



# Vermont Association of Conservation Districts

*Our Land. Our Water. Our Future.*

TO: Vermont House Committee on Environment & Energy  
FROM: Vermont Association of Conservation Districts  
RE: FY24 Budget  
DATE: Tuesday, February 28, 2023

Dear Chair Sheldon,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in front of the House Committee on Environment & Energy on Wednesday, February 22. Vermont's 14 Natural Resources Conservation Districts respectfully submit this memo as follow-up to questions we were asked in your Committee regarding our [FY24 Budget Request](#). As your Committee works on its budget memo to the House Appropriations Committee, we hope you will support including the full request of a \$3,000,000 base appropriation to the Natural Resources Conservation Council's line item within the Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets' budget. This funding is critical for Vermont's Conservation Districts to carry out our statutory obligations of protecting natural resources in the state of Vermont.

Below is information to help answer questions that came up during our testimony. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or requests for further information.

## **Subdivision of Government Status and Elected Leadership**

Vermont's 14 Natural Resources Conservation Districts are subdivisions of state government that were established by landowners through the petitioning process laid out in the [Soil Conservation Act](#) as a response to the Dust Bowl in the 1930s. Conservation Districts operate under the authority of the Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC) which is a designated "agency of the state" under 10 V.S.A. § 703. NRCC was established "to provide for the conservation, development, and use of the natural resources of this State" in a way that "protects and promotes the health, safety, and general welfare of its people." Each District has a Board of Supervisors who are all local residents elected by the public to that position. There are over 3000 Conservation Districts in the United States, and we have a historical partnership with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

## **Conservations Districts' Role in Achieving State Natural Resources Conservation Goals**

Conservation District staff members are non-regulatory government employees who live in the communities they serve. Our uniqueness lies in the neighbor-to-neighbor relationships we have with the landowners, land users and community members we provide services to. We are often the liaison that works directly with land stewards to identify and apply to the programs and grants that best meet their needs to implement conservation practices on their land. These programs and grants are often administered by the Agency of Agriculture, Food, & Markets, the Agency of Natural Resources, UVM Extension, the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, and others; Conservation Districts act as local outreach and implementers. Below are just a few examples of this work:

- **Pay for Performance Program** - Conservation Districts have a contract with VAAFM to implement the new Pay for Performance program at the local level, which is a natural continuation of our role of connecting the farmers in our communities to opportunities to reduce phosphorus.
- **Stormwater** - Many of Vermont's Conservation Districts are stormwater project implementers. We use Stormwater Master Plans and our relationships with municipalities to help advance water quality initiatives in stormwater. Many Conservation Districts hold community forums to gather public input on town stormwater projects.

- **Vermont Agricultural Water Quality Partnership** - the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts and all 14 Natural Resources Conservation Districts are part of the [Vermont Agricultural Water Quality Partnership](#), which is a formal partnership with an MOU signed between ourselves, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency, US Fish & Wildlife Service, UVM Extension, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets, the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board, and the Lake Champlain Basin Program. That partnership has a framework at the state level and local level to collaborate and coordinate efforts, and Conservation Districts hold that framework at the local level as regional coordinators.
- **Community Engagement** - Vermont's Conservation Districts represent community members and landowners in advising government agencies in the development of natural resources programs and policies through Local Work Groups. For example, the White River Conservation District is currently facilitating farmer-led Work Groups to inform the policies being developed around Payment for Ecosystem Services. Other Districts hold community forums to gather public input on all types of natural resources concerns and projects.

### Other Core Services of Vermont's Natural Resources Conservation Districts

Vermont's 14 Conservation Districts fill different niches in different parts of the state. Our uniqueness lies in our structural model - we exist everywhere in Vermont, regardless of community resources, providing continuity and access across all regions. We provide a wide range of services to communities and work directly with landowners to implement water quality and conservation projects on the ground. It is important to note that Conservation Districts are program implementers - we are the boots on the ground taking soil samples, transporting manure samples, planting trees, planning nutrient applications, finding new projects, etc. Some niches that we fill include:

- **Technical Assistance & Program Navigation to the Agricultural Community** - We provide a wide range of services to farm businesses - our focus is not entirely on business and financial planning which is often the sole focus of other service providers. When working with a farm or landowner, we are primarily focused on the sustainability of that land and the health of the local ecosystem. We sample soils, collect and transport manure samples, remind folks about regulatory requirements, and help with Nutrient Management Planning.
- **Tree Plantings to Strengthen and Protect Riparian Corridors** - Many Conservation Districts conduct tree planting operations to protect riparian corridors within their Districts. Riparian corridors are critical habitats for preventing soil erosion and protecting against flooding, and the trees and shrubs planted will make the riverbeds in these three towns more resilient to adverse climate impacts.
- **Invasive Species** - Multiple Districts are working with the USDA-NRCS developing local funding pools to initiate grants to landowners to eradicate invasive species on their properties.
- **Energy Conservation** - In 2023, the Orange and Windsor County Local Working Group, chaired by the White River NRCD, launched a \$30,000 local fund pool to conduct farm energy audits, via the NRCS EQIP program. Next year this funding pool may expand to include energy improvement implementation funding.
- **River, Floodplain, and Lakeshore Restoration Projects** - Conservation Districts implement a wide range of river, floodplain, and lakeshore restoration projects such as culvert replacements, bridge and dam removals, gully erosion mitigation, and lakeshore bioengineering. These projects are often coupled with woody buffer plantings.
- **Stormwater Runoff Projects** - District stormwater projects range from small rain gardens and school-parking lots to road improvements and major downtown remediation projects. Caledonia County Conservation District designed and implemented a \$456,000 stormwater project on North Main Street in downtown Hardwick that treated 31 acres of stormwater drainage with 9.3 acres of impervious surface. The system included underground pre-treatment units and underground infiltration units to store and infiltrate stormwater prior to discharge to the Lamoille River.
- **Community Outreach and Engagement** - Tactical Basin Planning workshops and outreach to assist DEC Tactical Basin Planners engage with the public as they develop watershed-wide water quality plans
- **Regional Water Quality** - Conservation Districts work in their local watersheds to improve local water quality. Most Districts serve on Basin Water Quality Councils, often serving as either Chair or Vice Chair of these Councils. The Poultney Mettowee Natural Resources Conservation District serves in partnership with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission as that region's Clean Water Service Provider. 10 Conservation Districts provide Lake Wise evaluations that lead to Lake Wise certification.

Please see the table in Appendix A to see which Districts offer which conservation programs.

### **Governor Scott's FY24 Budget vs. Our Funding Request**

Sec. B.225.2 of the Governor's recommended FY24 Budget includes a base appropriation of \$362,000 in state general funds to NRCC to be dispersed to Vermont's 14 Conservation Districts. This results in approximately \$20,000 per District with the remaining funds staying at NRCC for oversight and capacity building.

### **Background on State Funding for Vermont's Natural Resources Conservation Council**

Prior to last year, NRCC had been level funded at \$112,000 for over a decade. This resulted in systemic and consistent underfunding of Vermont's Natural Resources Conservation Districts, which led to our current budgetary situation of each District writing and managing many different grants just to sustain operations and programming. This funding model has been unsustainable and led to high staff turnover and burnout, reducing our capacity to meet our statutory obligations and expand conservation programming and implementation. Prior to the 2022 Legislative Session, VACD led a process of asking each District what they needed in order to continue operations in a more sustainable manner. That process led to our first specific request for increased base funding from the state last year, and we were successful in securing an additional \$250,000 in base funding which is represented in the Governor's FY24 Budget.

### **Request for \$3,000,000 Base Appropriation in FY24**

While we acknowledge that the increase from \$362,000 to \$3,000,000 is significant, it represents real need. Because District activities are currently limited to the purposes of the various grants we piecemeal together, it has been a challenge to expand our services and programs to meet the increased demand that we are experiencing as a direct result of state policy and goals. With a \$3,000,000 base appropriation, District Managers could spend less time managing grants and more time implementing projects on the ground, which is where their expertise lies. We currently have the capacity to expand our work in protecting natural resources and promoting climate resiliency across the state and need additional funding to do so. You can see estimates for each category of funding included in this request in our [FY24 Budget Request](#).

**The \$3,000,000 requested would not replace the majority of grants Districts currently receive to implement projects on the ground.** This funding would allow Conservation Districts and the NRCC to retain and recruit skilled staff, engage with their communities in a more meaningful way, provide the state mandated \$50 per diem to all Board members, make necessary facility upgrades, and build capacity. This funding is for management and administration, needs assessments, and community outreach and engagement, which is critical for successful operations and difficult to fund with project-based grant funding. In many states, Conservation Districts are funded through county government or property transfer taxes. We do not have these systems in place in Vermont, so we are relying on state funding as our primary avenue, which is the NRCC line within VAAFMs budget.

Sincerely,



Executive Director, Vermont Association of Conservation Districts  
[jill.arace@vacd.org](mailto:jill.arace@vacd.org) | (802) 496-5162 | [www.vacd.org](http://www.vacd.org) | [2022 Annual Report](#)

## APPENDIX A – VERMONT NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION DISTRICTS PROGRAM ACTIVITIES 2023

Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Districts Program Activities 2023		Bennington County NRCD	Caledonia County NRCD	Essex County NRCD	Franklin County NRCD	Grand Isle NRCD	Lamoille County NRCD	Orleans County NRCD	Ottawa County NRCD	Otter Creek NRCD	Poultney Mettowee NRCD	Rutland NRCD	White River NRCD	Windham County NRCD	Winooski NRCD	
		X = District offers this service O = A nearby District offers this service in this region														
Natural Resources Conservation & Restoration	Conduct Local Need Assessments				X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
	Draft Conservation Action Plans						X	X					X	X		
	Assist DEC's Tactical Basin Planning Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Tree Planting (Private Land)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Tree Planting (Public Land)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
	Tree Sales			X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	
	River Clean Up						X	X	X						O	X
	Invasive Species Removal/Management	X		X			X	X		X	X			X	X	X
	Aquatic Nuisance Control Grant Facilitation						X						X	X		
	Water Quality Sampling (LaRosa)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X				O	X
	Water Quality Sampling (Private Land)				X		X		X	X					O	
	Lake Clean Water Action Committees						X				X		X			
	Lake Watershed Action Plans			X		X	X	X					X	X	X	
	Lake Wise Shoreline Evaluations	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X			X	X	X
	Shoreline Protection & Restoration Projects	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X			X	X	
	Recreational Access	X					X		X		X					X
	Stream Restoration Projects	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
	Dam Removal Projects	X	X		X		X					X	X	X	X	X
	Support River Corridor Easements						X								X	
	Wetland Outreach and Site Identification			X	X	X		X						X		
Forest and Woodlot Programs	X		X	X			X		X				X	X		
Skidder Bridge Rental			X			X	X			O	X			X		
Serve on Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X				X	
Chair or Vice Chair BWQC				X	X	X			X							
Serve as Clean Water Service Provider										X					X	
Support Conservation Commission Meetings		X		X	X	X							X	X	X	
Education & Outreach	Educational Programs (Schools)			X	X		X		X	X			X	X	X	
	Educational Programs (Kids)				X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Educational Programs (Adults)	X			X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
	Envirothon Outreach						X	X				X	X	X	X	
	Volunteer Opportunities	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	
	Community Science	X				X	X				X		X	X	X	
	Regional Administrator for Public Access Greeter Programs												X	X		
	Natural Resource Assessments for Towns/Municipalities		X	X					X		X	X	X	X	X	
	Grant Application Assistance for Towns/Municipalities	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Grant Application Assistance for Watershed Groups/Nonprofits								X					X	X		
Stormwater Remediation	Stormwater Projects	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Roads Projects		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			O	X	
	Hazard Mitigation Plan implementation			X			X						X			
Agriculture	Soil & Manure Sampling	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X	
	RAPs Education and Outreach	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	
	Nutrient Management Planning (NMPs)	X	X	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	O	X	X	X	
	Conservation Planning for NRCS implementation		X		X	O	X	X	O				X	X	X	
	Technical Assistance for Ag BMP Implementation	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	O		X	O	X	X	X	
	Technical Assistance for VT Pay for Phosphorus (Performance) Program				X			X		X					X	
	Application/Grant-writing Assistance for Farmers	O	X	X	X	O	X	X	O		X	O	X	X	X	
	Plan Locally-led Funding Pools (NRCS)				X	X	X	X					X	X		
	Technical Assistance for Conservation Easements		X	X	X		X	X	X		X			X	X	
	Coordinate Farm Management Teams							X					X	X		
	Equipment Rental	O		O			X	X			X	O	X	X	X	
	Food Access	X					X						X			
	Serve as Regional Coordinator for VT Ag WQ Partnership	X			X		X	X			X		X		X	
	Chair Local Working Group to Inform NRCS Programs				X	X	X	X	O	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Farmers Watershed Alliance Coordination									X			X			

# APPENDIX B - VERMONT NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION DISTRICTS SOURCES OF INCOME - FY 2022

Bennington County NRCD
<b>FY22 # of Grants Written: 17</b>
<b>TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$86,522</b>
<b>FY22 FTEs: 1</b>
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
VAAFM AgCWIP
DEC Project Development
DEC Design & Implementation
DEC/NRCS Wetlands/Natural Resources O&E
NRCC Trees for Streams (Pur Project)
High Meadows Fund
USFS Batten Kill Watershed Alliance (Anticipated)
Other Anticipated Funding
Donations
Town of Bennington
Town Appropriations
Interest

Caledonia County NRCD
<b>FY22 # of Grants Written: 17</b>
<b>TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$241,403</b>
<b>FY22 FTEs: 1</b>
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
VAAFM AgCWIP
DEC Design & Implementation (Rte 14 Drainage Channel)
DEC Design & Implementation (NVU Gravel Wetland)
DEC Design & Implementation (South Prospect Design)
DEC Design & Implementation (Undercliff Road Gully)
DEC Design & Implementation (North Main Hardwick)
DEC Project Development
USFWS Culverts
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Management Planning
DEC & NRCS Wetlands/Natural Resource E&O
NRCC Administrative Contract
Local Government Hydroseeder Share Program
Miscellaneous Interest

Essex County NRCD
<b>FY22 # of Grants Written: 22</b>
<b>TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$149,899</b>
<b>FY22 FTEs: 1.6</b>
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
VAAFM AgCWIP #1
VAAFM AgCWIP #2
DEC Project Development
DEC Design & Implementation (Town of Concord)
DEC Design & Implementation (Maidstone Lake)
Upper Connecticut Basin Plan
Maidstone Lake (FY19)
Maidstone Lake (FY20 Northwoods for Ron Reed Project)
Canaday Foundation Pre-Proposal (UCCISMA)
LISFF Nitrogen Study
USFWS UCCISMA Cooperative Agreement
DEC & NRCS Wetlands/Natural Resources E&O
NFWF LISFF Wetland Grant
Windham Foundation Grant Nursery Proposed
VAAFM Tile Drain Agreement (OCNRCD)
Conservation Field Day
Town of East Haven REI
Town of Concord REI
Appropriations

Franklin County NRCD
<b>FY22 # of Grants Written: 16</b>
<b>TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$225,807</b>
<b>FY22 FTEs: 2</b>
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
VAAFM AgCWIP
DEC Project Development
DEC Design & Implementation
VTWSR
DEC & NRCS Wetlands/Natural Resources E&O
VAAFM Tile Drains
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Management Planning
NRCC Trees for Streams
LCBP BMPs Dam Removal
LCBP COVID
Contributions
Sales

Grand Isle County NRCD
<b>FY22 # of Grants Written: 7</b>
<b>TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$22,279</b>
<b>FY22 FTEs: 0.2</b>
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
NRCS Capacity Building
Training Reimbursement
Other Grant/Project Income
Event Income
Interest

Lamoille County NRCD
<b>FY22 # of Grants Written: 16</b>
<b>TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$317,650</b>
<b>FY22 FTEs: 2</b>
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services (2019)
VAAFM District Core Services (2020)
DEC Tactical Basin Planning (2020)
DEC Tactical Basin Planning (2019)
VAAFM AgCWIP
DEC Project Development
DEC Design & Implementation (Copley Park)
DEC Design & Implementation (Brewster)
DEC Design & Implementation (Hyde Park)
DEC Design & Implementation (Hyde Park)
NRCC Trees for Streams Project Development
NRCC Trees for Streams Project Development (2)
NRCC Trees for Streams (2020)
NRCC Trees for Streams (2020, Fall)
NRCC Trees for Streams (2021, Spring)
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Management Planning (2020)
DEC & NRCS Wetlands/Natural Resource E&O
Elmore Lake Assessment
Johnson SWMP
LUHS GSI Install #1
Boy Scout Camp
LCBP Emergency Grant
AOP Program Design Grant
AOP Implementation Grant
Capital Grant No-till Drill
Coop Agreement (16)
Coop Agreement (20)
Education General
Education Outreach
Edu School
Envirothon
Camp
Playgroups
Watershed Series

Orleans County NRCD
<b>FY22 # of Grants Written: 11</b>
<b>TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$160,812</b>
<b>FY22 FTEs: 1.6</b>
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
VAAFM AgCWIP
DEC Project Development
DEC LaRosa Water Quality Monitoring
VAAFM Tile Sampling (FNRCO)
VTWFD Watershed
DEC Lakewise Assessments
VTWFD Memphramagog Riparian Lands
VAWQP Regional Coordination
LCBP Lake Watershed Action Plan (Caspian Lake)
NRCS RCPP Technical Assistance & Conservation Planning
USFWS Partners for Fish & Wildlife
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Management Planning
Greenboro Association Lakewise
Town of Newport Center (TA for roads)
Town of Derby Line (TA for roads)
Equipment Rental
Fee for Service Soil Sampling
Interest Income
Donations
Plant Sale

Ottawaquechee NRCD
<b>FY22 # of Grants Written: 12</b>
<b>TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$25,303</b>
<b>FY22 FTEs: 0.2</b>
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
DEC Design & Implementation
Donations

# APPENDIX B - VERMONT NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION DISTRICTS SOURCES OF INCOME - FY 2022

<b>Otter Creek NRCO</b>
FY22 # of Grants Written: 18
TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$58,400
FY22 FTEs: 1
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
NRCC Trees for Streams (Starksboro Buffer)
CWIP Buffer Assessments
PFW Grant
Town Contributions
Tree Sales
Supplies Sales

<b>Poultney Mettowee NRCO</b>
FY22 # of Grants Written: 15
TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$505,665
FY22 FTEs: 5
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
VAAFM AgCWIP
VAAFM ACAP
DEC Project Development
DEC Design & Implementation
NRCC Trees for Streams (PUR Projct FY19)
NRCC Trees for Streams (PUR Projct FY20)
NRCC Trees for Streams (Butler)
VAAFM Agronomy & Conservation Assistance Program
VAAFM Tile Drains
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Management Planning (19-20)
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Management Planning (20-21)
Lake Champlain SeaGrant LEAP
LCBP Pollution Prevention (LakeWise LSC)
LCBP Pollution Prevention (Driveways)
LCBP Pollution Prevention (Forestry Practices)
Lookout Foundation
ANR Poultney River SWMP
High Meadows Fund Flower Brook Flood Resiliency (Part 3)
USFWS Culvert Assessment Ranking
Watershed Grant Lakewise Assessments
USFS Aquatic Passage
USFWS Habitat Resoration
NRCS Aquatic Passage
DEC LaRosa Water Quality Monitoring
LCBP Org Support Strategic Planning
LCBP Emergency Relief Rent & Services
ERP for Traverse Farm
ERP for Waite Farm
ERP for Bretton
Watershed Grant
Champlain Valley Native Plant Restoration Nursery
Nursery Tree Sale
Donations & Town Allocations
Slate Valley Trails office sublease

<b>Rutland NRCO</b>
FY22 # of Grants Written: 6
TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$108,751
FY22 FTEs: 1
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
DEC Project Development
DEC Design & Implementation (Rotary Park)
ERP FY17 (Cold River Bem Removal)
ERP FY18 (Cold River Bem Removal)
ERP 2020 (Youngs Brook Dam Removal)
LCBP BMP Enhancement (Town of Brandon)
Southern Windsor RPC Block Grant (Wallingford Elem School)
P3 Public Partnership Project (WCA)
Tree Sales
Trout Sales
Town Contributions
Skidder Bridge Rentals

<b>White River NRCO</b>
FY22 # of Grants Written: 15
TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$78,583
FY22 FTEs: 3.1
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
VAAFM AgCWIP
DEC Project Development
NRCC Trees For Streams
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Management Planning
DEC & NRCS Wetlands/Natural Resources E&O
NACD Technical Assistance
NFWF LISFF Wetland Grant

<b>Windham NRCO</b>
FY22 # of Grants Written: 8
TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$115,406
FY22 FTEs: 1.76
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning
VAAFM AgCWIP
DEC Project Development
NRCC Trees for Streams
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Managment Planning
DEC Grant in Aid: Aquatic Invasive Species & Greeter
GRHydro: Greeter Program
LRA: Greeter Program
Town of Wilmington: Greeter Program
New England Grassroots Environmental Fund
DEC & NRCS Wetlands/Natural Resources O&E
Watershed Grant: Lake Raconda O&E
Watershed Grant: Sweet Pond American Eel Sign
Southern Windsor RPC Design & Implementation
LISFF Micro-Wetlands Planning and Prioritization (Possible?)
Tree & Shrub Sales
Trout Sales
Interest
Workshops
Skidder Bridge Rental

<b>Winooski NRCO</b>
FY22 # of Grants Written: 15
TOTAL FY22 INCOME: \$265,380
FY22 FTEs: 3
<b>Budgeted Income Items:</b>
VAAFM District Core Services
DEC Tactical Basin Planning (19/20)
DEC Tactical Basin Planning (20/21)
VAAFM AgCWIP
DEC Project Development (19/20 - 1)
DEC Project Development (19/20 - 2)
EcoAmericorps Professional Training
ERP (Hands Mill Dam 30%)
VAAFM Tile Drains Agreement (FCNRCD)
FPR-EAB (20)
LCBP Commission Trainings
LCBP COVID
NRCC Trees for Streams (NFWF)
NRCC Trees for Streams (19)
NRCC Administration
NRCC Capacity (20/21)
NRCC CWBG (Morse Farm 100%)
NRCC CWBG Shady Hill IMP
RRST (FY20)
SWG (Hands Mill Dam 30%)
USFWS (FY19-ADMIN)
UVM Lakewise
NFWF LISFF Wetland Grant
VACD Mini Tasks
NRCS RCPP Nutrient Management Planning
Tree & Trout Sale
Interest
Municipal Support
Other
Expense Reimbursements

<b>Acronyms</b>
AFT - American Farmland Trust
AgCWIP - Agency of Agriculture Clean Water Initiative Program
ANR - Agency of Natural Resources
AOP - Agriculture Outreach Plan
BMP - Best Management Practice
CISMA - Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas
CWIP - Clean Water Initiative Program (funded by VT Clean Water Fund)
DEC - Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, under ANR
DPS - Vermont Department of Public Safety, part of Vermont Emergency Management
EAB - Emerald Ash Borer
E&O - Education & Outreach
EPA - US Environmental Protection Agency
ERP - Ecosystem Restoration Program
FPR - Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, also under ANR
GMNF - Green Mountain National Forest, US Forest Service
GSI - Green Stormwater Infrastructure
LCBP - Lake Champlain Basin Program
LIS - Long Island Sound
LISFF - Long Island Sound Futures Fund
LRA - Lake Rescue Association
NEIWPCC - New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission
NACD - National Association of Conservation Districts
NFWF - National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
NRCC - State Natural Resources Conservation Council
NRCS - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
PFW - Partners for Wildlife
RCP - Regional Planning Commission
REI - Road Erosion Inventories
SWG - State Wildlife Grant
SWMP - Stormwater Master Plan
TA - Technical Assistance
UCCISMA - Upper Connecticut River CISMA
USFS - US Forest Service
USFWS - US Fish and Wildlife Service
VAAFM - Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
VAAWQP - Vermont Agricultural Water Quality Partnership
VTFWD - Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department
VTWSR - Vermont Wild and Scenic Rivers

**APPENDIX C - STATE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION COUNCIL BLOCK GRANTS HELD IN FY 2023**

<b>Program/Grant Description</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Agency/Org</b>	<b>Total Award</b>
Conservation Districts Core Services (\$362,000 plus one-time \$248,000)	State	VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets	\$ 610,000
Tactical Basin Planning	State	VT Department of Environmental Conservation	\$ 244,741
Clean Water Project Development	State	VT Department of Environmental Conservation	\$ 144,900
Clean Water Project Design & Implementation	State	VT Department of Environmental Conservation	\$ 3,185,394
Agricultural Clean Water Initiative Program (AgCWIP FY22)	State	VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets	\$ 2,300,000
Regional Conservation Partnership Program Streams Aquatic Organism Passage	Federal	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service	\$ 1,505,200
Woody Buffer Block Grant/Trees for Streams	State	VT Department of Environmental Conservation	\$ 269,862
Trees for Streams	Private-Fed pass through	Lake Champlain Basin Program	\$ 245,334
Riparian Areas and Watersheds/Trees for Streams	Private-Fed pass through	National Fish & Wildlife Foundation	\$ 200,000
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$ 8,705,431</b>



## APPENDIX D - TESTIMONIALS FROM THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

*“Franklin County and Grand Isle Natural Resources Conservation District Services have outstanding staff that serve as one of FNLC'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. FNLC considers the Franklin and Grand Isle Natural Resources Conservation Districts to be one of the first services that we work with when addressing non-regulatory land use problems. Another vital service that the Conservation Districts in NW Vermont are providing is leadership on Basin Water Quality Councils. I serve on three BWQC's and a Conservation District Manager is serving as Chair on each of these Councils. This added function alone should qualify the Conservation Districts for more funding considering the added service that they are providing to attain the EPA TMDL goals.”*

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

*“It cannot be overstated how much the Vermont Land Trust relies on Conservation Districts to maintain our farmland conservation program; many projects simply would not meet water quality thresholds without their help. Please make this investment and keep this lean, high-functioning, water-quality partner strong and nimble.”*

- Donald Campbell, Vermont Land Trust, January 2022

*“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 Goyne, Richford Conservation Commission, February 2023

*“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

*“With the help from the conservation district we are doing things better with more data and more information at our fingertips. The projects we have done have truly helped to improve water quality and have helped us be a better neighbor by taking care of discharge properly. We have an active nutrient management plan and we have implemented four water quality improvement projects. We have a more efficient manure management system, less flooding along the road and in front of the barn and less ice issues, so it is more safe for the family. Having the water sampling results tracking these projects has been super interesting. We look forward to hearing the results annually and it is a useful tool, literally, we have shared the results with neighbors.”*

- Joanna Lidback, Farm at Wheeler Mountain, Westmore Vermont, January 2022