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Subject: EPA and State Announce Release of the Final Draft Plan to Restore Lake Champlain

For Immediate Release
August 14, 2015

EPA and State Announce Release of the Final Draft Plan to Restore Lake Champlain

BURLINGTON, VT -- Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 1 Administrator Curt Spalding, standing today on the shores of Lake Champlain at North Beach, shared the formal Plan to reduce phosphorous runoff into Lake Champlain and the agreed upon "Total Maximum Daily Load" (TMDL) that will place a cap on the maximum amount of phosphorous that is allowed to enter the Lake and still meet Vermont's water quality standards.

The TMDL sets new pollution reduction targets and pairs with Vermont's final draft implementation plan to prevent pollution from flowing into Lake Champlain and its tributaries. The EPA opens a 30-day public comment period on the TMDL with its release.

Vermont is experiencing another summer when polluted stormwater runoff is causing excessive growth of algae in the form of "blooms" in some areas of the lake. These blooms turn water murky shades of green, brown, or blue, and can be toxic to people, pets, and wildlife. This pollution also increases the costs of drinking water and wastewater treatment, hurts businesses that depend on clean water, damages Vermont's tourism and recreational opportunities, and depresses property values. Excessive polluted runoff also harms local streams and rivers that feed into Lake Champlain.

"EPA sincerely appreciates the dedication and hard work shown by Vermont officials and citizens to address the water quality problems faced by Lake Champlain. Working together, we are confident that we can reduce the levels of harmful nutrients and other pollution, and ensure a vibrant and healthy Lake Champlain for generations to come," said Curt Spalding, regional administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's New England office.

"What we are announcing today is a culmination of the hard work of many interested parties, including municipalities, farmers, watershed groups and the public committed to restoring Lake Champlain and the streams that flow into it," said Gov. Shumlin. "This marks a tremendous step forward in our state's longstanding efforts to clean up Lake Champlain and builds on our extensive efforts with partners to pass and begin implementing the Vermont Clean Water Act signed in June."

EPA information on Vermont Lake Champlain Phosphorus TMDL:

<http://www.epa.gov/region1/eco/tmdl/lakechamplain.html>

To find the TMDL Plan or other information, view the VTDEC Restoring Lake Champlain Page:

<http://www.watershedmanagement.vt.gov/erp/champlain/>

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