

Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District (RNRCD)

Annual Report FY 2017



Science at the Hatchery/Conservation Field Day

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.



Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District (RNRCD)

FY 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017

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 (approximately 6% of annual expenditures) with State funds allocated by the State of Vermont through the Natural Resources Conservation Council.

Fundraising/sales, workshops, support from towns and local businesses, and grants secure the remaining funding allowing the District to make progress on its mission.



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

Bridget Bowen

Wallingford

Co-Chair

Ted Grembowicz

Clarendon

Supervisor

Alan Shelvey

Shrewsbury

Supervisor

Bob Smith

Clarendon

Supervisor

Michael Pedone

Clarendon

Assoc. Supervisor

Russell Reay

Cuttingville

Staff

District Manager
Land Treatment Planner

Nanci McGuire
Michelle Smith

The District shares an office and partners with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Rutland staff of NRCS is composed of:

District Conservationist	Nathan Hamilton
Civil Engineer	Les Wright
Program Assistant	Joe Roberts
Soil Conservation Technician	Sally Eugair
Soil Conservationist	Philip Rivara
Soil Conservation Technician	Mary Beth Poli
Soil Conservationist	Rico Balzano
Soil Conservation Technician	Alexis Clune

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
Lake Champlain Basin Program
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 17

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 student's focus on Vermont's environmental issues related to aquatics, forestry, soils and wildlife resources through real-world learning in a teamwork environment and are also challenged to research an assigned environmental

issue and answer questions about that issue at a statewide competition. Scores are then calculated to determine the winning team. The District sponsored (3) teams in the 2017 statewide competition from Mill River Union High School and Stafford Technical Center. Stafford Technical Center took third place overall.

Tactical Basin Planning Meeting

The District hosted this meeting on Wednesday, June 21, 2017 from 6:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the West Rutland Town Hall. The purpose of this meeting was to bring District stakeholders together to identify specific water quality concerns and opportunities in the Upper Otter Creek Watershed, select special areas for protection, and explore the watershed vision of community members living in the basin.

Ethan Swift, Watershed Coordinator with the Vermont ANR Department of Environmental Conservation facilitated this meeting. Basin planning empowers people by soliciting their input, presenting them with information and tools and working together to develop specific real world activities to protect and restore water quality.

Conservation Field Day/Science at the Hatchery

The District organized this event which was held at the Dwight D. Eisenhower National Fish Hatchery in Chittenden on September 20, 2017. More than 100 students from six elementary schools in Rutland County participated. Some of the topics that students learned about were: fish & stream ecology, forests and tree identification, soils, rivers and streams. Each group also participated in a tour of the Hatchery. This is a hands-on activity that is always very well received. Funding for this year's event was provided by the Rutland County Solid Waste District.



Science at the Hatchery

Outreach:

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

Products & Services:

Seedling Sale

In an effort 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 which is a source of revenue that helps to fund our programs.

Trout Sales

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

Organization:

RNRCD Annual Meeting

The District held its Annual Meeting on Monday, February 27, 2017 at the Town Hall in West Rutland. Christopher Smid, Co-Owner of New England Slate Company provided a presentation titled “The Vermont Slate Industry Today” and Christopher Brooks, Owner of Vermont Wood Pellet Company provided a presentation titled “Responsible Use and Economics of Forest Products”. These presentations highlighted how responsible development and use of our natural resources provides products and revenue for people living in the District.

A Conservation Farm of the Year Award was presented to Woods Market Garden in Brandon for doing an outstanding job of protecting and conserving soil, water and related natural resources on the land they farm.

Programs:

Land Treatment Planning (LTP)

The District works with a Land Treatment Planner who provides technical assistance to farms in writing their land treatment plans and nutrient management plans (NMPs). The land treatment plan is a farm-specific resources assessment and the base for NMPs. One of the goals of having a NMP is to develop field-specific nutrient application recommendations. This can help the farm more efficiently apply manure and fertilizer based on crop needs, and reduce off-farm soil and nutrient movement.

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 2017 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 2017 contact Nanci at nanci.mcguire@vt.nacdnet.net

Green Stormwater Infrastructure

Giorgetti Park

The District received funding through an Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) Grant to implement a high priority project that was identified in the Stormwater Master Plan for the East Creek Watershed. This

project located at Giorgetti Park is designed to mitigate stormwater runoff to the East Creek. The RNRCD coordinated with Watershed Consulting Associates to develop a final design for a large-scale bioretention basin that was constructed in July and August of 2017 by Giancola Construction.

The bioretention basin treats 1.51 acres of impervious surfaces split primarily between the high-use paved parking lot and the roof of a multi-use sports arena building, as well as a small portion of a City-maintained street. The total drainage area for the practice is 4.43 acres.

This practice also repaired a significantly eroded channel outfall and it is calculated that it will remove nearly 1,000 lbs. of total suspended solids and (1) lb. of total phosphorus annually. Not only is this project highly functional for improving water quality, it is an attractive community asset that beautifies the area and is a showpiece for green infrastructure.



Giorgetti Park

Rutland High School & Stafford Technical Center

The District received funding through a Lake Champlain Basin Program, Pollution Prevention Grant to hire an Engineering Consultant to develop design alternatives for Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) to be implemented at Rutland High School and Stafford Technical Center located in the Moon and Tenney Brook watersheds in Rutland City.

Implementing GSI at Rutland High School and Stafford Technical Center will help the City of Rutland be compliant with the Vermont Clean Water Act and TMDLs for both the Moon Brook and Lake Champlain while providing a tangible introduction to GSI to the students and faculty

The focus is on improving water quality by reducing and treating stormwater runoff in the Moon and Tenney Brook watersheds. Measurable environmental outputs for this project will be at least two GSI practices designed for future implementation.

Rutland Town School

The District received funding through an Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) Grant to hire an Engineering Consultant to design green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) for Rutland Town School. Four locations and practices were identified and carried through to final design.

These practices are designed to capture, detain and/or treat a portion of the water quality storm volume from existing impervious surfaces on the south side of the school.

Selected practices include rain gardens, tree plantings, bioretention, and an infiltration trench. Greenspaces were targeted for the siting of these GSI practices. These locations allow for lower cost GSI practices to be implemented while maintaining existing vehicle access and parking.

Not only will the project be highly functional for improving water quality, it will also be an attractive community asset that will beautify the area and be a demonstration site for green infrastructure. Construction of these practices will begin during the summer months of 2018.

Other watershed planning projects

Cold River Berm Removal

The District received funding through an Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) Grant to hire a contractor to remove a berm that was created after the floods of the 70's on the Cold River in the Town of Clarendon. This berm was a contributing factor to property flooding and damage during Tropical Storm Irene. Removal of the berm will also address sediment and nutrient loading in the Cold River by allowing the stream to access the floodplain, thus reducing flood heights, velocities and providing ample storage of sediment within the river corridor.

RNRCD will subcontract with the Vermont River Conservancy to acquire River Corridor Easements on the 6 acres of forested floodplain located on two properties.

A conceptual design for the berm removal has been done by Fitzgerald Environmental Associates, LLC. as part of the Cold River Project Development and Design project that was funded by ERP.

NRCC Block Grant (VAAFMM)

The District received funding from the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFMM) through a Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC) Block Grant to provide education and outreach to farmers in the Upper Otter Creek watershed regarding the new Required Agricultural Practices (RAP'S), best management practices and the availability of technical and financial assistance and nutrient management planning. Workshops are currently being planned for spring and summer 2018. The District's role in this is a result of an innovative state-wide collaboration between NRCC and VAAFMM.