



**House Committee on
Corrections and Institutions
February 9, 2023**

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Statutory Purpose



“the dual goals of creating affordable housing for Vermonters, and conserving and protecting Vermont’s agricultural land, forestland, historic properties, important natural areas, and recreational lands of primary importance to the economic vitality and quality of life of the State.”

10 V.S.A.15 §302

Vermont Housing & Conservation Board Multiple Goals



VHCB's multiple goal mission illustrated in the Rutland region where its program supported the revitalization of the Paramount Theatre in downtown Rutland, the construction of 19 affordable apartments at Lincoln Place with 10 reserved for households exiting homelessness, and the preservation of Bird Mountain a wilderness and recreational area.

10 V.S.A. Chapter 15 § 322

§ 322. Allocation system

(a) The Board shall consider, but not be limited to, the following factors:

- (1) the need to maintain balance between the dual goals in allocating resources;
- (2) the need for a timely response to unpredictable circumstances or special opportunities to serve the purposes of this chapter;
- (3) the level of funding or other participation by private or public sources in the activity being considered for funding by the Board;
- (4) what resources will be required in the future to sustain the project;
- (5) the need to pursue the goals of this chapter without displacing lower income Vermonters;
- (6) the long-term effect of a proposed activity and, with respect to affordable housing, the likelihood that the activity will prevent the loss of subsidized housing units and will be of perpetual duration;
- (7) geographic distribution of funds.

(b) The Board's allocation system shall include a method, defined by rule, that evaluates the need for, impact, and quality of activities proposed by applicants.



VHCB Results: FY 2022 and FY 2023

State Investment: \$56.6M
Leverage: \$352.7M

- 1,218 homes and apartments
- 24 farms; 4,176 acres conserved
- 20 natural areas; forests; parks and trails: 4,500 acres conserved
- 4 historic preservation projects
- 154 farm and forest enterprises were provided business planning and technical assistance.

VHCB Program Impacts

- Downtown/Village Revitalization
- Outdoor Recreation
- Housing the Homeless
- Rural Community Development
- Homes for Workers
- Farm and Forest next generation transfers
- Water Quality
- Historic Gathering Places



Sweet Rowen Farmstead



The French Block



Barre Town Forest

35 Years of Housing & Conservation

- 275,699 acres of working forests, natural areas and recreational lands
- 15,000 affordable homes – rental and homeownership
- 170,918 acres on 789 farms
- 81 historic buildings have been restored for community use
- 900 businesses have enrolled in our Farm & Forest Viability Program
- Over 600 AmeriCorps members have served through VHCB
AmeriCorps
- 2,828 homes with reduced lead paint hazards

Capital Construction and State Bonding Act

VHCB Sections FY24 Proposed

Section 10 Clean Water

Agricultural water quality projects: \$800,000

Land Conservation and WQ Projects \$2.0 M

Section 16 Vermont Housing & Conservation Board

Housing and Conservation Projects: \$1.8 M



Hopkins St. Family Housing, Rutland



Franklin Homestead Independent Living and Assisted Living

Capital Bond Funding for Housing

- Supplements other state and federal funding for new and rehabilitated affordable housing serving low-income households.
- Provides critical funding for construction.

Permanent Affordability



Northgate Apartments in Burlington, 336 homes 100% owned and controlled by the Northgate Residents Ownership Corporation.

Bove Brothers Plan to Evict Low-Income Refugee Families in Winooski – and Raise Rents

By **DEREK BROUWER** and **LIAM ELDER-CONNORS (VPR)**



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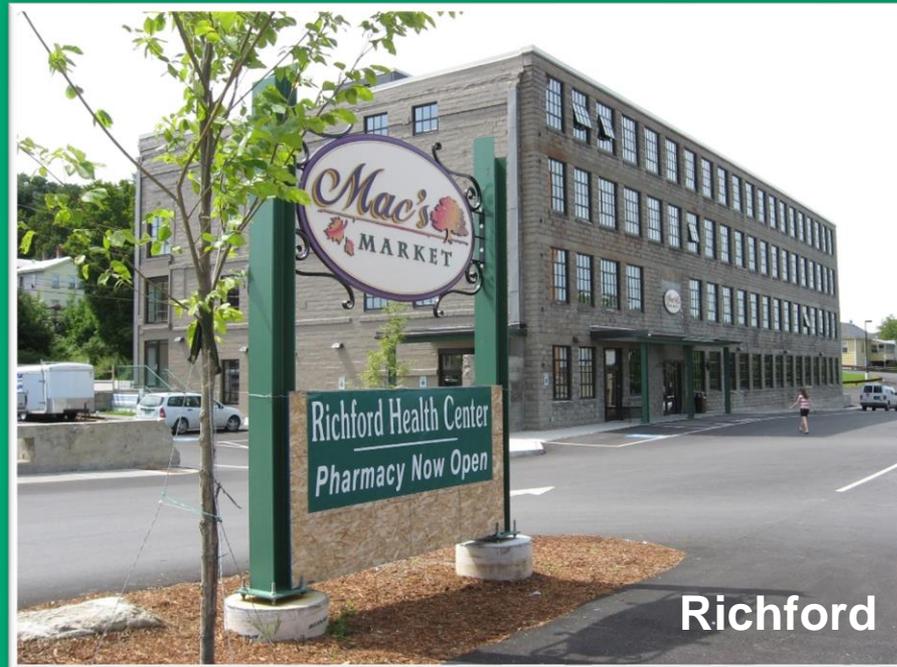
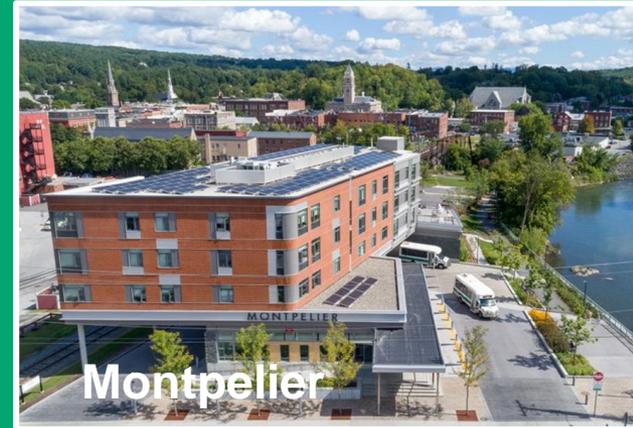


300 North Main apartments

DEREK BROUWER © SEVEN DAYS

After substantial advocacy work, the landlords agreed not to evict the residents.

Smart Growth and Revitalizing Downtowns



Service-Supported Housing

Service Supported Housing



At 3 Cathedral Square, older Vermonters enjoy meals and activities together. Health care is coordinated through the SASH program.



The Rutland Housing Authority converted a former commercial building to create 9 apartments with support services.



Meeting emerging needs: Emergency Shelters

Good Samaritan Haven Welcome Center, Berlin

Good Samaritan Haven opened a new shelter with 35 beds in August 2022 to provide housing with support services for individuals experiencing homelessness. The need is great, with more than 400 people currently without permanent housing in Central Vermont; nearly 100 are completely unhoused and may be living on the streets or in the woods this winter.



Champlain Housing Trust – Farmworker Housing Repair Loan Program

A loan fund to finance the repair and improvement of farmworker housing has been recapitalized with \$906,000 and a pilot program for new construction of farmworker housing will be developed with \$620,000 awarded by VHCB. Since it was launched earlier this spring, the Champlain Housing Trust has committed \$500,000 in loan capital to improve 21 farmworker housing projects housing more than 100 farmworkers living and working on farms in Vermont. UVM Extension Service is acting as a partner with CHT in helping with outreach to farmers about the new program.

Foundation House, Barre City

Housing for
women in
recovery
from
Substance
Use Disorder
and their
children



This historic home was re-configured by Downstreet Housing & Community Development into apartments with support services provided by Vermont Foundation for Recovery, an organization operating statewide. A family-like atmosphere is created where the members are nurtured and energized by others who share common experiences, struggles, values, and goals.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice



Habitat homeowner Janet Brown and her son, Bennington



Since 1987, VHCB has provided \$3.6 million to secure land and permanent affordability for 157 Habitat for Humanity Homes.

The Champlain Housing Trust constructed 20 new condominiums in Winooski on a lot donated by the City. Marketed to BIPOC households, all the homes quickly sold and will be occupied in 2022.

Rural Communities – photo ideas?



The Ascutney ski resort once boasted 1,800 vertical feet of skiing on over 50 trails. When it closed for the last time in 2010, it was a crushing blow to the town of West Windsor. Caleb Kenna for The New York Times

The New York Times

A Town that Saved a Mountain, and a Mountain that Saved a Town



Evergreen Manor,
Hardwick

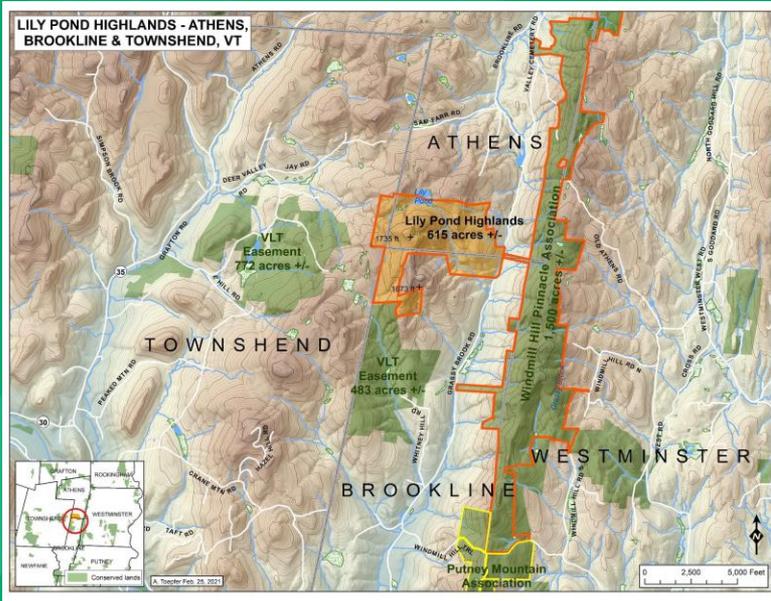
Capital Bill Funding for Land Conservation



Hubbard Park, Montpelier

Working with a statewide network of partners, VHCBC funds the conservation of agricultural land, natural areas, forestland, recreational land, and the preservation and restoration of historic properties. These investments strengthen our rural economy, protect wildlife habitat, provide public access to forestland, trails and water, and restore our historic community buildings, creating jobs and bringing visitors to Vermont.

Lily Pond Heights, Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association





Corse Maple Farm, Whitingham

Roy Corse pointing out the Corse Maple Farm annual syrup production records going back 100 years. In 2022 Roy Corse was named Outstanding Sugar Maker of the Year by the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association.

358 acres conserved with the Vermont Land Trust in two phases.

Morgan Street Wetlands - Bennington





Wildstone Farm, Pownal

John and Joy Primmer (at right) have been raising organic vegetables, herbs and flowers since 1984 on their farm in southern Bennington County. Through VHCB's Viability Program, they are working with a consultant from NOFA-VT on a transition plan for retirement. They conserved 21 acres with the Vermont Land Trust. The conservation easement includes water quality protections along frontage on South Stream.

**2021 New
England
Leopold
Conservation
Award**

The farm in 1999, previous to conservation practices put into place by Guy Choiniere, who purchased the farm from his parents.

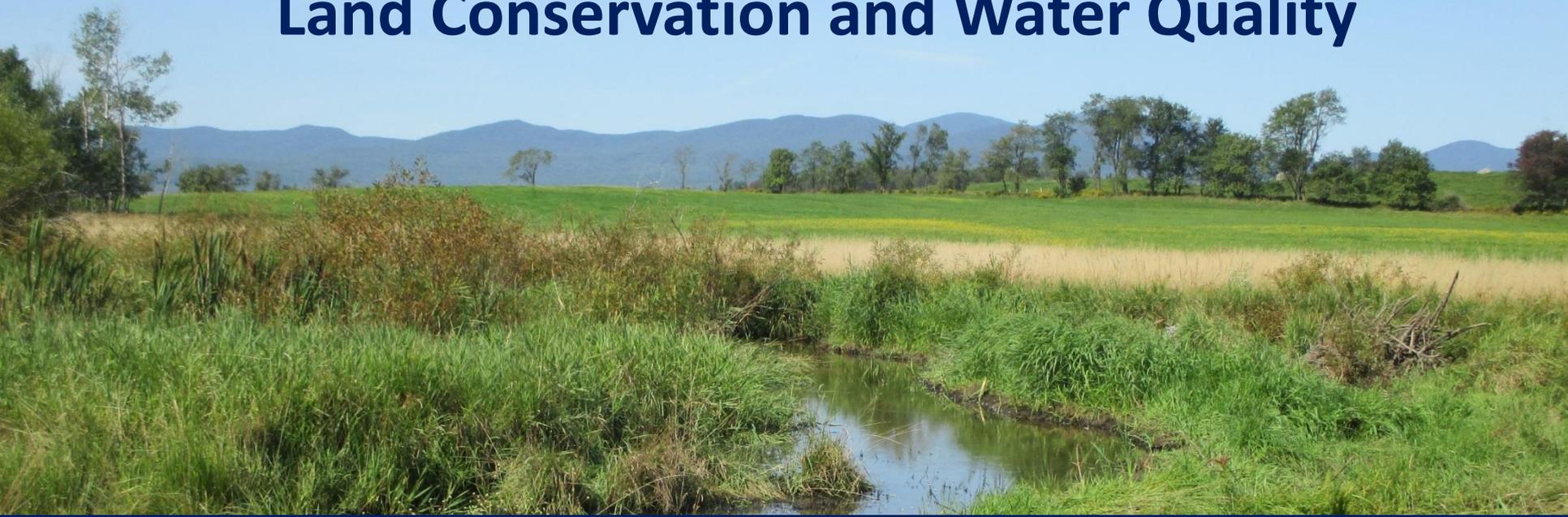


Choiniere Family Farm, Highgate

The Choinieres implemented numerous conservation practices, installing buffers along the river, cattle lanes and fencing, and kept manure under cover using bedded pack barns. The farm now produces milk without feeding grain. The Choinieres have also purchased a neighboring conserved farm.

Clean Water Initiative

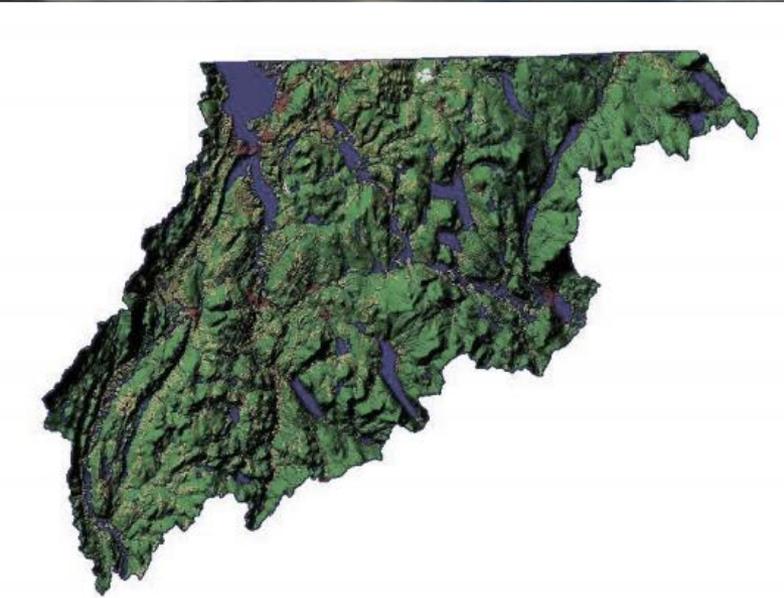
Land Conservation and Water Quality



Marquis Farm, Newport Center

- 90-cow grass-based organic dairy
- 124-acre parcel conserved in 2015; 122-acre home farm conserved in 2017
- Located in Mississquoi watershed (critical source area for phosphorous loading)
- Buffers in easement for small streams protect surface water
- Farm needed manure pit, barnyard, ditching, pasture watering system—all installed in 2017 with NRCS cost share

Clean Water Service Provider for the Lake Memphremagog District



VHCB is serving as CWSP for the district, collaborating with partners to protect and improve water quality in the 687-square mile basin which straddles the Canadian border

Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program

- 20 years of in-depth advising
- 900+ farm, food & forest products businesses served

In 2022:

- 154 enterprises engaged. Combined, they generate approximately 462 jobs and \$34.7M in annual gross sales.
- 1/3 clients engage in transition planning
- Nearly \$2.85M in loans & grants accessed
- 70% of clients reported increased gross sales
- 61% of clients reported increased net income



Fairmont Farm, East Montpelier (\$20,000 WQG for manure injector)

Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program

Business Plan Implementation Grants

- Provide capital to bring business planning goals to fruition
- FY22 awards totaled \$195,740
- These awards leveraged an additional \$357,778 in farmer, state and federal funds.



Karin Bellemare & Jon Wagner, Bear Roots Farm, Barre and The Roots Farm Market, Middlesex (\$4,800 Implementation Grant for a commercial kitchen)



Geordie & Emery Lynd, Northwind Farm, Walden



First-generation dairy farmers, Geordie and Emery Lynd own an 80-cow hill farm in Walden. Since they began farming in 2010, they have:

- transitioned to organic production
- conserved their land with Vermont Land Trust
- navigated the hurdles of aging infrastructure.

After completing the program, they applied for a \$10,000 implementation grant to build an addition on their barn, covered laneway and an automatic grain feeder.

Vermont Farm & Forest Viability Program

Water Quality Grants

- Support lasting on-farm investments in water quality improvements
- FY22 Awards totaled \$601,368
- These awards leveraged at least \$3,206,952 from farmer, state and federal funds.

*Ben, Nancy & Helm Notterman, Snug Valley Farm, Hardwick
(\$40,000 Water Quality Grant for winter bedded pack
hog housing)*





Jen & Jesse Lambert, Lambert Farm, Barre (\$10,000 Implementation Grant for Wastewater Infrastructure)



Wastewater from Lambert Farm's bulk tank and milk house was draining into an old pipe which discharged the untreated wastewater onto a downward sloping field. This contaminated a stream below as well as impairing the quality of the pasture.

In 2018, they received a \$10,000 VHCB Water Quality Grant to re-route the wastewater into their existing manure and wastewater storage, eliminating untreated runoff from the milkhouse.

This project also allowed the Lamberts to purchase a new, more efficient bulk milk tank to better accommodate Organic Valley's pick up schedule.

Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI)

- Assists small towns, businesses, and organizations with accessing critical funding for economic development projects
- Focused on working lands, outdoor recreation, and community-based economic development
- *Since 2017, \$525,000 in REDI funds has helped secure more than \$10M in grants for businesses & communities*



*Sheila Patinkin, Vermont Wagyu, Springfield
(Leveraged a \$250,000 USDA Grant through REDI)*

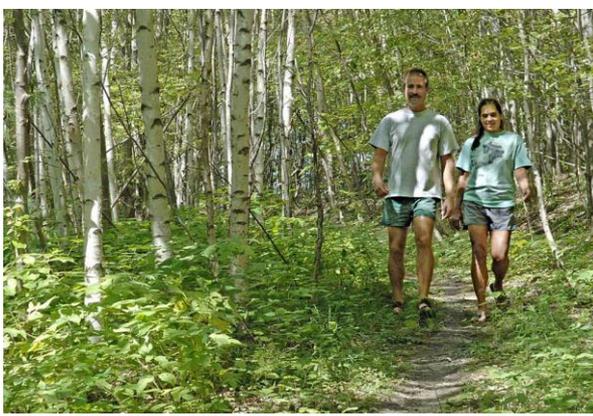


The Recreation Area on the Hoosic River, Pownal Trails Association/Empower Pownal (\$24,000 leveraged through REDI)

The Pownal Trails Association and Empower Pownal were formed out of a community visit process with the Vermont Council on Rural Development.

These groups collaborated to redevelop a former brownfield site into an outdoor recreation location with trails, parking and river access.

The REDI Program helped them secure a \$24,000 grant from the Recreation Trails Program.



High Pond, Pittsford



Bellows Falls Garage,
Bellows Falls



Clemmons Family
Farm, Charlotte

Future Pipeline

Housing, Conservation & Historic Preservation

- \$185 million for more than 2,000 rental housing developments, homeownership and accessibility
- Agricultural and natural resources projects in the near term exceed \$30 million in requests to conserve over 43,000 acres including 56 farms.



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Monument View Apartments, Bennington