

# Vermont Rapid Condition Assessment Method

Site: \_\_\_\_\_ Rater(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Metric 1. Wetland Size--including other contiguous wetland types**

### **Select one size class and assign score**

>10 ha (>25 acres) (5 pts)

1 to10 ha (2.5 to < 25 acres) (5 pts)

0.20 to <1 ha (.5 to < 2.5 acres) (3 pts)

< 0.20 ha (< 0.5 acres) (1 pt)

\*Exception - Vernal Pool or Fen Community relative to size (3 to 5 pts)

Score \_\_\_\_\_

## **Metric 2. Upland buffers and surrounding land use**

### **2a. Calculate average buffer width. Select one type and assign a score, or double check and average**

VERY WIDE. Buffers average >300m (>984 ft) or more around wetland perimeter (10)

MEDIUM. Buffers average 100m to < 300m (326 ft to < 984 ft) around wetland perimeter (7)

NARROW. Buffers average 15m to < 100m (50 ft to < 325 ft) around wetland perimeter (5)

VERY NARROW. Buffers average <15m (< 50 ft) around wetland perimeter (2)

Score \_\_\_\_\_

### **2b. Intensity of surrounding land use. Select one choice, or double check and average**

LOW, 2nd growth or older forest, wildlife preserve, etc. (10)

MODERATE, Old field (>10 years), shrub lands, young second growth forest (5)

MODERATELY HIGH, Residential, fenced pasture, park, conservation tillage, new fallow field (3)

HIGH, Residential, transportation, industrial, open pasture, row cropping, mining, construction. (0)

Score \_\_\_\_\_

## **Metric 3. Hydrology**

### **3a. Sources of Water. Score all that apply**

Groundwater (3)                      Perennial surface water (lake or stream) (3)

Precipitation (1)                      Seasonal/Intermittent surface water (2)

Score \_\_\_\_\_

### **3b. Hydrologic Connectivity. Score all that apply.**

Floodplain or a part of a wetland complex (1)

Part of wetland/upland (e.g. forest), complex (1)

Part of riparian/upland or stream/lake upland corridor (1)

Isolated hydrology--bog or fen with no obvious hydrologic input or output (2)

Score \_\_\_\_\_

### **3c. Maximum water depth. Select only one and assign score**

> 25 cm (10 in) (5)

>13 cm to < 25 cm (5 < 10 in) (3)

<12 cm (2)

Score \_\_\_\_\_

### **3d. Anthropogenic modifications to natural hydrologic regime**

#### **Score one or double check and average.**

None or none apparent (10)

Recovering – use for restoration or abandoned uses in wetlands (5)

Recent or no recovery (0)

Total of Scores above \_\_\_\_\_

### **3e. Hydrologic Stressors (Subtract from total Score under 3e)**

Ditching or dredging (- 5)

Tiled (- 5)

Dike (-5)

Weir or Dam (-5)

Stormwater input (- 5)

Point source pollution (- 5)

Filling and/or grading (- 5 )

Road bed or railroad track (-5)

Sedimentation – from an anthropogenic source or activity (-5)

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Stressor Total (subtract from total Scores) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score Side 1: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Metric 4. Habitat Alteration and Development**

### **4a. Habitat development relative to community type: Select one and assign score**

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Excellent (5)                      Good (3)                      Poor (1)  
Very good (4)                      Fair (2)

### **4b. Substrate disturbance, Score one or double check and average**

Score \_\_\_\_\_

None or none apparent (5)  
Recovering (3)  
Alteration present - no recovery (1)

### **4c. Vegetation Alteration or Removal. (subtract 5 pts for each impact)**

Subtract Score - \_\_\_\_\_

Mowing  
Grazing  
Clear-cutting  
Woody debris and/ or shrub or sapling removal  
Kill zone from toxic substances  
Herbaceous or aquatic bed removal  
Farming – cropland  
Nutrient enrichment (eutrophication)  
Sedimentation  
Recreational vehicle use: 4-wheelers, trucks, etc.,  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **Metric 5. Special Wetland Community**

Select one community and score for that type

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Vernal Pool (5)	Mature forested wetland (5)
Bog (5)	Northern White Cedar Swamp (5)
Fen (5)	Calcareous or Acidic Riverside Seep (5)
Old growth forest (5)	Alpine Peatland (5)
Red or Silver Maple-Green Ash Swamp (5)	Black Spruce Swamp (5)
Sugar Maple-Ostrich Fern Riverine FP Forest (5)	Red Maple-Black Gum Swamp (5)
Calcareous Red Maple-Tamarack Swamp (5)	Hemlock Swamp (5)
Deep Bulrush Marsh (5)	Buttonbush Swamp (5)

## **Metric 6. Plant communities, interspersions, and microtopography**

### **6a. Wetland Vegetation Strata \* Score all present using table on Page 12 of the instructions**

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Aquatic bed (floating carpets) (0 to 5)  
Emergent (0 to 5)  
Shrub (0 to 5)  
Forest (0 to 5)  
Open Water w/Floating Veg. (0 to 5)  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **6b. Horizontal & Plan View Interspersion. Select only one**

Score \_\_\_\_\_

High (5)                      Moderately low (2)  
Moderately high (4)                      Low (1)  
Moderate (3)

### **6c. Microtopography within the wetland community**

Score \_\_\_\_\_

Vegetated hummocks or tussocks (0 to 3)  
Coarse woody debris > 6in (0 to 3)  
Standing dead >10 in DBH (0 to 3)  
Amphibian breeding pools (0 to 3)

Total Scores of above \_\_\_\_\_

### **6d. Coverage of invasive plants**

Subtract Score - \_\_\_\_\_

Extensive >25% cover (- 5)  
Moderate 5 - 25% cover (- 3)  
Sparse < 5% cover (-1)  
None (+5)

Total Score This Side: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Score Side 1: \_\_\_\_\_

## **GRAND TOTAL (MAX 105 POINTS)**

(See manual for score ranking)

Total of both sides VRWCA \_\_\_\_\_