

Mad River Valley Elementary Schools and Stormwater

Project Summary

Friends of the Mad River (FMR) has been focused on reducing stormwater runoff in the Mad River watershed because improved stormwater management will reduce our community's vulnerability to flooding and improve our river's water quality. Also, the Water Quality Act (Act 64) adopted in 2015 will change Vermont's regulations related to stormwater runoff and FMR is working with our Mad River Valley (MRV) communities to be prepared for these changes. At this time the state has announced that it anticipates requiring a stormwater permit (and mitigation) from owners of parcels with **existing** impervious surfaces greater than 3 acres, though that threshold could decrease as rules are developed. [Based on a quick analysis Fayston School is ~2.4 acres impervious surface with direct hydrologic connection to a stream, Moretown School is ~3.4 acres impervious with possible connection to the Mad River, Waitsfield School is ~2.5 acres with direct connection to a stream and the Mad River, and Warren School is ~4 acres with direct hydrologic connection to a stream.]

Vermont's Clean Water Initiative Program has just announced a round of [Ecosystem Restoration Grants](#) that would allow us to take a significant step towards improved stormwater management at MRV elementary schools. Friends of the Mad River envisions "stormwater master planning" at each of the Valley's elementary schools – Fayston, Moretown, Waitsfield and Warren - to look at the campuses, talk to teachers and facility operators, and suggest and engineer solutions that would reduce the volume of, and pollutants in, water reaching the river or streams and help prepare schools for legislation that may require facility changes.

As currently envisioned (this is open to your feedback), an engineer would work with several key stakeholders from each school (board, facilities manager, teachers, administrators, etc...) to discuss campus parking/circulation considerations, known historic flooding, perpetual erosion issues, known areas sensitive to stormwater runoff, as well as your programmatic goals. After these initial meetings and site visits, the engineers would complete a desktop spatial assessment and a field investigation of problem sites. They would identify potential opportunities for stormwater runoff improvements and discuss their feasibility and programmatic utility with all the stakeholders. Using water quality benefits as well as project feasibility and programmatic benefit, the stakeholders would prioritize opportunities and select several at each school for further design and engineering. For a few (2-3) of the highest priority sites across all four schools, the engineers would develop "shovel ready" construction designs. For other high priority sites that don't need full engineering to construct (like smaller rain gardens, rain barrels, and vegetated swales), the engineers would provide "design-build" retrofit plans. Even if the stormwater master planning at a particular school doesn't yield watershed-level priorities, each school will have the option to receive at least one "design-build" retrofit plan. We understand that each of the schools has a unique setting and unique goals, so we'd be sure to hire an engineering firm willing to work with your goals and situation in mind, and with experience outside traditional "gray" stormwater management.

Aside from providing schools with designs for facility upgrades that may become mandated, these same upgrades can provide exciting educational opportunities.

No cash match is required for the grant, though in-kind and cash matches will help the application score higher. It would be good to get a sense for how many people from your school should participate as stakeholder and we can estimate their time commitment and include it as in-kind match. If there's an "extra" component related to the project that you're planning to fund, it is possible we could include its cost as match and increase our application's score.