

Vermont Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Accelerated Implementation of Ag and Forestry related Practices
2020 - 2025

RCPP General

The Vermont DEC RCPP is a 5-year program to increase the implementation of agricultural and forestry best management practices (BMPs), wetland restoration, and conservation easements. This program is distinct from other RCPP projects in VT and from other NRCS programs. The signup deadline for this RCPP program is **January 13, 2023.**

Who is Eligible?

All VT farm and forest landowners are eligible, though priority is given to small farmers (CSFO and SFO).

Funding:

This is a \$10 million project, with \$7 million going directly to landowners for practice implementation and easements. The balance goes to technical assistance, monitoring, education, and coordination.

Program Funding Allocation:

Ag BMPS	\$2.5 Million
Forestry BMPs	\$1.0 Million
Wetland restoration	\$250,000
Conservation Easements	\$3.25 Million

Focus Areas 2022 - 2023

- Grazing practices
- Agronomic practices (specifically reduced tillage, cover crops and nutrient management)
- Feed management
- Land rental programs
- Adaptive management practices

**Focus areas may change in future years as other RCPP programs begin, to ensure efficiency of funding.*

Assistance

Technical assistance is available to help decide if RCPP fits your farm or forestland. Planners will come to your property, help with any assessments or evaluations, and make sure that you participate in the program that will best help you financially and environmentally.

VT DEC has contracted with the VT Association of Conservation Districts and Redstart to provide technical services. Contact information is on the back.

RCPP Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I apply for RCPP funding instead of NRCS EQIP?

There are several benefits to RCPP that might be appropriate for your operation.

1. If you are a small farm or forest landowner interested in agronomic, grazing, forestry erosion or feed management practices, RCPP may provide you with a higher payment rate than other USDA-NRCS such as EQIP.
2. If you are interested to planting cover crops by Sept 21st or reducing applications of manure and nutrients to fields with high soil test phosphorus, you may be a great candidate for the additional land rental payment of \$52/acre; only available through this RCPP project.
3. If some of these practices (cover crops, reduced tillage, nutrient management) are new to you, you may be eligible for additional funds to test some of these practices with in-field test strips (Adaptive management practices). This provides an extra incentive payment.
4. If you would welcome one-on-one assistance navigating this RCPP opportunity, as well as help in accessing these RCPP funds to support improvements on your operation, trained technical assistance is available to help you with complete confidentiality.

I would like to participate, but I have reached the \$450,000 EQIP Farm Bill payment limitation.

RCPP is a standalone program which is not affected EQIP Farm Bill payment limitation. Effectively this provides a “clean slate” for producers who are eligible to access these RCPP funds.

There are too many programs. How do I know if this is better for me?

VACD and Redstart staff are available to explain it all. They can help you decide if RCPP is a better option for you.

Is this an NRCS program?

Yes, RCPP is a nationally USDA NRCS-funded program. However, funding for this program is separate from other USDA-NRCS programs such as EQIP, thus providing customers a higher chance of application selection.

What if I am currently participating in other non-RCPP programs?

You will be working with a dedicated RCPP planner who is knowledgeable in coordinating your RCPP application and determining what practices best fits your operation.

How do I sign up for RCPP?

The best way is to work with the dedicated RCPP planners listed below. They will help with the application process directly. Ranking priority will be given to applications that are submitted through these planners.

Contact Information

RCPP Coordinator – Kait Jones, VT DEC. kaitlyn.jones@vermont.gov