

## PROTECT AQUATIC ECOSYSTEMS

Beyond its charming image, owning a property on the riverbank also means living with its hazards (floods, droughts, erosion...), as well as respecting the equilibrium of the river dynamic and morphology.



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## REGULATION ON HYDRAULIC INFRASTRUCTURES

Watermills and waterbodies are complicated structures that could have an impact on the proper functioning of catchments and aquatic ecosystems. Numerous regulations exist on their management, as well as on the conservation of protected aquatic species and the removal of sediments.

> Guidelines on managing watercourses and waterworks are available on the Charente Eaux website, or contact your syndicat GEMAPI.

## WHOM CAN I CONTACT IN CHARENTE ?

Organisations in charge of monitoring aquatic environments and preventing flood (GEMAPI) are available to answer your questions and assist you in certain procedures.



> See the interactive map

> <https://charente-eaux.fr/carte-interactive/>

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

### > Office Français de la Biodiversité (OFB)

See the OFB website to contact your local organisation  
<https://ofb.gouv.fr/nouvelle-aquitaine> | 05 56 13 28 10

### > Your département's DDT(M)

Charente : [ddt@charente.gouv.fr](mailto:ddt@charente.gouv.fr) | 05 17 17 37 37 Other départements : Visit [annuaire.service-public.fr](http://annuaire.service-public.fr)

This handbook was published thanks to the GEMAPI technicians and the financial aid of :

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## INFORMATIONAL HANDBOOK BEFORE BUYING A WATERFRONT PROPERTY

### Watermills, waterbodies or waterfront properties

> [www.charente-eaux.fr](http://www.charente-eaux.fr)

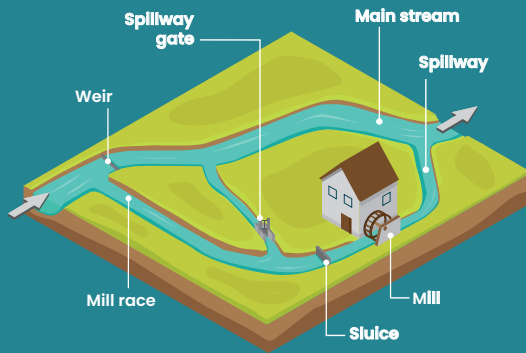
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## YOU WANT TO PURCHASE A WATERMILL?

### WHAT ARE YOU OWNER OF AND RESPONSIBLE FOR ?

Because you are owner, you are **responsible for all hydraulic infrastructures including spillway gates and mill races** (cf. diagram). This historical heritage requires a particularly demanding maintenance.

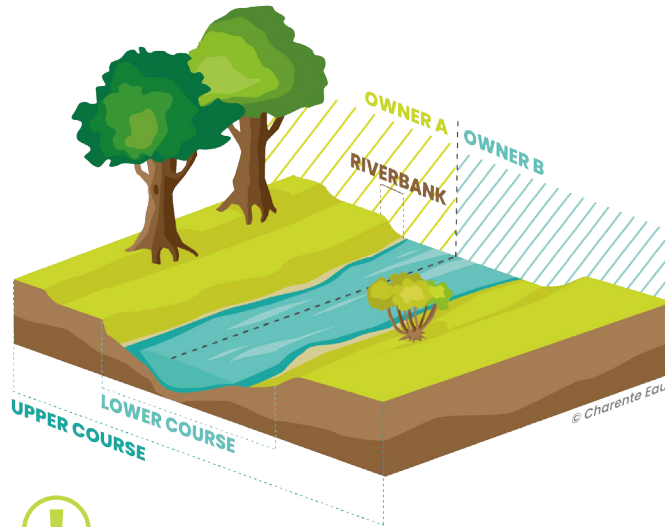


## YOU WANT TO PURCHASE A WATERFRONT PROPERTY?

### WHAT ARE YOU OWNER OF AND RESPONSIBLE FOR ?

In Charente, **less than 5% of the watercourse is state-owned**. The maintenance is ensured by the maintenance department at the Conseil Départemental.

The remaining 95% is private. **Residents are owners of half of the riverbed, from the riverbank to the middle of the stream, and are responsible for its maintenance.**



### ! YOUR RIGHTS AND DUTIES

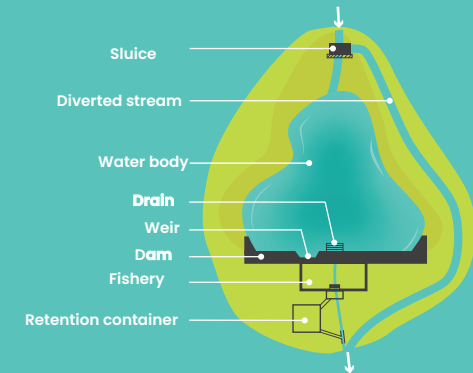
Organisations in charge of monitoring aquatic environments and preventing floods (GEMAPI) may be able to give you these informations

1. You are responsible for the **maintenance of the riverstream**. You can not modify the morphology of the riverbed without authorisation from the responsible administration.
2. You need to ensure the good ecological state of the stream as well as its smooth flow. Make sure your fence doesn't obstruct the way to boats or plant debris carried by the riverstream.
3. You can not introduce invasive species or discharge chemical substances in the stream.
4. You need to give a right of way to **authorities and technicians in charge of monitoring aquatic ecosystems**.

## YOU WANT TO PURCHASE A WATER BODY ?

### WHAT ARE YOU OWNER OF AND RESPONSIBLE FOR ?

According to the year of construction and pre-existing authorisations, **water bodies can receive different types of status under the water law (Loi sur l'eau)**. If the water body is connected to a watercourse, the owner needs to ensure that **the water body doesn't have an impact on the riverstream** : fish circulation needs to be allowed, the introduction of invasive species is forbidden, and drainage is regulated.



### ! GET INFORMATION BEFORE BUYING

The DDT(M) or organisations in charge of GEMAPI may be able to give you these informations

1. Identify all **infrastructure connected to the water body**, as well as owners of up and downstream properties.  
Identify the year of construction and evaluate the water body's surface area in order to guide you on administrative procedures.
2. Check if the property already has a legal status. If it does, get information on administrative procedures and maintenance regulation. If it doesn't, contact the responsible administration to assess the procedure and evaluate the consequences on the water body (construction, drainage...).
3. Evaluate the impact of the water body on surrounding aquatic environments. This assessment will indicate any up-to-date construction needed on the property.

### ! GET INFORMATION BEFORE BUYING

The DDT(M) or the previous owner may be able to give you these informations

1. Check the **land ownership and its extend to all hydraulic infrastructures** connected to the watermill.
2. Evaluate the **general state of the mill**, as well as **all hydraulic infrastructures** (tailrace, sluice, spillway gate) and their possible refurbishing.
3. Get information on your **water right (droit d'eau)** that declares all rights to operate the driving force of the watermill (**autorisation d'exploitation**).
4. Get information on water regulation associated to your ownership as it informs you on all hydraulic infrastructure maintenance.
5. Get information on the possible existence of a contract stating gate management and property access (**convention de gestion et de servitude(s)**).
6. Be aware of the **state of the ecological continuity** around the watermill, and evaluate if all **hydraulic infrastructure is up to date with current regulation**.