

Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District (RNRC D)

Annual Report FY 2016



Watershed Identification/Stream Crossing Signs

The Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District is committed to fostering an awareness of the link between stewardship of the natural environment and the agricultural community as well as other landowners, and encouraging and supporting efforts with partners, in meeting the need for natural resource conservation.



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FY 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016

Working With Our Community to Conserve & Manage Natural Resources

A Conservation District is a political subdivision of the State of Vermont, as designated by legislation in 1939, to cooperate with farmers, other landowners, organizations and state and federal agencies to encourage and assist in the development and use as well as conservation of natural resources throughout the State.

The Rutland District was established in 1968 and is one of fourteen in the State. It includes the sixteen towns in the eastern part of Rutland County and Rutland City.

The District is partially funded with State funds through allocation from the Natural Resources Conservation Council.

Fundraising/sales, workshops, support from towns and local businesses, and grants secure additional funds.



The District functions under the direction of five locally elected Supervisors and a District Manager. The District holds monthly meetings, which are open to the public, to oversee and administer all programs and finances.

Board of Supervisors

Co-Chair
Co-Chair
Supervisor
Supervisor
Assoc. Supervisor

Bridget Bowen
Ted Grembowicz
Alan Shelvey
Bob Smith
Russell Reay

Wallingford
Clarendon
Shrewsbury
Clarendon
Cuttingsville

Staff

District Manager
Land Treatment Planner

Nanci McGuire
Michelle Smith

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

District Conservationist
Civil Engineer
Program Assistant
Soil Conservation Technician
Soil Conservationist
Soil Conservation Technician

Nathan Hamilton
Les Wright
Joe Roberts
Sally Eugair
Philip Rivara
Mary Beth Poli

Cooperating Agencies/Partners

ANR, Dept. of Environmental Conservation
City of Rutland DPW
City of Rutland Parks and Recreation
Community College of Vermont
Farm Service Agency
Rural Development
Rutland Regional Planning Commission
Rutland County Solid Waste District
Rutland Area Food & Farm Link
Stafford Technical Center, Forestry & Natural Resources
Towns in the District (see map on page 2)
U.S. Forest Service (Green Mountain National Forest)
U.S. Fish & Wildlife
UVM Extension System
UVM Lake Champlain Sea Grant Program
VT Agency Of Agriculture Food and Markets
VT Association of Conservation Districts
VT Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation
VT Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
VT Natural Resources Conservation Council
VT Land Trust
Many Local Businesses

District Activities Fiscal Year 2016

Education:

Vermont Envirothon

The District participates in promoting the Vermont Envirothon program. The Envirothon works to strengthen environmental curriculum at the high school level. Teams of high school students are challenged to answer questions about conservation related issues, and scores are calculated to determine the winning team. The District sponsored (4) teams in the 2016 statewide competition from Rutland High School and Stafford Technical Center.

Clean Water Initiative

The District was instrumental in organizing public meetings in cooperation with the VT Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets, Poultney Mettowee NRC and Bennington County NRCD regarding the revised Accepted Agricultural Practices (AAP's) now Required Agricultural Practices (RAP's). The Vermont Clean Water Initiative will focus on reducing sediment and nutrient (phosphorus and nitrogen) pollution across the State from the six major sources: agriculture, developed lands, roads, river corridors and floodplains, wetlands and forest lands. For more information visit <http://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/cwi>

Continuing Education for Real Estate Professionals

The District sponsored this course on November 17, 2015 at the College of St. Joseph where Real Estate professionals received continuing education credits to learn how to use the VT Natural Resources Atlas and about Stormwater, flood resiliency and conservation.

2015 Governor’s Service Award - The District nominated Stafford Technical Center, Forestry and Natural Resources class for the K-12 Youth Volunteer Group category. Service projects that the District recognized Stafford Technical Center, Forestry and Natural Resources class for is:

Skidder bridge building, stream buffer plantings and assistance that they provide before and during our annual tree, shrub and more sale.

On October 16, 2015 two of the students and their instructor Mark Raishart went to the State House to accept this award.



Outreach:

RNRCD Website and Facebook - The District continues to maintain a website to supply information regarding agriculture and natural resource conservation to the public. <http://www.vacd.org/rcd>. Search for us on Facebook.

Products & Services:

Seedling Sale

In an effort to raise funds for our many programs and to encourage landowners to increase plantings for wildlife habitat, conservation and aesthetics, bulk purchases of evergreen and hardwood trees, wildlife/songbird trees, shrubs, apple trees and blueberry, raspberry and strawberry plants are made available to the general public. This year over 100 customers participated in the seedling program.

Trout Sales

The District sponsors a Spring Trout Sale that provides pond owners with trout for stocking.

Organization:

RNRCD Annual Meeting

The District held its Annual Meeting on February 22, 2016 at the Town of West Rutland, with a discussion regarding “Tactical Basin Planning in VT: Using a watershed framework to provide integrated water resource management for the restoration and protection of water resources in the Otter Creek Basin”.

This discussion was led by Ethan Swift, Watershed Coordinator with the Agency of Natural Resources.

Strategic Planning – On March 15, 2016 the District invited all of their partners to join them for a facilitated discussion where they shared common concerns which suggested new programs/projects. The District adopted their Strategic Plan for 2016-2020 at the June 14, 2016 Board Meeting.

Local Work Group

Rutland District Supervisors participate in Local Work Group meetings. The focus of these meetings is to assist in setting local priorities for USDA Cost Share Programs administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Programs:

Land Treatment Planning (LTP)

The District works with a Land Treatment Planner who provides technical assistance to farmers in preparing technical information for the development of Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans (CMNP’S).

Portable Skidder Bridges

The District has two portable skidder bridges available for rent to loggers and consulting foresters. Portable skidder bridges when properly installed and used as a temporary stream crossing structure, will reduce streambank and streambed disturbance as compared to other alternatives, thus minimizing the potential for sedimentation. Both of these bridges were funded through a statewide Ecosystem Restoration Program Grant and were built by the Stafford Technical Center, Forestry and Natural Resources Class.

Watershed Planning

Activities for FY 2016 include:

Water Quality Monitoring – The District continued to assist Rutland City in complying with certain minimum measures for stormwater management relating to the City’s “Plan for Implementation of the Six Minimum Measures by coordinating a summer volunteer water quality monitoring program. If you are interested in seeing the results of the summer water quality monitoring program for 2016 contact Nanci at nanci.mcguire@vt.nacdnet.net

Stormwater Master Planning for the East Creek and Tenney Brook – With funding through the Ecosystem Restoration Program and Lake Champlain Basin Program the District was able to hire consultants to design projects that were identified in the Stormwater Master Plan for the East Creek and Tenney Brook:

- Green stormwater practices for Giorgetti Park.
- Stormwater swirl separator at the outfall of an existing 36” drainage pipe, in the Adams Street right-of-way. The 36” drainage pipe discharges to Tenney Brook.



- Green stormwater practices at Northwest School.



Projects at Northwest School and Adams Street have been completed. The Giorgetti Park project will begin during the Spring of 2017.

Watershed Identification/Stream Crossing Signs – With funding through a Lake Champlain Basin Program Education & Outreach Grant the District hired a graphic design company to design and print stream crossing/watershed identification signs. The signs were installed throughout the Upper Otter Creek watershed by Town Road Crews. The second part of this project is to meet with Town Road Commissioners and staff in the Upper Otter Creek watershed regarding the roles that they can play in the VT Clean Water Initiative on Stormwater from developed lands and from roads.

