

We, the undersigned, fully support the request from the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (VACD) to increase base funding for the State's 14 Natural Resources Conservation Districts by \$2,638,000 for a total base appropriation of \$3,000,000 for fiscal year 2024.

Vermont's Conservation Districts are trusted and effective members of the agricultural and conservation communities. District staff and board members maintain a wealth of skills, information and relationships necessary to help local land stewards and communities address natural resource concerns.

By working with landowners, Conservation Districts help people steward their land for the future and build climate resilience for our state. The work of the Conservation Districts is continuous and growing due to increased demand. People need help navigating the universe of state and federal programs available and implementing these projects on the ground, and Conservation Districts provide that assistance.

Adequately funding Vermont's Natural Resources Conservation Districts is critical for advancing state conservation goals. Conservation Districts have been in our Vermont communities for 80+ years, and they were created to lead local efforts to protect soil health, water quality, and other natural resources. We ask the Vermont Legislature to please support VACD's full request of \$3,000,000 base funding.

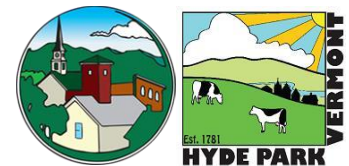
Businesses

- Anderbell Acres**, East Montpelier
- Bear Creek Environmental, LLC**, Montpelier
- Birch Meadow Farm LLC**, Fairlee
- Birdsong Farm**, Stockbridge
- Boneyard Farm**, Fletcher
- Calabash Gardens**, Wells River
- Carissa Stein Consulting**, Enosburg Falls
- Deep Meadow Farm**, Ascutney
- Doton Farm LLC**, Barnard
- Enman Kesselring Consulting Engineers**, Rutland
- Ever Green Designs**, Pawlet
- Fitzgerald Environmental Associates**, Colchester
- Green & Gold CSA**, Sudbury
- Harvest Hill Farm**, Walden
- Haystack Farmstead**, Pawlet
- Home Front Gardens**, Hyde Park
- Keep It Real Organics**, Jamaica
- Keyline Vermont LLC**, New Haven
- Liberty Hill Farm**, Rochester
- Myers Produce LLC**, Hardwick
- Not Just Trees, Inc.**, Clarendon
- Painted Tulip LLC**, Waterbury Center
- Redstart**, Corinth
- Shire Beef LLC**, Vershire
- Singing Cedars Farmstead**, Orwell
- SLR Consulting**, Waterbury
- Snow Organic Ag**, Post Mills
- Southwind Farm**, Pawlet
- Sunrise Farm**, White River Junction
- Swallow Hill Gardens**, Hardwick
- The New England Slate Company**, Poultney
- Watershed Consulting**, Burlington
- Yellowbud Farm**, White River Junction



Municipalities

- Town of Hyde Park**
- Town of Morristown**



Organizations

- American Farmland Trust**, Northampton, MA
- Atowi Project**, Brattleboro
- BALE (Building A Local Economy)**, South Royalton
- Black River Action Team**, Springfield
- Connecticut River Conservancy**, Brattleboro
- Enosburgh Conservation Commission**, Enosburg
- Forest Carbon Works**, Morrisville
- Franklin Watershed Committee**, Essex Junction
- Friends of Northern Lake Champlain**, St Albans
- Friends of Nulhegan**, Island Pond
- Johnson Tree Board, Johnson Conservation Commission**, Johnson
- Lake Bomoseen Association, Inc.**, Castleton
- Lake Carmi Campers Assoc., Inc.**, Franklin
- Lake Harvey Association**, Barnet
- Lake Raponda Association**, Wilmington
- Lake St. Catherine Association**, Wells
- Linking Lands Alliance**, White River Junction
- Maidstone Lake Association**, Maidstone
- Missisquoi River Basin Association**, East Berkshire
- Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)**, Richmond
- NorthWoods Stewardship Center**, East Charleston
- Peacham Pond Association**, Marshfield
- Regeneration Corps**, Norwich
- Richford Conservation Commission**, Richford
- Rural Vermont**, Montpelier
- The Intervale Center**, Burlington
- The Nature Conservancy in Vermont**, Montpelier

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Organizations continued

Trout Unlimited, Brattleboro
Vermont Farm Bureau, Richmond

NORTHWOODS
STEWARDSHIP CENTER

Lake
Saint
Catherine
ASSOCIATION

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS
VNRC
VERMONT NATURAL
RESOURCES COUNCIL

INTERVALE
CENTER



TROUT UNLIMITED



The Nature
Conservancy



Vermont Natural Resources Council, Montpelier
Vital Communities, Hartford
VT Institute of Natural Science, Quechee

Testimonials From the People We Work With and For

"The conservation districts provide incredibly helpful programs for farms like mine. Access to equipment, educational opportunities and on-farm conservation projects just to name a few. Conservation districts help farmers make gradual, often financially helpful transitions to practices that better conserve the farm's land and water resources."

- Brian Joseph Leach, Haystack Farmstead, Pawlet, February 2023

"The gutting of the technical services by UVM extension and NRCS has left farmers in a difficult situation, and the Conservation Districts play a broader role than NRCS services. The competency and field work is beyond what we experience from other service providers, and they are local and engaged. Please provide adequate funding so we can have continuance and competency for technical and grant support."

- Niko Horster, Shire Beef LLC, Vershire

"Conservation Districts assist farmers to contain excess nitrogen and phosphorus. They guide and fund farmers to stop high erosion locations on their farms. They are a critical program for soil and water health."

- Nicole D'Agata, Painted Tulip LLC, Waterbury, February 2023

"Conservation Districts provide needed resources for farmers in the community like me."

- Beth Kennett, Liberty Hill Farm, Rochester

"Please support our Natural Resources Conservation Districts with much needed financial aid. Like many other commissions around the state, the Richford Conservation Commission relies on their personnel and resources in promoting conservation of our natural resources and education about natural resources for our community."

- Annette Goynes, Richford Conservation Commission, February 2023

"Franklin County and Grand Isle Natural Resources Conservation District Services have outstanding staff that serve as one of Friends of Northern Lake Champlain's most vital allies when working with private residents and farms to bring practical Best Management Practices to reduce nonpoint phosphorus loss into the northern arm of Lake Champlain."

- Dr. Kent E Henderson, Board Chair, Friends of Northern Lake Champlain, January 2023

"VT Conservation Districts are the core of our values living in VT, our land and resources."

- Tricia Follert, Town of Morristown, February 2023

"The Conservative Districts are vital to connecting farmers with funding sources for water quality and other projects, and they are currently unfunded."

- Paul Doton, Doton Farm LLC, Barnard, February 2023

"Conservation Districts' structure provides the most efficient and effective means of working in local communities to improve our stewardship of natural resources."

- Jim Mazzonna, Maidstone Lake Association, February 2023

"Our local Conservation District's assistance is instrumental in helping us maintain our 6th generation VT farm. We would be lost without them."

- Jeremy Russo, Southwind Farm, Sudbury, February 2023