

MATT LACEY – CONSERVATION OUTREACH COORDINATOR



Matt Lacey is our new ECO member serving at The Nature Conservancy for the remainder of the service year. Coming from the Vermont Natural Resources Council, Matt was able to connect with The Nature Conservancy during his time with VNRC, and through this connection he joined their team via the ECO AmeriCorps program! Matt's main focus at The Nature Conservancy is on the reclassification of the Otter Creek Wetland Complex. Currently the wetland is all a Class 2 wetland, but many stakeholders in the area are seeking to reclassify sections of the swamp into Class 1. Changing the classification would provide greater protections for the wetland, such as doubling the required riparian buffer area. Matt's role in this process as an AmeriCorps member at The Nature Conservancy has been as a part of a steering committee formed by TNC and conservation commissions in Cornwall, Salisbury, and Middlebury. He has been facilitating meetings in Addison County with the conservation commissions as well as reaching out to select boards to do some outreach about the reclassification. In order to educate landowners about the potential change and reasons for doing so, Matt is developing promotional educational material for landowners and plans to host several informal public meetings intent on clearing misconceptions about what a reclassification might mean for the area. A petition is being put together for the idea, with Matt serving as the coordinator between conservation commissions. Another project that Matt has been researching for in his service is designating TNC property surface waters as Outstanding Resources Waters Designation. Specifically, two brooks in TNC properties: Cobb Brook and Calivale Brook. Having this designation would ensure further protections for these surface waters. Keep up the great service for these water bodies, Matt!