

Wetlands

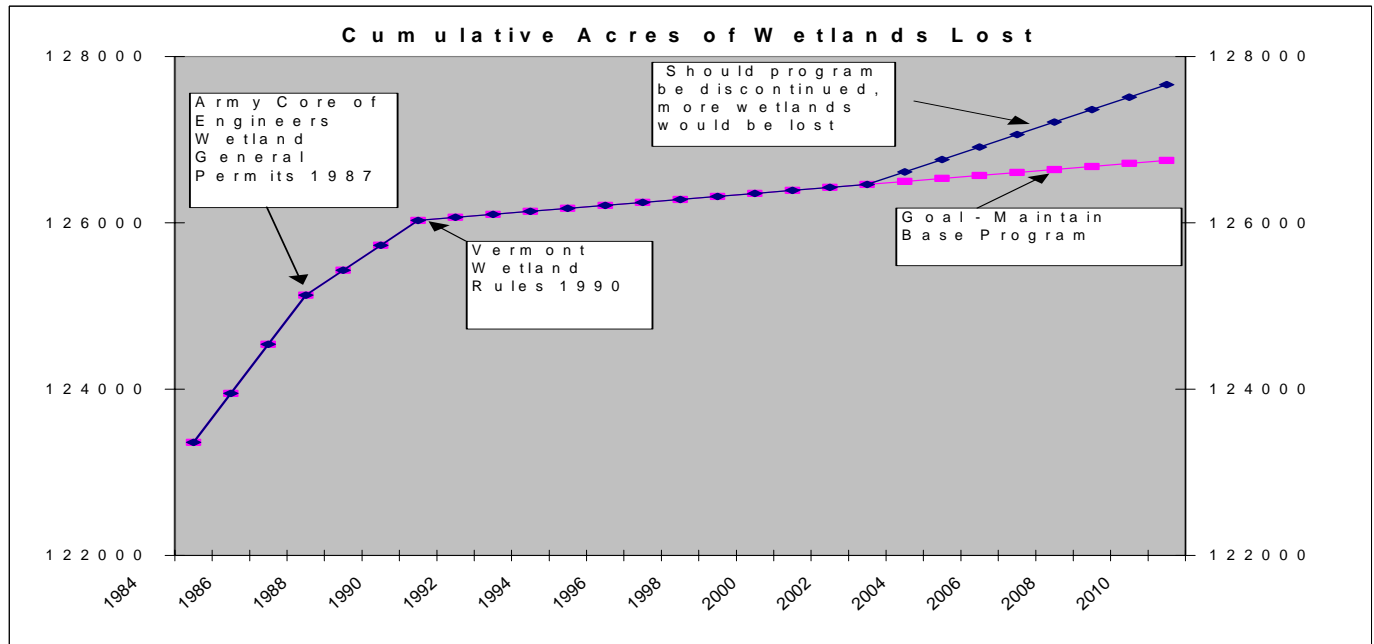
Water Quality Division

May 11, 2004

Results

Conservation of Vermont's significant wetlands for the functions and values they provide; education of Vermont's citizens with respect to the significance of wetlands; data collection and reporting through monitoring, assessment and inventories on the status and trends of Vermont's significant wetlands

Key Indicators



Story Behind Baseline Performance

Vermont was losing an estimated 590 acres of wetlands annually prior to the creation of state and federal wetland protection programs. The rate of loss began to decline when the US Army Corps of Engineers started issuing general permits in 1987. Since 1990, Vermont's Department of Environmental Conservation has administered the Wetland Rules, and the rate of wetland loss has fallen to 8 acres per year in 2002. Should the state program not be continued, this trend would be reversed, with a loss of valuable wetland acreage and function.

Strategies/ Performance Measures / Proposed Accomplishments

A more detailed account of the work plan can be found in the FY 2004 Wetland Program Development Grant Proposal, Date: December 1, 2003. The program may combine this proposed workplan and the corresponding annual report into the format of the PPA reports in the future.

Regulation, Compliance Assistance, and Enforcement

Vermont Wetland Rules:

Continue implementation of the Vermont Wetland Rules, primarily through review and issuance of Conditional Use Determinations, enforcement and compliance.

Performance Measure	"P"=Projected and A"=Actual Values	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Net number of known wetland acres saved. *	P				80	30	35	40	40	40	40	40
	A	103	40	8	48	8	50	7.5				
Number of site visits	P								800	815	850	850
	A	749	788	912	920	847	872	633*				
Number of CUD's issued	P							100	100	105	117	120
	A	97	101	62	87	103	101	90				
Number of Wetland acres lost (net loss)	P								6	6	6	6
	A	16	15	11	10	14	11	5.5				
Number of Citizen Complaints	P							110	85	83	77	75
	A	54	70	20	54	64	57	106				
Number of CUD's denied	P								0	0	0	
	A	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1			
Number of Wetland acres gained	P									0.1	0.1	0.1
	A	1.36	1.03	0	8.17	0.93	0.53	0.09	0.08			

* Staff reductions of 1 to 3 employees for most of this year.

Proposed Accomplishments

2004, 2005, 2006 – Maintain existing Wetland regulatory program

Grants and Loans

2004 – No grants and loans anticipated

Education and Technical Assistance

Brochures, fact sheets, consultation with towns, workshops for targeted audiences, teacher training, educational field days for elementary and high school students, and site visits.

Proposed Accomplishments

2004, 2005, 2006 – Target education on general contractors (2004), and real estate agents (2005) and lawyers (2006).

Monitoring, Assessment, and Direct Services

Data collection from site visits and projects completed, purple loosestrife control, and mapping projects

Proposed Accomplishments

2004, 2005, 2006 – Maintain existing Wetland Purple Loosestrife Control Program

2004, 2005, 2006 – Develop monitoring and assessment program

2004

1. The wetlands program will work with the NRCS and other groups to identify and implement wetland restoration projects in Vermont. Focus this year will be the NRCS Pittsfield Farm wetland restoration project. If funding is secured, wetland restoration projects will be focused on the Lake Champlain phosphorus TMDL.
2. The wetlands program will continue to report to EPA on efforts to develop a comprehensive monitoring and assessment program; improve the effectiveness of compensatory mitigation; and refine the protection of vulnerable wetlands and aquatic resources. Note the program may in the future combine the annual reports into the PPA reporting format to reduce redundancy of reporting. In this case, the annual report would report on progress for that year and details on the longer-term status and trends may be reported on a frequency other than annual.
3. The wetlands program will collaborate with the surface water programs efforts to integrate wetland bioassessment into stream, lake and pond assessments.
4. Due to funding needs and priorities, DEC cannot pass-through base funds to the Heritage Program for wetland inventories. The Heritage Program will apply for competitive grants to continue wetland inventory work. If it does not receive funding, the Wetlands Section will develop a strategy for continuing this work, most likely in conjunction with wetland bioassessment as noted above.