



Vermont
Housing &
Conservation
Board

House Committee on Corrections & Institutions

February 17, 2026

Presenters:

Gus Seelig

Executive Director

Stacy Cibula

Associate Conservation Director

Liz Gleason

Vermont Farm & Forest Viability
Director



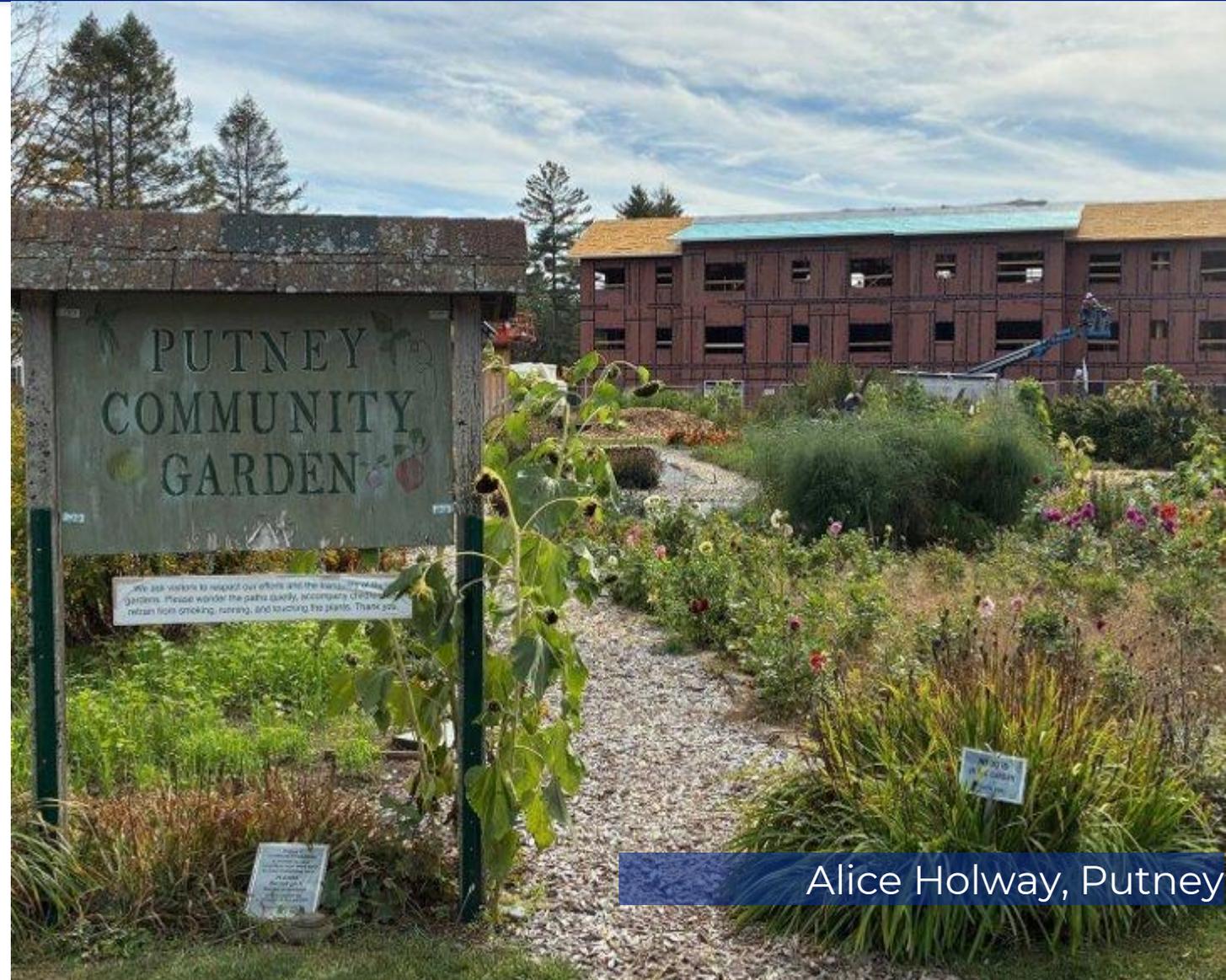
Camp Dream, Fletcher

VHCB 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



Alice Holway, Putney

FY27 Budget - Governor's Recommendation



Williams Farm, Bakersfield

Photo credit Vermont Land Trust

FY27 Funding Levels

	Property Transfer Tax	\$37.6M
	Clean Water Capital Funding	\$2.0M
	Farmland Retirement	\$200K
	Viability Water Quality Grants	\$600K

VHCB Housing Impacts Since 2020



TOTAL VHCB INVESTMENT: \$450,998,013.55



Total Leverage: \$828,194,698.16

HOMEOWNERSHIP

448 households supported
191 new construction single-family
homeownership units

RENTAL

2,721 total units
2,253 new units
718 homes for unhoused Vermonters

MANUFACTURED HOME COMMUNITIES

24 infill units
1077 lots in 10 communities

FARMWORKER HOUSING

74 repair projects
6 replacement projects
305 farmworkers to be served

SHELTER

26 shelters served total
13 new shelters
629 beds
313 new beds total

RECOVERY RESIDENCES

4 projects
59 residents benefitted

LEAD ABATEMENT

90 households served
70 apartments
20 single-family homes

ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

471 households received
accessibility improvements

5,651
Households
Served

Average Per
Unit
Investment:
\$80,000

Housing Programs: Investments from Shelter to Homeownership



Main Street Shelter,
Hartford



Foundation House,
Barre



New Avenue Apartments,
St. Johnsbury



Bay Ridge,
Shelburne



Conservation Programs



VT Adaptive,
Rochester



East Calais General Store,
E. Calais



Whetstone Brook,
Brattleboro



Mighty Food Farm,
Shaftsbury



Bull Creek Headwaters, Athens and
Townsend

Conservation, Viability and Rural Development

- FY26 (12/25): \$8,111,298
- FY26 anticipated projects: \$16M
- FY27 anticipated projects : \$19M

Housing

- FY26 committed (12/25): \$23,787,231
- FY26 anticipated projects: \$26-\$28M
- FY27 anticipated projects: \$40M+

Conservation's Clean Water Impact



Wolcott Community Forest



VHCB purchases development rights and places permanent conservation easements on farms and natural areas.



Conservation areas protect water quality assets through management practices such as riparian buffers and wetland protections.



Bond dollars from the clean water section support projects with enhanced water quality outcomes.

Water Quality Benefits



Reduces phosphorus pollution



Protects riparian buffers



Preserves wetlands



Prevents agricultural runoff



Enhances aquatic habitat



Long Pond Natural Area,
Greensboro

Farmland Retirement



Goulet Farm Retirement, Addison

Farmland Retirement Goulet Farm, Addison

- 176 acres of former cropland acquired by VT Department of Fish and Wildlife.
- Expands nearly 3,000-acre Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area.
- Restores 90 acres of wetlands
- Protects 1.5 miles of highest priority streams.
- Supports state-threatened grassland birds.
- Provides public access.
- Protects important archaeological resources.

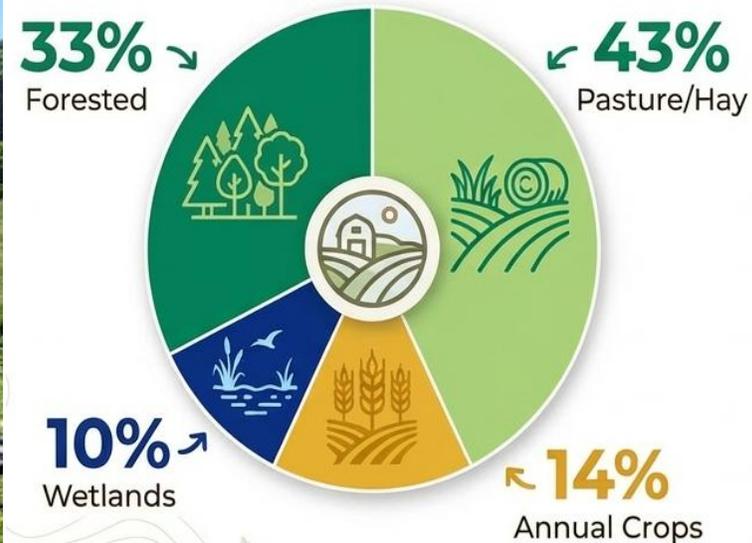
Water Quality Protections on Conserved Farms



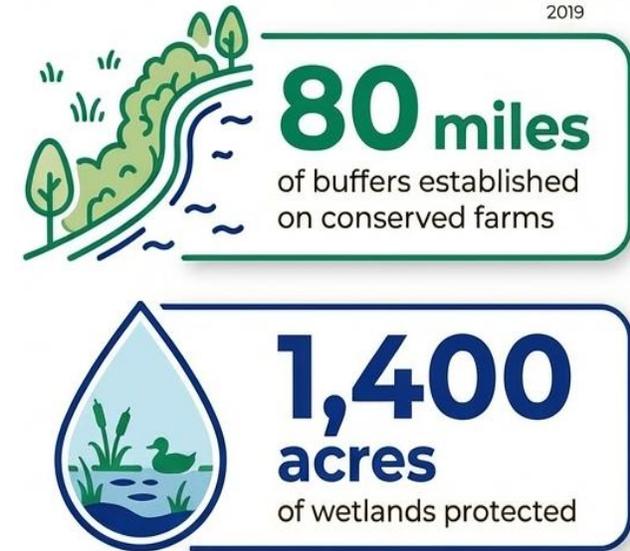
Sweet Pickins Farm, Putney



Conserved Farms Land



Conservation Impact Since 2019



FY25 Conservation Outcomes



Farmland

- 21 farms supported
- 2,877 acres conserved
- \$4,474,00 federal dollars leveraged



Natural Areas

- 18 projects
- 2,865 acres hunting, fishing, public access and outdoor recreation areas
- \$3,624,833 additional leveraged funds



Water Quality

- Clean Water Service Program Administrator for the Memphremagog Basin.
- 6 projects supporting floodplain and stream restoration



Leahy Memphremagog Clean Water Program

- 10 projects supporting partner capacity, land acquisition and habitat restoration

Camp Sunrise, Benson

Photo credit Green Mountain Council

Farm and Forest Viability Program



110 Businesses Served in 2025



Succession
Planning



Financial
Management
& Capital



Land Search
& Access



Profitability &
Quality of Life

2025 IMPACT

71%
OF BUSINESSES
INCREASED
GROSS SALES

82%
ADDED
NEW JOBS

ON AVERAGE
BUSINESSES
INCREASED SALES BY
\$52K

CLIENTS
ACCESSED OVER
\$5.4M
IN GRANTS
AND LOANS

100%
IMPROVED BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Collaborative Network of Partners



Service Provider Network

- Center for an Agricultural Economy
- Intervale Center
- Land For Good
- NOFA-VT
- UVM Extension

Other Partners

- Vermont Land Trust
- VT Sustainable Jobs Fund
- Liberation Ecosystems
- Healthy Roots Collaborative
- Northeast Forests
- Food Connects

Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI)



\$1,270,477 → **\$35,512,800**

REDI FUNDS SINCE 2017

GRANTS TO COMMUNITIES



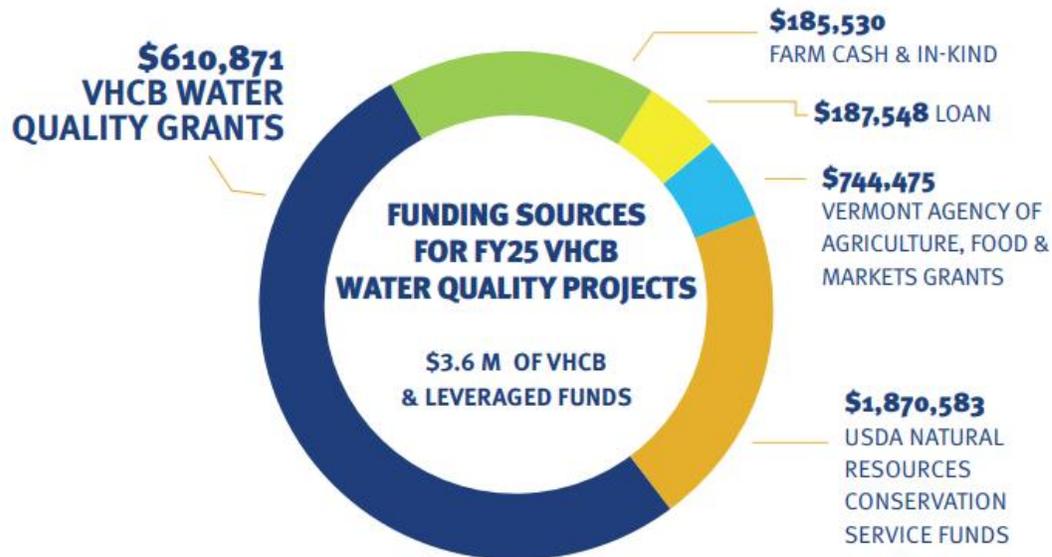
REDI assists **small towns** and **working lands businesses** access capital for critically needed economic development projects



Focus areas: community-based **economic development** and downtown revitalization, working lands, outdoor recreation

Water Quality Grants

- 15-25 projects funded each year
- \$5.4 million awarded since 2017
- 16 grants totaling \$611K in 2025 leveraged an additional \$2.9 million
- Flexible addition to State's clean water programming



Severy Farm, Cornwall

Water Quality Grant to Farmers



- ❖ Reduce runoff into waterways
- ❖ Improve soil health & water retention on farmland
- ❖ Improve manure management
- ❖ Improved grazing infrastructure



Bread and Butter Farm,
Shelburne



Pigamus Meats, South Hero



Grass Cattle Company,
Charlotte

Implementation Grants

“Without a doubt, my farm business has more potential for success because of the support and assistance from Farm Viability.”

—Becca Knouss

- ❖ Catalyze key projects to bring business & transfer plans to fruition
- ❖ In 2025: 27 grants made to increase climate resilience and grow local food and forest businesses
- ❖ Total Implementation Grants made: 197 awards totaling over \$1 million



The Goat Project, Bennington



Diggers Mirth Collective,
Burlington



Lincoln Peak Vineyard, New
Haven

Thank you!

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