

ANR Releasing River Corridor Base Map

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) is releasing a River Corridor Base Map, which can be viewed online on the Flood Ready Atlas. This base map will be posted as the first state-wide river corridor data on the ANR Natural Resource Atlas to inform the Agency's application of the:

- State [Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Rule](#) (Effective March 1, 2015, which regulates development exempt from municipal regulation, such as state facilities); and
- DEC [Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Protection Procedure](#) (which explains how the Agency will define Act 250 floodways and make recommendations to District Commissions consistent with the State Rule).

While the Agency will use the river corridor map along with other land use layers and field-generated data to carry out its regulatory responsibilities, the Procedure and the posting of the river corridor data **do not** increase the Agency's authority, change municipal obligations, or alter local land use regulations. River corridor delineations do not indicate any requirement to buy flood insurance.

The General Assembly has required the Agency to consult municipalities and regional planning agencies in the development of river corridor maps, and the release of this River Corridor Base Map is intended to start what will be an open and on-going map update process intended to support local, regional, and state flood resiliency and hazard mitigation planning. The Procedure outlines a number of ways in which the river corridor data may be updated or administratively revised in conjunction with municipal and regional planning. Act 138 and Act 16 passed in 2012 and 2013 respectively direct the Agency to assist municipalities with this process—see the [Flood Ready Vermont](#) webpage.

The Department has created a [River Corridors - Frequently Asked Questions](#) page to explain what river corridors are, how they are determined, how they can be updated and why the state has delineated corridors as an important flood management zone for minimizing erosion hazards over time.

The Agency welcomes public comment and requests for map updates on an ongoing basis. At this time the [River Corridor and Floodplain Protection Program](#) particularly invites your comments on the River Corridor Base Map to identify any areas where the computer processes may have created errors. Please see the [Suggestions for Reviewing the River Corridor Base Map](#). We will acknowledge receipt of map update requests and consider them for immediate or future map correction, as appropriate.

This is the first web posting of the River Corridor Base Map, and although ANR River Scientists and Mapping Specialists have worked to carefully examine the lines and the update submission/review process will be ongoing, the Program has set aside 30 days to encourage those wishing to check for obvious quirks in the computer line drawing process to submit proposed updates. After technically appropriate updates are completed the Agency will post the updated River Corridor map on the ANR Natural Resources Atlas.

Again, please see the [Suggestions for Reviewing the River Corridor Base Map](#).

Map update requests should be addressed to: ANR.WSMDRivers@state.vt.us, or DEC Rivers Program, Watershed Management Division, 1 National Life Drive, Main 2, Montpelier, VT 05620-3522

River Corridor Base Map

The ANR has posted the River Corridor Base Map on the [Flood Ready Atlas](#).

The River Corridor Base Map:

- Is based on a computer GIS process using topographic data to calculate watershed size, channel slope, channel and valley widths, and a meander belt width for stream and river reaches over 2 square miles in drainage area;
- Recognizes natural and human-imposed confining features, including valley walls, railroads, and federal aid highways, which are used to offset the location of the meander belt;
- Is limited in refinement and does not yet reflect the changes that might be made as a result of the map updates and administrative revisions outlined in the DEC Flood Hazard Area and River Corridor Procedure, many geared toward working with local and regional entities to better recognize the built environment, including:
 - New or existing Phase 2 stream geomorphic data (except for some natural valley wall data where readily available in digital form); including:
 - a. Natural features like bedrock outcrops, alluvial fans, and extreme sensitivity ratings that would change the width or location of the meander belt;
 - b. Slope stability allowances to include adjacent landslide areas and highly unstable side slopes;
 - c. Natural or man-made depressions (unless they contain surface water and were highly visible on base ortho-photos);
 - Administrative updates and revisions made to minimize fluvial erosion hazards while facilitating local planning that promotes infill and redevelopment; including:
 - a. Modified stream types, where channel adjustments are human-constrained but the channel is vertically stable;
 - b. Designated centers or other existing concentrated development areas such as village centers; and
 - c. Existing local transportation or utility infrastructure.