



---

**Agency of Natural Resources**

1 National Life Drive, Davis 2

Montpelier, Vermont 05620

802-828-1294

[www.anr.state.vt.us](http://www.anr.state.vt.us)

**Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets**

116 State Street

Montpelier, Vermont 05620

802-828-1619

[www.VermontAgriculture.com](http://www.VermontAgriculture.com)

## **The Lake Champlain Regional Conservation Partnership Program:**

Accelerated Implementation of Agricultural & Forestry

Conservation Practices in the Lake Champlain

Watershed of Vermont and New York



Semi-Annual Report for the USDA NRCS

Reporting Timeframe: May 31, 2017 – November 30, 2017

November 30, 2017

Report Prepared by:

**Allison N. Compagna**

**RCPP Project Coordinator**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Highlights of the report period .....	4
Wetlands restoration .....	4
Approval of New State Regulations .....	4
Engineering Contracts .....	5
Increased coordination with partners .....	5
New AmeriCorps Member .....	6
Program Administration Activities .....	7
Education/Outreach .....	7
Outreach Events and Materials .....	7
Number of Media Outlets Reached .....	8
Number of People Reached and Unique Outreach .....	8
Relationship Building with Partners .....	9
Success Stories .....	11
Planners .....	11
Partners .....	11
Integration of RCPP into Other Program Activities .....	11
Implementation .....	12
Projects Funded Outside Traditional NRCS Programs .....	12
Contracts and Practices Implemented .....	13
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program – Agricultural Land Easements .....	13
Farm & Forest Viability .....	15
Technical Assistance for Implementation .....	15
Adjustment of Terms .....	16
Use of Funds .....	16
Measurement of Results .....	17
Metric quantification .....	17
Practice efficiency .....	17

Water quality monitoring .....	17
Ranking & Targeting.....	18
Trainings.....	18
Partners Who Contributed to this Report .....	18

## APPENDICES

1. Spring ECO AmeriCorps Newsletter
2. September ECO AmeriCorps Newsletter
3. ECO AmeriCorps Spotlight
4. ACEP-ALE Meeting Agenda May 2017
5. Advisory Board Meeting & ACEP-ALE Meeting Agenda November 2017
6. Financial Status Report (FSR)
7. NRCS Deliverables Table
8. Cover Cropping is Becoming More Common on Vermont Farms- VLT Article.
9. Celebrating 40 Years of Learning and Growing on the Land: Changes in Farm Conservation – VLT Article.
10. Mettowee Farmers Protect Farmland and Natural Features- VLT Article.
11. Mettowee Farmers Conserve Third Property & Protect Natural Resources
12. Lussier Farm Expands, As Daughter Continues Farming the Land- VLT Article.
13. Pawlet Farm is Now Home to a New Business- VLT Article.
14. Water Quality Protected on Three Rutland County Farms- VLT Article.
15. VHCB to get \$3.6 Million in Federal Funding for Farmland Protection- Vermontbiz Article.
16. VHCB Grants Address Water Quality and Help Farmers Transfer Farms to the Next Generation- VLT Article.
17. Vermont Housing & Conservation Board to Receive \$3.6 Million in Federal Funding for Farmland Protection- VTDigger Article.
18. Conservation Practices on Farms in St. Albans Bay- Farmers Watershed Alliance Article.
19. Partner Contributions Breakdown Spreadsheet

## **November 30, 2016 – May 30, 2017 Report**

The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is pleased to submit this semi-annual report to USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Progress for the reporting period May 31, 2017 to November 30, 2017 is documented below in the format requested by NRCS. DEC thanks the partners of the Lake Champlain RCPP for their match efforts, including the invaluable narrative reports that are utilized in the compilation of this document. Please see attachments for additional information where indicated.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT PERIOD**

#### **WETLANDS RESTORATION**

The Vermont DEC Clean Water Initiative Program (CWIP) has a contract with Arrowwood Environmental to update potential wetland restoration data, create project packets of wetland project opportunities for landowners including NRCS payment rates and incentive payments using the DEC Wetlands Incentive Calculator, input prior and new outreach data into the Agricultural BMP Database, and conduct outreach visits for project sites. The contractor will coordinate closely with Vermont NRCS.

The contractor has completed evaluating existing priority restoration site data, ranked the sites, developed project packets, and put the data on a password protected site for partner use. Recently the partners have been developing the second round of highest priority restoration site packets and will soon begin outreach efforts in collaboration with NRCS staff.

DEC has facilitated a wetlands committee including partners that meet on a quarterly basis to discuss potential RCPP WRE projects, the efforts of the contractor and to develop improved processes for the program. In what month, the wetlands committee gathered to attend the annual presentation hosted by the contractor and discuss efforts to increase partner engagement in WRE project planning.

Three wetlands restoration easement projects in the Lake Champlain Basin RCPP Priority Watershed (St. Albans Bay, Missisquoi Bay, and South Lake A & B) are set to close this autumn. Each will be receiving a wetlands incentive payment above and beyond the easement payment.

#### **APPROVAL OF NEW STATE REGULATIONS**

As part of Act 64, Vermont's Clean Water Act, the legislature required that the Agency of Agriculture revise the regulatory Accepted Agricultural Practices. The revised regulations, the Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs), were passed in December 2016, and partners have been working diligently to assist the agricultural community in understanding and implementing these updated regulations. Below is a list of a selection of initiatives surrounding the RAPs. Each of these, in addition to other RAP related outreach, has provided the opportunity to increase water quality improvement and participation in RCPP.

- VAAFM trained custom manure applicators on proper manure application in accordance with the RAPs, and about appropriate means of record-keeping.



- Partner organizations have been hosting farm and field events that feature trainings on the new rules.
- The VAAFM Small Farms Program staff have been visiting small farms throughout the state to introduce themselves, and the RAPs. Small farms did not previously require permitting but with the new rules, farms with 50 or more mature cows will need a permit. VAAFM staff want to ensure farmers know the information and resources available to best help them be in compliance with the new rules.

## **ENGINEERING CONTRACTS**

This new process for providing engineering services is intended to increase the implementation of critical practices, but has resulted in a high increase in workload for the RCPP program.

Since the last year, there have been nine in need of engineering assistance that have been moving through the new process. The multiple tasks including project notification, site visits, collection and review of bids, notification of bid selection and moving a project through approval with the DEC business office prior to engineering planning has added considerable time to the project implementation timeline, however completion this year is unlikely without this process. NRCS and DEC have amended the RCPP contract to address the budget changes necessary to cover this TA cost (\$250,000). The continuation of this process is currently being evaluated by DEC and NRCS.

## **INCREASED COORDINATION WITH PARTNERS**

One of the challenges of implementing the Lake Champlain RCPP has been the complexity of a new program for an already committed group of partners. In addition to the many outreach activities and documents created by the RCPP Project Coordinator, the following actions have been added during this program period to ensure that RCPP technical information is shared in an accurate and timely manner with landowners.

- The RCPP Project Coordinator, Project Manager, VACD Technical Programs Manager and RCPP Conservation Planners now collaborate monthly via conference call to discuss contracts, conservation planning, and outreach, ensuring efficient workload planning and regular program updates. These conference calls have also served as a platform to offer supplemental trainings for the planners by bringing in Lake Champlain RCPP partners to provide updates regarding opportunities for agricultural producers.
- The RCPP Project Coordinator attends VAAFM bi-weekly Water Quality Meetings to share information about DEC efforts and provide updates about the Lake Champlain RCPP.
- The RCPP Project Coordinator has periodically attended each of the NRCS staff zone meetings in the Lake Champlain Basin to share information, provide updates and answer questions about the Lake Champlain RCPP.
- The ECO AmeriCorps member serving with the Vermont Clean Water Initiative Program of DEC completed a series of short education videos, these are now available on the following website:  
<http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/cwi/outreach/video-series>
- The RCPP Project Coordinator provided training for new RCPP South Lake Conservation Planner in July 2017.

- The RCPP Project Coordinator has continued monthly meetings with Vermont Forest, Parks & Recreation (FPR) to discuss project and engineering needs, informational video development, budgets and best management practices.
- The RCPP Conservation Planners have been assisting with moving RCPP EQIP contracts forward for implementation, this includes developing Land Treatment Plans and supporting farmers through the Digging In Nutrient Management Planning Course, developing Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) Plans, providing technical support for projects going through planning or installation of a practice,
- The RCPP Project Coordinator attended the NRCS-hosted Quarterly 2017 Easement Kick-off Meeting & both the Project Coordinator and Manager have continued to attend VHCB-hosted quarterly easement project selection meetings.

## **NEW AMERICORPS MEMBER**

ECO AmeriCorps member Rachel Ross continued to provide RCPP assistance through the development of informational videos. She completed her service in August 2017 and the videos can be viewed on the Clean Water Initiative Program's website: <http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/cwi/outreach/video-series>. Two of the videos are specific to the RCPP program.

The CWIP program was provided the opportunity to host an additional ECO AmeriCorps member for the last four months of the service year. From April to August of 2017, RCPP welcomed Andrew Nyugen, who provided support to Vermont's clean water efforts through assisting the MAPP program with stream and acid precipitation sampling including organization partner volunteers and analyzing data, providing support to the Non-Point Source Coordinator in her efforts to track phosphorus reduction projects and efforts, and developing a blog series about water quality and climate resiliency. Andrew's support to MAPP and CWIP in water sampling continue to help inform the priorities of RCPP. Additionally, partners are working closely to best use RCPP match water quality sampling funds by choosing monitoring sites that can be supplemented with other ongoing sampling conducted through MAPP.

The Vermont Clean Water Initiative Program welcomed two new ECO AmeriCorps members for the 2017-2018 service year. Carlie Wright is serving as Team Leader and Social Indicators Researcher, collaborating with VAAFM and DEC to develop a survey for agricultural producers who received financial and technical assistance through the VAAFM BMP Program. Jordyn Geller is also serving within DEC and she is in the field verifying best management practices that have been installed using Ecosystem Restoration Program grant funding as well as working with DEC communications staff to tell the story of these phosphorus and nutrient reduction projects. Carlie's work will directly influence future funding priorities and process. Jordyn's work will help quantify the value of RCPP and other water quality improvements.

For an update about the clean water efforts of all of the ECO AmeriCorps members, please see the attached ECO AmeriCorps spring and summer 2017 newsletters.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITIES

To capture the great accomplishments occurring through the Lake Champlain RCPP, DEC requires participating partners to provide quarterly financial and narrative match reports. MOUs have been developed with partners to identify deliverables and reporting requirements. Details from these reports are included throughout this document.

The RCPP program includes collaboration with New York partners in the South Lake Champlain Basin. The New York NRCS issued a bulletin, press release and timeline detailing sign-ups for Lake Champlain RCPP funding through September 15, 2017. This funding will be used to implement practices to address priority resource concerns. The SWCDs and NRCS offices will work together to provide assistance to landowners through this program. They received 7 applications and are in the contracting process.

Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (VACD), through its contract with DEC, continues to provide conservation and nutrient management planning assistance to farms that have or are in the process of committing to land conservation easements on their farms, conducting resource inventories on farms using NRCS tools and evaluation materials, and to work as a case manager with producers. Three RCPP conservation planners located in the South Lake region, the North-East Kingdom and North-Western region of the Lake Champlain Basin are currently providing technical assistance. A new RCPP Conservation Planner joined the team in July and is serving the southern region of the Lake Champlain Basin.

DEC continues to host monthly ACEP-ALE meetings with key partners including NRCS, VHCB, VLT, and VACD to discuss projects moving through the conservation easement process, as well as continually striving to communicate and improve our process.

The DEC RCPP Project Coordinator collaborates with the DEC Business Office staff and NRCS staff to complete financial quarterly reporting and accruals. Continued collaboration regarding reporting involves in-person meetings and conference calls. Please see the attached Financial Status Report for more detailed information.

The RCPP Project Coordinator continues to participate in statewide activities where opportunities to share RCPP information exist.

The RCPP Advisory Board met on May 2, 2017 and November 7, 2017 with the following partners: NRCS, VAAFM, VHCB, VLT, FPR, and VACD. These meetings include discussions of current ACEP-ALE projects, review and approval of future RCPP ACEP-ALE projects, outreach, review of WRE projects and incentive payments, prioritization of workload, adjustment of terms, and beyond. Please see the attached agendas for more detailed information.

## EDUCATION/OUTREACH

### **OUTREACH EVENTS AND MATERIALS**

DEC continues to update the RCPP webpage available here: <http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/cwi/rcpp>

Lake Champlain RCPP Partner, AgriMark, discussed water quality during individual farm visits between AgriMark representatives and cooperative members, including what to expect with the new Required Agricultural Practices and what measures to take to be in good standing.

DEC continues to work with NRCS to share information with all the NRCS field offices via weekly emails (leadership emails) and on the NRCS RCPP website

(<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/vt/programs/farmbill/rcpp/>).

The Farmers Watershed Alliance (FWA) hosted a Conservation Practices on Farms in the St. Albans Bay Bus Tour where approximately 30 attendees comprised of farmers, agency officials, community members, and local organizational members attended. Please see the attached article from the FWA.

#### **NUMBER OF MEDIA OUTLETS REACHED**

The RCPP Project Coordinator updated the RCPP materials available on the Vermont NRCS RCPP website, (<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/vt/programs/farmbill/rcpp/>).

Cover Cropping is Becoming More Common on Vermont Farms- VLT Article, please see attached.

Celebrating 40 Years of Learning and Growing on the Land: Changes in Farm Conservation – VLT Article, please see attached.

Mettowee Farmers Protect Farmland and Natural Features- VLT Article, please see attached.

Lussier Farm Expands, As Daughter Continues Farming the Land- VLT Article, please see attached.

Pawlet Farm is Now Home to a New Business- VLT Article, please see attached.

Water Quality Protected on Three Rutland County Farms- VLT Article, please see attached.

VHCB to get \$3.6 Million in Federal Funding for Farmland Protection- Vermontbiz Article, please see attached.

VHCB Grants Address Water Quality and Help Farmers Transfer Farms to the Next Generation- VLT Article, please see attached.

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board to Receive \$3.6 Million in Federal Funding for Farmland Protection- VTDigger Article, please see attached.

Conservation Practices on Farms in St. Albans Bay- Farmers Watershed Alliance Article, please see attached.

#### **NUMBER OF PEOPLE REACHED AND UNIQUE OUTREACH**

Through their ongoing efforts in outreach, communication, water quality improvement efforts and training, VAAFM staff provided 3238.75 hours of support. The Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) were adopted

December 6, 2016. VAAFM staff have been providing technical assistance to agricultural producers through the planning process of bringing their farms into compliance with these updated regulations. Staff have emphasized farms with conservation easements that are eligible for Lake Champlain RCPP funds, resulting in structural improvements and water quality remediation.

VAAFM has made their monthly publication of AgriView available for mail distribution, free of charge, to all agricultural producers in the State of Vermont, vastly increasing its distribution. Additionally, the publication is available electronically and can be found here: [http://agriculture.vermont.gov/news\\_media/agriview](http://agriculture.vermont.gov/news_media/agriview). It is a key resource for sharing important information about agriculture in Vermont.

Over the summer there were several conferences and training sessions which enabled VAAFM staff to interact with their clientele, farmers and partners. One positive experience out of these meetings included visiting field events demonstrating practical solutions by farmers that address natural resource concerns. Included in these events were the UVM Crop Field Day in Alburg and the Farmers Watershed Alliance event at the Magnant Farm in Northwestern Vermont. In addition, AAFM staff worked directly with farmers to provide education and support to adopting the new Required Agricultural Practices rule regarding frequently flooded soils.

The majority of Lake Champlain RCPP work focuses on farms that are conserved and therefore are not new to NRCS. However, as part of their match contribution, Lake Champlain RCPP partners are providing outreach that reaches additional farmers and forest landowners while the RCPP Project Coordinator and Program Manager have expanded coordination efforts with Vermont Land Trust (VLT) to increase coordination with the VACD planners. Following several trainings provided by the RCPP Project Coordinator, VLT technical staff have been communicating the resources available under the RCPP when conducting farm visits. Annually, VLT visits approximately 500 conserved agricultural properties statewide, a significant contribution of which are in the Lake Champlain Basin. VLT's Stewardship staff spend considerable time working with conserved landowners on water quality improvement efforts by reviewing proposed activities, educating and directing landowners to technical assistance and cost-share programs.

DEC has been supporting the VAAFM in the development of the Vermont Environmental Stewardship Program (VESP). The program began accepting applications for the pilot program in the fall of 2016. So far, 10 applications have been received from small, medium and large farm operations. Most of the application are from small farms, and include organic dairies, beef operations, conventional dairies, and one vegetable farm. An official press event was held in July, 2017, announcing the launch of the program, and included the NRCS Acting Regional Conservationist for the Northeast. VESP is utilizing the new NRCS Resources Stewardship Evaluation Tool (R-SET) to strengthen and modernize conservation planning to help farmers better identify opportunities for improving on the ground conservation planning. The pilot program will help VAAFM fine-tune the tool to Vermont conditions for future official program roll-out. Additional innovative aspects of the VESP program include the pilot approach of high-resolution drone imaging to determine if using these technologies can allow of reduced in-field work for staff.

## RELATIONSHIP BUILDING WITH PARTNERS

Almost all the Lake Champlain RCPP partner organizations that have committed match are actively working on RCPP efforts (note: not all are currently reflected in the match documentation report). These include Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets (VAAFM), Vermont Department of Forest Parks and Recreation (FPR), Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB), Vermont Land Trust (VLT), Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (VACD), DEC, NY Washington and Essex Natural Resource Conservation Districts, St. Albans Dairy Cooperative, AgriMark Cooperative and Dairy Marketing Services, Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP), Friends of Northern Lake Champlain (FNLC), Farm to Plate (F2P), Farm & Forest Viability Program (FFV), Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), St. Albans Cooperative Creamery (St. Albans Coop), AgriMark Cooperative (AgriMark) and Commonwealth Dairy. Other partner efforts are under development.

These outreach efforts include:

- Extensive outreach regarding the RAPs to ensure farmers are aware of the water quality needs, concerns and resource opportunities through RCPP, other NRCS and state programs.
- One-on-one farm visits addressing specific farm issues.
- Farmer workshops, educational meetings and field visits.

The Lake Champlain RCPP provides opportunities for building relationships between partners through the RCPP Advisory Board, subcommittees on ACEP-ALE and WRE projects, monthly meetings with VACD, as well as the development of the Vermont Environmental Stewardship Program. At these meetings, partners are actively describing priorities and goals, identifying and overcoming challenges to improve water quality and to protect and restore natural resources. The success of that relationship building is evident as partners work together to make the Lake Champlain RCPP a cohesive and effective program while gaining a better understanding of partner programs.

An example of the intensity and high need for cohesive coordination and understanding has been one RCPP ACEP-ALE project in St. Albans that has involved significant partnerships among VLT, VHCB, DEC, VAAFM, VACD, TNC-VT, and Friends of Northern Lake Champlain to address long-standing water quality issues associated with the farm. These efforts are ongoing and this project is not only utilizing the resources of the ACEP-ALE program but also the engineering consultants on retainer for RCPP, TNC-VT & Keurig Green Mountain funding, partner technical and administrative support, as well as fundraising efforts. The immense time and resource commitment to this project demonstrates the critical need for careful project coordination, but also highlights the value of multiple partners in water quality improvement. Currently, the site is being evaluated by an engineering contractor to determine an appropriate approach to mitigating runoff of the site, then partners will develop an Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program proposal for funding. This system, and other stipulations of the project contract, must be completed for the project to successfully close in the coming autumn. The funds for installing the system have been secured and partner organization, TNC, is working both with the landowner, engineer and contract to ensure it is installed before this winter. Estimated easement closing is expected late autumn/early winter.

## SUCCESS STORIES

### **PLANNERS**

The three RCPP Conservation Planners have been working with existing new RCPP participants to provide technical assistance in the development of conservation plans for agricultural best management practices, developing ALE plans for RCPP-funded easements, developing Land Treatment Plans and assisting producers with the UVM Extension Digging In Nutrient Management Planning Course, and assisting NRCS staff with eligibility, screening, ranking and contract planning.

### **PARTNERS**

VHCB has made significant progress in implementation of our LEAN plan developed in February, 2016. On November 9th, VHCB held their first joint meeting of VHCB Conservation Issues Committee and the Viability Board, with guests (former Ag Advisory Committee members FSA State Director, and NRCS State Conservationist). The purpose of this meeting will be held annually to receive broad feedback on VHCB's farmland conservation program. This meeting focused on rural enterprises on farms including appropriate scale on conserved lands, challenges with local zoning possible tension between ag viability and conservation easements.

VHCB was approved by NRCS to assume responsibility for all closing reviews, appraisal tech reviews, etc. NRCS would evaluate 15% of the projects post-closing. This would speed up the closing process, while giving more responsibility to VHCB. In early April, VHCB received approval from NRCS for a template easement. They have amended their regular ALE and RCPP-ALE Cooperative Agreements to attach this template, and will use this for most projects moving forward. This would remove the need to be reviewed by a national deed reviewer and the review will take place entirely at the state NRCS office. This will eliminate one step in the closing process.

RCPP has been a pilot for and integral part of VT DEC's development of tracking tools for clean water efforts and TMDL implementation. DEC and Lake Champlain RCPP Partners have been involved in discussions and planning for tracking statewide implementation of best management practices to improve water quality, including RCPP efforts on agricultural, forestry, and wetland land uses.

## INTEGRATION OF RCPP INTO OTHER PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

RCPP is a key part of DEC's agricultural efforts in meeting the State's commitments to Act 64 and the Lake Champlain TMDL. Therefore, it is important that RCPP efforts coordinate and integrate with other parts of DEC and VAAFM. Some examples include:

DEC and VAAFM are actively working with scientists, partners and farmers to develop methods for addressing the potential water quality impacts of tile drains. DEC and VAAFM coordinated a working group to provide input on methods to remediate tile drain impacts and a report was sent to the Vermont Legislature in January 2017. All RCPP partners and staff are continually involved in the technical aspects of tile drain discussions and potential for remediation to ensure accurate communication when working with landowners in the field.



The RCPP Conservation Planners have been collaborating with Vermont Land Trust Stewardship Staff to attend annual stewardship inspections, as a technical resource and to share information about opportunities through the Lake Champlain RCPP.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### **PROJECTS FUNDED OUTSIDE TRADITIONAL NRCS PROGRAMS**

Projects funded outside traditional NRCS programs as match to the RCPP grant included \$17,864.13 for farm agronomic practices, \$88,500 for best management practices and \$2,691.30 for CREP riparian buffer plantings from VAAFM. Additionally, VHCB/Commonwealth Dairy provided \$31,987.50 in Dairy Improvement Grants for water quality projects on three farms in the Lake Champlain Basin. This program, a partnership with the St. Albans Cooperative Creamery, Dairy Farmers of America, Housing Vermont and the Massachusetts Housing Investment Corporation, the Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program provides grants of up to \$40,000 to Vermont dairy farmer members of the St. Albans Co-op and Dairy Farmers of America to make on-farm improvements.

VHCB has received \$1,000,000 in State Clean Water funds for FY18, of which approximately \$600,000 in funds from the Vermont Capital Construction and State Bonding Act will be used to support farmers making water quality improvements on farms (Commonwealth Grants). The first deadline was October 13<sup>th</sup>, and we received 13 grant applications requesting a combined \$445,319 in funds. Decisions about grant awards will be made in mid-November, 2017. We have two more upcoming grant deadlines: November 15<sup>th</sup> 2017, and February 21<sup>st</sup> 2018.

This past quarter VHCB made a second set of award decisions for our 2017 dairy improvement grants. The following farm projects were awarded grants:

- Eric Clifford, Clifford Farm LLC, Starksboro: \$25,000 to purchase a no-till grain drill (RCPP Match)
- Wayne & Nancy Fiske, Windfall Acres, Highgate Center, VT: \$8,150 to upgrade their milking units
- Grace Gosliga, Goslinga Farm Inc., Addison, VT: \$25,000 to purchase a no-till seeder (RCPP Match)
- Jennifer Hall, Hall & Breen Farm, LLC, Orwell, VT: \$8,000 to renovate the barn feed alleys
- Jill Maxham, Lakeside Farm, South Hero: \$6,000 to empty and repair the manure pit (RCPP Match)
- Karen and Patrick O'Donnell, O'Donnell Farm, Westfield, VT: \$21,500 to construct a manure storage system for heifers (RCPP Match)
- Denise Pothier, Pothier Farm, Newport, VT: \$21,926 to establish a pasture management and grazing system (RCPP Match)
- Nathan & Darcy Smart, East View Farm, Brunswick, VT: \$35,000 to build a heifer facility (RCPP match)
- Mark Vosburg, Vosburg Farm, St. Albans, VT: \$22,428 to purchase a new bulk tank and renovate the milk house
- Lorenzo Whitcomb, North Williston Cattle Company, Williston, VT: \$20,000 to purchase storage tanks allowing the farm to grow and store their own soy

Approximately \$400,000 of Clean Water funds are targeted to farm buyouts- i.e. retiring land from farming when the location has become especially challenging from a water quality perspective. This amount of funding will allow VHCB to fund one or more projects. We continue to work with partners, both on specific projects, and to the scope out a broader programs and process for farm buyouts, should future additional funding be available. We presently have two possible projects in the works, both in the Lake Champlain Basin, and are actively seeking others, to develop a pipeline of possible projects. We do not expect to commit any of these funds until later this fiscal year.

## **CONTRACTS AND PRACTICES IMPLEMENTED**

The Vermont NRCS/FPR Foresters worked on existing and new contacts and scheduled site visits for spring snowmelt. This pre-planning work included making maps and reviewing Forest Management Plans for landowners. They continue to move projects forward for engineering contracting, currently three projects will be contracted through DEC and two additional will be done by NRCS and the foresters. Both NRCS & the FPR Foresters continue to improve on their communication and collaborative approach to shepherding projects through the Lake Champlain RCPP program.

## **AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM – AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENTS**

VLT, VHCB & NRCS closed on the permanent conservation of three RCPP-funded farms (the Lussier Farm in Benson, the Cleveland Farm in Pawlet and the Marquis II Farm in Newport) during April-June, as well as an additional four conservation projects on farm and forestland elsewhere in the Lake Champlain Basin, permanently protecting 754 acres (RCPP funding- 250 acres). Additionally, VLT sought and received match funding for three RCPP farm projects from the VHCB Board during this time. Please see the details below.

There are five agricultural land easement projects in the Lake Champlain Basin that have been funded and are moving toward closing. Additionally, there are four projects that have been selected to move forward for funding. VHCB submitted their third application to NRCS for RCPP-ALE projects on February 3rd, are seeking funding for 4 additional RCPP projects in Hinesburg, Highgate, Middlebury, and West Haven.

VLT closed on five additional conservation projects and one DEC River Corridor Easement overlay on a farm elsewhere in the Lake Champlain Basin, permanently protecting 873 acres.

A total of 18 farmland conservation projects within the three challenged/priority watersheds have been developed and are eligible for RCPP ALE funding. Additionally, over 40 farmland and forestland conservation projects under development are located in other portions of the Basin.

VLT staff are developing a number of River Corridor Management Area (RCMA) projects within the Lake Champlain Basin that include significant river corridor protection in addition to buffer implementation. These projects are primarily overlays on existing conserved farms to add restrictions to strengthen water quality protection. Currently there are three projects funded with an additional four in application phase.

Technical staff from the Vermont Land Trust, the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, and the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts gathered on November 16, 2017 to discuss challenges and opportunities in engaging conserved landowners with the Lake Champlain RCPP, to receive training on the new Required Agricultural Practices, and to collaborate about opportunities for technical assistance. VLT staff spend considerable time researching farm and forestland conservation opportunities in the Lake Champlain Basin in an effort to identify priority conservation projects and outreach to these farmland owners.

## **CLOSED PROJECTS**

The Cleveland Farm: Scott & Traci Cleveland conserved 100 acres in the town of Pawlet. The Cleveland's purchased the property in 2016 as an extension of their adjacent home farm. They felt that securing this additional cropland was essential to their dairy operation, now and for the next generation, if their sons decide to continue farming here. The Cleveland III property lies within the Taconic Mountain biophysical region of Vermont, a mostly forested region underlain by metamorphosed sedimentary slate, schist, and phyllite bedrock types, and characterized by sometimes dramatic topography. The property straddles a striking boundary between the knobby North Pawlet Hills to the east and gently rolling lowlands to the west. Its lower parts feature a variety of open, shrub, and forested wetlands. One large open wetland on the eastern portion of the property has been occupied by beaver over the years, with ponded areas of varying size depending on the level of beaver activity, and it has also hosted a small heron rookery. A stream occasionally feeds this wetland to the eastern boundary. Much of this slope is Transition Hardwood Talus Woodland, a rare natural community in Vermont, as designated by the Vermont Natural Heritage Program. At the top of the slope, at the ledge crest, is a small band of Red Cedar Woodland, another rare natural community in Vermont, as designated by the Vermont Natural Heritage program. At the top of the slope, at the edge of the crest, is a small band of eastern red cedar in its native habitat, hophornbeam low red shadbush, woodland sedge, poverty grass, and cow-wheat, with areas of open ledge. A 1.5-acre Ecological Protection Zone (EPZ) was designated around the Red Cedar Woodland.

The Lussier Farm: Paul and Kerrilee Lussier conserved approximately 150 acres after purchasing the property from the Rogers in 2016 in order to expand the land base for their organic dairy property from the Rogers in 2016 in order to expand the land base for their organic dairy operation on the home farm along Route 22A, also in Benson. This new parcel's location on the Hubbardton River and within the South Lake region, a state priority area for farmland water quality improvements, has made it an important parcel to conserve. Just downstream of Mill Pond and its dam in Benson, the Hubbardton River and an unnamed tributary have their confluence on the Lussier II farm. The gently sloping property ranges from about 340' on the upper eastern crop fields down to approximately 220' where the Hubbardton River passes across the western portion. Forested ravines and open shrubland lie between the upper crop fields and the lower riparian areas. In recent years, the agricultural land has been managed primarily for conventional dairy crops. The Lussiers are now transitioning it to organic hay production, which may include some transition crops such as sorghum. They also intend to use a portion of the property as pasture. The riparian area along the Hubbardton River and its tributary is a combination of open and shrub wetland and is fed by a series of small streams that drain the upper fields through forested ravines. Several constructed swales and ditches direct surface water flow into the wetland and riparian areas from open parts of

the property, and in many cases provide water quality protection through grass or shrub buffers. The riparian zone, associated wetlands and surrounding forested areas, including those areas of Mesic Clayplain Forest, provide important habitat for a range of vertebrate and invertebrate species, as well as connections between different habitat types. The easement designates a 50' Riparian Buffer Zone (RBZ) along the Hubbardton River and its tributary. The previous owners constructed a fence with the help of USDA's CREP program to protect waterways from livestock, though it only creates a 35' buffer in some places. Two stream crossings were also constructed as part of the project. The easement also designates a 12.5-acre Ecological Protection Zone (EPZ) protecting the forested ravines and areas of the Mesic Clayplain Forest.

The Marquis II Farm in Newport: This is the home farm for this organic dairy, cropland was protected in one of the first RCPP easements. The landowners recently finished installing a new manure pit with support from NRCS, as well as developing a grazing plan.

On June 14th, the VHCB board met and committed funding to 16 farm projects, including three RCPP projects. In September the RCPP Advisory Board and VLT easement planning staff met to review potential Lake Champlain RCPP ACEP-ALE projects and develop a numbered list of projects to fund based on water quality priorities. In November the RCPP Advisory Board met to review current and future RCPP project needs.

#### **FARM & FOREST VIABILITY**

The RCPP Program Manager has been working closely with Farm Viability to directly connect RCPP farms to the Farm & Forest Viability program and increase the use of this critical program throughout the Lake Champlain Basin. The RCPP Project Coordinator worked with Vermont Farm Viability partners to develop an information email about farm viability resources, which was distributed widely to conservation partners. Please see attached.

#### **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

The RCPP Conservation Planners continue to work closely with NRCS staff, the RCPP Project Coordinator and VACD Technical Programs Manager to prioritize workload. The three RCPP Conservation Planners have been working with 38 farms and have provided over 100 technical assistance visits to those farms in addition to technical assistance provided by NRCS staff. Their efforts include conducting hazardous waste assessments and interviews, developing Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) plans, developing Land Treatment Plans (LTPs), assisting with signups for Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) development, and acting as the "case manager" to producers navigating programs to implement clean water activities and comply with state and federal regulations. Please see the attached VACD quarterly report for January and April for detailed information about deliverables met.

The Lake Champlain RCPP foresters are providing technical assistance in project development utilizing stream crossing practice standard 578, stream crossing stabilization practice standard 655, and forest trails and landings practice standard 655. This planning work involves field visits, communication with the landowners, stream crossing survey work, and processing stream crossing data. The FPR/NRCS foresters provided technical assistance

to 25 landowners in Bolton, Richmond, Jay, Wolcott, Eden, Huntington, Richford, Holland, Bakersfield, Hinesburg, Richmond, Westford, Plainfield, Hyde Park, Charleston and several other southern Lake Champlain Basin towns.

The foresters have experienced workload challenges due to the high surveying and planning needs associated with stream crossings. Additionally, there is a large agricultural engineering workload that is affecting implementation. VT DEC is coordinating with NRCS and FPR to target Lake Champlain RCPP technical assistance dollars for funding engineering assistance that addresses both areas of concern.

Technical assistance visits by the foresters have included determining appropriate crossing structures, assessing culturally significant features and general outreach with the AMPs and road and trail maintenance. NRCS foresters have also been flagging work for engineering contractors.

The foresters participated in and assisted with LEAP Training in May 2017. This training was for loggers and it included an AMPs overview, wetlands regulations and overview of logging in wetlands, Portable Skidder Bridge Rental Program and a comment and questions time.

The foresters participated in RCPP training for County Foresters in May 2017. This training included an overview of the Lake Champlain RCPP and the Cold Hollow to Canada RCPP. The training included a visit to one of the first completed RCPP forestry projects to observe bridges and discuss the successes and struggles of the project as well as other sites where similar projects might be applicable.

Dave Wilcox from FPR has been providing assistance to the NRCS foresters with technical support. He has assisted with the RCPP training for County Foresters, as well as attended the NRCS Technical Committee Meeting in Colchester.

### ADJUSTMENT OF TERMS

In September 2016, NRCS offered the opportunity to have rolling sign-ups with no batching if the RCPP Conservation Planners would be responsible for moving those applications forward through the ranking process. DEC agreed, and was awarded an Adjustment of Terms to allow for threshold ranking. DEC had planned to pilot this approach with only the agricultural applications in the first round (DEC chose to maintain the same program schedule as regular EQIP to avoid confusion for the planning staff and the RCPP Conservation Planners could always “beat” the deadlines within the program schedule when working on an application). Not only will this provide an expedited process for applicants, it will be a good case study for NRCS to observe if they wish to try it in any of their traditional pools. Both the RCPP Conservation Planners and NRCS staff have provided feedback that they really like the threshold ranking as it allows projects to move forward with less “waiting” and they would be in support of it being available to all programs.

### USE OF FUNDS

EQIP dollars for agricultural practices are available to conserved farms in the three target watersheds of Missisquoi Bay, St. Albans Bay, and South Lake. ACEP (WRE and ALE) and Forestry EQIP dollars are available to any landowners

in the Lake Champlain Basin. Technical assistance funding supports three RCPP Conservation Planners and the two RCPP Foresters, who are assisting landowners in the Lake Champlain Basin. Additionally, partner technical assistance funding is supporting contractual engineering work for Lake Champlain RCPP contracts, as NRCS engineering staff's workload is not able to balance the increased workload the Lake Champlain RCPP brings.

Allocation of Financial Assistance Funds:

EQUIP: \$3,200,486 (Ag) & \$245,498.96 (Forestry)

ALE: \$2,558,925

WRE: \$422,449.36

Please reference the attached FSR for technical assistance and match document. Additionally, please reference the attached reporting Table "449-DEC".

### MEASUREMENT OF RESULTS

A key component of the Lake Champlain RCPP contract is the assessment and evaluation of the results of practice implementation as an indicator of progress. There are several methods that the State of Vermont is using collectively.

#### **METRIC QUANTIFICATION**

Each practice is being tracked by appropriate metrics, such as number of acres or linear feet and are documented in regular reporting to NRCS.

#### **PRACTICE EFFICIENCY**

On an annual basis, practice tracking will also include estimated phosphorus reduction using the efficiencies being used in accountability for the Lake Champlain TMDL. This methodology was developed with the EPA in conjunction with DEC and VAAFM and with the assistance of NRCS.

#### **WATER QUALITY MONITORING**

DEC has an extensive State and lay monitoring program for surface water quality. While site specific monitoring should not be used solely as a method for evaluating practice success, since there are many other factors in the sub-watershed that can impact data, there are instances and locations where this type of monitoring can be informative and supplemental to other methods. DEC is conducting bracketed water quality monitoring at practice sites where the situation indicates that results will be valuable, and will provide further information in future reports.

## RANKING & TARGETING

EQIP dollars for agricultural practices are available to conserved farms in the Lake Champlain Basin with priority given to the three targeted watersheds of Missisquoi Bay, St. Albans Bay, and South Lake. ACEP-WRE & ALE and Forestry EQIP dollars are available to all landowners in the Lake Champlain Basin. Lake Champlain RCPP-Specific Ranking & Screening Criteria exist for agricultural and forestry conservation projects and for agricultural and wetland easement projects.

## TRAININGS

The RCPP Project Coordinator and VAAFM Water Quality Outreach Coordinator hosted a webinar for RCPP partners in May 2017 to provide updates to partners about accomplishments of the Lake Champlain RCPP, information regarding the RAPs and VAAFM technical and financial resources, and to answer questions.

The RCPP Project Coordinator presented in June 2017 about the Lake Champlain RCPP to DEC partners, and a recording of the webinar is available on the CWIP YouTube page and the CWIP RCPP webpage:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8Xl8j4X8Zs>

## PARTNERS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service  
Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation  
Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets  
Vermont Association of Conservation Districts  
Vermont Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation  
Vermont Housing & Conservation Board  
Vermont Land Trust  
St. Albans Cooperative  
Dairy Farmers of America  
AgriMark Cooperative Creamery



# Spring 2017 Newsletter



## Inside this issue:

Page 1: MLK Day of Service

Page 2: AmeriCorps Week

Page 3: Mayor's Day

Page 4: Member Trainings

Page 5: Member Highlights

Page 10: Host Site Highlights

Page 11: Members in Action

Page 13: ECO Bulletin Board

## ECO AmeriCorps

1 National Life Drive,  
Montpelier, VT 05602



## ECO AmeriCorps kicks off 2017 with MLK Service Day



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: 'What are you doing for others?'"

In honor of these words and Dr. King's legacy, AmeriCorps members from across the United States answer that question by serving in a manner that helps empower and strengthen their local communities.

For their part, on January 16th, ECO AmeriCorps Members served at the ReSource Center in Burlington. This facility prevents tons of material from ending up in Vermont's landfill while

providing essentials to families and individuals in crisis.



*ECO Member Jimmy helps construct new shelving units.*

## Recognizing service efforts during AmeriCorps Week

# *It's AmeriCorps Week!*



March 4 to March 11

AmeriCorps Week is an annual week long event put on by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to promote and thank serving AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps alumni for their service. Held this year on March 4th and running through March 11th, individuals, programs, and organizations across the United States put on events and social media campaigns to honor and celebrate the contributions that 80,000 members have made to their communities and the service given by more than 1 million AmeriCorps alumni.

AmeriCorps Week is also a time when AmeriCorps programs across the country spread awareness of national service and the benefit it has on American communities through the efforts of their serving members.

To assist in this effort, ECO AmeriCorps led a social media campaign highlighting the efforts of members past and present by running themes for each day of the week. Through these efforts, the wonderful efforts of our members was noticed by a variety of agencies and individuals.

## *SerVermont Preps for Spring Conference*

In May, SerVermont is hosting its annual AmeriCorps Spring Professional Development Conference at the [Common Ground Center](#) in Starksboro, Vermont. This annual two-day conference will serve as a second gathering point for members serving with various AmeriCorps programs throughout the State of Vermont.

As with the fall conference, the spring conference will include opportunities for AmeriCorps members to network, attend workshops, and attend sessions with guest speakers. Many of these workshops and sessions will be geared towards helping AmeriCorps members prepare for their life after their respective service terms end.



## Recognizing service efforts during AmeriCorps Week



*AmeriCorps members serving in the Burlington area gather at Burlington City Hall to meet with Mayor Miro Weinberger.*



*AmeriCorps members serving in Central Vermont gather at Montpelier City Hall to meet with Mayor John Hollar.*

On Tuesday, April 4th 2017, more than 4,520 mayors and county officials representing 194 million citizens from across the country came out to recognize the efforts of national service in their communities. This annual event known as “Mayor and County Recognition Day for National Service” began five years ago as a way for mayors and county officials to acknowledge the impact of national service and thank those who serve within their communities.

On April 3rd and 4th, ECO members from across the State of Vermont gathered at the City Halls of Montpelier, Burlington, and St. Albans to meet with their respective mayors and discuss how their service has impacted their communities as well as how national service has affected them.

ECO Members Dom, Annie, Stephi, Joe, and Zack also gathered on the morning of the 4th to remove dog waste from Burlington’s Roosevelt Park for a “April Stool’s Day” event that was put on by the Lake Champlain Committee.



*ECO Members Brodie and Thomas (left to right) meet with St. Albans Mayor, Elizabeth Gamache.*



*ECO Members Dom, Annie, Stephi, & Joe assist Lake Champlain Committee in removing pet waste from Roosevelt Park.*



## ECO AmeriCorps holds regional spring gatherings

In mid-March, the ECO AmeriCorps Program held its second regional gatherings. These gatherings were an opportunity for members network with one another while learning about the State of Vermont's natural history as well as learn about other existing needs within the communities they serve.

Members serving in the Central and Southern Region met in the City of Montpelier to learn about the history of Vermont. Throughout the day they toured Vermont's Statehouse, the [Vermont Historic Society Museum](#), and concluded their day with a trek up to Hubbard Park's stone tower.

The following week, ECO members serving in the Northern Region gathered at the City of Burlington's [Fletcher Free Library](#) for a team building exercise and lunch before they tackled a service project with the [Chittenden County Emergency Food Shelf](#).

While at the food shelf, members served in a variety of ways. From unloading food trucks to stocking food shelves and preparing premade meals, members of the Northern Region provided a valuable service while learning about the needs of others within Chittenden County.

After their service, several members expressed interest in returning to the food shelf to earn independent service hours.



*ECO Members in the Central Region paid a visit to the Hubbard Park Tower after touring Vermont's State House and Historic Museum in Montpelier.*



*ECO Members in the Northern Region pose for a photo after serving with the Chittenden County Emergency Food Shelf.*

### **AmeriCorps in Vermont by the numbers**

- More than 5,100 members have provided more than 7.6 million hours of service since 1994.
- AmeriCorps members across Vermont have earned more than \$17.9 million in education awards since 1994.
- For the 2016-17 service year, the Corporation for National & Community Service has committed more than \$6.2 million to Vermont through national service and social innovation initiatives.

## Members visit water treatment facilities

The December ECO training was jam-packed full of exciting learning opportunities for the members. Beginning at the DEC's Annex building in Montpelier, members attended a presentation on the Lake Champlain TMDL by EPA Environmental Protections Specialist Eric Perkins, who was the lead author for the 2016 Lake Champlain TMDL. After a quick break, members then learned about communicating natural resource issues with volunteers in the municipal land use planning process from Vermont Fish and Wildlife's Jens Hilke.

Following a quick lunch

that included a competitive white elephant gift exchange, members donned their winter clothing and headed outside for a tour of the Montpelier Water Resource Recovery Facility. In their tour, members learned about the numerous steps (some more pungent than others) involved in process of treating wastewater. Their tour of the recovery facility complete, members jumped into their vehicles and headed to the Berlin Drinking Water Treatment Facility to learn how water is treated prior to consumption.

Members enjoyed their tours and learning how drinking and waste water is treated.



*An employee of the Berlin Drinking Water Treatment Facility leads a tour for the ECO members.*

## ECO AmeriCorps members learn about fluvial dynamics

In early January, ECO members participated in a day of training with a dual focus.

The morning portion of the training provided members with the exciting opportunity to meet with DEC River Scientist Staci Pomeroy and Environmental Scientist Amy Picotte, and learn about stream tables through their interactive river process simulator and fun group activity.

In the afternoon portion of the training, members participated in a Gallup StrengthsFinder assessment facilitated by DEC Lakes & Ponds Program Manager Perry Thomas. This exercise helped members identify their personal strengths and understand how to better utilize these strengths and the strengths of others in their service.



*ECO Members (left to right): Shannon, Michelle, Billy, Andrew D., Chris, Andrew N., Trevor, Brodie, Stephi, and Lindsay learn about stream dynamics from DEC River Scientist Staci Pomeroy.*



## Calvin Coolidge and the impacts of TS Irene

In February, ECO members made the trip to Plymouth to visit the Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site. There they were taken on an guided tour by Regional Site Administrator Bill Jenney, and learned about the life of America's 30th president, Vermont native, Calvin Coolidge.

As one of the many local communities directly affected by Tropical Storm Irene back in August of 2011, Plymouth was an ideal location for members to learn about the impacts of large storms like Irene.

Sitting down to watch a locally produced documentary, members learned not only of the devastation caused by this tropical storm, but also of the resiliency shown by the local residents in overcoming the aftermath of it.

After the documentary, members met with DEC Lakes & Ponds Program Manager Perry Thomas who presented on the water quality and the public policy implications of Tropical Storm Irene and similar large- scale disasters.

Members enjoyed seeing a unique part of Vermont's history and learning how communities respond to disasters.



*Coolidge Historic Site Administrator Bill Jenny leads members on a tour.*

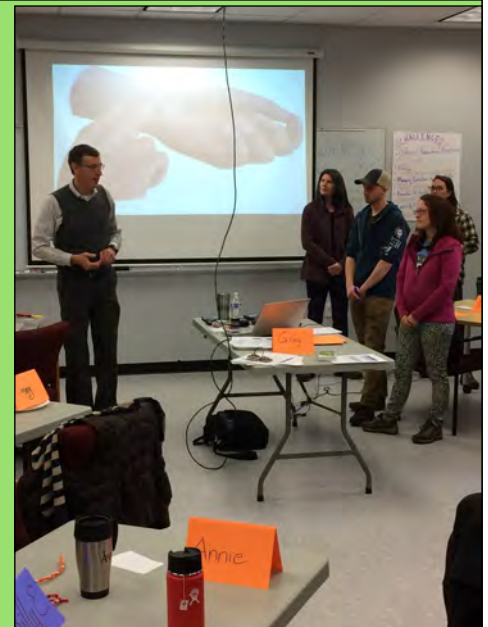
## Generational diversity training bridges the gap

In March, ECO AmeriCorps members returned to the DEC's Annex building in Montpelier to meet with Greg Hessel of ReGeneration Resources.

A consultant specializing in helping organizations grow, change, and manage conflict, Greg facilitated a presentation on generational diversity in the workplace. This session was designed to help the ECO members learn about how different generations have different communication styles, workplace expectations, approach work differently, use and view technology differently, etc. The goal of this training was for the members to ultimately gain a better

understanding and appreciation of these differences to result in improved workplace communication and success in their service and in their life after ECO AmeriCorps. Several site supervisors also attended this training to engage members and provided additional, diverse perspectives.

Members enjoyed the opportunity to discuss challenges that have encountered as well as some of the negative stereotypes they feel are placed on them for being part of the "Millennial Generation." Members expressed that through this training, they better understand the different communication styles, expectations and behaviors of individuals from across the generational spectrum.



*Greg Hessel of ReGeneration Resources helps members and their supervisors understand and manage expectations across different generations.*

## Stephi develops GIS capabilities serving with the NRCS



*Stephi Drago poses for a photo while out surveying an easement.*

ECO AmeriCorps has given me countless opportunities to gain important career experiences in agriculture and water resource management, while helping me cultivate a love of service.

In college, my academic interests focused on agricultural impacts on water quality. Serving with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Colchester, has allowed me to explore those interests and develop professional skills.

I have had the chance to work heavily with GIS and develop my cartographic skills by generating maps and ArcGIS layers in support of NRCS conservation efforts on private lands.

My position has helped me discover my love for map making, and the strong role I want it to play in my career. Not only have I had the chance to explore my passion for cartography and geospatial analysis, but I have also been able to participate in many different types of field work including wetland easement monitoring, cover crop certification, tree surveys, and hazmat reviews, with more opportunities to come in the next six months.

I have been extremely satisfied with my position, and I'm grateful for the valuable career experience I have gained from ECO AmeriCorps while serving the great state of Vermont.

## ECO AmeriCorps helps Annie pursue her Ph.D. goals

My time at the Lake Champlain Sea Grant, and as a second year AmeriCorps member, has been an amazing experience.

Last year, I served in a different AmeriCorps program which was very rewarding due to the strong connections I made with the kids I tutored, but it did not allow me to grow professionally towards my goal of earning a Ph.D. in marine biology\* like my time in ECO AmeriCorps has.

Since starting this program I have been able to bolster my Geographic Information Systems (GIS) skills, which was a personal goal coming into this program.

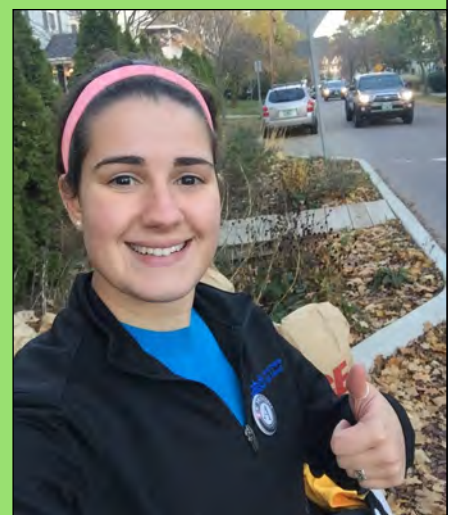
I just finished a GIS project analyzing the functionality of Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) projects funded through grants from the Department of Environmental Conservation.

The maps I created in GIS were used to compare functionality scores between projects and were compiled into a report that was shared with the specific granting program.

Because of this report, several of the projects that were not there when we went to assess them are now going to be rebuilt.

It is experiences like these that have made me truly appreciate my time in the ECO AmeriCorps program.

*\*Since writing her article for this newsletter, Annie has been accepted at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science where she will pursue her Ph.D.*



*Annie Schatz helping to map a GSI bike tour in Burlington.*



## Carlie's service helps with her professional growth

In my year of service, I am an ECO AmeriCorps member with the Addison County Solid Waste Management District (ACSWMD) in Middlebury. I am a fresh graduate from St. Lawrence University. I have spent the last six months serving with ACSWMD, learning about the recycling and trash industry and trying to figure out how those things relate to my overall career goals.

Since September, I have grown both professionally and individually. Serving in ECO AmeriCorps has allowed me to learn about office dynamics and how to interact with my colleagues in a way that I was unfamiliar with before. I have gone from a complete introvert to readily introducing myself to new people that walk through the office door. This is especially useful since my service with ACSWMD has been focused on school outreach.

A project I recently completed in February was an after school program at Vergennes Elementary School. I taught a group of kids, ranging from grades 3-6 a new lesson each week focusing on waste reduction! The kids, who were deemed "Waste Warriors!" made posters to hang up in their school cafeteria in order to help their friends understand where their waste goes!

Serving with kids and being a part of the education field has really helped me narrow down my future career goals and I am looking forward to serving the rest of my term with ACSWMD.



*Carlie Wright presents on composting and recycling to a middle school class.*

## Clarice expands her knowledge of land use patterns



The last six months serving with the Vermont Land Trust (VLT) have offered me a variety of exciting experiences across the state. I've expanded my GIS skills, my understanding of land use patterns and the role of conservation easements in Vermont and beyond, and my knowledge of forest management.

One of the goals of my term of service is to collect and review forest management plans for conserved properties. For me, the most effective way to gather the plans is to visit county foresters. The county foresters have been very generous with their time and technical assistance and have offered an impressive preview into the work of a forester and state employee.

In the picture to the left, I'm coring an Eastern Hemlock that Dan (VLT staff forester), Liz (VLT staff ecologist), and Rick (Lamoille County Forester) correctly estimated qualifies as part of an "old forest" stand. After coring the hemlock I used the Bluetooth GPS unit on my hip to delineate the old hemlock forest so that the stand could be enrolled as an old forest ESTA (Ecologically Significant Treatment Area) in the forest management plan update.

## Trevor's time with the NorthWoods Stewardship Center



*Trevor Banister has fun at an after school fishing program.*



*Trevor poses for a photo while removing invasive plants on National Public Lands Day last fall.*

Here at the NorthWoods Stewardship Center we have a lot of exciting projects that kick into gear when the ground begins to thaw. One of my primary projects is assisting with the NorthWoods Riparian Buffer Planting Program (NWBPP) and the NorthEast Kingdom Lakeshore Buffering Program (NEKLB). These are buffer planting programs for lakes, ponds, river, and streams in the Memphremagog Watershed.

In mid-April we will be conducting site visits at prospective properties to develop a planting plan for each individual's riparian or littoral zone. Planting begins after the planning phase is complete and typically lasts 2-4 weeks. Lastly, we revisit sites in the late summer to conduct survival studies of the trees and shrubs.

Another upcoming project that I get the honor of spearheading is a watershed health survey for Sucker Brook, one of the main tributaries of Seymour Lake. Sucker Brook is directly adjacent to the boat launch, and it has been loading the river mouth with sediment which is inhibiting larger boats from launching. The source of this excess sediment is unknown and problematic now that dredging is no longer an option. I will be walking predetermined regions of Sucker Brook to catalog potential sources and recommend installation of well-suited best management practices in these problem areas.

My third major spring project is conducting water sampling for Seymour Lake through the LaRosa Program, a volunteer water quality monitoring analytical services partnership. We will be testing for total phosphorus, total nitrogen, and total suspended sediments. The goal of this sampling is not only to collect data to see general nutrient trends, but also to sample 2 high flow events to capture the sediment traveling down Sucker Brook. It will be interesting to see how the water sampling data compares with what I see during the Sucker Brook ground-truthing.

I'm excited and ready for all the planning I've done over the winter months to come to fruition. One of the greatest things about AmeriCorps is that we get to be the boots on the ground making that direct measurable impact on the land. Planting trees and taking samples are some of the direct impacts I get to make, and I can't wait to see all those trees in the ground improving our water quality for generations to come.



## ECO member helps CVSWMD expand its outreach



**By: Cassandra Hemenway,  
CVSWMD Outreach Manager**

The Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District has been thrilled to benefit from the service of Andrew Donahue as our Eco-AmeriCorps service member this year. Andrew has been an amiable, cooperative, capable young professional in our midst. It's been wonderful to see him bring his personal style to our outreach about recycling, composting, and reducing waste. Our experience with Andrew has made it clear that we would like to continue participating in the Eco AmeriCorps program next year.

Andrew has been a key organizer of one of our largest special collections of the year, an e-waste collection on America Recycles Day, which diverted 10 tons of electronics from the landfill (See his blog post about it [here](#)). Andrew has also produced an intelligent and engaging video about electronic waste, which we will use on our website, social

media, and presentations, explaining why e-waste is hazardous, and how to properly recycle it. See his e-waste video [here](#).

Creating eye-catching signage for our Additional Recyclables Collection Center (ARCC) has made it easier for ARCC users to sort materials. Been a key leader in "Project Tote," a creative outreach project engaging schools and local artists to upcycle our broken compost totes into beautifully painted recycling bins. Andrew helped us to display the totes and engage the public in voting for a favorite on Earth Day. He is also joining one of our School Program Coordinators in displaying the totes at U-32 high school's annual "Color Run." Andrew has done astounding work as a project coordinator on this event.

Andrew is just beginning a new project assisting the organizers of the Tunbridge World's Fair to increase recycling and begin vendor composting at this year's fair. While he will have completed his year of service prior to the fair dates, he will have made an impact before the fair ever opens its doors.

The existence of the ECO AmeriCorps program has allowed CVSWMD to extend our outreach, benefiting CVSWMD residents, school children, and the general public with regular outreach and education about Vermont's Universal Recycling Law, and the benefits of reducing the waste that goes to Vermont's

only operating landfill. I can see professional growth in Andrew even in just seven months, and love how the program is so "win-win." We get the help we need to reach the public in new and engaging ways, and Andrew gets assistance with the burden of student loans while gaining professional skills.



*Andrew Donahue poses for a photo at his desk in the CVSWMD's Montpelier office.*

### Did you know...

- ▶ AmeriCorps members currently serve at more than 21,000 locations across America.
- ▶ AmeriCorps leverages more than \$1 billion in outside funding and donations every year.
- ▶ More than 1 million members have served in AmeriCorps since it began in 1994.

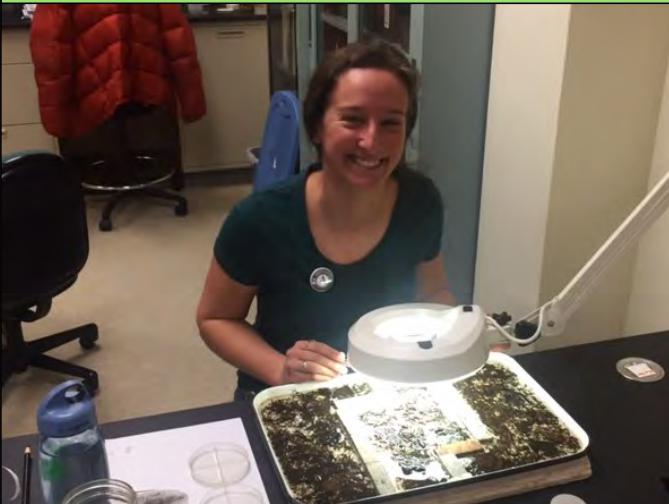
## ECO AmeriCorps members in action



ECO members Emily, Billy, and Zack pose for a pensive moment at the Vermont Historical Society Museum.



ECO member Stephi poses with a geospatial map that she created.



ECO member Michelle assists with aquatic insect studies at the DEC Biomonitoring lab.



ECO member Lindsay meets with land owners to discuss Land Treatment Plans.



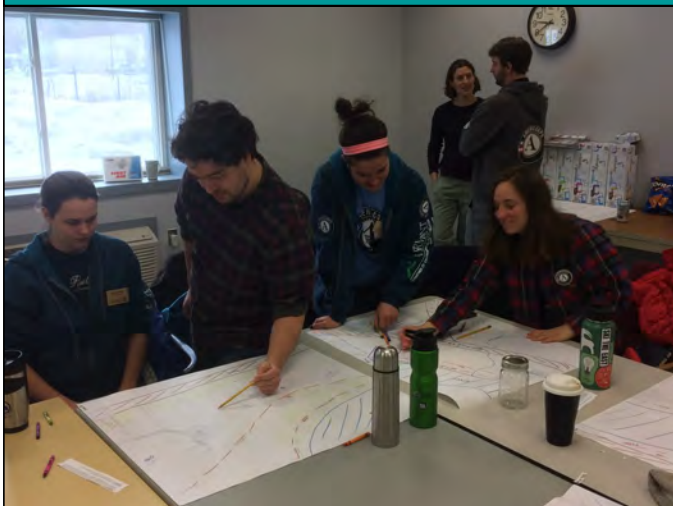
ECO members learn how drinking water is treated while touring the Montpelier Water Filtration Facility.



ECO members learn about the life of President Calvin Coolidge at the Coolidge Homestead State Historic Site.



## ECO AmeriCorps members in action



ECO members Rachel, Dom, Annie and Lindsay learn about the complexities of property management in watershed areas.



ECO members Zack, Thomas, Rachel, Lindsay, Annie, and Dom volunteer with the VT Food Bank at Burlington's annual Mardi Gras parade.



ECO members Clarice and Zack mark off a riparian buffer at a farm in Barre.



ECO members Jimmy, Maddie, and Joe along with ECO Program Director Carey help load bags of food at the Chittenden Emergency Food Shelf.



ECO member Maddie at the Intervale Center prepping dogwood clippings for later planting in riparian areas.



ECO member Shannon serves to educate elementary school students on the importance of recycling and composting.

## ECO AmeriCorps Program Bulletin Board

### Upcoming Events

May 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> SerVermont Conference

June 3<sup>rd</sup> – National Trails Day

June 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> – Overnight ECO Training

July 28<sup>th</sup> – All-Day ECO Training

August 11<sup>th</sup> – End of year celebration

### 2nd Quarter Accomplishments

24,522.5 Total hours served

20,600 Hours of direct service that directly effects Vermont water bodies, landscapes, or citizens.

3,685.5 Hours of training accomplished

237 Hours of fundraising accomplished

4 Miles of rivers improved/put into use.

573 Vermonters educated on environmental stewardship

70 Vermonters reporting an intention to change their behavior as a result of training/ education

59 Volunteers supported

47 first time volunteers

12 recurring volunteers

350.5 volunteer hours served



### *Do you have any service projects or training ideas?*

Are you aware of an upcoming event, conference or training opportunity? Our members would love to know about it! Many of our members are newcomers to the State of Vermont and are excited to learn how they can further immerse themselves and experience what Vermont has to offer. If you know of an event you believe would benefit our members, please contact either Team Leader [Zack Simpson](#) or ECO AmeriCorps Program Coordinator [Reuben Allen](#).



# 2016-17 Year-End Newsletter



Volume 2, Issue 4

September, 2017

## Inside this issue:

**Page 1:** Service Conclusion

**Page 2:** Career Day Training

**Page 3:** Earth Day Service

**Page 4:** Green Up Day

**Page 5:** SerVermont Conference

**Page 6:** Overnight Event

**Page 7-9:** What's Next for our  
Members

**Page 10:** 2017-18 Service Sites

**Page 11-12:** Photos from the  
Field

**Page 13:** ECO Accomplishments

## ECO AmeriCorps Concludes its Second Service Year!



Members and program partners pose with Gov. Phil Scott, ANR Secretary Julie Moore and SerVermont Executive Director Phil Kolling during the end-of-service celebration.

The second service year of the ECO AmeriCorps program has come to a close. On Friday, August 11th, outgoing ECO AmeriCorps members gathered for one last time to conclude their eleven months of service. Members met in Berlin, at the Capital City Grange for a day to celebrate and reflect upon their service.

Members were joined by service site supervisors, program mentors, and other program

partners. Speakers included Governor Phil Scott, ANR Secretary Julie Moore, and SerVermont Executive Director Phil Kolling. Each member also received a personal letter from Senator Bernie Sanders, thanking them for their service.

During the afternoon, each member gave a brief presentation, highlighting their accomplishments during their 11 months of service to the State of Vermont.



Follow us on  
**Twitter**



FOLLOW US ON

**Instagram**



follow us on

**facebook**



## Members Prepare for Life After Service



On the last Friday of April, our AmeriCorps members gathered at the Vermont College of Fine Arts in Montpelier to begin preparing for their lives after service. Prior to the training, our members were tasked with updating their resumes and preparing a cover letter for a mock position with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation. Members began the day with a presentation by University of Vermont Career Readiness Counselor Lauren Petrie, who reviewed member cover letters and resumes and provided career preparation guidance.

Following the morning presentations, members had the opportunity to sit in on panel discussions with some of Vermont's leading natural resource professionals. Panelists included ANR Secretary Julie Moore, Vermont State Park Director Craig Whipple, DEC Environmental Compliance Division Director Kim Greenwood, USDA NRCS Soil Conservationist Hisa Kominami, Vermont Land Trust Central Vermont Director Bob Linck, DEC Environmental Scientist Josh Mulhollem, University of Vermont Waste & Recycling Program Supervisor Corey Berman, and Chris Smith of the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Panelists shared stories regarding their personal career paths as well as suggestions for ECO members to begin their environmental careers.

## *Did you know...*

AmeriCorps serves as a pathway to economic opportunity that provides members with valuable skills specific to their service (environment, construction, teaching, etc.) as well as general skills of leadership and problem-solving that all employers are looking for in their employees.



## Members Participate in Earth Day Efforts



*ECO Members Emily, Michelle, Andrew N. & Chris help clean up the banks of the White River in collaboration with the White River Partnership on Earth Day*

On Saturday, April 22nd, ECO Members celebrated Earth Day with a day of service. Members focused on two projects in collaboration with the White River Partnership and the Burlington TreeAGE Nursery. Members serving in southern and central Vermont made the journey to the banks of the White River in South Royalton to help collect trash from along the river banks, while members who serve in northern Vermont gathered in Burlington to help plant, water, and mulch trees within the TreeAGE Nursery.



*ECO Members (L to R) Joe, Shannon, Marissa, Annie, Dom, and Lindsay assist in mulching young trees.*



*ECO Members Tom and Trevor with Jackson and TreeAGE Nursery's Marie pose with a tree they are about to plant.*



## Cleaning Up Vermont's Communities on Green Up Day

ECO Members participated in Vermont's Green Up Day on the first Saturday in May. Members went out into their local communities and joined other Vermonters in a variety of service projects from Brattleboro to Newport. Some members joined other Vermonters in removing trash from Vermont's roadways and public spaces while others used the day to serve with their regular host sites, educating area residents on ways in which they can help keep Vermont green and litter free. Each year, more than 22,000 volunteers come together to green up Vermont.



*Above, ECO Members Michelle, Joe, Maddie, and Emily join forces to plant trees with the Montpelier City Parks in their Green Up Day efforts.*



*Above ECO Member, Andrew Donahue, manages a booth with his service site the Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District to promote education for recycling and composting.*



*ECO Members Thomas, Clarice, and Dom assist with trash removal along the Burlington waterfront*



*ECO Members Marissa and Rachel assist with roadside trash removal with the Winooski Valley Park District.*



## Members Participate in Annual SerVermont Conference



SerVermont Executive Director speaks to a group of AmeriCorps members representing Vermont's various service programs.

In May, SerVermont held its annual AmeriCorps Spring Professional Development Conference at the Common Ground Center in Starksboro. This annual two-day conference serves as a second gathering point for members serving throughout the State of Vermont in various AmeriCorps programs. The conference included a variety of networking opportunities, workshops, and guest speaker sessions.

## *National Service in Vermont*

In 2016, Vermont was the #4 AmeriState in the country with the fourth most AmeriCorps members per capita in the nation. Vermont has more than 530 local service sites, supports more than 2,300 national service members, and accounts for more than \$11 million in Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and local funding. Since 1994, nearly \$18 million in AmeriCorps education awards have been earned in by AmeriCorps members in the Green Mountain State.



## Members Serve & Learn During Summer Service Event

In late June, the ECO team made its way up to Grand Isle State Park for our second annual Summer Solstice Training and Service Event. Members met at Grand Isle on June 20 where they spent part of the day serving with Vermont Dept. Forests, Parks & Recreation Invasive Species Coordinator Elizabeth Spinney to remove invasive buckthorn from a six-acre section of the park's campground.

Members reconvened during the afternoon for a series of team-building activities led by Team Leader Zack Simpson before making our way to our campsites for the night.

The following day we participated in a cyanobacteria monitoring training led by Lake Champlain Committee Executive Director Lori Fisher. The event wrapped up with one final reflection activity before members returned to their host sites for the final month of



*ECO Members Rachel, Bonnie, Marissa, and ECO staff Nikki remove invasive common buckthorn from Grand Isle State Park.*



*ECO Members participated in exciting "Zactivity" team building activities.*



*ECO Members learn about cyanobacteria monitoring from the Lake Champlain Committee's Lori Fisher.*





## What are our members doing after their service?

1. **Trevor Banister**—Trevor is serving a second year of service with his 2016-17 host site, the Northwoods Stewardship Center.
2. **Joe Bondi**—Joe has returned to his home state of Pennsylvania where he will continue his search for employment within the environmental field in Pennsylvania and Vermont.
3. **Dominic Brennan**—Dom is working in a temporary, part-time position with his service site, the Lake Champlain Committee, where is assisting with finishing up their cyanobacteria monitoring season after which he plans to move to Philadelphia to pursue his career goals.
4. **Thomas Bryce**—Thomas signed on for a second year of service with ECO AmeriCorps. In his second year of service, Thomas is serving with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture.
5. **Shannon Choquette**—Shannon was hired by her service site, the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District, where is working in a full-time position the new Outreach Coordinator.
6. **Lindsay Cotnoir**—Lindsay is working in a temporary full-time position with her service site, the Orleans County Natural Resource Conservation District.
7. **Maddie Cotter**—Maddie accepted a full-time position with her service site, the Intervale Center as their new Production Specialist and Volunteer Coordinator.
8. **Clarice Cutler**—Clarice accepted a full-time position with the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts as their new South Lake Conservation Planner.



*Maddie Cotter nurturing native trees at the Intervale Center in Burlington. Maddie served with the Intervale this year and was hired as a full-time staff person when her service ended.*

## What are our members doing after their service?

9. **Andrew Donahue**—Andrew recently accepted employment as a zero waste coordinator with a non-profit organization in Boulder, Colorado.
10. **Stephi Drago**—Stephi is working in a full-time position with the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts as their new Strategic Watershed Cartographic Technician.
11. **Billy Ernest**—Billy is serving a second year in the ECO AmeriCorps program. In his second year of service, Billy is serving with the Windham Regional Planning Commission.
12. **Michelle Graziosi**—Michelle Graziosi is working in a full-time position with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.
13. **Brodie Haenke**—Brodie is serving as second year in the ECO AmeriCorps program. In his second year of service, Brodie is serving with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District in St. Albans.
14. **Joshua Klavens**—Josh is remaining private regarding his future plans. We wish him the best of luck in his endeavors.
15. **Emily Markstein**—Emily is serving a second year in the ECO AmeriCorps program. In her second year of service, Emily is serving with the Intervale Center.
16. **Marissa Ng**—Marissa is serving a second year in the ECO AmeriCorps program. In her second year of service, Marissa is serving with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in Colchester.



Last September, 24 ECO AmeriCorps members came together for their service year orientation. Today, 10 of those members are working in green jobs and seven are returning for a second year of service with ECO AmeriCorps.



## What are our members doing after their service?

17. **Andrew Nguyen**—Andrew is continuing his goal of obtaining employment within the state of Vermont.
18. **Rachel Ross**—Rachel plans to hike the entirety of the Vermont Long Trail before traveling out to California for a well-deserved vacation.
19. **Annie Schatz**—Annie has begun her Ph.D. studies in marine biology at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science.
20. **Zack Simpson**—Zack has been hiking the entirety of the Vermont Long Trail after which he hopes to enlist in the United States Army as a Geospatial Engineer to pursue his career goals.
21. **Bonnie Woodford**—Bonnie has accepted a temporary part-time position with her service site, the VT Dept. Forests, Parks & Recreation's Urban & Community Forestry Program, to assist with its Town Forest Recreation Planning Initiative.
22. **Carlie Wright**—Carlie is serving a second year in ECO AmeriCorps where she is splitting her time as the ECO AmeriCorps Team Leader and Clean Water Initiative Social Indicator and Communications Assistant.
23. **Jimmy Young**—Jimmy is working in a full-time position with the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts as their new Land Treatment Planner for Chittenden, Washington, and Orange County.
24. **Chris Yurek**—Chris was hired by his service site, the Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, in a full-time Planner position.



At the end of her service Stephi Drago (left) began full-time employment with the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts. Brodie Haenke (right) is serving a second year of ECO AmeriCorps in 2017-18.



## **Our 2017—2018 Service Sites**

**We are excited to partner with these service sites in 2017-18**

Addison County Regional Planning Commission

Addison County Solid Waste Management District

BattenKill Watershed Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area

Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District

Friends of Northern Lake Champlain

The Intervale Center

New England Interstate Pollution Control Commission

Lake Champlain Basin Program

Lake Champlain Committee

Lake Champlain Sea Grant

Lamoille Solid Waste Management District

Missisquoi River Basin Association

NorthWoods Stewardship Center

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Two Rivers-Ottawquechee Regional Planning Commission

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets

Vermont Center for Ecostudies

Vermont Land Trust

Windham Regional Commission

DEC—Waste Management and Prevention Division

VT Dept. Environmental Conservation Watershed Management Division's

Monitoring Assessment, and Planning Program (MAPP) &

Clean Water Initiative Program (CWIP)

## ECO AmeriCorps members in action



ECO members Thomas and Stephi hold a jam session after the first day of the SerVermont Conference.



ECO Member Lindsay uses a clinometer to assist with determining the slope of an agricultural field.



ECO Member Brodie collects water samples in northern Vermont.



ECO Member Shannon and Team Leader Zack take a tour of the Coventry Landfill.



ECO Member Dom assists with efforts to remove water chestnut from Vermont's ponds and lakes.



ECO Member Maddie utilizes heavy farming equipment to carry out plantings at the Intervale Center.



## ECO AmeriCorps members in action



ECO Member Marissa assisting with the state of Vermont's Bear Monitoring Program.



ECO member Rachel helping DEC staff with spring phosphorous monitoring.



ECO Member Shannon helping grade school students understand the benefits of composting and recycling.



ECO Member Andrew D. held a compost bin decorating event this past spring.



ECO Team Leader Zack assisting with outreach efforts at the University of Vermont's career fair.



ECO members Chris and Andrew D., along with Reuben Allen, removing invasive common buckthorn at Grand Isle State Park.

## ECO AmeriCorps Program Bulletin Board

### Thank you to our supporters!

ECO AmeriCorps thanks everyone who helped make the 2016—2017 service year a success. Our success is not only achieved by our members. It is also the result of assistance, guidance and support provided by our site supervisors, member mentors, community partners, and many others who support our program. With each passing year, support for our program continues to grow and so does the impact our members are able to make on Vermont's environment. It is through these combined efforts that our members are able to get things done and achieve the most from their eleven months of service.

### Service Year Accomplishments

40,942.25..Total hours served

35,316.25..Hours of direct service that directly effects Vermont water bodies, landscapes, or citizens.

5,314.5.... Hours of training

311.5 ..... Hours of fundraising

25.63 ..... Miles of rivers improved

345.8..... Acres of public land improved

3,245..... Vermonters educated on environmental stewardship

542..... Vermonters reporting an intention to change their behavior as a result of training/education

778..... Community volunteers supported

5,355..... Community volunteer hours served

10..... Members hired into green jobs







## Land Stewardship | STORIES FROM THE FIELD

### VLT and AmeriCorps: Hands-On Land Management



Clarice Cutler digs up invasive poison parsnip at the conserved Roleau Farm in Bristol.

By Darcie Abbene

When Nate and Jessie Rogers bought their 133-acre farm on the Dog River in Berlin, they knew they were going to have river problems. Damage to the riverbanks delivered by 2011's Tropical Storm Irene, coupled with the river's twists and turns, has continually presented a challenge to farmers on this property. VLT suggested working on a management plan that would address how to reduce erosion and manage

Japanese knotweed, an aggressive invasive species that took over as a result of Irene damage. The Rogers agreed. Their project is an example of the way VLT hopes to offer landowners more hands-on support to steward conserved lands.

"We want to put resources toward projects thoughtfully and not duplicate someone else's effort," says VLT's Tyler Miller. That means looking at what ser-

vices are provided already by other organizations, and how VLT might fill the gaps in helping landowners meet their land management goals.

Critical to making the Rogers Farm project and others happen has been VLT's collaboration with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation's new Environmental Career Opportunity (ECO) AmeriCorps program. This service corps program helps improve Vermont's water quality.

During the last two years, ECO AmeriCorps members Julia Gulka and Clarice Cutler worked with owners of VLT-conserved land providing technical assistance. This included property evaluations, marking the boundaries of protected areas, organizing service projects, and more.

Two more AmeriCorps members have already signed on for next year to continue some of Julia and Clarice's projects, and to research how VLT can best improve its technical support.

Julia, in collaboration with VLT, US Fish & Wildlife, and Trout Unlimited, designed a plan to stabilize the Rogers' riverbank and track four experimental knotweed plots managed with different combinations of grazing and mowing to help control the invasive plant. She organized a volunteer day to plant 1,100 trees along the river, then she and Nate worked on a system of rotational grazing and monthly mowing and monitoring of the knotweed. This year Clarice continued the work by measuring knotweed growth within the plots and analyzing the different methods of controlling it.

"You can look at those fields and see a massive spread of [native] plants, a

nice tight soil structure," Nate observes. He'll likely continuing the grazing rotation as well as the mowing, which has been successful at stunting the spread of knotweed. He worries about the power and intensity of flooding though. VLT will monitor this project for the next five years.

"It's a unique property, and it's good to have someone go out so frequently because it's such a dynamic part of the river," says Clarice.

The ECO AmeriCorps members have provided hands-on assistance with invasive species management on several other conserved properties. Last year, Julia spent some of her tenure developing invasive management plans for 11 conserved properties in Windham County, a conserved town-owned property in Waitsfield, and for the Bluffs Farm in Newport, which VLT currently owns.

"The care and time that she was able to put into developing those plans is more than our staff are usually able to devote," Tyler says. "With AmeriCorps members, this becomes another service we can provide with frequency and regularity."

Clarice has also advanced VLT's invasive species work. She and a fellow ECO AmeriCorps member spent three days walking the Brewster Uplands Conservation Trust property, 700 acres VLT owns in Cambridge. They identified where, and to what extent, the invasives multiflora rose, common buckthorn, Japanese barberry, Japanese knotweed, and shrub honeysuckle have taken over. Her management plan has detailed maps, feasibility costs, and management strategies. Clarice also organized a poison parsnip 'pull party' on a riparian buffer along Baldwin Creek in Bristol.

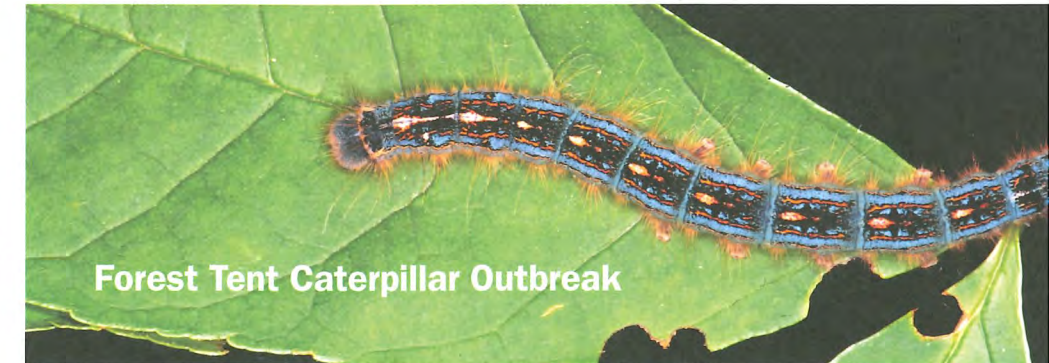
"It's been really effective so far," says Clarice. "We pulled parsnip on half the buffer, and if you drive by you'll see no yellow parsnip flowers where we

were, versus 100% yellow flowers in the other area." The six-person work party used shovels to sever the roots beneath the top of the soil. The group wore gloves, long sleeves, and pants because the plant's sap is toxic to the skin in daylight.

Moving forward, Tyler is excited about the opportunities he sees. "The

need for land management technical support is large," he says. "We are excited about moving in new directions and applying consistency and rigor to the process."

The next two AmeriCorps members to work with VLT this coming year will help the organization to take another step in this direction. ♦



Forest Tent Caterpillar Outbreak

2016 and 2017 have seen an outbreak of the forest tent caterpillar, a native insect that eats the leaves of deciduous trees. During outbreaks, which last one to three years, caterpillars can stress hardwood stands. Defoliation of maple trees is a concern for sugarmakers in hard-hit areas; this summer, Essex, Orleans, Lamoille, and Caledonia counties were most affected.

In defoliated sugarbushes, the Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation (FPR) recommends using no more than one tap per tree, and avoiding tapping the smallest trees. FPR also recommends delaying thinning by one to three years and timber harvesting for at least three years. Taking these actions will minimize other stresses on the sugarbush and its trees. Sugarmakers tapping at least 10 acres can request an egg mass survey by FPR. For more information, contact Josh Halman at [joshua.halman@vermont.gov](mailto:joshua.halman@vermont.gov) or (802) 279-9999.

### Attention Farmers

Financial and technical assistance is available through USDA-NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) for soil and water conservation practices, such as cover crops, rotational grazing systems, and animal waste management systems. EQIP applications are accepted year-round on a continuous basis. Conserved farms located in the Lake Champlain basin are encouraged to apply; farms within the Missisquoi Bay, St. Albans Bay, and southern Lake Champlain areas will receive priority attention. Please contact your local Vermont NRCS office or visit their website to learn more.



## RCPP Advisory Board & ALE Meeting Agenda

### **RCPP Board Meeting**

10:00-10:10am- Review of Agenda & Roundtable Introductions

10:10-10:20am- Events/Efforts Since Last Board Meeting- Roundtable from Partners

10:20- 11:00am: Overall Budget Update from Obe & Board Discussion

- EQIP Applications & Contract Approvals with Remaining Balances
  - Forestry Budget Discussion- lay out the options, group discussion & consensus on whether to amend the agreement to move EQIP funds into forestry
- Easement Applications with Remaining Balances
  - Wetlands Update & Discussion of options for match funds (still have considerable DEC wetlands funds (“match”) to spend but have used most of the ACEP-WRE funds)

11:00-11:10am- Staffing Update from VACD

11:10-11:20am- Cold Hollow to Canada RCPP Forestry Efforts & Collaboration

11:20-11:45am- Engineering Update & Discussion

11:45am-12:00pm- Parking Lot Items and/or Break

### **ACEP-ALE Meeting**

12:00pm- Discuss Montagne Project- Call in from Jon.

12:30pm- Phillip Jones Reviews the Clean Water Road Map

Other Project Updates & Timelines- Nancy & Tracy

Assigned Staff for Projects- Jeff

Review of projects for VHCB Board Meeting in June- Nancy & Tracy

***The next ALE meeting is June 6, 2017.***

***The next RCPP Advisory Board & ALE Meeting is August 1, 2017.***

The Lake Champlain Regional Conservation Partnership Program  
Quarterly Advisory Board Meeting  
November 7, 2017

AGENDA

10am-12pm Board Meeting

Round Table Updates

Engineering Update-Alli

Wetlands Update- Alli

Budget Update- Obe

Forestry Timber Bridge Update & Crossings Discussion- Dave

RCPP Feedback for Farm Bill Suggestions

12pm-2pm ALE Meeting

Reschedule December Meeting Date

Project Updates & Needs

Upcoming Applications

Frequency of Meeting

## Financial Status Report (FSR)

Project: RCPP

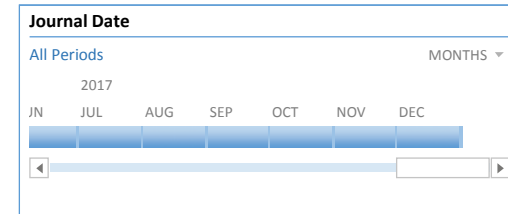
Name: Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Award #: 68-1644-15-4

grant period		months done		required	actual	Award	Spent	Remaining	ASAP	
Start	End								Remaining in FA	
	5/1/2015	5/1/2015	Federal	44.5%	4%	16,300,000	207,327	16,092,673	Remaining in FA	16,104,276.92
	9/30/2019	9/30/2017	Match	55.5%	90%	20,325,483	4,840,728	15,484,755	Remaining in FSR	16,092,673.07
months	53	29	55%	Indirects		-		-	difference	11,603.85
Total Spent		15%				Remaining Federal Grant		16,092,673		

grant	RCPP
section	(All)
division	(All)

Sum of Amount	Column Labels			Encumbered	total expenses	amount remaining
Row Labels	Budget	Federal Share	Match			
Contractual	28,151,974.00	169,526.92	4,634,059.61	352,833.08	5,156,419.61	22,995,554.39
Equipment					-	-
Fringe Benefits	2,593,974.00		48,449.77		48,449.77	2,545,524.23
Indirect	159,122.00		26,487.36		26,487.36	132,634.64
Other (Services)	2,212,000.00		14,209.09		14,209.09	2,197,790.91
Personnel	3,470,413.00		115,917.66		115,917.66	3,354,495.34
Sub-Awards		37,800.01	-		37,800.01	(37,800.01)
Supplies	38,000.00		450.54		450.54	37,549.46
Travel			1,154.28		1,154.28	(1,154.28)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>36,625,483.00</b>	<b>207,326.93</b>	<b>4,840,728.31</b>	<b>352,833.08</b>	<b>5,400,888.32</b>	<b>31,224,594.68</b>





Reporting Item	Responsible Entity	
	NRCS	Partner
1) The number and types of eligible partners, landowners, and producers participating in the partnership agreements selected	# participants enrolled in EQIP, # participants enrolled in ACEP-WRE, # participants enrolled in ACEP-ALE	2-EQIP
2) The number of producers and landowners receiving assistance	# participants enrolled in EQIP, # participants enrolled in ACEP-WRE, # participants enrolled in ACEP-ALE	2-EQIP
3) The number of new producers and landowners reached (i.e., those who have not previously participated in NRCS programs) and if any beginning farmers or ranchers, limited resource farmers or ranchers, socially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, eligible farmers or ranchers, or Indian Tribes received assistance	# beginning farmer, # limited resource farmers, # socially disadvantaged, # Veteran Farmers	2
4) Total funding committed to projects, including from Federal and non-Federal resources	EQIP - \$; ALE - \$; WRE \$	Not sure yet undergoing engineering review which is not complete until Nov 20th
5) A description of how the funds are being administered under an alternative funding arrangement	There is no alternative funding arrangement	
6) means for tracking adherence to any applicable provisions for payment eligibility	NRCS tracks adherence for program eligibility through existing software systems	
7) Any oversight mechanisms implemented	Quarterly RCPP Advisory Boards	
8) The process through which program appeals by participants are resolved	NRCS handles all appeals through the processes set forth in 7 CFR 614	



[News](#)  
[About](#)

[Events](#)

[Contact](#)

[DONATE](#)



**Vermont Land Trust**  
Conserving Land for the Future of Vermont

Select Page



# News & Stories

[Home](#) » [Cover Cropping is Becoming More Common on Vermont Farms](#)

## COVER CROPPING IS BECOMING MORE COMMON ON VERMONT FARMS



As with many Vermont farms, growing feed for Fairmont Farm's 2,800 Holsteins isn't a set-it-and-forget-it process.

Richard Hall of Fairmont Farm plants 1,550 acres of corn each year. The land is in Craftsbury and East Montpelier, where the growing season is short, soil type varies, and much of the sloped topography is highly erodible.

But thanks to the increasingly common practice of cover-cropping, Hall has staved off erosion and improved soil health, resulting in a better crop yield. Cover-cropping is sowing a field with plants in the off-season to rejuvenate the soil. In the spring, most Vermont farms till the plants into the soil, others use herbicides.

Once less common and used mostly by organic farms, cover-cropping is now considered a best practice and is used on about one-third, or 30,000, of Vermont's corn acres, according to University of Vermont Extension agronomist Heather Darby. That's in part due to better understanding about the benefits. It is also more accessible: USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets offer funding and UVM Extension offers technical assistance.

Fields that aren't covered in the winter are susceptible to the elements. As Darby puts it, "A field that doesn't have anything growing on it... [is] more susceptible to being eroded, to soil being lost. When you have roots growing in the ground, it does magical things. It creates structure, allows porosity, allows water to be drained. It keeps the soil going, growing, producing."

Cover crops—winter rye, oats, and tillage radish are common in Vermont—benefit farmers by recycling excess nutrients, increasing microbes, and aerating the soil. They benefit water quality by stabilizing soil and minimizing nutrient runoff, which is why cover cropping is now required for some farms in floodplains. While the practice has its challenges—upfront costs, time, and fine-tuning—farmers are finding it's a worthwhile investment, especially as the climate becomes more erratic.

"As the quality of the water has continued to decline and people have become more concerned about the environment, the strategy to minimize erosion in agricultural systems has become more elevated," Darby says.

Eight years ago, Richard Hall started cover-cropping as he moved to no-till farming, a method that does not upturn the soil through tillage. With this system, he can plant more difficult terrain, and take fewer passes with his equipment, which means less wear-and-tear and lower fuel usage. In the fall, he plants rye, and in the spring, he plants silage corn.

That's "allowed us to plant corn in places that maybe we couldn't under a conventional system," Hall says. "Once you get into it more, you realize the benefits of soil health." Though cover-cropping requires more time and some changes, Hall said, he's seeing better yields.

"I never thought that I could say one-third of the corn acres are cover cropped," Darby says. "When I started, I really only knew of 50 acres that were cover cropped. To watch the practice expand the way it's expanded in the last five to eight years has been really amazing."

To learn more, visit [www.uvm.edu/extension/cropsoil/covercrops](http://www.uvm.edu/extension/cropsoil/covercrops).

Also, you can see cover crops in action and hear more from Heather Darby in [this UVM video](#).

Owners of conserved land can also call their VLT stewardship manager.

*This story appeared in our Spring 2017 Newsletter. Story by Sky Barsch, photo by Kristen Workman/UVM Extension.*



#### SEARCH BY REGION

Champlain Valley

North Central

Northeast Kingdom

South







[News](#)  
[About](#)

[Events](#)

[Contact](#)

[DONATE](#)



Select Page



# News & Stories

[Home](#) » Celebrating 40 Years of Learning and Growing on the Land: Changes in Farm Conservation

## CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF LEARNING AND GROWING ON THE LAND: CHANGES IN FARM CONSERVATION



In the Vermont Land Trust's early years, conserving a single farm felt like a major accomplishment.

But in the following decades, VLT's farmland conservation program has gotten a lot bigger, more sophisticated, and has had more far-reaching results.

Since it was founded in 1977, the land trust has conserved 976 parcels of farmland totaling almost 204,000 acres. Many of those farms are now in large blocks of farmland that are, in effect, protected landscape-scale farming districts.

Vermont remains the most farmed state in New England, and VLT has played a major role in that by preserving the land base vital to Vermont agriculture. However, it's no longer sufficient to simply stop development of farmland.

VLT believes it's important that conservation plays a role in a vibrant farm economy.

"We're really thinking about stewarding the enterprise," said Siobhan Smith, VLT's Vice-President for Conservation and Stewardship. "Our staff is out there, working with farmers to help them stay viable." That requires boots-on-the-ground contact with individual farmers, and a willingness to think in new ways. "There's going to be a future for Vermont agriculture. It's just going to look different," Smith said.

By protecting good agricultural soils and farmers' access to the land, VLT can help secure that future, whatever form it takes. VLT's Farmland Access Program is pioneering approaches to farm affordability. The land trust also connects farmers to a variety of services and programs, such as the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board's (VHCB) Farm and Forest Viability Program. Often conservation enhancements can bring in much-needed cash, and help strengthen the farm's operation.

River View Farm, in the southeastern Vermont town of Putney was one of the first farms conserved by VLT, and the first farm conserved with a grant from VHCB. The farm has been used as a dairy, a sheep farm, and for hay production. It's an example of how a farm can grow and evolve over time and how conservation plays a part.

Paul Harlow, who bought River View Farm in 2014, has been farming in southeastern Vermont since he was a boy. At 66, he is wiry, energetic, and articulate. In the four decades since he bought the home farm in Westminster from his father, he has built up a major organic vegetable operation in the fertile Connecticut River Valley. He now owns roughly 400 acres, of which 300 acres are producing crops.

His location, right next to Interstate 91, helps him sell his vegetables to the Boston market; trucks from Whole Foods and other retailers pull into his yard regularly during the summer. The scale of Harlow's operation seems, at times, to surprise even him.

"We're selling \$400,000 worth of kale every year," he says, shaking his head. "Can you imagine that? Nearly half a million dollars from kale?"

However, Harlow was having trouble meeting the demand for his high-quality organic produce until he was able to purchase River View Farm.

To make the farm more affordable, Paul worked with VLT to amend the old easement, adding stronger conservation measures that addressed water quality and the land's future availability to working farmers. Funding for these further conservation restrictions came from VHCB.

Conserving important ecological areas and protecting water quality has become a regular part of farmland conservation for VLT. Because River View Farm fronts the Connecticut River, Harlow agreed to remove several acres from crop production to allow vegetation to grow naturally in an area along the river. This will help prevent erosion and protect a significant natural area—seven acres of floodplain forest. Such buffer areas between cropland and rivers also provide important wildlife habitat.

To ensure that farmland will stay in active farming, VLT now employs a tool — an Option to Purchase at Agricultural Value (OPAV). This option gives VLT the right to buy a farm at its agricultural value should the farmer attempt to sell it to a non-farmer (family members are exempt). By selling an OPAV, Paul was able to offset some of the cost of buying Riverview Farm and will help make sure the farm remains in agriculture.



Because he's in his 60s, Harlow has begun to think about transferring the farm to a new generation of farmers. Fortunately, in his case, his son and other young farmers are interested in forming a consortium to buy the farm and keep it in production.

The question of farmland succession is a continuing one for the Vermont Land Trust, since more than \$3 billion worth of Vermont farms are being run by farmers age 65 or older. Fortunately, there is no shortage of young farmers eager to get onto the land. Farmland Access Director Jon Ramsay noted that he has a database of some 350 aspiring farmers. But there are often difficulties in actually getting new farmers situated on specific pieces of land.

And so Ramsay helps the new farmers through whatever difficulties may arise in finding the right farm, financing it, and making it a viable and continuing operation.

"The goal is to see these farms remain working farms," he said.

In places like the Mettowee Valley in Rupert and Pawlet, the Champlain Valley, and parts of far-northern Vermont, the land trust has conserved landscape-scale contiguous blocks of farmland, some as large as 7,000 acres.

These are important in keeping farming a going enterprise in Vermont because they help make it economically feasible to maintain feed stores, heavy equipment repair shops, and other elements of the agricultural infrastructure.

"We need all kinds of farms in Vermont," Ramsay said. "If these lands are available, then they can stay productive into the future."

*This story appeared in our 2017 Spring Newsletter. Story by Tom Slayton.*



## SEARCH BY REGION

Champlain Valley





[News](#)  
[About](#)

[Events](#)

[Contact](#)

[DONATE](#)



Select Page



# News & Stories

[Home](#) » [Mettowee Farmers Protect Farmland and Natural Features](#)

## METTOWEE FARMERS PROTECT FARMLAND AND NATURAL FEATURES



Traci and Scott Cleveland are part of the vibrant Mettowee Valley dairy community. They have expanded their business over the years, purchasing their first farm in Pawlet in 1994

and conserving it with VLT in 2007. In 2010, the couple purchased land from Scott's uncle next door. Funding for a conservation easement sale helped finance the purchase, which allowed the family to triple the land they owned.

This year, Scott and Traci have once again added to their farm—this time with 100 acres they bought from their friend and forester Alan Calfee. This property is in a strategic location, very close to their barns and manure storage tank. The farm soils are excellent and there is a steep stretch of forest with mature sugar maples. As with their other land, Scott and Traci worked with VLT to conserve this property, which will keep it available for farming for generations to come.

The land also has two important natural features: a section of rare cliff habitat along a ridge that borders the North Pawlet Hills Natural Area (owned by The Nature Conservancy) and a 24-acre wetland. Beaver and herons use the wetland for breeding, and its streams feed into the Mettowee River and eventually Lake Champlain.

*Funded by VHCB, the Castanea Foundation, the Lookout Foundation, other foundations, and a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant awarded to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation by the USDA NRCS. (May 2017)*

**Topic:** [dairy](#), [farms & food](#), [recent projects](#), [South Central](#), [water](#), [wildlife](#),



#### SEARCH BY REGION

Champlain Valley

North Central

Northeast Kingdom

South

South Central

#### SEARCH BY TOPIC

Announcements

Farmland Access



## Conservation Projects | AROUND THE STATE



Scott and Traci Cleveland, pictured with their sons, Jonathan and Justin, conserved 100 acres in Pawlet as part of a farm expansion.

## 17 | Mettowee Farmers Conserve Third Property and Protect Natural Features

Traci and Scott Cleveland are part of the vibrant Mettowee Valley dairy community. They have expanded their business over the years, buying their first farm in Pawlet in 1994 and conserving it in 2007. In 2010, they tripled their land by purchasing farmland from Scott's uncle; the sale of a conservation easement helped make the expansion affordable. This year, they have once again added to their farm—100 acres in Pawlet. The soils are excellent and there is a steep stretch of forest with mature sugar maples. As with their other land, Scott and Traci worked with VLT to conserve this property, which will keep it available for farming for generations to come.

The land also has a 24-acre wetland that feeds into the Mettowee River (and eventually Lake Champlain) and a section of rare cliff habitat along a ridge that borders the North Pawlet Hills Natural Area.

*Funded by VHCB, the Castanea Foundation, the Lookout Foundation, other foundations, and a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant awarded to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation by USDA NRCS. (May 2017)*

## 18 | Conserved Benson Farm Expands

Alison Lussier, 23-year-old daughter of Paul and Kari Lussier, was five when her family conserved their farm in Benson. "I remember I started asking why the cows couldn't go certain places, like in the river, and being told it was because the land is conserved," she said. After working on the farm part-time for several years, Alison is now full-time. "I'm excited and thankful about being able to farm here," she said. "Without VLT, we wouldn't be here today."

The Lussiers farm organically and need a lot of land to pasture their cows. This May, Paul and Kari conserved another 150 acres they recently purchased. Nearly all the land has excellent farm soils. The Lussiers will be converting their new fields to organic hay and pastureland.

The Hubbardton River and one of its tributaries meet on the Lussiers' farmland. There is a 50-foot-wide buffer of protected forest and wetlands along the river and tributary that will help filter water as it makes its way to the southern end of Lake Champlain. Twelve acres of rare clayplain forest cover the ravines between the fields and the river.

*Funded by VHCB and a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant awarded to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation by USDA NRCS. (May 2017)*

## 19 | Shoreham's "Pinnacle" Protected

Bill and Lissy Heminway recently purchased 130 acres next to their home in Shoreham. The seller wanted to find a buyer who would conserve the land, and Bill and Lissy were just those people. The Heminways immediately began working with VLT to make sure that the forestland, fields, streams, and wetlands would forever be protected. The land is locally known as The Pinnacle for being the highest point (640 feet) in low-lying Shoreham. There are sheer cliffs topped by cedar and pine trees, which are more often found along Lake Champlain's shoreline than on inland locations. Just above these steep sections runs a band of dry, oak-dominated forest, also uncommon in Vermont. The lower elevations have streams and headwater wetlands of the Lemon Fair River. (June 2017)





[News](#)  
[About](#)

[Events](#)

[Contact](#)

[DONATE](#)



Select Page



# News & Stories

[Home](#) » [Lussier Farm Expands, as Daughter Continues Farming the Land](#)

## LUSSIER FARM EXPANDS, AS DAUGHTER CONTINUES FARMING THE LAND



Alison Lussier, 23-year-old daughter of Paul and Kari Lussier, was five when her family conserved their farm in Benson. Starting the dairy came with challenges, but Alison remembers her childhood as the best years of her life.

Alison was barely aware that her family's dairy farm was conserved until she was about twelve. "I remember I started asking why the cows couldn't go certain places, like in the river, and being told it was because the land is conserved," says Alison.

After working on the farm part-time for several years, Alison is now full-time and learning the tricks of the trade from her dad. "I'm excited and thankful about being able to farm here," she said. "Without VLT we wouldn't be here today."

The Lussiers farm organically and need a lot of land to pasture their cows. This May, Paul and Kari conserved another 150 acres they had bought last year. Nearly all the land has excellent farm soils. The funding they received for conserving the property made the purchase more affordable. "The farms around us were selling lots, but it is never going to happen to us; we need all of our land!" said Alison. The Lussiers will be converting their new fields to organic hay and pastureland.

The Hubbardton River and one of its tributaries meet on the Lussiers' farmland; in total a half-mile of these watercourses cross the new land. There is a 50-foot-wide buffer of protected forest and wetlands along the river and tributary that will help filter water as it makes its way to the southern end of Lake Champlain.

Twelve acres of clayplain forest, a rare forest type in Vermont, covers the ravines between the fields and the river. Conservation will maintain this important habitat, which was prevalent in the Champlain Valley hundreds of years ago.

*Funded by VHCB and a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant awarded to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation by the USDA NRCS. (May 2017)*





[News](#)  
[About](#)

[Events](#)

[Contact](#)

[DONATE](#)



Select Page



# News & Stories

[Home](#) » Pawlet Farm Is Now Home to a New Business

## PAWLET FARM IS NOW HOME TO A NEW BUSINESS



In 1972 Tim and Nancy Bryant purchased Milaura Farm in Pawlet and ran it as a successful dairy for 40 years. As they were nearing retirement, they considered the options for the farm.



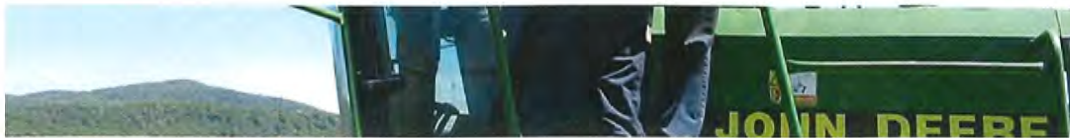
New water quality regulations and the relatively small size of the farm made it a difficult fit for dairy farming in this era. The farm also had a 20-acre gravel pit. Through working with VLT, the Bryants were able to find new farmers and reclaim a large gravel pit as farmland (see photo gallery below). They also sold a conservation easement on 173 acres, making sure they will always be available for farming.

Rico and Jill Balzano and their children moved to the Bryant's farm this year after their pastured pork business outgrew their farm in Wells. They were looking for more land and a farm that had barns. The Balzanos are leasing the Bryant's farm as they work toward eventually purchasing it. Tim and Nancy moved to an on-farm house so they can remain close to the land they love. They are also lending their know-how as Rico and Jill settle and expand their business.

A third of a mile of Beaver Brook crosses the farm. The brook is a major tributary of the Mettawee River, which eventually runs into the southern end of Lake Champlain. The land along the brook was protected from farm activities through the conservation easement, as were several wetland areas. Healthy, natural vegetation along wetlands and watercourses helps to filter nutrients and sediments from farms, which in turn improves water quality. Rico and Jill are also in the process of building fences to keep farm animals away from the water.

*Funded by VHCB (with matching funds from USDA NRCS), the Castanea Foundation, the Lookout Foundation, other private foundations, and a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant awarded to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation by the USDA NRCS. (March 2017)*





Tim Bryant



### SEARCH BY REGION

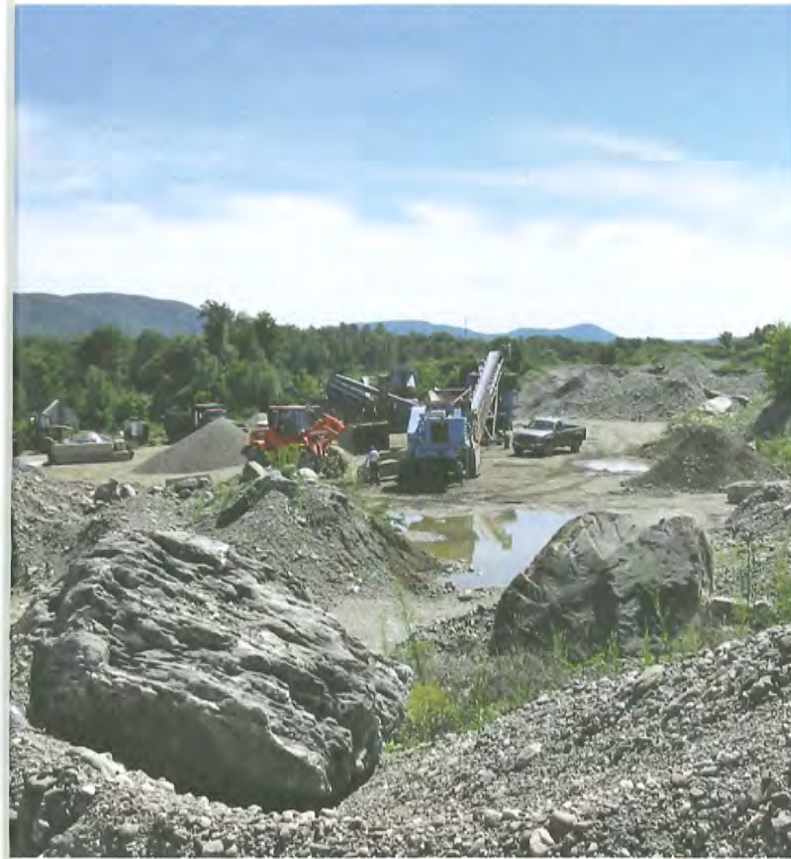
Champlain Valley  
North Central  
Northeast Kingdom  
South  
South Central

### SEARCH BY TOPIC

Announcements  
Farmland Access  
Farms & Food  
Forests  
Land Management  
My Vermont  
Press Releases  
Recent Projects  
Recreation, Wildlife & Nature  
Save this Land  
Stories from the Field  
Water



## Conservation Projects | AROUND THE STATE



*Farmers Tim and Nancy Bryant worked with VLT to restore farmland (right) on what had been a gravel pit (left) as part of the conservation of their Pawlet farm.*

16

### Pawlet Farm Conserved and Now Home to a New Farm Business

In 1972 Tim and Nancy Bryant purchased Milaura Farm in Pawlet and ran it as a dairy for 40 years. As they were nearing retirement, they considered the options for the farm. New water quality regulations and the relatively small size of the farm make it a difficult fit for dairy farming in this era. The farm also had a 20-acre gravel pit. Working with VLT, the Bryants were able to reclaim the gravel pit as farmland, find new farmers for the land, and conserve 173 acres, making sure the property will always be available for farming.

Rico and Jill Balzano moved to the Bryants' farm this year after their pastured pork business outgrew their land in Wells. The Balzanos are leasing the Bryants' farm as they work toward purchasing it. Tim and Nancy moved to an on-farm house so they can remain close to the land

they love. They are also lending their know-how as Rico and Jill settle in and expand their business.

A third of a mile of Beaver Brook crosses the farm. The brook is a major tributary of the Mettowee River, which eventually runs into the southern end of Lake Champlain. The land along the brook was protected from farm activities through the easement, as were several wetland areas. Healthy, natural vegetation along wetlands and watercourses helps to filter nutrients and sediments from farms, which in turn improves water quality. Rico and Jill are also in the process of building fences to keep farm animals away from the water.

*Funded by VHCB, the Castanea Foundation, the Lookout Foundation, other foundations, and a Regional Conservation Partnership Program grant awarded to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation by USDA NRCS. (March 2017)*





[News](#)  
[About](#)

[Events](#)

[Contact](#)

[DONATE](#)



**Vermont Land Trust**  
Conserving Land for the Future of Vermont

Select Page



# News & Stories

[Home](#) » [Water Quality Protected on Three Rutland County Farms](#)

## WATER QUALITY PROTECTED ON THREE RUTLAND COUNTY FARMS



**Benson and Pawlet** – Governor Phil Scott has designated August 20-26 as [Vermont Clean Water Week](#), celebrating and promoting efforts to clean up Lake Champlain and other lakes,

rivers, streams, and wetlands. In honor of Clean Water Week, the Vermont Land Trust announced the successful conservation of three Rutland County farms. The conservation of these farms not only keep them permanently available for agriculture, but also protects water quality in the Mettawee and Hubbardton Rivers and the southern end of Lake Champlain. Funding for these projects came in part from state and federal sources.

"Nearly 90% of all properties conserved with the Vermont Land Trust have frontage along, or lie within 20 feet of, a stream or river," said Elise Annes of the Vermont Land Trust.

"Conservation is an effective way to support farm businesses and at the same time help to create a viable solution for water quality improvement."

In Benson, Paul and Kari Lussier run a dairy with help from their daughter Alison. They conserved their land when Alison was five, and she learned about the meaning of conservation later in her childhood. "I remember I started asking why the cows couldn't go certain places, like in the river, and being told it was because the land is conserved," says Alison.

The Lussiers farm organically and need a lot of pasture for their cows. Last year, Paul and Kari bought 150 more acres with excellent soil. They conserved their new land this year with funding from the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) and a grant from the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

Vermont NRCS received the second largest RCPP award in the country of \$16 million for water quality improvements, of which \$3.9 million is allocated to conserving farms in the Lake Champlain Basin. "We encourage more farms to consider RCPP as an option for conserving environmentally critical agricultural lands," said NRCS State Conservationist Vicky Drew.

The grants also helped offset some of the cost of purchasing the land for the Lussiers.

The Hubbardton River and one of its tributaries meet on the Lussiers' new farmland; in total a half-mile of these watercourses cross the land. A 50-foot-wide buffer of forest and wetlands along the river and its tributary will filter and clean water as it makes its way to the southern end of Lake Champlain, while stabilizing the banks against erosion.

"We're at a critical point for Vermont's waters, with a need from all sectors to take strides to improve water quality for our environment, our wildlife, and the health of our people," said Allison Compagna, RCPP Project Coordinator with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.

At the southern end of Rutland County, the Cleveland family in Pawlet has also conserved and expanded their dairy farm over the years. Traci and Scott Cleveland first bought their farm in 1994. Now their sons Justin and Jonathan are grown and help with the business. The Clevelands conserved land with the Vermont Land Trust in 2007 and 2010, and this year they added another 100 acres to their farm and conserved it.

On this farm, 24 acres of wetlands feed tributaries of the Mettawee River, eventually flowing into Lake Champlain. Conservation ensures these valuable natural areas will be protected to maintain good water quality.

Also in Pawlet, Tim and Nancy Bryant conserved 173 acres of their former dairy farm. They are leasing the land to Rico and Jill Balzano, who needed barns and more land for their growing pork business. A third of a mile of Beaver Brook, a major tributary of the Mettawee River, crosses this farm. Conservation ensures that Beaver Brook will be protected from farm activities by a buffer of natural vegetation. Rico and Jill are also installing fence to keep their animals away from the water.

Funding for conserving the Cleveland farm and the Bryant farm came from VHCB, the Lake Champlain RCPP, and several foundations, including the Castanea Foundation and the Lookout Foundation. "VHCB funding to conserve these farms will help improve water quality in our state," said Gus Seelig, Executive Director of VHCB. "Farmers that conserve their land follow agricultural land easement plans that promote the long-term viability of the farmland and other natural resources." These funds also help reduce the cost of these farms when they are sold to farmers.

"Our conservation work is guided by staff with expertise in land use and ecology," said Elise Annes of VLT. "Our goal is to have protections on every waterway we conserve in the future,

^



and to retroactively add water quality protections to older conservation easements. By working in partnership with landowners, we can make a difference for clean water."



#### SEARCH BY REGION

Champlain Valley  
North Central  
Northeast Kingdom  
South  
South Central

#### SEARCH BY TOPIC

Announcements  
Farmland Access  
Farms & Food  
Forests  
Land Management  
My Vermont  
Press Releases  
Recent Projects  
Recreation, Wildlife & Nature  
Save this Land  
Stories from the Field  
Water



**Vermont Land Trust**

# vermontbiz

[Magazine](#) [News](#) [Company Database](#) [Contact VBM](#) [Events](#) [Login](#)  
[Home](#)



## VHCB to get \$3.6 million in federal funding for farmland protection

[Tweet](#) [Like 0](#) [G+](#) [Share](#) 3

Tue, 10/17/2017 - 4:36pm --



### Subscribe

Join our free eNewsletter

Email Address

Additional eNewsletters

- ☐ Weekly eHealth
- ☐ Weekly eNewsmakers
- ☐ Weekly e/eNewsletter
- ☐ Weekly Roundup
- ☐ Weekly Events

Subscribe



When it **HAS** to be spec



Click Here to learn more



The Whitcombs have been farming in Vermont for 150 years. They manage a progressive dairy operation with robotic milkers and more than 500 Holsteins. In two transactions using VHCB and NRCS funding, the Whitcombs have conserved 410 acres in Williston and Essex Junction with over two miles of Winooski River frontage. Buffer areas along the Winooski are fenced to protect water quality. Click photo for VAAFM-VESP-Drone Video

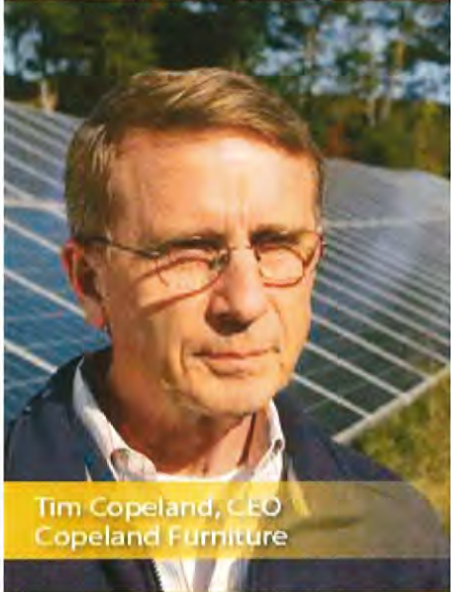
**Vermont Business Magazine** The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will use \$3.6 million in new federal funding to purchase conservation easements on farmland. The funds come from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), a Farm Bill initiative.

Gus Seelig, Executive Director of VHCB said, "Since 1997, VHCB's partnership with NRCS has brought over \$50 million to Vermont to complement state funding for farmland protection. To date, VHCB funding has been used to conserve more than 162,000 acres of farmland. Proceeds from conserving land can help farmers reduce debt, expand, diversify, install conservation practices, or buy their first farm. Helping farms transition to new ownership while staying in active agricultural use is a key goal of VHCB's Farmland Protection Program and more than half of recent farmland conservation projects have enabled land transfers, either within the family, or to existing farm businesses."

VHCB is the first organization in the nation to be certified to review and administer ACEP funds directly for farmland conservation projects. Certification will streamline the process, providing more efficient service to farmers. Through the efforts of Senator Leahy, the certification provision was added to the 2008 Farm Bill, with a goal of improving the program's delivery and providing more flexibility to state agencies and private land trust entities.




**Grow your  
Business  
with Sunlight**



**Tim Copeland, CEO  
Copeland Furniture**

"We decided to go solar primarily for the financial benefits. I would strongly recommend Catamount, especially to someone who has a strong concentration of usage like we do."

**Free Site Evaluation**



**CATAMOUNT**  
SOLAR

Vermont's Employee-Owned  
Solar Company



### Whitcomb family of the North Williston Cattle Company.

Protecting agricultural soils, promoting soil health, and enhancing water quality are other key goals of VHCB's farmland protection program. Some of this new federal funding is specifically targeted to achieve these goals in the Lake Champlain basin through the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Working with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, approximately \$4 million will be directed to additional agricultural easements that prioritize water quality improvements.

Vicky Drew, NRCS State Conservationist, said, "Conserved farms are eligible for RCPP funds to adopt practices and build infrastructure to improve environmental stewardship and protect water quality, such as installing riparian buffers or restoring wetlands. We look forward to working with VHCB to conserve an additional 25 farms with these federal funds. Vermont is working hard to couple land conservation efforts with management practices that protect water quality."

VHCB's Farmland Protection Program relies on non-profit conservation organizations such as the Vermont Land Trust and the Upper Valley Land Trust to work with farmers who are interested in selling development rights. These groups apply to VHCB on behalf of landowners for funding to conserve farmland. VHCB awards combine federal and state funding to protect farmland and leverage local fund raising, private foundation funds, and landowner bargain sales of conservation easements.

Source: Montpelier. VHCB 10.17.2017



Be the first of your friends to like this



**Vermont Business Magazine**  
2 hours ago

### Treasurer negotiates 51% ad

Fri, 10/27/2017 - 10:31am -- tim Vermont B

VERMONTBIZ.COM

Like

Comment

Share



**Vermont Business Magazine**  
4 hours ago

### Shelburne salt shed fight con

Thu, 10/26/2017 - 4:50pm -- tim Vermont R

VERMONTBIZ.COM

### Recent Comments

- Mike Burnham  
Let me understand this. Vermont get this settlement. How was the State of Vermont wronged? It wasn't. What about the victims? They get nothing. Well, Donovan is following in his predecessor's...

Vermont gets \$1 million settlement from General Motors · 18 hours ago

- James Maroney  
The state of Vermont refuses -- refuses -- to acknowledge that the fix for this problem is not to remove the phosphorus that has flowed into the lake from agricultural fields and that due to weak...


[DONATE](#)
[IN THE NEWS](#)
[Peter Shumlin/EB-5](#)
[Opioids](#)
[Burlington Telecom](#)
[Turbine noise limits](#)
[Private school finances](#)
[Podcast: Narcan](#)
[Complete coverage of the Jane Sanders investigation](#)
[Nationally recognized EB-5 reporting](#)
[Teflon Town: ChemFab's toxic legacy](#)
[Embezzlement allegations in Coventry](#)


**Check out FAFSA Fridays! Get help with financial aid forms and learn how to pay for college.**

[FIND A WORKSHOP](#)
[VERMONT PRESS RELEASES](#)

## VHCB Grants Address Water Quality and Help Farmers Transfer Farms to the Next Generation

 By [Press Release](#)

 Oct 18 2016 | [Comment](#)

News Release — Vermont Housing Conservation Board  
October 17, 2016

Contact:

 Gus Seelig 828-3251 or [gseelig@vhcb.org](mailto:gseelig@vhcb.org)

At a meeting on October 5, the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board committed \$233,468 in state funding and \$633,500 in federal funds from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to conserve 490 acres of farmland in Franklin, Rutland, Washington, and Windsor Counties. The conservation easements for each of the five farm projects will include water quality protections for surface waters and riparian areas. Two of the farm projects will involve transfers to younger farmers. The Vermont Chapter of the Nature Conservancy will contribute \$265,000 to two of the farm projects as part of a collaboration with the Keurig Green Mountain Company aimed at protecting and restoring water quality in Lake Champlain.

"We are pleased that each of the five farm projects to be conserved by the Vermont Land Trust will have water quality-related easement protections," said VHCB Executive Director Gus Seelig, who also noted that three of the projects will use federal Regional Conservation Partnership Program funds targeted to farms within the Lake Champlain watershed. Another priority for VHCB has been to facilitate the transfer of farms to the next generation. "Conserving the land makes the farms more affordable to young farm buyers," said Seelig. "It's gratifying that two of the farms funded this month involve transfers to the next generation of farmers."

The Board also committed \$125,000 to the Town of Waitsfield to support an effort to add 110 acres to the 640-acre Scrag Town Forest. The acquisition would protect water quality, open up new trails to the summit of Scrag Mountain, and provide for development of a parking area at the trail head. Other funding for the project includes \$256,650 from the federal Community Forest Program and \$65,485 in private fundraising. The community will need to raise \$40,000 in additional funds and receive town approval from Waitsfield to successfully complete this project.

One of the projects funded on October 5 is a former dairy farm in Calais that will be conserved by the Vermont Land Trust and sold to a farmer selected in a competitive process through VLT's Farmland Access Program. The easement will protect a river corridor and wood turtle habitat and will provide permanent public access along Pekin Brook, a popular fishing stream. VHCB's commitment of \$130,609 in state and federal funds to protect the 129-acre farm will be matched by \$30,000 from the Calais conservation fund and \$60,000 from The Nature Conservancy and Keurig Green Mountain; \$10,430 will need to be raised locally.

In other commitments, the Board approved \$20,000 in funding to help the City of Newport hire a real estate consultant to advise the city following termination of a planned downtown redevelopment that was to use EB-5 investor funds. The site is across the street from the library and adjacent to the courthouse, in the heart of downtown, in an area that may be suitable for mixed residential and commercial development.

VHCB also granted \$50,000 to the Committee on Temporary Shelter (COTS) to assist that organization in a project at the former Burlington College campus on North Avenue in Burlington. The site will host 14 new efficiency and studio apartments for very low-income and homeless individuals, a new day station to be used by homeless people, and offices for COTS, which has raised more than \$2 million for the project. The VHCB contribution will help address budget shortfalls due to environmental contamination and structural deficiencies in the existing building.

 More information at [www.vhcb.org](http://www.vhcb.org)

**If you read us, please support us. If you give now, your donation will be matched by national donors who care about local investigative news in Vermont.**

**The News Match Challenge is generously supported by the Knight Foundation, The Democracy Fund and the MacArthur Foundation. All gifts up to \$1,000 will be matched up to a total of \$28,000.**





DONATE

## News in pursuit of truth

IN THE NEWS

Peter Shumlin/EB-5

Opioids

Burlington Telecom

Turbine noise limits

Private school finances

Podcast: Narcan

Complete coverage of the Jane Sanders investigation

Nationally recognized EB-5 reporting

Teflon Town: ChemFab's toxic legacy

Embezzlement allegations in Coventry

**NewsMatch**  
 Quality journalism matters

## News Match 2017

Support VTDigger • Help us meet the challenge

Donations in any amount up to \$1000 will be matched

DONATE

## VERMONT PRESS RELEASES

## Vermont Housing & Conservation Board to receive \$3.6 million in federal funding for farmland protection

By Press Release

Oct 19 2017 0 Comments

 News Release — Vermont Housing & Conservation Board  
 Oct. 17, 2017

Contact:

Gus Seelig 828-3250; [gus@vhcb.org](mailto:gus@vhcb.org)Nancy Everhart 828-5066; [nancy@vhcb.org](mailto:nancy@vhcb.org)

The Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB) and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will use \$3.6 million in new federal funding to purchase conservation easements on farmland. The funds come from the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), a Farm Bill initiative.

Gus Seelig, Executive Director of VHCB said, "Since 1997, VHCB's partnership with NRCS has brought over \$50 million to Vermont to complement state funding for farmland protection. To date, VHCB funding has been used to conserve more than 162,000 acres of farmland. Proceeds from conserving land can help farmers reduce debt, expand, diversify, install conservation practices, or buy their first farm. Helping farms transition to new ownership while staying in active agricultural use is a key goal of VHCB's Farmland Protection Program and more than half of recent farmland conservation projects have enabled land transfers, either within the family, or to existing farm businesses."

VHCB is the first organization in the nation to be certified to review and administer ACEP funds directly for farmland conservation projects. Certification will streamline the process, providing more efficient service to farmers. Through the efforts of Senator Leahy, the certification provision was added to the 2008 Farm Bill, with a goal of improving the program's delivery and providing more flexibility to state agencies and private land trust entities.

Protecting agricultural soils, promoting soil health, and enhancing water quality are other key goals of VHCB's farmland protection program. Some of this new federal funding is specifically targeted to achieve these goals in the Lake Champlain basin through the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). Working with the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, approximately \$4 million will be directed to additional agricultural easements that prioritize water quality improvements.

Vicky Drew, NRCS State Conservationist, said, "Conserved farms are eligible for RCPP funds to adopt practices and build infrastructure to improve environmental stewardship and protect water quality, such as installing riparian buffers or restoring wetlands. We look forward to working with VHCB to conserve an additional 25 farms with these federal funds. Vermont is working hard to couple land conservation efforts with management practices that protect water quality."

VHCB's Farmland Protection Program relies on non-profit conservation organizations such as the Vermont Land Trust and the Upper Valley Land Trust to work with farmers who are interested in selling development rights. These groups apply to VHCB on behalf of landowners for funding to conserve farmland. VHCB awards combine federal and state funding to protect farmland and leverage local fund raising, private foundation funds, and landowner bargain sales of conservation easements.

If you read us, please support us. If you give now, your donation will be matched by national donors who care about local investigative news in Vermont.

The News Match Challenge is generously supported by the Knight Foundation, The Democracy Fund and the MacArthur Foundation. All gifts up to \$1,000 will be matched up to a total of \$28,000.

 MacArthur  
 Foundation

 KNIGHT  
 FOUNDATION

 democracy  
 fund



## FARMER'S WATERSHED ALLIANCE WORKING FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY POSITIVE SOLUTIONS FOR FARMERS



[OUR MISSION](#) [BOARD MEMBERS](#) [AG NEWS & RESOURCES](#) [EVENTS](#) [PROJECTS](#) [FARM ASSESSMENT](#) [MEMBERSHIP](#) [FUNDING](#)

### September, 2017

## Conservation Practices on Farms in St. Albans Bay

Event Review

By admin September 12, 2017 [Comments](#)

Thursday, September 7th, 2017 was the [Conservation Practices on Farms in St. Albans Bay](#) bus tour! This event was hosted by the Farmers Watershed Alliance, UVM Extension NW Crops & Soils Team, and the USDA NRCS. There were approximately 30 attendees comprised of farmers, agency officials, community members, and local organization members.

The bus boarded at the UVM Extension Office in St. Albans. The tour highlighted conservation agronomic practices being done on various sites around St. Albans Bay. See some of the highlights below:







**Brigham Road Site – No-till Corn into Harvest Cover Crop:** Our first stop began with hearing from John Thurgood and Sarah Lerose, both from the NRCS. John viewed this event as a celebration! He spoke of how in 2015 the NRCS, other agencies, and farmers came together to work on water quality issues. "We wanted to make sure farmers who wanted to do something could." Referencing EQIP, funding pools, the 4 target watersheds (St. Albans Bay included), and developing a Watershed Action Plan. Sarah emphasized the necessity to get the message across to the public that farmers are doing good things for water quality. Heather Darby (second from the right) shared with the group how behind the corn harvest is due to weather conditions this season. The weather is ~3 weeks behind schedule, making corn ~2 weeks away from harvest. Having a late corn harvest will make cover crop establishment difficult.



*Janes Road Site – No-till Corn Into Sod: These fields were grass fields, but the Longway's wanted to convert them into corn fields. They came in, hayed it off, and planted the corn directly into the grass. They were able to reduce erosion and see soil savings because of this practice! They also experimented with fertilizer. The half of the field that had fertilizer looks better because it got more nitrogen. It was noted that farmers who spread fertilizer a little later on this year had a better yield because the rain season had passed. Heather added with that, "It's the science of farming we're all aware of, but the art of farming is different." Farmers need to be able to adapt their practices to weather and environmental stresses. They need to have the resources available to re-learn when they see new practices come into play.*





**Corliss Road Site – Forage & Biomass Planting:** These were corn fields for 10+ years. They decided to switch to forage & biomass fields through an EQIP program. They harrowed last fall and again this spring, seeded down the third week of June, rolled it again, and were able to harvest twice! The seed they used was a mix of alfalfa, red clover, orchard grass, and a few other varieties. They have seen much less erosion since switching from corn. There is also much less opportunity for nutrient run-off than before. Forage & biomass fields are becoming increasingly popular in Vermont. Someone asked if we are seeing less corn in Vermont as a result. Jeff Sanders answered that typically we are rotating corn to new fields. So there are not fewer corn acres in Vermont, just different acres.





*Dunsmore Road Site – Roller Crimp No-till vs. Conventional: These fields used the UVM ZRX Roller Crimper. Parts of the fields are conventionally tilled, and parts are minimally tilled. They also have experimented with cover cropping. They put the roller on the planter earlier in the season to roll down the cover crops (pressures down the weeds). Although, they had a carbon issue with the cover crops being left on the field. The cover crops soaked up too much nitrogen, impacting the corn yield. In Vermont, no-till is much more successful on non-organic farms than on organic farms. This is because no-till is a lot more successful when combined with spraying to get rid of the cover crops and weeds.*



**Maquam Shore Road Site – No-till into Standing Cover Crop; Manure Injection:** We were able to see the UVM ZRX Roller Crimper! This is a 6 row planter. It has undergone quite a few modifications with Scott Magnan's Custom Service to make it as efficient of a tool as possible for farmers. Scott Magnan (featured speaking in the photo) explained a few of those modifications. One is the hydraulic down pressure. This feature applies pressure to row units and allows the user to either auto-adjust or adjust as they see fit. Another modification is that the fertilizer application was switched from a squeeze pump to an electric pump. With the electric pump it is much easier to know exactly how much is being applied. Lastly, they added advanced seed-tube monitoring. This feature takes the guessing game out of seeding. A farmer can see if the machine is skipping seeds or double-seeding. This gives farmers the ability to react to issues as they are happening. This machine is one of the first in the county! Farmers are able to rent this roller crimper and test it out on their fields before committing to buying expensive equipment on their own. All of this is made possible through funding.





**Lake Road Site – No-till Roller Crimp vs. Conventional:** This was the final stop of the bus tour. This field was half no-till roller crimped and half conventional tillage. On the no-till half, there was a heavy mat of rye which helped reduce erosion and hold in the moisture. That half is filled with some of the best corn in the Bay this season! Jeff Sanders (on the right) ended the tour remarking on how amazing it is that so many farms in the bay are practicing agronomic conservation in their own way. "There's a lot of different paths getting to the same place." All but 2 farmers in the area that could have signed up for an EQIP program have. We need to make this profitable so that when the funding dries up farmers can and will continue to follow these practices. "Without the cost share, this stuff would probably not be happening."

Search

#### Recent Posts

Featured Farmer: Darlene Reynolds, Crosswinds Dairy & Daughters, Alburgh, VT October 24, 2017  
 Conservation Practices on Farms in St. Albans Bay September 12, 2017  
 2017 Summer Farm Meeting at Bridgeman View Farm August 24, 2017  
 UVM Extension Northwest Crops and Soils Team 10th Annual Field Day! July 13, 2017  
 Featured Farmer: Tim Magnant, Bridgeman View Farm, Franklin June 16, 2017  
 FWA Seeks Program Coordinator Applications May 1, 2017  
 FWA Annual Meeting March 29, 2017  
 FWA Annual Meeting Invitation March 7, 2017  
 Grassed Waterways: An Effective Water Quality Strategy November 1, 2016  
 Request for Proposal June 25, 2015  
 Vermont Water Quality Bill Signed June 23, 2015  
 In Memory of Guy Palardy... June 12, 2015  
 Three Types of Tillage and Four Types of Manure Incorporation June 1, 2015

The Farmer's Watershed Alliance Received an Environmental Merit Award from the EPA April 26, 2014  
FWA Says Goodbye to Founder and Long-Time Chair April 13, 2014  
MILK PRICE PROTECTION FOR THE STATE'S DAIRIES OPENS THIS WEEK August 27, 2012  
Composting Animal Mortalities on Farm Video July 3, 2012  
Manure Spreading Ban Lifted March 21, 2012  
Mission of the Farmers' Watershed Alliance April 3, 2011

#### **Archives**

October 2017  
September 2017  
August 2017  
July 2017  
June 2017  
May 2017  
March 2017  
November 2016  
June 2015  
April 2014  
August 2012  
July 2012  
March 2012  
April 2011

#### **Categories**

Announcement (11)  
Article/Resource (6)  
Event Review (4)  
Featured Farmer (2)

#### **Meta**

Log in  
Entries RSS  
Comments RSS  
WordPress.org

Powered by Wordpress Magazi by Tloreo