

Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Districts

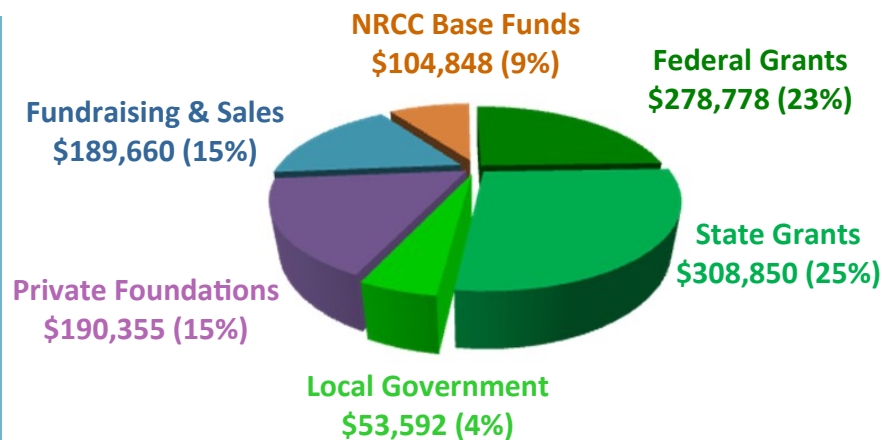
Sources of Income – FY 2014

In Fiscal Year 2014, Vermont's 14 Natural Resources Conservation Districts utilized \$104,848 in base funding from the State of Vermont through the Natural Resources Conservation Council. Districts raised an additional \$1,021,235 in funding from public and private sources to implement vital conservation programs throughout the state, for a total of \$1,126,083. Conservation Districts developed partnerships with, and received funding support from, a wide range of organizations. District income was well diversified, as shown in the chart and table below.



For every dollar in base funding provided by the Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Council, Conservation Districts raised an additional ten dollars.

Vermont NRCDC Sources of Income - FY2014		
NRCC Base Funds	9%	104,848
Federal Agency Grants	23%	278,778
State of Vermont Grants	25%	308,850
Local Government	4%	53,592
Private Foundations	15%	190,355
Fundraising & Sales	15%	189,660
Total	100%	\$1,126,083



Vermont Association of Conservation Districts (VACD) is the non-profit organization of Vermont's fourteen Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCDCs). Each District educates and assists landowners and local stakeholders to address their natural resource needs. Districts network with local, state, and federal agencies to secure funds and implement strategies that protect soil and water quality. VACD promotes natural resource conservation by providing services to districts and implementing state-wide conservation programs.

Focus of Conservation District Projects

- Agricultural Practices**
Improving farm viability while protecting soil & water quality
- Watershed Stewardship**
Protecting, restoring, and enhancing our water resources
- Stormwater Mitigation**
Greening of communities through improved development
- Sustainable Forestry**
Promoting responsible use of working woodlands
- Education and Outreach**
Empowering land stewards with knowledge and expertise

VT District Report FY2014



In 2014 Districts raised \$10 for every \$1 of base funds provided by the Vermont State Natural Resources Conservation Council.

Vermont Natural Resources Conservation District Partners

- VT Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
- VT Department of Environmental Conservation
- VT Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Forest Service
- Lake Champlain Basin Program
- Lake Champlain Sea Grant
- Vermont Community Foundation
- New Hampshire Charitable Foundation
- Green Mountain Coffee Roasters
- Ben and Jerry's Foundation
- Wellborn Ecology Fund
- University of Vermont Extension
- Municipalities and Businesses
- Regional Planning Commissions
- Conservation Commissions
- Watershed Associations
- Fishing and Hunting Clubs
- Agricultural Producer Cooperatives
- Land Trust Organizations

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Natural Resources Conservation Districts were created throughout the United States in response to the Dust Bowl in the late 1930s, with the purpose of helping farmers and landowners to improve soil and water quality. Vermont's Soil Conservation Act of 1939 states that "the lands, water, forests and wildlife of the state of Vermont are among the basic assets of the state, and that the preservation of these lands, water, forests and wildlife by conservation, development and use is necessary to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of its people." The first Vermont Conservation District was established in 1940, and since then districts have grown into strong dynamic organizations. Long-standing relationships with landowners and state and federal agencies allow districts to find solutions to natural resource issues in partnerships that are unique and successful.

Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Districts Project Highlights and Results 2014



Agricultural Practices

Improving Farm Operations while Protecting Soil and Water Quality

Conservation Districts educate agricultural producers regarding Vermont's Accepted Agricultural Practices and Best Management Practices. District's help identify expertise and financing to address natural resource concerns on the farm, with support from State and USDA Farm Bill Programs. Assessments and planning for nutrient management, land treatment, and environmental management are completed to insure the economic viability of farms.

- ◆ Agricultural Outreach Initiative
- ◆ Livestock Exclusion Projects
- ◆ Agronomy and Conservation Assistance
- ◆ Aeration/No Till Drill Equipment Rental
- ◆ Farmers Market Capacity Building
- ◆ Agriculture & Water Quality Workshops

Participating Farms	BMPs Implemented	Agronomic Practices/Acres	Livestock Exclusion Linear Feet	Agricultural Buffer Planting Acres	Agricultural Buffer Planting Stems
150	21	4,086	13,740	21.71	4,638



Watershed Stewardship

Protecting, Restoring, and Enhancing Our Water Resources

To protect and improve Vermont's waterways and watersheds, Conservation Districts complete a wide range of activities to assess, plan, coordinate, and monitor the quality of water to ensure healthy environments for human activity and wildlife diversity. NRCDs create and/or utilize water quality data to prioritize and implement restoration and protections to improve Vermont's surface water resources.

- ◆ Lake Champlain Algae Monitoring
- ◆ Culvert/Aquatic Organism Passage Assessments
- ◆ Flood Resiliency Programs
- ◆ LaRosa Water Quality Monitoring
- ◆ Watershed Project Prioritization Projects
- ◆ Stream Team Clean Ups

Watershed Projects	Land Owners	Community Partners	Buffer Acres	Buffer Linear Feet	Stems Planted
47	125	40	24.92	19,061	8,997

Stormwater Mitigation

Greening Our Communities through Improved Development

As the landscape changes, Conservation Districts work to ensure that Vermont communities are clean, healthy, and vibrant. Stormwater mapping and management plans allow NRCDs to educate, coordinate, and implement Low Impact Development (LID) practices for homeowners, businesses, road crews and municipalities to strengthen the community's flood resiliency.

- ◆ Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination Study
- ◆ Stormwater Mapping & Master Planning
- ◆ Stormwater Improvement/Retro Installments
- ◆ Better Backroads Projects
- ◆ Hydroseeder/Vactor Municipal Co-ops
- ◆ Pollution Prevention Programs

Stormwater Projects	Landowners	Community Partners	Acres Impervious Surfaces Removed
30	63	44	2.92



Education and Outreach

Empowering Land Stewards with Knowledge and Expertise

Conservation Districts involve students, landowners, businesses, and municipalities in a variety of educational and service-learning opportunities ranging from in-school presentations to county-wide field day events. A major focus of NRCDs is to provide education and outreach through informal learning activities for future land stewards. Competition; Conservation Field Days and Farm Field Days; Festivals, fairs, farm and forest tours.

Participants	Workshops	Community Partners
15,956	123	83

- ◆ River and Roads Demonstrations
- ◆ Conservation Camps and Field Days
- ◆ Professional Development
- ◆ Service Learning Programs for Youth
- ◆ In-Classroom Presentations & Curriculum
- ◆ Webinars & Field Demonstrations

Sustainable Forestry

Promoting Responsible Use of Working Woodlands

A healthy forest supports a vibrant forest economy. Conservation Districts support a healthy working landscape and assist the stewards of the forest to maintain their livelihood. By investing in the working lands, NRCDs are able to protect and restore native species and their habitats while promoting sustainable land management practices.

- ◆ Portable Skidder Bridge Rental Program
- ◆ Native Plant Restoration Nurseries
- ◆ Logging Presentations
- ◆ Emerald Ash Borer Response Planning

Skidder Bridge Rentals	Land Owners
29	39



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Mike Raboin, and Paul Wagner

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Laura DiPietro, VTAAF&M
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Vicky Drew, NRCS
Jill Arace, VACD



Vermont Association of Conservation Districts



conserving
natural resources
for our future

www.vacd.org

State Natural Resources Conservation Council

An Agency of State Government, Serving Vermont's 14 Natural Resources Conservation Districts

FY2016 Budget Proposal

Proposed

Item	FY2013	FY2014	FY2015	FY2016	FY2015 Deliverables
Base Allocation to Conservation Districts	101500	101,500	112,000	112,000	\$8000 per Conservation District with Performance Measures which include *Previous Year Quantified Project Results and Reporting *Previous Year Financial Report,Sources and Leveraged Funds *District Natural Resource Assessments, Conservation Needs *District Performance Assessments & Capacity Building Plans
District Capacity Building Support Funds			42,000*	28,000	District Capacity Building mini-grants; NRCC Capacity Building Subcommittee; Reviews of Districts' Performance & Natural Resource Assessments; Targeted training opportunities and technical assistance for implementation of District Capacity Building Plans *Includes an additional \$14,000 Matching Funds committed from NRCS in FY2015
District Manager Training & Professional Development	5000	5000	5,000	5,000	District Manager statewide meetings, communications, and trainings
Supervisor Training and Support	1500	1500	2,500	2,500	Supervisor activities at state and local levels; Reimbursements for NRCC meetings and subcommittees; Statewide trainings, Local elections
NRCC Management and Administration	4000	4000	8,000	8,000	Oversight of all NRCD sub-agreements and finances; Guidance on Elections Processes; Administration of NRCC meetings; Oversight of Districts' Performance Measures; Legislative and statewide partners meetings; Reporting to VTAAF&M
Agricultural Outreach Initiative	100,000	100,000	0	0**	Targeted AAP education and outreach program for small farms; Soil & manure sampling training and incentives; Support for farms' enrollment in Nutrient Management Classes held by UVM Extension **FY2016 Funding from RCPP secured to continue this program in Lake Champlain Basin
TOTAL	212,000	212,000	169,500	155,500	

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Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Districts Performance Indicators

Roles and Responsibilities as mandated in Vermont Statute

Title 10: Conservation and Development, Chapter 31: Soil Conservation Act

Format:

Role/Responsibility

Performance Indicators

1. ASSESS Natural Resource Needs and UNDERSTAND Landowner Concerns

- 1.1. *District assesses natural resource needs and identifies local priorities.*
- 1.2. *District solicits landowner input through Local Work Groups and other events.*
- 1.3. *Expertise of Supervisors and Staff enable district to assess needs and set priorities.*

2. REPRESENT Landowner Concerns

- 2.1. *District represents landowner concerns in discussion with Vermont Legislators and other policy makers and program managers.*

3. INFORM and EDUCATE the Public

- 3.1. *District informs the public about natural resource assets, needs, programs and opportunities to participate in addressing natural resource concerns.*

4. IMPLEMENT Projects

- 4.1. *District implements projects to address natural resource concerns. (See measures over.)*

5. Optimize PARTNERSHIPS

- 5.1. *District expands reach and impact by working closely with other local, state and federal entities.*

6. Establish and Implement REGULATIONS

- 6.1. *District utilizes regulatory authority to address natural resource priorities.*

7. FUNDRAISE and MANAGE District

- 7.1. *District solicits financial support to address natural resource priorities.*
- 7.2. *District operations support fulfillment of the district's mission and conform to legal requirements and best practices.*

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Project Results Performance Measurements: *The following items are included in the Conservation District base funding reporting template.*

Agricultural Programs	Stormwater Programs	Watershed Programs	Forestry Programs	Education & Outreach
# and Title of Agricultural Programs # of Farm Visits # of Soils Samples Taken # of Well Water Samples Taken # of Acres of Conservation Tillage # of Acres Aeration/Manure Injection # of Acres Cover Cropping # of Linear Feet Livestock Exclusion Fencing # of stream Linear ft buffer planting on Ag land # of Acres buffer planting on Ag land # of stems planted # of Agricultural Dam Permits issued # of Referrals to Other Programs # of Best Management Practices Designed # of Best Management Practices Installed	# and Title of Stormwater Programs # if Stormwater Projects and Programs' # of Landowners work with # of Towns worked with # of Small Raingarden Projects installed # of Rainbarrels Distributed # of Hydroseeder Participants # of Stormwater Practices Installed # of Acres Drainage Area Treated by installed BMPs # & type of Stormwater Assessments # and type of Backroad BMPs installed	# & Title of Watershed Programs # of Landowners worked with # of Towns worked with # of Stream Geomorphic Assessments funded or completed # of Corridor Plans Produces # of Acres Buffer Planting on non-Ag land # of stream linear ft buffers on non-Ag # of stems planted # of acres invasive species removal/treatment in Riparian areas # of culverts replaced/retrofit # of culverts designed # of culverts assessed (ANR protocol) # of linear ft berm removed # of River corridor easements identified/referred # & location of water quality monitoring # of stream clean-up events	# & title of Forestry Programs # of Landowners worked with # of Portable Skidder Bridges owned # of Portable Skidder Bridge rentals/year # of acres woodland invasive species treated/removed # of nurseries operated by District # of stems sold at Plant Sale	# of Workshop coordinated # of Outreach Events # of Trainings coordinated List of outreach topics # of training hours provided # of program participants Demographic of Program Participants # of schools worked with # of internships offered # of scholarships/camperships # of education materials, brochures, newsletters produced Website Updates