

2.3 Engage in Watershed Protection and Restoration

15 Points

30 Points

Objective

Improve the health of your watershed.

What to Do

Collaborate within your community or take a regional approach by collaborating with regional partners and local watershed groups to engage in Watershed Protection and Restoration.

The more you do, the more points you earn.

Watershed Protection and Restoration (up to 30 points)

1. Complete an Action Plan Project (15 points)

- Complete a priority project as outlined in your Watershed Management Plan (may require cooperation with your local water company). If not included in your plan, provide justification for the project. [Sample projects](#) are outlined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for the [Northeast Region](#).

Submit: Documentation of the completed project.

2. Source Water/Riparian Corridors Regulatory Protection (15 points)

Adopt regulations to help protect your watershed, such as:

- Overlay zones or other mechanisms to protect ecologically important areas such as source waters, riparian corridors, aquifer protection areas, vernal pools, critical habitat areas, or other areas identified by your Natural Resource Inventory.
- Zoning, subdivision or other regulations focused on reducing impervious cover and/or its impacts.
- Regulations focused on protecting water quality such as septic inspection and pump-out ordinances.

Submit: A description of your regulations, noting the specific watershed resource they protect and/or threat that they address. Provide a hyperlink to any materials that can be found online.

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from your community's planning or public works departments, engineering, GIS, water pollution control authorities could be helpful in implementing this action.

In addition, the inland wetlands commission, planning and zoning commission, conservation commission, and watershed organizations could help implement this action.

Funding

For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the [Sustainable CT Grants Portal](#), which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Sustainable CT Resources for Certification](#) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, "[Watershed Based Plans and Watershed Management Plans](#)"
- [Checklist for plans eligible for CWA Section 319 funding](#)
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "[Handbook for Developing Watershed Management Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters](#)"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "[Watershed Plan Builder](#)"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "[Impaired Waters and TDMs: Resources, Tools and Databases](#)"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "[Nonpoint Source: Volunteer Monitoring](#)"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "[National Aquatic Resource Surveys](#)"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "[Tools to Assist States and Tribes to Reduce Nutrient Pollution](#)"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "[Polluted Runoff: Nonpoint Source Pollution](#)"
- US Environmental Protection Agency, [Watershed Academy](#)
- US Environmental Protection Agency, [WATERS \(Watershed Assessment, Tracking & Environmental Results System\)](#)
- Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District & North Central Conservation District, "[How to Create a Streamside Buffer Garden](#)"

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- [CT Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials](#)
- [Connecticut Conservation Districts](#)
- US Environmental Protection Agency, [Climate Ready Estuaries](#)
- US Environmental Protection Agency, "[Healthy Watersheds Protection](#)"
- [National Estuary Program](#)
- US Environmental Protection Agency, [National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System \(NPDES\) Stormwater Program](#)
- [Center for Watershed Protection](#)

Why This Matters

A watershed is the area of land that drains or sheds water into a specific receiving waterbody, such as a lake or a river. As rainwater or melted snow runs downhill in the watershed, it collects and transports sediment and other materials and deposits them into the receiving waterbody. All waterbodies are part of a watershed. Connecticut has eight major [watersheds](#), but your town or city only needs to plan for local watersheds.

Watershed management is the practice of planning for and implementing strategies to maintain or improve the health and water quality of a watershed system. Since watersheds are, essentially, large areas of land that are the pathways for water flow in a region, there are many opportunities for pollutants to enter the system. Thus a thorough plan that includes an education component is important to protect the long-term health of the system. Watershed health is a barometer for health of the surrounding environment.

Benefits

Your community will have a water quantity and quality that is both fishable and swimmable.

You will help sustain drinking water levels for your citizens and surrounding populations.

By managing stormwater properly and minimizing point-source and non-point source pollution you will be able to sustain healthier watersheds and healthier wetlands, forests, meadows, etc. - creating healthier

places for people to live, work, and play.

CT Success Stories

- New Haven, West Haven, Bethany, Hamden, Prospect, Woodbridge: [“West River Watershed Management Plan”](#)

Credit for Past Action

- Action must have been completed within 10 years prior to application submission.