

Windham NRCD
Board of Supervisors Meeting
April 15, 2026
Board Packet
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Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District

April Supervisor Meeting

6:30 PM, Wednesday, April 15, 2026

USDA Service Center

28 Vernon Street, Suite 332

Brattleboro, VT 05301

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89485547272>

Agenda

Land Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Abenaki People, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations.

Review Agenda for Additions or Changes

New Business

1. NRCS Updates
2. Volunteer Waiver - **Board to Potentially Approve Volunteer Waiver**

On-Going Items

1. Update from Budget and Building Acquisition Subcommittee
2. Technical Service Provider Work
3. 2026 Plant Sale and Plant Palooza Planning

Secretary's Report

Approve minutes from March 26, 2026

Review Upcoming Supervisor Meeting Dates:

Next meeting: TBD

Other Business

Executive Session

Future Agenda Items:

1. FY26 Q3 Financial Reports
2. 2026 Greeters and Invasive Species Technician Hires



Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District

28 Vernon Street, Suite 332

Brattleboro, VT, 05301

802-689-3024

Volunteer Service Agreement and Photo Release Form

This Volunteer Service Agreement and Photo Release Form (the “Release”) executed on this date: _____ by _____ in favor of the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District, a municipality business status that functions like a not-for-profit, their employees and board members (collectively, “WGNRCD”).

The Participant desires to participate with WGNRCD and engage in the activities related to being a participant during the WGNRCD outdoor events (the “Activities”). Activities may include non-motorized and/or motorized water travel; use of hand tools, digging, hammering, moving rocks, branches and bushes; walking on uneven terrain, including when carrying heavy loads of materials, and supplies and tools. The Participant understands that these Activities may include inherent and other risks including, but not limited to the following; injury from exposure to non-motorized and/or motorized water travel, including collisions and capsizing, unpredictable weather; the risk of being on and around deep, cold and fast moving waters with obstacles over and below the water; and any and all other risks associated with the environment, remote locations and the tasks undertaken as a volunteer participant in the above referenced activities.

In performing the specific volunteer service, I acknowledge that:

- I have acquainted myself with what is required to perform those tasks, and represent that I have the skill and ability to perform them;
- I assume full responsibility for my own safety and agree to hold WGNRCD harmless for any injury to me or damage to my property, except where such injury or damage results from the negligence of WGNRCD or its employees;
- I am a volunteer worker and therefore am not covered by WGNRCD’s worker’s compensation policy or health insurance plans;
- I will perform the volunteer service in compliance with the standards and specifications established by the municipality and further agree to use any personal protective equipment (if any is required) in accordance with guidance from the municipality;
- I am 18 years of age or older and know of no reason, medical or otherwise, which would prevent me from performing the tasks that are required by the scope of work listed. **If I am UNDER 18 years of age**, my parent/guardian’s signature is provided here:

○ Parent or Guardian’s name: _____

○ Parent or Guardian's signature: _____

○ Date: _____

Participant agrees that this Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of Vermont, and that this Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Vermont. Participant agrees that in the event that any clause or provision of this Release shall be held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity of such clause or provision shall not otherwise affect the remaining provisions of this Release which shall continue to be enforceable.

I, _____, affirm my desire to provide uncompensated volunteer services to WCNRCD as such services described above.

Participant signature: _____

Photographic Release. Participant does hereby grant and convey unto WCNRCD all right, title, and interest in any and all photographic images and video or audio recordings made by WCNRCD or its agents during the Participant's Activities with WCNRCD, including, but not limited to, any royalties, proceeds, or other benefits derived from such photographs or recordings.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Participant has executed this Release as of the day and year written above.

Participant name: _____

Participant signature: _____

April 2026 Report on District Activities

- **This report covers district activities between February 21 and April 13*



Students from Dartmouth University lead a community forum focused on flood resilience on April 10 in Dover.

- **Financials:**
- As of 3/31/2026 we have a balance of \$70,299.10 of equities minus liabilities (on a cash basis). For comparison, we had:
 - \$63,794.11 on 2/28/2026 (last month)
 - \$85,394.25 on 3/31/25 (last year)
- We have \$53,112.50 in outstanding invoices, of which \$250.00 is overdue.

General Updates

- **Advocacy**
 - Cory visited the statehouse on 4/3 to meet with Senators Wendy Harrison and Nader Hashim. Our funding request is continuing to progress through the appropriations process. The house passed a budget with our core funding of

\$612,000 (what is in the governor's budget) and \$300,000 in one-time appropriations. If enacted, this would level fund districts in FY27. The Senate Agriculture Committee recommended the same combination of ongoing and one time funding in their memo to appropriations and listed us as their number 1 priority.

- **AmeriCorps**

- Cory and Abby attended training on generational differences and conflict resolution hosted by VHCB on 4/10.
- Abby has continued working on Plant Palooza planning and has publicly announced the event
 - 8 organizations have committed to tabling in addition to UVM master gardeners (including Vermont Museum of Natural History bringing live animals)
 - Talk given by Devon Snyder from Sedge and Soil Consulting and Natural Garden Design titled "Getting Started with Native Plants" at 9:30 AM
 - Ordered 240 cider donuts for \$180 from Allen Brothers Farms - we plan to sell these for \$1 each
 - In conversation about renting a large tent and coffee makers. The cost estimate for a 20x30 tent (including set up and break down) is \$725.

- **Sales Programs:**

-We have 268 orders for \$40,520.56 in sales as of 4/13.

-The Yellow Bud Farm, Cold Stream Farm and Nourse Orders have been paid in full. We'll wait to pay the remaining balances on Netherlands and Adams until they invoice us after shipment.

- **Ag-CWIP:**

- Attended VAWQP annual meeting
- Heather attended UVM agronomic spring course
- Starting to soil sample
- Payment received on our invoice for July-December semi-annual report.
- VAAFM reviewed VACD's application for funding and made award decisions for individual districts. VACD's total request was \$5,478,778, although this was considerably more than the maximum in the RFP. Districts were awarded \$3,651,000 in total funds, meaning \$1,827,778 needed to be cut from districts' requests (roughly 33%). Windham NRCD was awarded \$221,500, which

represented only a 10% cut from our request. Overall, this funding represents an increase in annual Ag-CWIP funding of about 23% for our district from the current agreement that ends 6/30 and the new agreement that will begin 7/1. This will be a 2-year agreement that will enable us to continue offering outreach, education and technical assistance to producers.

- Heather finished preparing and submitted the district's locally-led fund pool proposal (as discussed at February board meeting). NRCS met to review proposals recently but we are still waiting for an announcement on any funding decisions.
- Emma and Abby attended the NOFA NH Conference on March 7.
- District staff attended the Vermont Agricultural Water Quality Partnership Annual Meeting at Killington on March 31st.

- **AFT RCPP:**

- AFT has informed us they intend to apply for an extension so we can continue to support implementation work under our current agreement throughout FY27 (otherwise the agreement will end in September). We have not used all of the funds in this agreement, so an extension could be very helpful for our funding.
- February and March invoices submitted. Payment received on February invoice.

- **NACD TA:**

- Heather and Emma finished EQIP ranking (I believe 8 applications between the two of us)
- Reporting and invoicing completed for Q3 (January-March).
- Michelle Monroe from VACD has informed districts that we should plan to spend down the current agreements by the end of June, as they do not anticipate NACD being able to offer extensions this year. She also has notified districts that we should not expect these funds to be awarded in FY27 at this time. VACD submitted a large proposal on behalf of districts for FY27 last fall. These funds are already appropriated but we're hearing that OMB is holding up a new agreement with NACD at this time over past political disagreements. If not funded, this would represent a \$50,000 gap in our FY27 budget. Staff are working to develop a NFWF LISFF Proposal that we hope can fill this hole, but we won't see this funding (if awarded) until spring of 2027. We can shift staff around and spend down remaining funds on AFT RCPP and the current LISFF project to get us through the end of calendar year 2026. We have been building up our cash reserves this year because we anticipated a gap in funding already with our LISFF project ending this fall. We can use cash reserves to cover some of this gap if we have new funding agreements on the horizon. Michelle has suggested having

districts all report on current staffing and funding to VACD so they can use any available funds strategically to protect current staffing throughout the state.

- **Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) Watershed Planning:**

- Emma has continued to plan a series of workshops and demonstration days throughout the Connecticut River Valley in VT and NH in partnership with a variety of other organizations. The first of these was held 4/8 as Cheshire County Conservation District hosted an equipment field day to raise awareness on available equipment for no and reduced till practices.
- Cory prepared and executed a subagreement for Sullivan County CD in New Hampshire so they can plan and implement several agroforestry workshops.
- Cory prepared extensions of current agreements with Cheshire CCD and NOFA NH so they can continue their work on the project and develop additional workshops.
- District staff attended the Connecticut River Joint Partnerships and CRWFA joint meeting with legislators on March 23 at Allison's Orchard in Walpole. Staff from Senator Welch's office attended to talk about his WEATHER act that would provide new crop insurance options for farmers impacted by severe weather. Members of the NH Delegation were on hand to discuss the Connecticut River Partnership Act as well.
- Cory is working to schedule a steering committee soon where we can update the committee on our progress and discuss next steps, including a possible application for implementation funds to the LISFF grant round that is currently open (due in May).
- Cory is working with NFWF to process a budget amendment. Once in place, this will enable us to spend more of our funds on personnel and less on contractual expenses, which aligns well with how the project has unfolded.
- Cory and Heather attended a Funding Workshop focused on the LISFF grant opportunity hosted by Throve Environmental at the Retreat Farm on April 2.
- Cory and Heather held productive meetings with NFWF and Cheshire CCD to discuss ideas around a proposal for implementation funding. The current concept includes:
 - Apply for implementation funding to support implementation of on-farm practices to reduce Nitrogen loss throughout the CT River Valley in NH and VT.
 - Focus on funding implementation of practices that require no engineering and limited planning, including:
 - Reduced tillage
 - Cover Crops

- AgroForestry
 - Nutrient Management Planning
 - Rotational Grazing
 - Streamside Buffers and Fencing
 - Prescribed/Rotational Grazing
 - Nitrogen Monitoring and Assessment
 - Planning and engineering work for small and medium organic dairy farms throughout the region to support the below practices. Farms would then be set up well to qualify for funding from NRCS to implement, either through EQIP or through a possible RCPP (NFWF may apply for their own RCPP to support these practices)
 - Waste Storage Facility
 - Livestock Pipeline
 - Heavy Use Area Protection
 - We would need to identify a partner who could complete the engineering work on this agreement. Cory and Heather have a meeting with staff from Newtrient to learn more about the work they are already doing with NFWF and Stonyfield and discuss possible collaboration.
- **NRCC: Tactical Basin Planning:**
 - Isabel attended Rivers and Roads Tier 3: Sediment and Large Wood Removal training
 - Our proposed work plan for FY27 is due to Marie on 4/23. Staff are working to identify priority work to include in next year's agreement.
 - Cory, Isabel and Abby participated in a Green River Watershed Alliance Meeting on February 24 focused on efforts to reclassify the watershed to protect water quality. Abby and Bay Holmes (CRC AmeriCorps) will be working to move this effort forward over the next few months.
 - Emma attended the public meeting on the new management plan for Jamaica State Park on March 4.
- **Grant-in-aid:**
 - We received our funding award from VT DEC. It includes:
 - \$35,098 for Water Chestnut Survey and Removal
 - \$18,129 for Lake Raponda Greeter Program
 - \$6,534 for Somerset Greeter Program
 - \$8,771 for South Pond Greeter Program
 - \$18,477 for Harriman Greeter Program
 - These amounts are more than we requested for water chestnut and Harriman, slight cuts at South Pond and Raponda and roughly what we requested at Somerset. Cory will adapt the budgets for each program accordingly.

- The greeter and invasive species technician positions have been posted on our website.
- **Trees For Streams:**
 - Isabel worked with Jess to amend the TFS agreements to reflect planting needs
 - Tree planting dates: May 7th (Rockingham) and May 9th (Chester)
- **Project Development**
 - Isabel has been desktop reviewing potential tree planting sites in the Saxtons River watershed. She sent out outreach letters to landowners and has been coordinating with VRC, CRC, and the Orianna Society on joint site visits.
 - Isabel and Hemlock met with 6 landowners on site to assess their parcels. Follow-up visits with Todd Menees were then completed to get the state's approval of these sites.
 - Additional site visits are to come in this area through May.
- **Vermont Community Foundation:**

Isabel organized meetings with the Green River Watershed Alliance to discuss the Green River reclassification process. Abby is working on the next steps for this.

 - Isabel collaborated with VLT on the “Wildlife in the Whetstone” event on 3/27.
 - Cory attended the Resilient Watersheds Cohort Meeting on April 13. Topics included “right-sizing” watershed organizations’ flood resiliency work to match community needs and org capacity.
- **Watershed Grant:**
 - Our application on behalf of the SE VT Cisma (developed by Abby and Sam (AmeriCorps with VLT) was partially funded for \$5,000. We plan to reduce the scope of work from 2-3 sites to 1-2 sites but otherwise keep the same basic project idea. Project includes invasive species management at high visibility sites in the Whetstone Watershed.
 - Abby and Isabel attended the Brattleboro Area Farmer’s Market Board Meeting on April 7th to discuss a potential collaboration for implementation work on this project
 - Final payment received on 2024 Watershed Grant that was closed out in January.
- **SE VT Cisma:**
 - Steering Committee met on April 8th to discuss next steps for the Watershed Grant.
- **WUV Workforce Capacity Building Grant:**
 - We received our final payment on the 2024-2025 agreement. This agreement is now closed out.
 - Cory is continuing to work with Dave Dore from Structural Integrity on our financial management system.
- **NFWF Forest and Rivers Fund Grassland Bird Project:**

- Kate McKay started work on March 12. She has been busy getting up to speed on the project and the area's farms.
- Kate organized a steering committee meeting on March 30.
- Cory and Kate met with Chris Bernier from Vermont Fish and Wildlife to discuss management of the Windsor Grasslands WMA to support grassland birds.
- A Birding on the Farm Workshop was held at Miller Farm in Vernon on March 17th.
- Kate conducted outreach with farmers attending CCCD's Equipment Field Day on April 9th.
- Other work in progress includes coordinating with partners on outreach and locating potential sites, updating the Windham County NRCD website to provide more visibility for the project and additional information on grassland birds, compiling lists of sites with grassland birds that might be suitable for targeted outreach, developing a toolkit of outreach materials and wording for newsletters, starting to make connections with landowners, and planning for the field season.
- **Whitingham WISPr**
- **NRCC DM Representative:**
 - Cory attended the NACD NE Employees Association Meeting and the NRCC Meeting on February 26.,
- **MARC Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant Lake Raponda Shoreline Erosion Control Final Design Grant**
 - DuBois and King is nearing the completion of 60% designs. If we can get our ducks in a row in time we are hoping to apply to Mount Ascutney RPC's open grant round for implementation funding based on these 60% designs.
 - DuBois & King invoiced for work through the end of March. Cory needs to prepare a report and invoice to MARC to bring us up to date.
- **MARC Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant SEVCA Stormwater and Wetland Restoration Preliminary Design Grant**

Other:

- Isabel presented at the Vermont Association of Wetland Scientists' Winter Conference on the significance of small, "pocket" wetlands in the Connecticut River Valley.
- Isabel and Cory worked with the Dartmouth team to host a Rock River Watershed Discussion on April 11th.
- Cory developed a grant application to Cornell University's Small Grant Program in partnership with Vermont Land Trust, Monadnock Conservancy, Cheshire

CCD, Ottaquechee NRC and Vermont Center for Ecostudies. If funded, this \$10,000 grant would enable us to expand the grassland bird project into conserved lands and begin to develop a more comprehensive, regional-approach to outreach and education on conserved lands to support declining birds. This is a planning grant, so the hope is that we would apply for a \$25,000 implementation grant in a year.

- Emma and Abby worked with Edible Brattleboro to develop a grant proposal to help develop garden projects in Brattleboro to address food insecurity.
- Cory presented to the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Districts about our experience implementing the locally led process in Windham County on April 7.

**note: please see below for a summary of current grant agreements and an acronym list.*

Reference Materials *

**Not updated monthly, only as grants change status*

Current Grant Awards:

- **MARC Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant Lake Raponda Shoreline Erosion Control Final Design Grant**
 - Grant runs until 12/31/27 with all work required to be completed by 10/31/27. Provides \$44,586 to complete final designs for the set of water quality management practices identified last year during the preliminary design round. Since we worked with DuBois & King on the preliminary design round, our procurement policy allows us to execute an agreement with them for this round of design work without going to bid again.
 - Cindy Ingersoll and Chris Yurek at MARC are the grant contacts.
- **MARC Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant SEVCA Stormwater and Wetland Restoration Preliminary Design Grant**
 - Grant runs until 12/31/27 with all work required to be completed by 10/31/27 Provides \$26,572 to complete initial site analysis, alternatives analysis and 30% designs for a preferred set of alternatives at the Southeast Vermont Community Alliance facility in Westminster, VT, near the Henwood Hill Marsh. We'll need to post a RFP for this project.

- Cindy Ingersoll and Chris Yurek at MARC are the grant contacts.

WRC WISPr Funding

- **This award utilizes funding from the Town of Whitingham up to 10% of the cost of the recently installed wastewater treatment facility (~\$300,000) for natural resources projects in the town. Windham NRCD is working with WRC, DEC and the town to identify projects to fund with these funds. Our current subagreement with WRC only supports a buffer planting and invasive species management project along VT-112 in Whitingham at the municipal lot and the Wastewater Treatment Facility.**
- **The current subaward is for \$25,192.71 and runs from 2/27/25 - 11/1/27.**
- **Most of these funds will flow to a licensed applicator performing three successive cutting and/or herbicide applications and a planting crew (likely Redstart who gave us a quote), but some funds are held for staff time managing the project.**
- **Future awards may be executed if suitable projects can be developed. Funds will support Final Design and Implementation, but not preliminary design.**
- **Margo Ghia at WRC is the contact for this agreement.**

NRCC One Time Core Funding

- **Our proposal was partially funded for \$9,858.02. Funded items include:**
 - **Laptop**
 - **Office Printer**
 - **Project Screen**
 - **Office Chairs**
 - **Logo and Outreach Materials**

- **Financial Consultant (additionally funding to be paired with WUV funding)**
- **All funds must be spent by 6/30**
- **Receipts are required for all purchases, but we have flexibility on breakdown of spending and can include staff time as an expense at billable rate.**
- **Clare Ireland is the contact for this grant**
- **An amendment was issued on 4/29/25 for an additional \$4,903 to fund the purchase of a kayak trailer and kayaks or canoes.**

NRCC Trees for Streams Enhanced Survivorship Award

- **This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Jess Miller is the contact at NRCC for this program.**
- **Agreement runs 1/1/25 to 10/31/25.**
- **Total award of \$2,321.41 for enhance survivorship activities at two past TFS sites: Meadows and Otter Lane.**
- **Funds 32 hours of staff time, mileage and \$695 in supplies.**
- **Isabel Bowman is project manager for this project.**

NRCC Trees for Streams Whetstone Woods Planting

- **This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Jess Miller is the contact at NRCC for this program.**
- **Agreement runs 4/1/25 to 5/30/25. Reporting and final invoice due to NRCC by 6/13/25. Total award is for \$2,953.70 on an expense reimbursable basis.**

VACD Micro Wetland Planning and Prioritization

- **This is a grant held by VACD with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Long Island Sound Futures Fund.**
- **We have a subagreement with VACD for \$4,044.05 to fund design work on wetland restoration projects at three sites in the Williams River Watershed.**
- **This agreement funds 75 hours of Isabel's time to work on these designs. Work must be completed by 10/31/25.**

NRCC Project Development

- **This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Lina Smith is the contact for this grant.**
- **We have an award of up to \$6,586.43 in staff time and mileage to complete project development activities for 13 sites on the Rock River.**

- **Isabel will be taking the lead in completing these activities, which will include:**
 - **Outreach to landowners, typically by mailing**
 - **Site visits for interested landowners**
 - **Coordination with DEC staff to develop selected sites for applications for preliminary design funding.**
- **The grant runs 10/1/24 – 3/1/26**

Watersheds United Vermont Workforce Capacity Development Grant

- This 18-month agreement funds a variety of capacity building purchases and investments. The primary components of this are:
 - Funding for a new website
 - Purchase of a storage shed
 - Strategic Planning including a consultant
 - Financial assistance including hiring a consultant to help us set up a better system
 - Creation of emergency and transition plans for district staff.
 - Professional development for staff, including wetland delineation training for Isabel
- Lyn Munro and Tobiah Schulman at WUV are the contacts for this grant.

- 90% of funds will be paid up front, with the remaining 10% upon completion of all grant activities. Agreement includes a claw-back provision if we fail to spend some of the money on eligible expenses.

NRCC: Core Agreement (FY25)

- Block grant administered by NRCC, current agreement has been signed and is awaiting execution for \$35,500. The agreement runs 7/1/24 through 6/30/25. Deliverables on the agreement are:

- § FY25 Work Plan and Budget
- § FY24 Project Results Reporting
- § FY24 Financial Reporting
- § Supervisor Election Process
- § NRCC Supervisor Union Representation

- In addition to these deliverables, the agreement lists “operational standards” that the district is expected to maintain. These are:

- § Maintaining an updated natural resource assessment for the district to provide basis for project and program development.
- § Developing projects and programs addressing resource concerns and securing of grants, contractual agreements or other financial support needed to support implementation.
- § Executing annual supervisor election processes, including posting legal notice holding annual board seat elections or appointments and updating the board directory.
- § Holding regular board meetings and annual meeting
- § Maintaining updated policies and procedures

§ Providing monthly financial reports for review by Board of Supervisors or Board Treasurer, including Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Report and Check Register

§ Conducting annual performance assessment and annual employee performance reviews

§ Providing annual financial and performance accountability to NRCC.

§ Clare Ireland at NRCC is the primary contact for this grant.

§ Key due dates:

§ Executed Subagreement – 7/1/24

§ FY26 Budget for NRCC and Legislative Advocacy Work – 7/22/24

§ FY24 Work Plan and Budget – 9/15/24

§ FY24 Projects and Financial Reporting – 9/15/24

§ Supervisor Election Process – 12/15/24

§ Updated Supervisory Directly – 1/31/25

NRCC: Basin Planning (FY24)

This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Timeline is July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. Our award was for \$21, 555 in funding to support a variety of water quality work and regional coordination, including:

- Running the Local Working Group process
- Attending annual meetings of the LRA, CRC, GRWA and conducting outreach to these and other watershed groups.
- Plan and run a Nitrogen-reduction working group (this will pair with the LISFF project if funded)

- Technical Assistance to non-ag landowners in littoral and riparian settings.
- Support for the basin planning process in Basin 12 (Deerfield).
- Public outreach and education regarding the Lakewise Program at Lake Raponda, South Pond and Sadawga.
- Public outreach and education regarding riparian stewardship through tabling at public events, such as the Guilford Fair and the Herrick’s Cove Wildlife Festival.

NRCC Basin Planning (FY25)

This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Timeline is July 16, 2024 – July 15, 2025. Clare Ireland is the primary contact at NRCC for this grant (with Jess Miller filling in while Clare is on maternity leave) Our award was for \$28,330 in funding to support a variety of water quality work and regional coordination, including:

- Participation in monthly regional coordination meetings by Cory and Isabel.
- Participation by staff in meetings with key stakeholders including the Lake Raponda Association and the Green River Watershed Alliance to increase education and outreach on natural resource restoration and protection needs and opportunities through coordination on opportunities for projects and information sharing. Meetings with other stakeholder groups as opportunities arise to develop new public access greeter programs along the CT river. Also funds participation in the Southeast Vermont Cooperative Invasive Species Management Association steering committee, attendance at Watershed United Vermont’s Annual Meeting, West River Restoration Meetings, the Scaling Up Dam Removals Workgroup meetings and the 30x30 workgroup meetings.
- Creation of a district-led Newton Brook workgroup aimed at identifying obstacles to implementation of restoration practices to improve water quality to plan watershed-level monitoring and restoration efforts. Launch a limited water quality testing program on Newton Brook with partners including Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC).
- Tabling (including with the stream table) at public events including Brattleboro’s First Friday Gallery Walks, CRC’s Riverfest, Mount Snow Wildlife Festival and the Herrick’s Cove

Wildlife Festival. Staff will also conduct outreach and education to the Lake Raponda, South Pond and Sadawga lake communities regarding the Lakewise Program.

- Continued work on the “Adopt A Storm Drain” Program in Brattleboro.
- 2 workshops on topics such as rain gardens, rain barrels or benefits of riparian buffers.
- Outreach to businesses about best management practices for land along rivers, with the focus being on women and minority-owned businesses.
- Technical assistance to non-agricultural landowners to help the protect water quality, improve flood resilience and support littoral and riparian habitat through appropriate stewardship.
- Targeted outreach to forest landowners to support adoption of agroforestry management practices and to promote the district’s skidder bridge program.
- Host a Vermont Invasive Patrollers Workshop to train members of the public on aquatic invasive species identification and reporting procedures.
- Refer water quality concerns to appropriate staff at DEC and VAAF.M.
- Respond to initial contacts from land owners to support identifying and developing future projects for the district’s project development program.
- Support Tactial Basin Plan Development by reading and reviewing draft plan and providing feedback and hosting public comment sessions.
- Training for staff including Rivers and Roads Training and Watershed Forestry Partnership’s Annual Conference.

Ellis Brook Floodplain Restoration and Berm Removal Implementation

- This is a block grant administered MARC for clean water restoration projects. MARC has awarded us funds to complete the berm removal and buffer plantings on a property in Dover and Wilmington. Mary Nealon and Bear Creek Environmental were contacted to complete the design work and will likely be contacted to oversee the berm removal. We have an executed grant agreement for this project for a total of \$95,195 and all deliverables must be completed by 12/31/24.

Dummerston Covered Bridge Access Erosion Gully Design Project

- This is a block grant administered by the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission, using clean water block grant funding from the State of Vermont. We have been awarded \$17,496.96 to create final designs for the creation of a safe access to the river at the Dummerston Covered Bridge on the West River. The primary contact for this grant is Chris Yurek.

- We have an agreement with Watersheds United Vermont for the implementation of this project. This award is for up to \$39,763 and deliverables must be completed by 9/30/25.

Brattleboro Farmers Market Rain Gardens Preliminary Design

- This is a block grant administered by the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission, using clean water block grant funding from the State of Vermont. We have been awarded \$20,065.05 to create preliminary (30%) designs for the creation of 5-8 stormwater best management practices (BMPs) for the treatment of stormwater before it reaches the Whetstone Brook. The primary contact for this grant is Chris Yurek.

Southeast Vermont Cisma (these are grants that the district holds but that Cisma partners assist with implementation)

Windham Foundation

- This is a direct grant to Windham NRCD from the Vermont Community Foundation. This \$3,000 award funds:

- Assessments of town forests, public parks and public-facing businesses for woody invasives.
- Coordination of community workdays to address infestations
- Funding for AIS surveys at Harriman, Somerset and Raconda.
- Funding for the Harriman Greeter Program.

NRCC: Ag-CWIP

This is a block grant managed by NRCC. Emily Nummer is the primary contact. The four-year agreement runs from November 1, 2022 through June 1, 2026. This grant funds:

§ Outreach and education efforts focused on clean water and healthy soils, including workshops for producers and the public.

§ Technical Assistance to producers aimed at supporting practices that protect and restore water quality and soil health; includes on-farm visits by staff as well as coordinating farm teams meetings to develop broad support for producers with partner agencies and nonprofits.

§ Soil sampling assistance

§ Purchase of soil probes to create an equipment library for producers to borrow as needed.

§ Conservation Practice Surveys

§ The purchase of capacity building equipment including cell phones, grant management software and GIS.

American Farmland Trust RCPP

○ American Farmland Trust has an RCPP agreement to implement regenerative soil health practices throughout New England. We have a contract with AFT for Windham NRCD to host a 0.5 FTE conservation planner position to complete work in Windham, Bennington and portions of Windsor counties.

○ Invoices are due monthly for our costs.

○ Total contract is for \$200,000 and runs through 9/30/2026.

Vermont DEC Grant in aid: Aquatic Invasive Species 2024

This funding source from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation supports greeter programs and aquatic invasive species survey and removal efforts. Kim Jensen is the primary contact at VT DEC for this work. Olin Reed is the primary contact for support with greeter training and the Survey 123 Application for data management.

Our award includes the following funding:

Water Chestnut Survey and Removal at four sites - \$23,989

Harriman Reservoir Greeter Program - \$6,082

Somerset Reservoir Greeter Program - \$6,000

Lake Raponda Greeter Program - \$20,280

South Pond Greeter Program - \$11,700.

NRCC DM Rep

This small agreement with NRCC pays for Cory to act as District Manager Representative. Cory attends statewide coordination meetings, helps plan and facilitate district manager meetings and works to support better collaboration between district managers and with state and federal partners. The agreement runs from July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026. Clare Ireland at NRCC is the contact for this grant.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Long Island Sound Futures Fund

○ We have an executed agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the below work:

- Working with Marie Caduto and Marli Rupe (DEC) on an application for a 3-year planning project to begin development of nitrogen reduction modeling for ag practices in the CT River Valley. Project would bring together state, federal and district staff along with researchers from UVM, UNH and Dartmouth to identify practices for Nitrogen reduction on farms. Part of this project will include stakeholder meetings with producers to help build a framework for N reduction practices that are compatible with CT River Valley farms. This could potentially lead to a multi-year implementation project in the future. Proposal would provide \$32,000 for Windham NRCD to serve as the coordinator for the Vermont portion of the project.
 - Application was submitted May 19. We ended up having enough match from VT DEC, NH DES, UNH-Extension, UVM-Extension and other partners to not need any matching funds of our own. This may prove useful down the road if we want to use Ag-CWIP as match for another program proposal. The final proposal was for \$418,596. Much of this will be subcontracted to partners

National Association of Conservation Districts Technical Assistance, Education and Outreach Grant

Windham NRCD partnered with White River NRCD and Bennington NRCD on a application to this funding source to support increased outreach, education and technical assistance to producers. Our application was partially funded for \$291,000. We are using these funds to support adding an agricultural resource specialist who will work with Heather (~\$50,000). Other funds are supporting an engineer in the Rutland office who will support NRCS work throughout the South Zone. Josh Carvajal is the engineer doing this work. We have an agreement executed with White River NRCD as a sub-recipient.

Jennifer Byrne is the contact for this grant.

Pending Grant Awards:

Whitingham WISPr (Water Infrastructure Sponsorship Program)

-The Town of Whitingham is in the process of replacing their wastewater system. This program will provide the town with savings on their clean water revolving fund loan for up to 10% of the total project cost if they spend the same amount on clean water projects during the project timeline. Windham NRCD and Windham Regional Commission have been partnering to develop a suite of projects to take advantage of these funds. The timeline for this work and specific guidance is still being developed by DEC, but we anticipate beginning work in June of 2024. WRC has agreed to serve as the fiscal agent for these funds (will likely be around \$350,000). The district will have significant opportunities to develop and oversee natural resources projects, as there will be too much work in too short of a time for WRC to do the work themselves.

Grant proposals and other opportunities

Japanese Stilt Grass Early Detection Rapid Response

Submitted a proposal for additional funding to continue the mapping and removal efforts for stilt grass. The final proposal is for a 2-year, \$31,221.60 proposal that would support 200 hours per year for Isabel to serve as point person and coordinator on early detection rapid response efforts, 160 hours per year for a seasonal staff person to work on invasives mapping and removal, and funding for contractors to assist with mapping and removal and chemical applications where appropriate. Rachel Cliche at Silvia O Conte NWR is the contact person for this grant.

**Windham County Natural Resource Conservation District
Special Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)**

Thursday, March 26th, 2026, 6:30 pm

Geof Dolman's House, 301 Barrows Road, Brattleboro, VT

Hybrid Meeting

Present: Cory Ross, Executive Director; Heather Blunk, Agricultural Specialist; Abby Reed, AmeriCorps Conservation Assistant; Isabel Bowman, Conservation Specialist; Meg Kluge, Geof Dolman, Linda Corse, Katie Morrison, board supervisors

Zoom Participants: Arrow Branwen, Administrative Assistant; Emma Gregg, Agricultural Specialist; Pieter van Loon, board supervisor

Land Acknowledgement: *We respectfully acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Abenaki People, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations.*

Review Agenda for Additions or Changes

- No changes

New Business

- Annual Organizational Business
 - Have not had any talks about officers since reelection of Linda to board supervisor
 - Current slate of officers: Chair, Linda Corse; Vice Chair, Meg Kluge; Treasurer, Geof Dolman; Secretary, Katie Morrison
 - **Pieter motions for current officer slate to remain, seconded by Meg. Motion passed at 6:44 PM**
 - **Pieter nominated to be alternate VACD rep, Linda nominated to be main VACD rep**
 - **All in favor, none opposed, passed 6:45PM**
- Technical Service Provider Work
 - Until recently, districts prohibited from doing so
 - Reversed a couple of months ago
 - Concern we would have an unfair advantage, would have to go to a different physical space, use a different computer than NRCS'.
 - Changes to cooperative agreement
 - NFWF and Stonyfield Organic Dairy Cooperative reached out and said they may have an opportunity for us to partner with them as a TSP

- i. NMPs, other management plans, for Stonyfield Dairy
 - ii. Hope to open up to the rest of Vermont
 - iii. Would receive NRCS funding more easily
 - iv. No engineers, one org is going to hire one
 - v. Would be a full time job eventually, Heather would move away from NRCS planning, would have to hire someone else to do Heather's current work
- Will be a lot more complicated to be a TSP, but funding source is consistent and stable
- Will be competing with other providers if we become TSPs, but it's a good market because there aren't many who can take on farm work and has potential to grow
- Need to ask NFWF more questions. Without this opportunity, the relationship management of the TSP would be very challenging
- Seems like the partnership with NFWF is worth exploring
- 2026 Plant Sale and Native Plant Festival Planning
 - Want to make plant sale be about more outreach and education instead of just a pick up day
 - Other conservation orgs can table with info, speak to people
 - Also turn it into an 80th WCNRCD anniversary
 - Reach out to Rich Earth Institute about tabling and possibly having their port-a-potty there, Green Mountain Orchards if they want to sell apples or cider donuts.
 - Where do we find volunteers?
 - i. Reach out to the high school
 - ii. Newsletter
 - Board is on board with the plan, keep logistics in mind, and open to helping

On-Going Items

- Update from Budget and Building Acquisition Subcommittee
 - Prepared worst and best case scenarios for spending on building space
 - Cannot commit to anything today, since VLT has dropped out due to possible legal questions
 - Do not have to make a decision today, but want to talk about options
 - Meg talked to property manager at Winston Prouty campus
 - i. Nice setting, slightly out of downtown
 - ii. Have a couple of spaces,
 - 1. One is a littler bigger than we really need,~ 1,400 sq. ft. for \$1800 a month
 - 2. Also two offices that were less than \$1200, 800 sq. ft. total
 - iii. One year lease, all utilities except internet included
 - iv. Public spaces professionally cleaned
 - v. Have a large conference room that people borrow

- vi. Has a cafeteria, it is available to be rented
 - 1. During the week, high school runs a cafe out of it
- vii. Parking not a problem, including leaving district truck
- o Cotton Mill probably not a good option, industrial and too expensive
- o Vermont Building might be an option, waiting to hear back

Secretary's Report

- **Approve minutes from February 24, 2026**
 - o **Motion to Approve**
 - o **All in favor, none opposed**
 - o **Passed 8:13PM**

Review Upcoming Supervisor Meeting Dates:

- **Next meeting:** Wednesday, April 15th

Other Business

Motion to go Into Executive Session for personnel issues:

- **Seconded**
- **All in favor, none opposed**
- **Passed 8:17PM**

Respectfully submitted,

Arrow Branwen