



Echo-Seymour Lake Watershed Action Plan 2023



Orleans County Conservation District (OCNRCD) and Memphremagog Watershed Association (MWA) have secured grant funding from the **Vermont Dept of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC)** to lead, with the engagement of community members and other partners, the development of a combined **Lake Watershed Action Plan (LWAP)** for **Echo & Seymour Lakes**.

What is a Lake Watershed Action Plan: An LWAP is an assessment and planning tool that identifies the greatest threats to water quality, wildlife habitat, and the overall health of the lake ecosystem. The process evaluates the shoreland, tributaries, drainage ditches, wetlands, hydrologically connected roads, and working landscapes to create a priority list of issues and projects. The result is a planning guide that prioritizes restoration and protection actions for the watershed. The plan is shared with the community and local partners for their input.

The Echo-Seymour Lakes Watershed is 15,481 acres including the two lakes (24.2 sq miles). The natural beauty is integral to the quality of life for the residents of the towns of Charleston and Morgan. The Seymour Lake Watershed lies completely within the Echo Lake Watershed (**see map** of watershed on reverse). Both lake communities have active lake associations, and the two communities have committed to working together to create one LWAP that covers both lakes. The VTDEC lists the Echo Lake Watershed as “moderately disturbed.” Although Seymour’s phosphorus level is not presently increasing, the level has not receded to its base level in the 1990’s. Additionally, new threats like climate change and the reality of more extreme storms could increase phosphorus levels in the future.

LWAP Project Timeline:

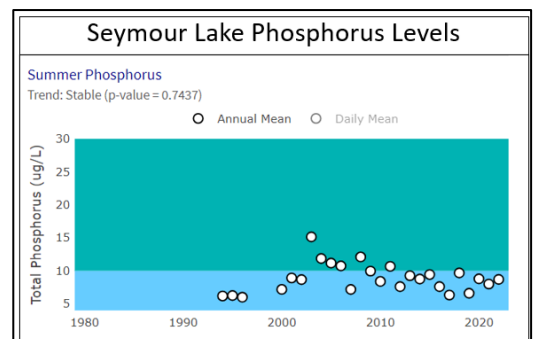
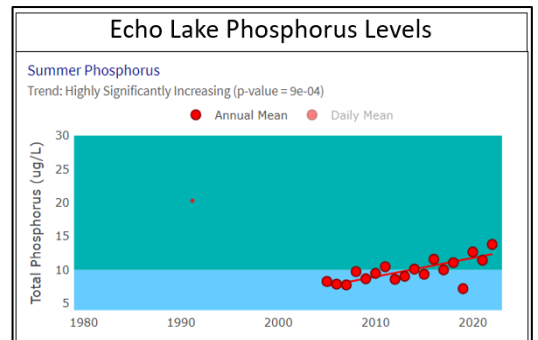
| | |
|---------------------|--|
| June-July 2023 | Kick-off meetings with stakeholders to review data library & prioritization criteria |
| Aug 2023- July 2024 | Field assessments |
| Aug 2024 | Stakeholder meeting to review project prioritization & seek community input |
| Nov 2024 | Public presentation of final report, including restoration plans for 3 priority |

Field Assessments:

- Lake shorelands & Lake Wise
- Roads
- Streams
- Other stakeholder-approved priority areas

Objectives & Outcomes:

- Create a watershed data library & ArcGIS [online story map](#) accessible by the public
- OCNRCD & MWA will engage stakeholders and the Project Team in identifying and prioritizing projects
- LWAP final report will include [summaries of up to 30 prioritized projects](#) and restorations plans including [30% concept designs for three top priority projects](#)
- Using LWAP, stakeholders will [source funds to complete project development, design & implementation](#).



For more information, please contact:
Sarah Damsell, Orleans County NRCD
802-334-6090 x7008



