

VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

PILOT PROGRAM INFORMATION

What is it?

The Vermont Environmental Stewardship Program is new program that encourages agricultural producers to achieve environmental excellence. Farmers work with conservation planners and technical service providers to set environmental goals for their farm that go above and beyond any state and federal requirements, and are tailor fit to their farm. The focus of this program is to improve on-farm soil health, implement feed management on farms and achieve a net-zero nutrient balance, and apply whole-farm conservation planning to achieve environmental stewardship.

Why should I participate?

Farmers should participate to demonstrate to their communities that they are excellent stewards of their land. Participants will receive increased financial and technical assistance for implementing conservation practices. Participants that become verified will received on-farm signs, program apparel, and program decals for their equipment. Participants will also receive Cornell soil health tests for all of their fields. Verified program participants will be documented environmental stewards, and will have the science to back them up.

Where is this program being piloted?

This program will be available to farmers on a statewide basis. For the first year, we will be accepting 5 to 10 farms into pilot program. Applicants will be selected for participation through a competitive application ranking process.

How do I qualify for this program?

Agricultural producers wishing to apply to this program will need to, at a minimum, be in compliance with all State and Federal environmental regulations, and be actively farming their land.

How will my farm be assessed and verified?

Program participants will have their farm assessed by a technical service professional. These professionals will utilize the USDA-NRCS Resource Stewardship Evaluation Tools, Cornell Soil Health Assessment, and the VT APEX model to assess the baseline environmental impact of the applicant's farm. Depending on the assessment results, participants will then put together an implementation plan and timeline that will achieve "green" index ratings across all assessment tools. Participants will be assessed as they implement practices to achieve verification. Once their technical professional has

documented that the farm is meeting their standards, the farm will be verified by a 3rd party, and will then be considered a "verified" participant.

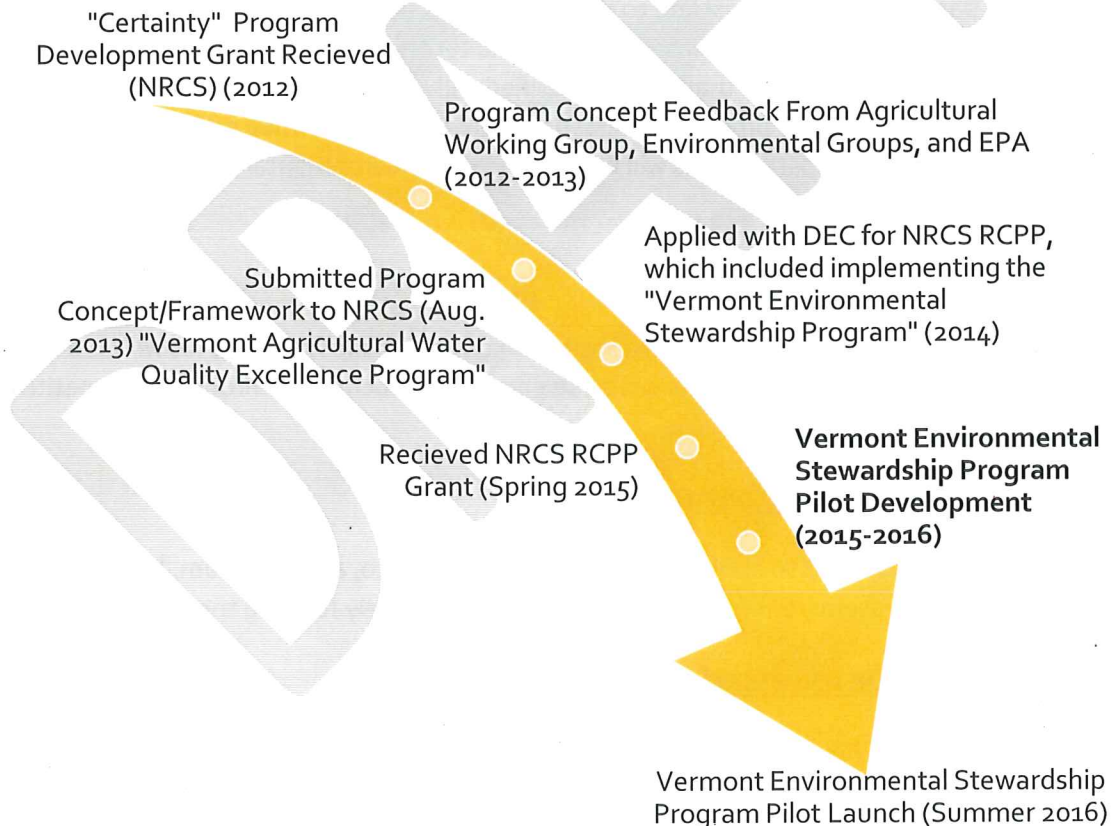
How long does program verification last?

Program verification lasts for 5 years, and participant have the opportunity to recertify before their certification expires.

How do I apply?

Coming soon (insert link to landing website and accompany document with a single page application form).

Program Development Timeline





United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Resource Stewardship Evaluation

Operation:
Operator:
Site ID:

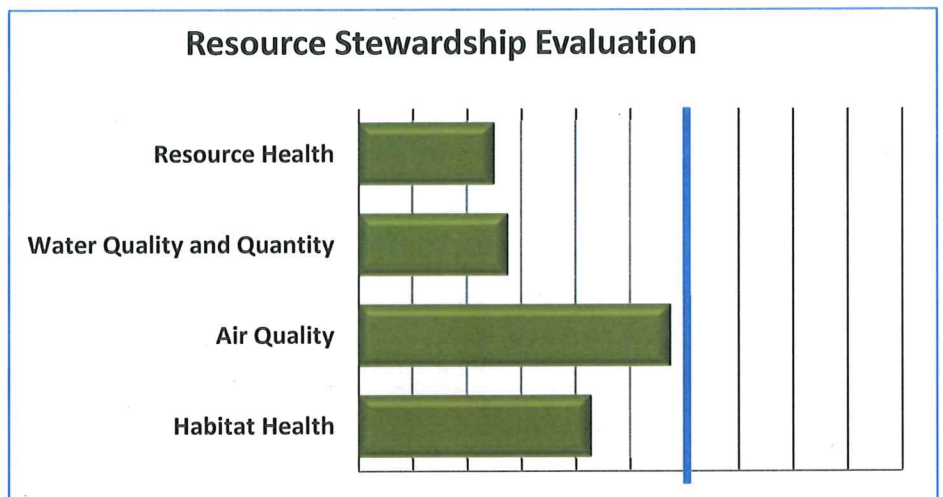
State:
County:
Contact:

Farm #
Tract #

Land Use: **Cropland**
Assessor:
Date:

Contact:

Assessments	Completed
RUSLE2	Yes
WEPS	N/A
STEP	Yes
COMET	Yes
Wildlife (Cropland)	Yes
Stream Evaluation	N/A
Prescribed Grazing Plan	N/A

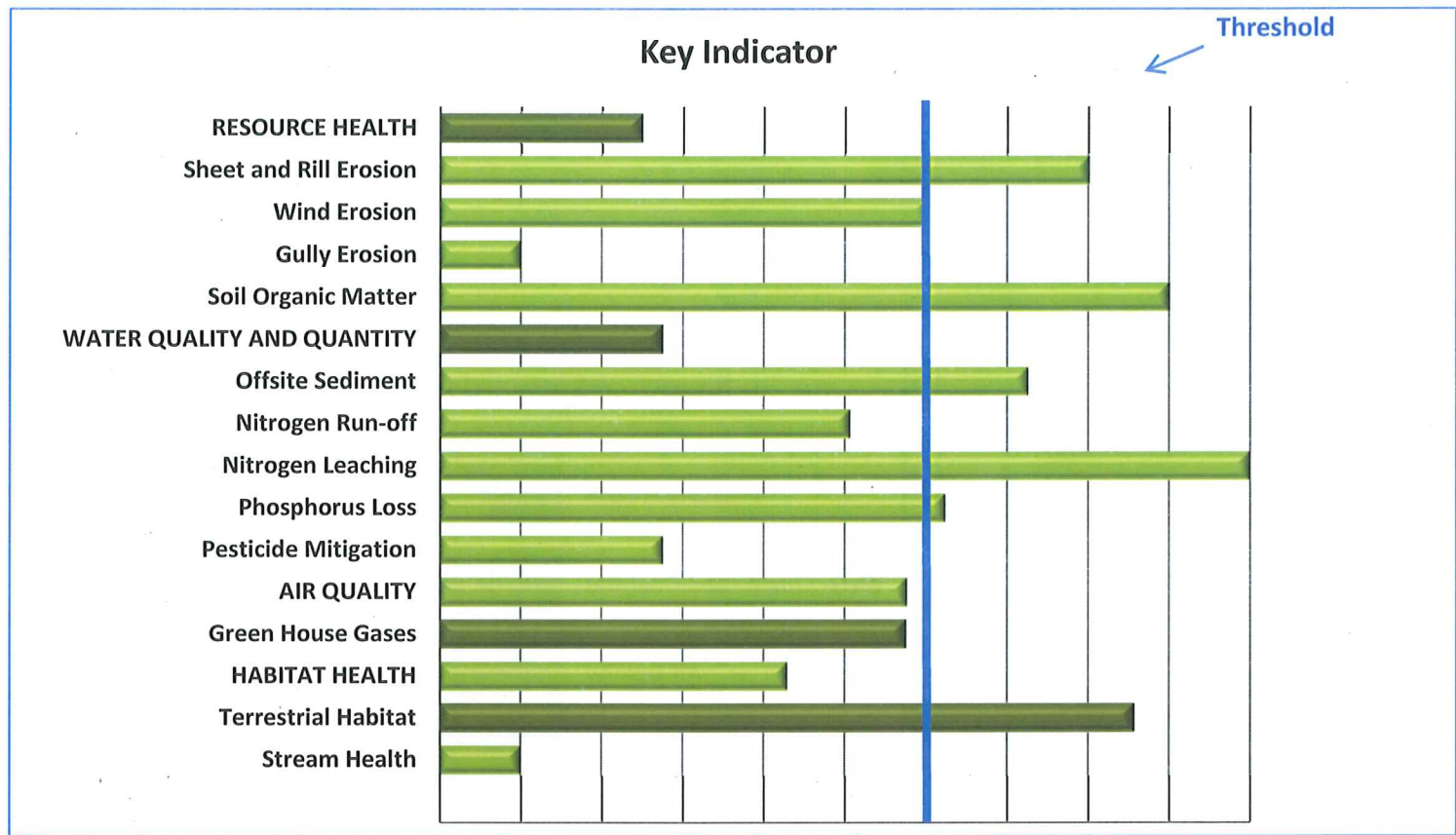


Insert Site Map Here

Insert Representative
Image Here

Resource Stewardship Evaluation

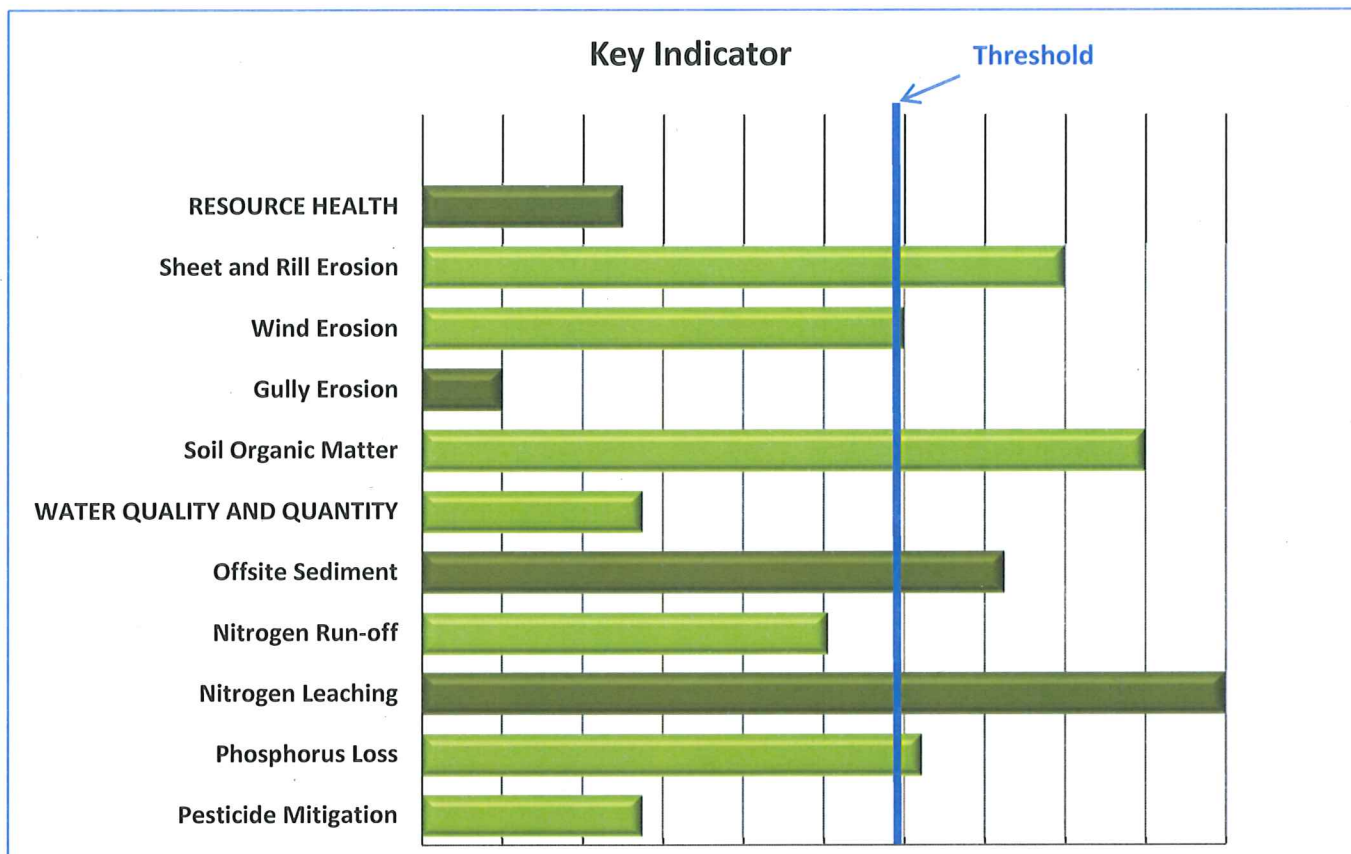
Cropland Results



Indicator	Assessment Method	Result	Threshold	Notes
RESOURCE HEALTH				
Sheet and Rill Erosion	RUSLE2	1	2	
Wind Erosion	WEPS	5	5	
Gully Erosion	Gully Erosion	Fail	Pass	
Soil Organic Matter	RULSE2 (SCI)	0.6	0	
WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY				
Offsite Sediment	STEP Sediment	50	40	
Nitrogen Run-off	STEP Nitrogen Run-off	53	65	
Nitrogen Leaching	STEP Nitrogen Leaching	55	30	
Phosphorus Loss	STEP Phosphorus	63	60	
Pesticide Mitigation	STEP Pesticide	35	100	
AIR QUALITY				
Green House Gases	COMET	0.484848	0	
HABITAT HEALTH				
Terrestrial Habitat	National Wildlife Guide	0.76	0.50	
Stream Health	National Stream Guide	0.00	0.50	

Resource Stewardship Assessment

Grazing Land Results



Indicator	Assessment Method	Result	Threshold	Notes
RESOURCE HEALTH				
Sheet and Rill Erosion	RUSLE2	1	2	
Wind Erosion	WEPS	5	5	
Gully Erosion	Gully Erosion	Fail	Pass	
Soil Organic Matter	RULSE2 (SCI)	0.6	0	
WATER QUALITY AND QUANTITY				
Offsite Sediment	STEP Sediment	50	40	
Nitrogen Run-off	STEP Nitrogen Run-off	52.75	65	
Nitrogen Leaching	STEP Nitrogen Leaching	55	30	
Phosphorus Loss	STEP Phosphorus	62.75	60	
Pesticide Mitigation	STEP Pesticide	35.00	100	
AIR QUALITY				
Green House Gases	COMET	0.484848	0	
HABITAT HEALTH				
Terrestrial Habitat	National Wildlife Guide	0.76	0.50	
Stream Health	National Stream Guide	0.00	0.50	

Cornell Soil Health Assessment

Jane Grower
Main St
Yourtown, NY, 12345
Agricultural Service Provider:
Schindelbeck, Bob
Ag Services
rrs3@cornell.edu

Sample ID: M_1
Field/Treatment: Veg field
Tillage: No Till
Crops Crown: COG, COG
Date Sampled: 3/2/2015
Given Soil Type: Lima
Given Soil Texture: Silt Loam
Coordinates: Coordinates Not Provided

Measured Soil Textural Class: Sandy Loam

Sand: 65% Silt: 26% Clay: 9%

Test Results

Indicator		Value	Rating	Constraint
Physical	Available Water Capacity	0.14	53	
	Surface Hardness	240	22	Rooting, Water Transmission
	Subsurface Hardness	310	53	
	Aggregate Stability	56.6	47	
Biological	Organic Matter	3.3	55	
	ACE Soil Protein Index	5.8	25	Organic Matter Quality, Organic N Storage, N Mineralization
	Respiration	0.37	26	Soil Microbial Abundance and Activity
	Active Carbon	366	28	Energy Source for Soil Biota
Chemical	pH	6.9	100	
	Phosphorus	7.5	100	
	Potassium	65.3	91	
	Minor Elements Mg: 213 Fe: 13.7 Mn: 7.8 Zn: 1.4		100	

Overall Quality Score

58

Medium

