

Better Backroads Program

Highway Division, Municipal Assistance Bureau -

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Better Backroads

Support projects on roads that improve water quality and result in maintenance cost savings.

Goal is to promote the use of erosion control and maintenance techniques that save money while protecting and enhancing Vermont's lakes and streams. Assist communities through technical assistance and grant opportunities.

Two types of grants:

- Category A – Road Erosion Inventory and Capital Budget Planning
- Category B – Correction of a Road Related Erosion Problem
 - Example projects: rock lined ditches, stabilized banks, culvert headers, road drainage, turnouts, “Daylighted” culverts, Velocity reducers, Diversion berms, Energy dissipaters and stream bank stabilization

Current Funding Levels

\$440,000 Transportation Funds

\$30,000 through Interagency Transfer from ANR

What did this fund last year?

Transportation Funds

23 Category A inventory/ prioritization/ capital planning grants

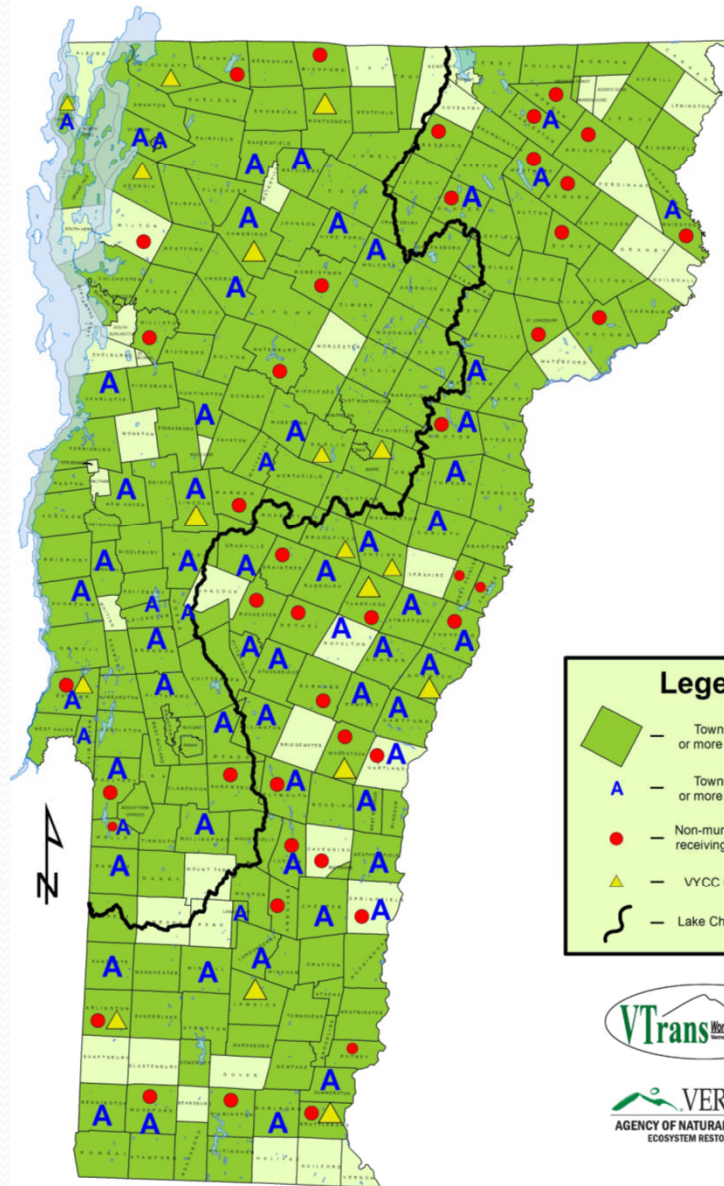
41 Category B implementation grants

Interagency Transfer






1 Category A inventory/ prioritization/ capital planning grant

3 Category B implementation grants

Better Backroads Grant Recipient Towns & Organizations 1997 - 2015



Legend

-  — Towns receiving one or more Category B grants
-  — Towns receiving one or more Category A grants
-  — Non-municipal organizations receiving one or more grants
-  — VVCC Crew Project Sites
-  — Lake Champlain Watershed





How important are the Category A Grants for the future?

We think they are very important and critical in helping communities prepare for the Municipal Highway General Permit. Since SFY12 – and the impacts of Tropical Storm Irene – 49 Category A grants have been funded.

New prioritization model is being developed through ANR. It is our intention that future Category A grants will utilize this methodology.

SAFETEA-LU Earmark Funds – small amount of federal funds still available. Intend to grant to the RPCs so that they might help more municipalities with Category A grants. Should fund approximately 37 of these planning projects. These funds will supplement the proposed program funding for SFY16.



Implementation Grants

Small investments can provide great returns.

However, small investments – maximum of \$10,000 grants – can limit the ability of municipalities to complete some larger scale projects that can impact water quality.

Program continues to weigh grant sizes and the ability to distribute funding to many municipalities against the benefits of funding fewer but larger projects with available funding. Additional funding from the Clean Water Initiative could allow for some larger and targeted projects to be completed and assist municipalities with complying with stormwater permitting.

Following are some examples of modest investments that have clearly improved conditions....

Arlington



Example of Before and After



Glover



And More Before and After





More than just grants....

In calendar year 2013 (started mid summer when program came to VTrans) technical assistance was provided to approximately 30 towns. Many return visits during or after construction completed.

In calendar year 2014 technical assistance was provided to approximately 55 towns. Also many return visits.

Vermont Better Backroads Manual and Pocket Guide.

Training/ Workshops in coordination with Vermont Local Roads.

Will more be needed? Yes. It is anticipated that municipalities will need additional outreach, education and technical assistance.



Coordination Efforts

ANR – Program details/ parameters jointly developed with staff from ANR. Project selections made jointly as well.

Environmental and Maintenance and Operations Staff – Coordination ongoing with technical experts in these units. Also involved with developing program parameters and project selections.

Vermont Local Roads - Ongoing collaboration on municipal training needs and technical assistance.

All of these collaborative efforts will need to continue and be enhanced.



Questions?