

Appendix A. Summary of Recommendations - Upper Valley

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should:

1. work with local communities in plans for recreational use of its property at the Union Village flood control dam.
2. Repair erosion from heavy foot traffic at picnic areas at the Union Village flood control dam and Quechee Gorge.

Congress should

3. act to reduce the amount of air-borne mercury delivered to the Connecticut River Valley.

STATE GOVERNMENT

State legislatures should

4. urge the US Congress to act to reduce the amount of air-borne mercury delivered to the Connecticut River Valley.
5. NH legislature should provide sustainable funding for LCHIP.
6. NH legislature should pass legislation updating the definition of personal water craft to include all such craft under the definition of ski craft, retaining the 300' distance from shore for travel over headway speed.
7. NH legislature should provide more funding to NH Fish & Game to allow it to fulfill its responsibility for enforcement of OHRV laws.
8. enact legislation to create a framework for responsible use of ATVs
9. VT Legislature should adopt shoreland protection legislation.
10. should form a joint NH-VT committee to decide how to address dock permitting on the river.

NH Department of Safety should

11. support legislation to update definition of ski craft to include 3-4 person personal watercraft.
12. increase enforcement of existing boating laws, to prevent boating conflicts and minimize boat wake-induced riverbank erosion

Fish and Game/Wildlife and Parks/Recreation agencies should

13. provide information on invasives and boating law at their river access points
14. encourage additional car-top boat access for the use of canoes and other small craft, on the mainstem and on tributaries, because of their low impact on the river. Parking should be screened from the river and from nearby roads by a vegetated buffer.
15. continue to cooperate with watershed groups and conservation commissions to understand and address the Didymo infestation. Provide better color photographs on posters at boat launches. Use fishing license applications to educate the public.
16. discourage construction of new public and private boat ramps or expansion of existing ramps in this segment because of the negative impact of motor boats on the river and because adequate access for these boats already exists in the areas of the river deep enough to accommodate them.
17. assist the Town of Orford with its river access improvement to reduce sediment entering the river at the current ramp, expand the riparian buffer, and move parking further from the river and screen it with vegetation.
18. assist the Town of Norwich in reducing erosion at its river access across from the Ledyard Boat House. The access site also needs a sign.
19. address erosion control at NH Fish and Game's Blood Brook access in Lebanon, and provide a river access sign on Route 12A.
20. consider providing boat washing stations at ramps for trailered boats, and at Lake Morey, Lake Fairlee, Mascoma Lake, and other water bodies with infestations of aquatic invasive plants.
21. provide written guidance for landowners for the management of public and private boat landings, which would include the maximum bank height appropriate for a ramp, use of a riparian vegetated buffer strip, and a site for posting public information and education.
22. educate landowners about the benefits of leaving land open to the public and the liability protections offered by existing laws.
23. educate landowners about NH's 20% recreational adjustment under current use and Class A/B trails
24. consider designating limited special areas for ATV trails; require that their design, construction, and

maintenance are consistent with state and local planning and zoning, that water stays on site and trail erosion does not contribute to water quality degradation.

25. establish a mandatory registration fee for ATVs that is large enough to provide funds for law enforcement and trail construction; dedicate part of the fee to a landowner restitution fund to which landowners can apply for reimbursement if they have sustained damage from OHRVs.
26. require ATV riders to be members of a statewide ATV organization which would provide education and training; require completion of a course and mandatory ATV insurance.

State transportation agencies should

27. provide limited signage identifying waterways which is aesthetically in keeping with the rural nature of the region.
28. improve bicycling safety; assist towns in creating bike paths; promote the use of abandoned railroad rights-of-way as bike paths while continuing to permit landowners to access their land across tracks.
29. consider providing modest, public river access for car-top boats with parking for 2-4 cars at the Thetford/Lyme Bridge when it is upgraded.

NH DES should

30. assess water quality, to assure that the river is safe for swimming.
31. discourage construction of new public and private boat ramps or expansion of existing ramps in the Upper Valley segment because of the negative impact of motor boats on the river and because adequate access for these boats already exists in the areas of the river deep enough to accommodate them.
32. pursue further testing of fish tissue.
33. advise dock owners to take in their docks by November 1. Consider establishing a date for dock removal similar to that in effect for ice fishing houses.
34. continue to cooperate with watershed groups and conservation commissions to understand and address the Didymo infestation. Provide better color photographs on posters at boat launches. Use fishing license applications to educate the public.

VT Agency of Natural Resources should

35. adopt and enforce rules for docks on the Connecticut River and its tributaries similar to those established by New Hampshire.
36. place a river access sign on Route 5 for the N. Thetford Boat Landing and consider addressing sediment accumulation at the ramp.
37. continue to cooperate with watershed groups and conservation commissions to understand and address the Didymo infestation. Provide better color photographs on posters at boat launches. Use fishing license applications to educate the public.

TOWN GOVERNMENT : Area towns should

38. encourage more car-top boat access for canoes and other small craft, because of their low impact on the river; use low-impact design.
39. discourage construction of new public and private boat ramps because of the negative impact of motor boats on the river.
40. discourage construction of new public and private beaches because of the negative impact of imported sand and removal of the riparian buffer on water quality.
41. Fairlee and Piermont should consider locations for foot and car-top boat access.
42. Orford should work with the NH Fish and Game Department to achieve improvements at its existing river access.
43. Norwich should consider improvements to its river access opposite the Ledyard Boathouse, and identify alternative locations for foot and car-top boat access.
44. Hanover should proceed with improvements at the North Land Tract to allow boaters to launch their canoes and kayaks in Mink Brook near the Connecticut River, now that the town has closed the nearby public access at the wastewater treatment facility.
45. The City of Lebanon and the local Rotary Clubs should continue to pursue redevelopment of the Westboro Rail Yard, including a riverside path and a car-top boat launch.
46. The City of Lebanon should control erosion and install public information boards at its existing Connecticut River access sites at Riverside Park near the Wastewater Treatment Plant in West Lebanon and

below Cole Park in East Wilder. Consider how to protect the silver maple floodplain forest from vehicle damage at the West Lebanon launch and add directional signage on Route 12A. Removal of construction debris is also needed at Two Rivers Park.

47. The City of Lebanon should continue its work to eliminate combined sewer overflows.
48. consider how to address the problem of pet waste.
49. monitor local boat access points for nuisance plants.
50. in the absence of state oversight of dock construction, Vermont towns should consider adopting local control of docks.
51. advise riverfront landowners to take in their docks by Nov. 1
52. discourage construction of marinas on the river.
53. coordinate water rescue training and equipment
54. discourage large parking lots at recreational attractions, and closely review any development of recreational facilities along the river
55. screen parking at river access sites with a riparian vegetated buffer and install and maintain information boards at all water access sites, especially at the Norwich access and at Lebanon's access sites.
56. notify the public immediately if there is a suspected water quality violation at a wastewater treatment plant.
57. create trail guides to town owned properties.
58. identify opportunities, when land use is changed, to retain easements for public access for trails, birding, car-top access, or other low impact public recreation.
59. enhance bicycle safety by promoting construction of bike paths, both dedicated and adjacent to highways.
60. explore federal and state funding programs, such as SAFETEA, to create trails and other new recreation opportunities.
61. encourage snowmobile groups, the Upper Valley Trails Alliance, and other local recreation groups to provide monitoring, trail watches, and peer education.
62. schools and conservation commissions should consider creating a Quest within their town, using guidance and curricula created by Vital Communities of the Upper Valley.
63. define "recreational facilities" in land use regulations, to allow them to better guide these developments particularly along waterways. Limit the size of parking lots for recreational facilities.
64. take action to protect scenic views of the river, and of Upper Valley ridgelines and hilltops, if they have not already done so.
65. work with the US Army Corps of Engineers in plans for recreational use of its property at the Union Village Dam.

Regional Planning Commissions should

66. coordinate recreation and open space plans among communities and across the river.
67. help identify places where bicycle shoulders could be added without destroying the character of a local road.

The Connecticut River Joint Commissions should:

68. create written guidance for the public on construction and maintenance of river access, including design, riparian buffers, and existing state rules and regulations.
69. convene a joint NH/VT dock rules committee to agree upon how to achieve consistent oversight for dock construction on the Connecticut River

Connecticut River Scenic Byway Council should

70. aid in protection of scenic views of the river corridor.
71. help educate new residents and visitors to the region on respectful use of private land, such as asking landowner permission and avoiding littering.
72. encourage inn-to-inn canoe trips for their commercial value to local inn owners, and to relieve pressure on the canoe campsite system.
73. waypoint centers should offer Connecticut River Birding Trail guides and ValleyQuest publications
74. ensure that Byway centers are able to provide information about and directions to places of interest on both sides of the Connecticut River, not just those located within the same state.

PRIVATE SECTOR

TransCanada Hydro Northeast and its successors should:

75. continue to maintain its canoe campsite at Gilman Island or consider donating it to the Upper Valley Land Trust.

Upper Valley Land Trust should:

76. continue with its exemplary work in land conservation, providing public recreation access for car-top boats, wildlife observation, or trails where possible and appropriate.
77. work with the Town of Orford to establish a car-top boat access at Jacob's Brook.

Recreation groups should:

78. snowmobile groups, Upper Valley Trails Alliance, Dartmouth Outing Club, hiking groups, and bicycle clubs can provide monitoring, trail watches, and peer education on the proper use of private land to help prevent unwanted trespassing and littering. Encourage riders to move to four-cycle engines.
79. encourage landowners to keep their land open to the public
80. The Upper Valley Trails Alliance, Dartmouth Outing Club, Appalachian Mountain Club, Appalachian Trail Conference, and other trail groups should actively recruit help with trail maintenance and encourage hikers and horseback riders to avoid trails in wet conditions, especially when they are saturated from snow melt and rain.
81. encourage local stewardship of recreation areas (campsites, trail heads, trails) and responsible public use.
82. The Upper Valley Trails Alliance could encourage an organization to take active responsibility for overseeing the system of primitive canoe campsites and identify a river campsite coordinator.
83. The Upper Valley Trails Alliance should pursue a trail connection across the Lebanon-White River Junction railroad bridge.
84. Fishing tournament organizers should require boat and trailer checks before boats are launched in the river.
85. OHRV equipment dealers should encourage appropriate use of trails by not promoting the kinds of irresponsible behavior shown in manufacturers' advertisements.
86. work with the US Army Corps of Engineers in plans for recreational use of its property at the Union Village Dam and Quechee Gorge.
87. golf course managers using Connecticut River water for irrigation should register this water use with the State of New Hampshire.
88. Trail planners should work with willing private landowners to create trail connections for people and wildlife through private property, particularly in association with the well-established Appalachian Trail, snowmobile trails, and cross country ski trails.
89. Fishermen and other recreationists must be educated to carefully clean their gear after visiting the Connecticut River and report sightings of invasive aquatic species to state agencies. Observe the new baitfish regulations in Vermont and apply the same care in New Hampshire waters, to help protect fisheries from VHS disease.
90. Local outfitters and guides, outdoor stores where bait is sold, and local recreation programs should educate their customers and participants about Didymo and other invasives, and urge them to clean their gear.

Citizens should:

91. obey existing boat speed laws and avoid waterskiing above the Lyme/Thetford Bridge.
92. avoid littering at access sites and along riverbank; participate in volunteer cleanups
93. check and wash boats and trailers before launching in the Connecticut or its tributaries to avoid introducing milfoil, Zebra mussels, or other unwanted invasives, especially when leaving infested water bodies.
94. refrain from waterskiing in areas of the river too narrow to permit a boat to turn around.
95. avoid operating jet skis on the river at night.
96. dock owners should remove their docks by November 1, well before the river begins to freeze.
97. canoeists should help monitor the condition of the campsites.
98. fishermen and hunters should replace their lead sinkers, jigs, and shot with safe gear immediately.
99. fishermen should remove their bob houses well before the river's ice begins to break up in spring
100. fishermen should avoid anchoring their boats below Wilder Dam
101. avoid hiking or riding on trails in wet conditions, especially when exposed soils are saturated
102. volunteer to help with trail maintenance for their chosen form of recreation, whether hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing, or snowmobiling

103. Mountain bikers should stay on trails that are hard enough to sustain this use, and avoid cycling on steep foot trails or in wet conditions when their tires are more likely to leave ruts and cause permanent trail damage. Cyclists should be certain that they have permission from the landowner before they ride, and close any farm gates they use. They should be prepared to volunteer to help maintain local trails where they ride.
104. avoid snowmobiling on the river in winter.
105. hunters should seek permission from landowners who have not posted their land, and demonstrate respect and courteous use of their land
106. hunters should discontinue use of lead shot
107. hunters, including those seeking waterfowl, should not discharge a firearm near a home
108. pet owners everywhere should pick up after their pets.