Vermont Protects River Corridors to Mitigate Flood Damage

After Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 several state agencies, non-governmental organizations, as well as regional and municipal leaders worked together to strengthen flood resilience across Vermont. The Flood Ready Vermont website (www.floodready.vermont.gov) is dedicated to municipal officials - helping build citizen and community support for hazard reduction that can save lives and reduce damage to property and public infrastructure. Their efforts are excellent examples of best practices in communicating hazard mitigation challenges and solutions.

The central message of Vermont Flood Ready: Flood damage has become more common and more costly — but it doesn’t have to be that way. We can become flood ready together — developing in safer places, protecting the functions of the watersheds that protect us, adapting our critical infrastructure and preparing for emergencies. All over the state, select board members, planning commission members, town officials, planners, and citizens are working to make our communities flood resilient. Is your community flood ready?

Keep what works.

Through abundant links, videos, community data and stories of success Flood Ready Vermont calls attention to how the power of moving water can damage roads, culverts, bridges, homes and critical services. The site highlights the importance of protecting river corridors to provide the space needed by rivers and creeks to
meander, slow down, and thus reduce their erosive power. The functions of river corridors are protected under state permits and by 30% of municipalities.

The website includes stories about Vermonter working proactively to become flood ready. A video produced by the Connecticut River Conservancy explains how the Town of Brandon is working to reduce flood damage, restore river corridors and adapt buildings (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nxrg9x6Klh0&feature=youtu.be). Another, produced by the Connecticut River Conservancy and the Conservation Law Foundation, illustrates how floodplains worked to reduce damage along Otter Creek (https://youtu.be/ucb-Y8ipng).

Vermont Flood Ready poses important questions: How can we protect the forests in our watersheds that slow down the flow of water and reduce the damaging peak flows? How can we create the space for streams and rivers to maintain the least erosive gradient down the valley? How can we delay water uphill, and on floodplains, before it arrives in town? Banners convey the key messages: Disaster is Not Necessary and Protect What Works!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**
Vermont Flood Ready
floodready.vermont.gov
Incentives for Municipal Flood Resilience
floodready.vermont.gov/findfunding/emergencyreliefassistance
Community Reports with Town Data – Updated live by collaborating agencies
floodready.vermont.gov/assessment/communityreports
Listserve for Municipal Officials
floodready.vermont.gov/gethelp#Listserve
Flood Ready Atlas with River Corridor Maps and Incentive Data
tinyurl.com/floodreadyatlas
Flood Ready Resources
http://floodready.vermont.gov/get_help
Making It Happen – Stories of community work for flood resilience
http://floodready.vermont.gov/stories
The Watershed Management Division - Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed
Floodplain Managers – Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
Natural Hazard Mitigation Association nhma.info