Going Green Project: Brief & Extended Descriptions

Short description

Credit for Going Green

An innovative tool has been created tools to help New Hampshire communities meet water quality standards through the use of buffers. The Going Green Project engaged a panel of experts to generate science-based recommendations for calculating the pollutant removal rate of restored or constructed buffers in development, redevelopment, and restoration projects, and others involving land use change. Communities can now use this information to receive pollutant removal credits under permits issued by the NPDES Stormwater Permit Program. Municipal staff and boards can promote these recommendations as a way to protect water quality, while achieving other benefits like habitat provision and flood mitigation. The project was sponsored by the National Estuarine Research Reserve System Science Collaborative.

For more information > (Link to Non Technical Summary)

Extended description

Credit for Going Green: Meeting Water Quality Standards with Buffers

The capacity of buffers to protect water quality is widely acknowledged. However, until now there has not been a way to quantify the ability of restored or constructed buffers to reduce pollution, or for communities to receive credit for their use under regulatory permits. As a result, buffers have not been considered alongside other water quality best management practices (BMPS).

Your organization here participated in a project that created resources to help New Hampshire communities use buffers to meet water quality standards. The team worked with a panel of experts to generate science-based recommendations for calculating the pollutant removal rate of restored or constructed buffers in development, redevelopment, restoration, or other land use change projects.

Communities can use this information to receive pollutant removal credits under permits issued by the NPDES Stormwater Permit Program. Municipal staff and boards can promote it as a way to protect water quality, while achieving the other benefits that buffers provide, like habitat provision and flood mitigation. This approach not only has the potential to enhance green infrastructure throughout the state, it also leverages the many opportunities for buffer restoration in New Hampshire.

How your organization used/plans to use project results—could be in the form of a quote.

Project partners included the University of New Hampshire Stormwater Center, Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Roca Communications, New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, US Environmental Protection Agency Region 1, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Connecticut Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO), The Nature Conservancy-NH, Washington Stormwater Center, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, City of Dover, City of Rochester, Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and the Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

The project was sponsored by the National Estuarine Research Reserve System Science Collaborative, which supports collaborative research to address coastal management problems important to Reserves and their communities. The Science Collaborative is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and managed by the University of Michigan Water Center.

Download an overview of the project and its results >

Download a technical memorandum that summarizes the project's pollutant reduction performance curves, use cases, considerations for application, and supporting panel decisions. >

Download an overview of the expert panel process. >