



January 3, 2017

Dear Clean Water Advisory Committee Member,

You are invited to participate in a series of focus groups involving the members of the Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) for the Northwest Regional Planning Committee (NRPC). These focus groups are aimed at better understanding the Northwest's clean water infrastructure needs and the role that local control can play in the planning and advisory processes. I represent a team of researchers from the University of Vermont, Saint Michael's College, and Castleton University working on the Basin Resilience to Extreme Events (BREE) Project. In partnership with the NRPC and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, we seek to better understand how the CWAC may function as a critical feature of the region's tactical basin planning process.

Three focus groups with the CWAC are planned, with the first being scheduled for January 25, 2018 from 6 pm to 9 pm in St. Albans at the Northwest Medical Center, Conference Center (133 Fairfield St). Dinner will be provided at no charge to you. Two additional focus groups will be held during the late spring of 2018 and late fall of 2018. These focus groups will be used by BREE researchers and by regional and state planners to advance the region's ability to prioritize project and allocate resources to pressing water quality improvement needs.

Focus group #1, to be held January 25, 2018, will center on getting a baseline understanding for how you understand water quality issues in your community, the tactical basin planning process, and the role of the CWAC in this process. We will want to know what criteria matter most to you when weighing these options.

Focus group #2, to be held in late spring of 2018, will center on exploring certain water quality project scenarios using one or more decision making tools that are available. The focus of this meeting will be pinning down the criteria and the trade-offs that you see when considering specific project examples. We will continue to discuss the relationship between the CWAC and the tactical basin planning process.

Focus group #3, to be held in late fall of 2018, will center on scenario planning using a tool specifically designed for use by the CWAC. Specific recommendations for refining the relationship between the CWAC and the tactical basin planning process will be developed by the group.

We recognize that you may not be able to attend all three focus groups, but our hope is to have a critical mass of people available for all three sessions. If you cannot make all the sessions, we still very much desire your participation in at least one or two of these sessions.

Please confirm your participation with Amanda Holland, NRPC, at 802-524-5958 or aholland@nrpcvt.com. If you have any questions about the focus groups, please feel free to contact Chris Koliba directly at 802-656-3772 or ckoliba@uvm.edu.

Thank you in advance for participating in these important opportunities to shape local control over water quality decision making.

Sincerely,

Christopher Koliba, Ph.D.
Professor and Social Systems Team Leader

Amanda Holland
Northwest Regional Planning Commission