy public viewing and/or documented poor water quality in their particular catchment or drainage area. The pollution stressors in each catchment inform the water quality improvement design at that particular site.

With state and local funding (see below), LCA and AOTS hired technical consultants to assess each property and to design the most optimal plans to address stormwater runoff issues. To date, some sites have design plans while some have been constructed. Where landscape conditions allow, these plans use more "Optimal Conservation Practices" or OCPs. OCPs allow runoff from larger weather events, and/or from an entire neighborhood catchment area, to slow down, spread out and seep into the ground, reducing or eliminating sediments and other pollutants flowing into rivers and lakes. OCPs aim to increase flood resiliency during Vermont's more frequent and extreme storm events.

The public is invited to tour many of these sites, to learn about the ways in which stormwater moves on a particular landscape, and to see how, without proper treatment designs, stormwater can cause local erosion that degrades nearby streams and the Lake. The public will be able to view the design plans for addressing the flow and absorption of the runoff, and/or the completed projects. Printed materials describing the site assessment and design/construction processes are available for each AOTS site. These demonstration sites serve many purposes, all for the benefit of improving our water resources and storm resiliency:

- Community members will learn more about Optimal Conservation Practices and how they can apply these practices to their own properties and/or advocate for OCPs on public lands.
- Municipal officials will be encouraged to assess town properties, to promote OCPs in the management of public lands, and to support OCPs in town plans and regulations.
- As a result of the installation of OCPs, there will be a reduction of stormwater runoff inputs into local streams and the Lake, with the long-term benefit of improving water quality and flood resiliency.
- The sites will model high quality stewardship of the land, influencing current and future generations to improve management of stormwater in ways that more greatly reduce pollution and the accelerated eutrophication of Lake Champlain.

### **Future Plans**

AOTS continues to work with demonstration site owners to determine the best design options for their properties and to develop implementation plans. AOTS is actively assisting property owners to seek funding sources for the implementation and stewardship phases of their projects. In addition, AOTS materials aim to assist interested property owners who were inspired by the demonstration sites to design their own OCPs.

### **Project Partners and Funders**

Lewis Creek Association Milone and MacBroom, Inc. Charlotte Congregational Church Charlotte Library Town of Shelburne Town of Hinesburg Town of Charlotte South Chittenden River Watch LaPlatte Watershed Partnership <u>Place Creative Company</u> AOTS Demonstration Site Property Owners <u>Kelsey Trust, Vermont Community Foundation</u> <u>Vermont Agency of Natural Resources</u> <u>Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District</u> <u>Lake Champlain Basin Program</u> <u>VTrans Better Roads Program</u> <u>UVM Lake Champlain Sea Grant</u> <u>The Nature Conservancy, Vermont Chapter</u>

# **Surface Water Conditions & Ahead of the Storm Project Location**

# **LaPlatte River & Direct Drainage Watersheds** Hinesburg, Shelburne, & Charlotte, Vermont

# Introduction

Data collection over the past 10 years in the watersheds of the LaPlatte River, Thorp Brook, Kimball Brook, and Holmes Brook has improved understanding of water resource conditions and led to the identification of water quality, stream channel stability, and habitat improvement projects. This project summarizes the data on a map and prioritizes the projects in a list for each Town - Charlotte, Hinesburg, and Shelburne. An annotated bibliography has been provided to connect each recommendation to the data and report from which it originated.

Baseline conditions at South Chittenden

River Watch sampling stations (2004 to 2015) compared to VT Water Quality

Standards (2014). Poor Water Quality

E. Coli = Indicator of coliform bacteria

Likelihood of excessive channel change,

stormwater runoff, with more runoff from urban and agricultural areas than from

downstream receiving waters such

can degrade local habitat and

changing paths, during a flood.

The type of landcover influences

forested and naturally vegetated

corrected by MMI based on field

Ahead of the Storm Project

observations 2013.

landcovers. Data from 2006 NLCD,

P = Total Phosphorus Solids = Turbidity

as Lake Champlain.

CI = Chloride

# Legend



### Stream Channel Stability



### Landcover

- Developed- Medium to High Density
- Rural Development- Low Density
- Agriculture
- Shrubs and Grasses
- Forest
- National Wetland Inventory
- Lakes and Ponds

### Streams (By Order)

- $\land \lor \lor \land \lor \lor$
- Railroad
- Roads
- **CONTINUATION** Town Boundary
- Watershed Boundary

# For More Information:

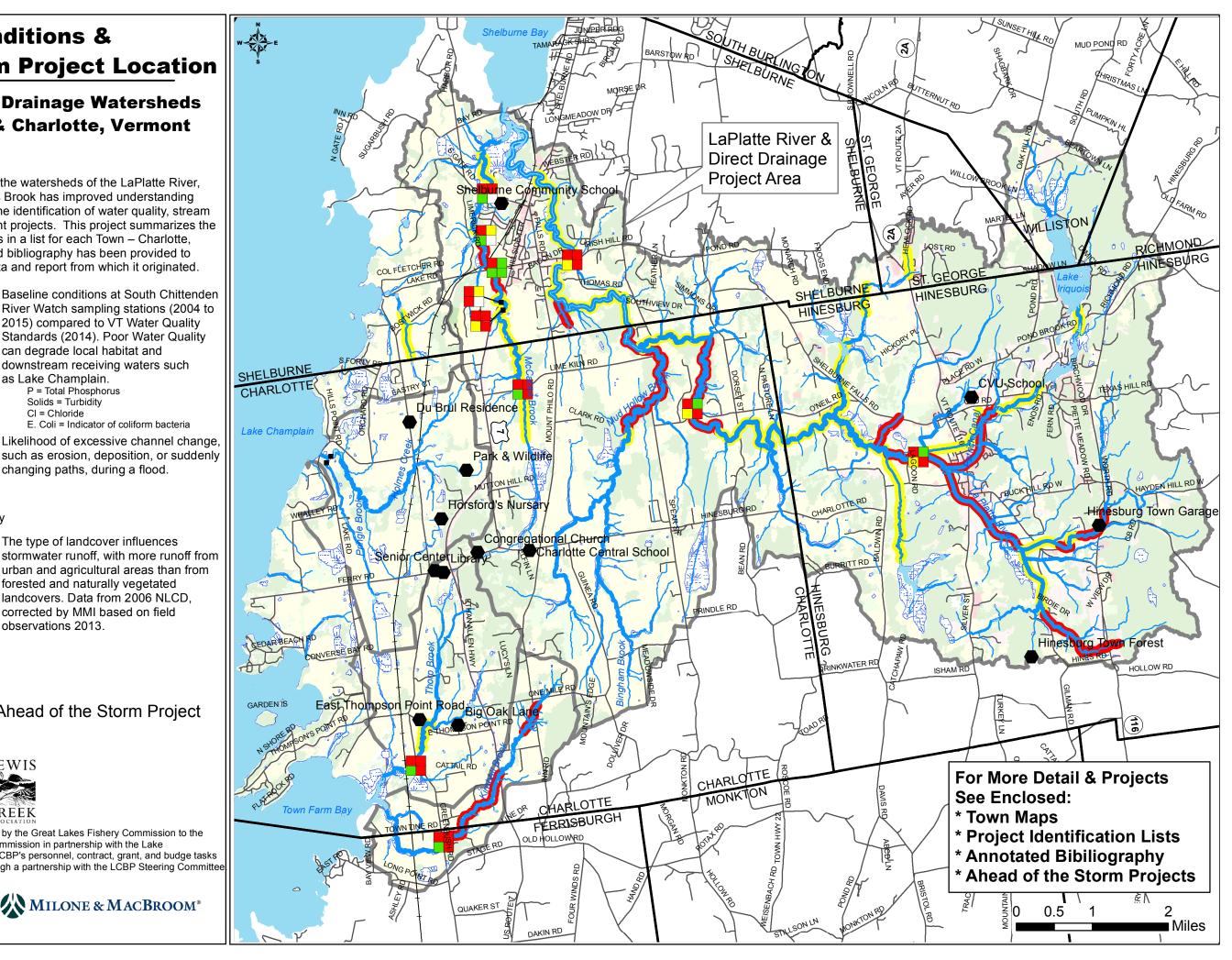
Lewis Creek Watershed Association www.lewiscreek.org



This project was funded by an agreement awarded by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin Program. NEIWPCC manages LCBP's personnel, contract, grant, and budge tasks and provides input on the program's activities through a partnership with the LCBP Steering Committee



MILONE & MACBROOM®



# 3. AHEAD OF THE STORM (AOTS) DEMONSTRATION SITES



Shelburne, Charlotte and Hinesburg demonstration sites showcase a variety of optimal storm water and water quality conservation practices designed for more extreme weather events, increased water quality treatment and river corridor protection. See section 6 for site information.

Treatment Area Size, Ownership, Town, Funding Source	Demonstration Site Name Watershed	Site Description/ Stormwater Problem to Address	Potential Implementation Practices
Small Scale, Public Charlotte ERP design	Charlotte Library 115 Ferry Rd., Charlotte Holmes Brook Watershed	Increased flow and inundation from impervious surfaces in hydric soil location	Rain barrels, swales, wetland enhancement, rain garden
Small Scale, Public Charlotte ERP design	Charlotte Senior Center 212 Ferry Rd., Charlotte Holmes Brook Watershed	Increased flow and inundation from impervious surfaces in hydric soil location	Rain barrels, swales, bioretention area, rain garden
Small Scale, Public Charlotte ERP design	Charlotte Park & Wildlife Refuge North Greenbush Rd., Charlotte Holmes Brook Watershed	Runoff and erosion from ditches in agriculture land use flowing toward town beach and Lake	
Small Scale, Private Charlotte ERP design	Horsford Gardens and Nursery 2111 Greenbush Rd., Charlotte Holmes Brook Watershed	Runoff and erosion from ditches in commercial land use	Soft gully fixes, check dams, swales, rain garden
Large Scale, Public Charlotte ERP design	Charlotte Congregational Church 403 Church Hill Rd., Charlotte McCabe's/Thorp Brook Watersheds	Increased flow and erosion from impervious surfaces and steep headwater slopes	Rain garden, swales, wetland enhancement
Large Scale, Private Charlotte ERP design	Big Oak Lane neighborhood Big Oak Lane, Charlotte Thorp Brook Watershed	Increased flow and erosion from impervious surfaces in lacustrine soils location near stream	Swales, stormwater pond, vegetation plan, check dams, riparian buffer
Large Scale, Private Charlotte ERP design	Dubrul home 845 Greenbush Rd., Charlotte Holmes Brook Watershed	Increased flow from town ditch and high water table location	Rain garden vegetation plan, check dams, swales
Large Scale, Private Charlotte ERP design VTrans BR implementation	Mack farm and ETP Road ROW E. Thompson's Point Rd., Charlotte Thorp Brook Watershed	Increased flow and erosion from ag fields, undersized road ditch, direct discharge to Brook	Swales, right size culvert, vegetation plan, check dams, riparian buffer
Large Scale, Public Hinesburg ERP design	Hinesburg Town Garage 907 Beecher Brook Road, Hinesburg LaPlatte Watershed	Increased flow and erosion from impervious surfaces associated with Town Garage/ Gravel Pit and CSWD Drop Off Center	Vegetation plan, erosion runoff controls, Bio- Retention pond or Rain Garden.
Large Scale, Public Hinesburg ERP design	LaPlatte Headwaters Town Forest Gilman Road, Hinesburg LaPlatte Watershed	Accelerating head cut from past forest and river management practices	Professional evaluation on causes of erosion and establishment of management plan
Med Scale, Public Charlotte LCBP design	Charlotte Central School 408 Hinesburg Road McCabe's Brook Watershed	Increased flow and inundation from impervious surfaces in hydric soil location	Rain barrels, swales, wetland enhancement, rain garden
Med Scale, Public Shelburne LCBP design	Shelburne Community School 345 Harbor Road, Shelburne McCabe's Brook Watershed	Increased flow and ponding from impervious surfaces in hydric soil location at gateway to Shelburne Bay	Rain barrels, swales, wetland enhancement, rain garden
Medium Scale, Public Shelburne ERP design LCBP implementation	Sally Thomas home and Brook Lane ROW 41 Pinehurst Drive, Shelburne Munroe Brook Watershed (stormwater impaired)	Increased flows and ditch erosion from ditch network	Right size ditch, swale enhancement with vegetation and check dam
Medium-Large Scale, Public Hinesburg LCBP design	CVUHS 369 CVU Rd, Hinesburg LaPlatte/Patrick Brook Watershed	Increased flows and erosion from impervious surfaces	Swale enhancement with vegetation and check dam, bioretention area

### 4. DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR OPTIMAL CONSERVATION PRACTICES

The goal of the Ahead of the Storm (AOTS) Project, led by the Lewis Creek Association, is to define and implement Optimal Conservation Practices (OCPs) that establish treatment levels above permit requirements necessary to protect ecosystem functions where feasible and cost effective. Recent climate trends show increasing storm frequency, intensity, and



magnitude<sup>[1][2]</sup>. AOTS recognizes a need for greater emphasis on water retention, infiltration and filtering. Recommended OCP practices will naturalize the movement of stormwater runoff across the land, enhance flood resiliency, and protect water quality in receiving lakes and streams. This approach is recommended for Vermont headwater forest protection<sup>[3]</sup> and is also applied here in the LaPlatte watershed region of the Champlain valley.

OCPs do a more complete job of slowing down runoff, spreading out runoff, and promoting infiltration<sup>[4]</sup>.

SLOW IT DOWN Increase Roughness of Land Surfaces Decrease Slopes Dissipate Energy SPREAD IT OUT Disperse Flow Paths Interrupt Flow Paths Direct to Infiltration SOAK IT IN Increase Infiltration Minimize Disturbance Minimize Impervious Surfaces & Soil Compaction

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN DESIGNING OCPS FOR WATER QUALITY PROTECTION & FLOOD RESILIENCY

- ✓ Slow the rate of water flow
- ✓ Increase the amount of infiltration
- ✓ Reduce soil movement and erosion
- ✓ Enhance the capacity of naturally vegetated land to trap sediment
- Maintain water quality even during storm events
- ✓ Consider stream stability and water quality of the greater river system

- Reverse cumulative impacts from multiple problem areas
- ✓ Use practices known to reduce phosphorusrich runoff
- ✓ Use practices that are cost-effective and feasible for landowners
- ✓ Go beyond the minimum design requirements to achieve OCPs

#### EXAMPLES

- 100-foot buffer from surface waters, instead of the minimum requirements
- When possible, design for larger stormwater flow volumes than are required by state permits
- Where possible, design for the channel protection volume (CPv) standards for optimizing the stormwater practice. These standards are designed to help avoid incremental impacts to the stability of nearby stream corridors by slowing and treating stormwater runoff on site.
- If redeveloping a site, account for the amount runoff from the entire impervious and natural areas.
- Design for no net water volume runoff when changing land use and land cover.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Armstrong, W. H., M. J. Collins, and N. P. Snyder, 2012. Increased Frequency of Low-Magnitude Floods in New England. Journal of The American Water Resources Association 48(2):306-320.
- [2] Collins, M. J., 2009. Evidence for Changing Flood Risk in New England since the Late 20th Century. Journal of The American Water Resources Association 45(2):279-290.
- [3] Underwood, K. L. and D. Brynn, 2015. Enhancing Flood Resiliency of Vermont State Lands (Draft). Prepared for Vermont Forests, Parks & Recreation by South Mountain Research & Consulting and Vermont Family Forests, Montpelier, VT.
- [4] USEPA, 2014. Planning for Flood Recovery and Long-Term Resilience in Vermont: Smart Growth Approaches for Disaster-Resilient Communities. EPA 231-R-14-003. Office of Sustainable Communities, Smart Growth Program, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, DC.

#### GLOSSARY

**Channel Protection Volume (CPv)**: The stormwater treatment standard that requires that stormwater from a given land use after a 1-year, 24-hour rainfall event be contained in a stormwater management structure for a certain amount of time before it enters the nearest water body. For cold water fish habitats, stormwater must be contained for 12 hours, and for warm water fish habitats, 24 hours, to meet the standard of channel protection volume.

**Climate Resilience**: The capacity for human communities and surrounding ecosystems to absorb stresses and maintain function in the face of external stresses imposed upon it by climate change (e.g., flooding, drought, etc).

Hydrology: The movement of water in relation to land.

Headwaters: A tributary stream that is close to or forms a part of its source river.

Infiltration: The downward movement of water into soil.

**Stormwater Infrastructure**: the basic physical structures designed to capture, store, and treat stormwater runoff. Stormwater infrastructure includes (but is not limited to) retention ponds, ditches, swales, rain gardens, and constructed wetlands.

**Riparian Buffer**: Vegetated areas along river banks that filter pollution, protect riverbank stability, and provide habitat.

Water Quality Volume (WQv) and Treatment Standards: The stormwater infrastructure must be designed to capture 90% of the annual storm events (referred to as the **90% rule**), and remove 80% of the annual post-development total suspended solids load, and 40% of the total phosphorus load.

**1-year, 24-hour storm**: A storm volume that could be expected to hit Vermont any given year over a period of 24 hours (i.e., a 100% chance). Currently, the Vermont Stormwater Manual defines this as a roughly 2 inches of rainfall in 24 hours. This value varies slightly across the state. In Chittenden County, a 1-yr, 24-hr storm is defined as bearing 2.1 inches of rainfall.

**10-year, 24-hour storm**: A storm volume that could be expected to hit Vermont once every ten years over a period of 24 hours (i.e., a 10% chance). In Chittenden County, a 10-yr, 24-hr storm is defined as bearing 3.2 inches of rainfall.

**100-year, 24-hour storm**: A storm volume that could be expected to hit Vermont once every onehundred years over a period of 24 hours (i.e., a 1% chance). In Chittenden County, a 1-yr, 24-hr storm is defined as bearing 5.2 inches of rainfall. **Note**: When considering climate change (think Tropical Storm Irene), 100-yr, 24-hr storms are projected to occur far more frequently than a 1% chance would suggest.

### 5. SITE ASSESSMENT & DESIGN PROCESS

The process and steps for any design process are similar and can be applied to solve problems across a large variety of site conditions and landuses. An AOTS demonstration site involves close participation with the property owner throughout the steps. The following is an overview of the site assessment and design process. Some advanced steps may not be required for a simple project.



#### PRE-PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Before a project begins, it needs to be identified and landowners need to be willing to proceed. Steps might include:

- Identify a general problem area based on stream water quality, known flood problems, or other water related issues.
- Discuss possible benefits, project impacts, as well as long-term maintenance requirements with landowners and other stakeholders so that there is a mutual understanding of possible projects.
- Document project buy-in from landowners and move forward with next steps.

#### MAP CONTEXT & FEATURES WITH EXISTING DATA

During this desktop phase, preparation for a site visit is complete by compiling aerial photography and available data:

- Topography (elevation, peaks, and depressions; contours from LiDAR, if available)
- Soil Map: hydrologic soil groups (A, B, C, D) and floodable soils
- Existing wetlands
- Property lines

- River Corridors
- Fluvial Erosion Hazard Zones (FEH)

• Nearby water quality and subwatershed area

- FEMA floodplains and floodways
- Other known mapped data, possibly from a site plan or existing stormwater permit

#### SITE ASSESSMENT FIELD VISIT

Visit the site and use compiled basemap data to guide more detailed observations and record:

- Identify and draw arrows showing water flow paths including pipes, swales, and overland
- Record erosion stream banks, rills, gullies
- Locate existing stormwater infrastructure pipes, ditches, ponds, catchment areas
- Map impervious surfaces buildings, parking areas, roads (paved and gravel)
- Note land type and/or ecosystems present meadow, forest, lawn, paved, gravel
- Photograph site conditions

- Note site constraints such as utilities electrical wires, poles, manholes, valves indicating water lines, etc.
- Note site opportunities for stormwater treatment (especially wet areas) and consider possible solutions
- Delineate larger subwatershed drainage area and boundaries which are typically drawn to encompass areas where treatment may be done
- Locate site information not otherwise noted, including water quality conditions of the subwatershed
- Record all information on mapping and in notes

#### DESIGN

Visit the site and use compiled basemap data to guide more detailed observations and record:

- Draw drainage area boundaries to all possible stormwater treatment areas
- Perform hydrology calculations based on soils, land use, and runoff patterns
- Choose and size OCPs based on target storms maximize treatment capacity to address future climate
- Illustrate OCPs on design plans include plan, section, profile, and details to define the specific action

#### IMPLEMENTATION

Discuss OCPs and costs with landowners and work with them on any remaining steps up to and including construction:

- Make plans for additional design and engineering, soils testing, survey, securing funding, and/or permitting, if needed
- Consider volunteer, donation, or education options
- Consider phases if more than one practice designed
- Construction, then ongoing maintenance

#### **GLOSSARY**

**Analysis of Alternatives (AoA):** an analytical comparison of the effectiveness, cost, and risks of any potential OCPs that could fit the site. Factors that go into this analysis include runoff volume, erosion, and other site-specific variables.

**Culvert**: a tunnel carrying a stream or open drain under a road, railroad, trail, or similar obstruction/impervious surface.

**Drainage Area Boundaries:** Comparable to the rim of a bowl, drainage area boundaries are the higher elevation points surrounding an area from which water is shed and deposited into points of low elevation.

**Erosion:** The action of surface processes (e.g., water flow in this context) that remove soil, rock, or dissolved material from location and then transports it to another.

**FEMA**: The United States Federal Emergency Management Agency, which responds to natural disasters including extreme weather events.

**FEMA floodplains**: A floodplain is an area of low-lying ground adjacent to a river, formed mainly of river sediments and subject to flooding. FEMA has mapped floodplains by their definition and standards. These areas may differ from local boundaries.

**Fluvial Erosion Hazard (FEH) Zones:** Formal areas delineated for certain communities based on studies of how far the stream or river reaches during heavy rain/flood events.

Gully: A landform created by running water, eroding sharply into soil (typically on a hillside).

**Hydrologic soil group:** A soil classification system created by the NRCS, ranked A to D. *Group A* consists of sand, loamy sands, or sandy loams, and has the lowest runoff potential and highest infiltration rates. *Group B* consists of silt loams or loams, and has a moderate infiltration rate. *Group C* consists of sandy clay loams, and have low infiltration rates. *Group D* consists of clay loams, silty clay loams, sandy clays, silty clays, or clays, and has the highest runoff potential and lowest infiltration rates.

Impervious surfaces: A surface (such as asphalt) that does not allow water to penetrate or infiltrate through.

NRCS: The United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service.

Ponding: Areas where water forms pools or puddles.

**Rill**: A shallow channel cut into soil by the erosive action of flowing water.

**Riparian Buffer**: Vegetated areas along river banks that filter pollution, protect riverbank stability, and provide habitat.

**River Corridor**: Room needed by a stream to maintain its least-erosive form and buffer.

Runoff: The movement of water, and substances carried with it, across a land surface.

**Stormwater Infrastructure**: Natural and green structures and land features designed to capture, store, and treat stormwater runoff. Stormwater infrastructure includes (but is not limited to) retention ponds, ditches, swales, rain gardens, forests, natural areas and wetlands.



### **Site Packet Contents**

- AOTS Summary Materials
  - Existing Conditions and Site Assessment with Map and Photo
  - > Final Design Concept, Layout Details, Operations and Maintenance Plan
  - Cost Estimate
- Implementation
  - Current Status and Funding
  - > Photos

### Site Packet Links

**Charlotte Library** 

Charlotte Senior Center

Charlotte Park & Wildlife Refuge

Horsford Nursery, Charlotte

**Charlotte Congregational Church** 

Big Oak Lane Neighborhood, Charlotte

Du Brul Home and Greenbush Road, Charlotte

Mack Farm and East Thompson's Point Road, Charlotte

Hinesburg Town Garage

LaPlatte Headwaters Town Forest, Hinesburg

Charlotte Central School

Shelburne Community School

Brook Lane, Shelburne...coming soon

Champlain Valley Union High School (CVUHS), Hinesburg...coming soon

### 7. CONTACT INFORMATION AND RESOURCES



#### **Partners and Funders**

Lewis Creek Association Milone and MacBroom, Inc. Charlotte Congregational Church Charlotte Library **Town of Shelburne** Town of Hinesburg Town of Charlotte South Chittenden River Watch LaPlatte Watershed Partnership **Place Creative Company** Kelsey Trust, Vermont Community Foundation Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District Lake Champlain Basin Program VTrans Better Roads Program UVM Lake Champlain Sea Grant The Nature Conservancy, Vermont Chapter AOTS Demonstration Site Property Owners (see page 6)

### **Helpful Resources**

The Vermont Rain Garden Manual "Gardening to Absorb the Storm" – general design information and plant info

http://www.uvm.edu/seagrant/sites/default/files/uploads/publication/VTRainGardenManual\_Full.pdf Vermont Low Impact Development Guide for Residential and Small Sites https://anrweb.vt.gov/PubDocs/DEC/WSMD/stormwater/docs/sw\_LID%20Guide.pdf Vermont Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) Simplified Sizing Tool for Small Projects http://www.vpic.info/GreenInfrastructureCalculatorsAndSizingTools.html Vermont DEC Stormwater Program http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/stormwater New Draft Stormwater Manual – this has design information for most of the treatment options http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/stormwater/docs/ManualUpdate/sw\_VSMM\_VOLUME1\_0 3012016\_DRAFT.pdf University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center http://www.unh.edu/unhsc/ Vermont Wetland Plant Supply – local plants with lots of information on where they are appropriate http://vermontwetlandplants.com/