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## Dam Removals & Floodplains Quick Guide

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### Initial screening and evaluation:

Determine if the project is located in a federally mapped [flood hazard area](#) (as shown on Flood Insurance Rate Maps for the community). Flood hazard areas are available on the ANR Natural Resources Atlas for the following counties: Chittenden, Washington, Rutland, Bennington, Windham and Windsor (<http://anrmaps.vermont.gov/websites/anra5/>).

For the rest of the state, Flood Insurance Rate Maps are found on the FEMA Map Service Center Website: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search>

Determine if the project is located in a mapped flood hazard area with published base flood elevations. If no, proceed to permitting requirements.

If the project is within a flood hazard area with published base flood elevations, verify the following:

- Whether the dam provides any flood storage benefit (most do not). If yes, determine whether dam removal would increase flooding of downstream properties.
- Will removal of the dam reduce base flood elevations for insurable buildings (decrease flood elevations by one or more feet) and substantially modify the flood hazard delineation. If yes, the project scope should include submittal of a [Letter of Map Revision \(LOMR\)](#) request to FEMA.

### Permitting requirements:

If the project is located in a mapped flood hazard area, the project will require a local permit. The type of permit will be determined by the local flood hazard bylaw (e.g. administrative or conditional use).

Most run-of-river dam removals should be easily permitted given that these are removals of in-channel encroachments.

### As-built data:

For projects located in a flood hazard area with published flood elevations, as-built information will need to be provided to the town and state. At the minimum, as-built cross-sections of the restored reach certified by a registered professional engineer or licensed land surveyor in the same vertical datum as the published base flood elevations will be needed.

In cases where the removal will significantly lower the base flood elevations, impacting both flood insurance premiums and mapped flood hazard area delineations, the scope of work should include the requirement to obtain a [LOMR](#) from FEMA.

**Technical Assistance:**

DEC Regional Floodplain Managers are available to provide technical assistance. The best time to solicit regional floodplain manager input is early in the process during scope of work development for feasibility and design and prior to submittal of the local permit application. Assistance is available with initial screening work and with the permitting process.

Floodplain Manager contacts map:

[http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/rivers/docs/floodplain\\_mngr\\_regions.pdf](http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wsm/rivers/docs/floodplain_mngr_regions.pdf)

Further Reading on Floodplains and River Corridors:

[http://floodready.vermont.gov/flood\\_protection/river\\_corridors\\_floodplains/floodplains](http://floodready.vermont.gov/flood_protection/river_corridors_floodplains/floodplains)

[http://floodready.vermont.gov/flood\\_protection/river\\_corridors\\_floodplains/river\\_corridors](http://floodready.vermont.gov/flood_protection/river_corridors_floodplains/river_corridors)