

Note From District Manager

I am sure I am not the only one who feels that the Summer has flown by. As usual, we have been busy. But possibly like many of you, we were a little too optimistic about what we could accomplish and a few projects have been pushed to future years! Among those projects were the removal of Rouleau Pond Dam in Williamstown and the replacement of the culvert on Woodchuck Hollow Road in Washington. Both of these projects fell victim to rapidly rising construction costs and delays in final designs and permitting. Happily, more money has been found and the design and permitting issues have been resolved. We expect both of these projects to go to construction in the Summer of 2027. Summer 2027 may also see a major river bank stabilization project go to construction in Richmond.

Thankfully, we did have two major projects go ahead. A large strategic wood addition is being installed at the Rocky Woods Natural Area in Worcester. Additionally, the improvements to Enos, Red Pine, and Partridge Hill Roads are underway in Hinesburg. A watershed action plan we conducted in the Lake Iroquois watershed identified this network of dirt roads as a source of excess nutrient runoff in the lake watershed, the La Platte River, and ultimately Lake Champlain. This project is particularly special for me as it was the first grant that I wrote when I started my position as District Manager more than two years ago. I am happy to see it finally happening! We thank the Lake Champlain Basin Program and the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission for funding this project!

Fall also brings on the typical agricultural activities of cover crop verification and soil sampling. The list of farms we serve continues to grow, so much so that we have had to add a UVM intern to help with the workload! We are very proud of how much our agricultural program has grown over the past two years and the service we provide to the many farmers in our District.

As we slide into Fall, begin to wind down our summer activities, and transition to our Winter grant writing and planning, I want to be sure we are reflecting on all our successes and work over the past field season. One of the ways we have been doing this as a District is through our annual dinner. This year our dinner is on November 12 from 5 PM to 7 PM at the Richmond Free Library (see below for information on how to register). If you came last year, I encourage you to come again. If you missed it last year, I hope you can make it this year. I look forward to seeing you there!





*Dan Koenemann visits Rocky Woods Natural Area in Worcester, Vermont, to check on strategic woody addition efforts.
Credit: Lucas Goldfluss*

Unifying Stormwater Program Update

It's been a great field season for the Unifying Stormwater program. This summer, Winooski NRC staff were able to reach properties throughout the district's service area and complete assessments for homeowners, schools, and businesses. Through Stream Wise, Lake Wise, and Storm Smart assessments, we've worked with landowners to identify ways to better manage stormwater, protect water quality, improve flood resiliency, and support healthy streams and lakes in the Lake Champlain basin. Each assessment included a follow-up report with recommendations specific to the property.

We still have capacity to complete a few more property consultations this fall.

If you're interested in having your property assessed, please reach out to Lucas at Lucas@winooskinrcd.org. Thanks to funding from the Lake Champlain Basin Program, we're excited to continue this work and look forward to carrying the program into next year.



Shoreline view during a Lake Wise property consultation in Malletts Bay, Colchester, Vermont.

Credit: Lucas Goldfluss



UVM Student Involvement

This fall, the Winooski NRCD is working with two UVM senior capstone classes on projects that connect students with real conservation work in the Winooski River watershed.

Students in Rubenstein's NR 4060 are working with WNRCD and the Winooski Valley Park District on planning for a native tree and plant nursery on Winooski Valley Park District land. This builds on work WNRCD has already been doing to explore the development of our own native plant nursery in Chittenden County. The goal of the conservation nursery is to grow native trees and plants from local genetics for restoration and conservation projects, helping address the limited availability of locally grown plant material in Vermont. We're also exploring a model where sales to commercial customers help support the production of plants for conservation projects. The NR 4060 students will be looking at soil health, invasive species, native plant selection, and what will be needed to get the nursery up and running.

Their work will help us take the next steps toward making the nursery a reality! We're also collaborating with students in the University of Vermont's College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences through the CEE 4950 course on a potential dam removal in Charlotte. The students will evaluate the existing dam and develop conceptual designs for removal and stream restoration, including looking at sediment, hydrology, site stability, permitting, costs, and maintaining the existing walking trail. It's been great to have students working alongside our staff and bringing new ideas and expertise to these projects. These partnerships give students a chance to get out of the classroom and work on real conservation projects, while helping WNRCD move some long-term projects forward.



Dan Koenemann and Lucas Goldfluss conduct a site visit in Charlotte, Vermont, to assess a potential dam removal.

Credit: John Lens, UVM



Old Riparian Buffer Project Adoptions

Over the past decade, WNRCD has helped plant more than 30 acres of riparian buffers throughout our service area. These buffers are important focus areas for reducing nutrient runoff, protecting streambank stability, and providing wildlife habitat. However, they need ongoing maintenance to continue functioning as intended. Many of our older plantings have had little or no maintenance because funding for operations and maintenance has been limited. We've recently started going back to these sites to see how they're holding up and determine what work may be needed.

In the Northern Lake Champlain Basin (Basin 5), we've completed project verification visits at two sites (one on McCabe's Brook in Shelburne and one on Indian Brook in Essex). Both were planted in 2016 and are still functioning, but are nearing the end of their original 10-year design life. We're looking at what maintenance may be needed and working toward extending their design life. In the Winooski River Basin (Basin 8), WNRCD has helped establish 14.25 acres of riparian buffers. We've now completed verification visits at four of the five sites. The remaining site visit will wrap up the initial assessment of these projects and help us determine where maintenance, replanting, or invasive species removal may be needed. This work is a chance to check in on projects that were planted years ago and make sure they continue providing the intended water quality benefits they were designed to deliver. Lucas and Dan have been leading the charge on this work, and we're looking forward to getting these buffers back into good working condition and keeping them that way for years to come.



Dan Koenemann assessing the survivorship of trees planted along Thatcher Brook in 2016.

Credit: Lucas Goldfluss



Locally Led Process

Locally led conservation starts with the people who know the land best: the community.

The core ideal of locally led conservation centers on the principle that community stakeholders are best suited to identify local natural resource concerns, as well as any related economic and social concerns. Leveraging community feedback, partnerships, and USDA funding to strategically invest federal dollars in local priority resource concerns to restore, conserve, and protect natural resources and working landscapes is the primary intention of the Locally Led Conservation Delivery model. A key part of this approach is gathering insight from a wide range of community members, including agencies, organizations, nonprofits, businesses, farmers, landowners, and anyone interested in sustainable natural resource management. Their first-hand knowledge helps ensure conservation efforts truly reflect local needs.

In Vermont, Natural Resource Conservation Districts gather feedback every year by hosting Local Working Group meetings in their service area and distributing Locally Led Surveys. This data shapes district-wide Conservation Action Plans which provides the foundation for our Locally Led Conservation Plan proposals. These Locally Led Conservation Plans outline local resource concerns and goals, propose solutions and actions, identify necessary funds and technical assistance, determine monitoring and evaluation methods, and present an implementation timeline. The Winooski NRCD will launch our 2027 Locally Led Conservation Delivery Survey and begin collecting feedback at our Annual Dinner on November 12th from 5 PM to 7 PM at the Richmond Free Library. For those that cannot attend the annual dinner, the survey will also be linked to our website,

<https://www.winooskinrcd.org/surveys>

In addition to the survey, the Winooski NRCD will host two Local Work Group meetings where individuals can provide in-person feedback.

Field Work With Colin!

We are happy to highlight the great work of our intern, Colin, who has been a wonderful addition to the team this fall. Colin is a Junior at UVM majoring in Sustainability, Ecology, and Policy, with a minor in Food Systems. He brings valuable lab and field experience to our work from his previous roles with the USDA Dairy Forage Research Center, the Gund Institute, and UVM research labs. Colin has been instrumental in assisting with CEMA 216 testing and standard soil testing in our service area. The field season is far from over! We are excited to continue getting out in the field and connecting with both new and returning farmers across the district.





Our agricultural field intern, Colin, collects soil samples in Northfield, VT, using a sampling probe for nutrient testing to ensure compliance with Nutrient Management Plan requirements.

Credit: Kara Winslow

WNRCD Annual Tree Sale

Thank you to everyone who supported our Tree Sale this May! We're grateful for your continued support of the WNRCD Tree Sale year after year, and we look forward to helping you add new life to your landscapes. We're excited to announce that the finalized species list for next year's Tree Sale is now available on our website. We have several new species available this year, including quaking aspen, shagbark hickory, and swamp white oak. Take a look at the full species list and start planning your order! Visit winooskinrcd.org/annual-tree-sale-and-donations to learn more.

Important dates:

Sale Opens: Friday, January 1st, 2027

Sale Closes: Saturday, May 1st, 2027 at 11:59 PM

Pick-Up Day: Saturday, May 8th, 2027 (9:00 AM – 12:00 PM)





WNRCD Annual Dinner and Celebration!



The Winooski NRCD is happy to announce that our annual dinner will be held November 12 from 5 PM to 7 PM at the Richmond Free Library (201 Bridge St, Richmond, VT 05477). The evening will be a casual one with time for socializing, a discussion of the pressing natural resource concerns in our District, a Winooski NRCD year in review, and a short presentation by the State climatologist, Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux! You may also find yourself the recipient of one of our door prizes! The dress and atmosphere will be casual. Children and families are welcome.

To register for the dinner please visit our website. The \$20 suggested donation to help cover food and the venue, which can be paid here, is a suggestion. If you cannot afford the donation, please do not let it prevent you from coming. We would love to have you!

Location: Richmond Free Library, Richmond, VT

Date: Thursday, November 12, 2025

Time: 5:00 – 7:00 PM

Speaker: Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux



Dan Koenemann presents at the 2025 Annual Dinner at North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier, VT.

Credit: Lucas Goldfluss



District Mailing Address



The Winooski NRCD has been using a new mailing address. Please send all future correspondence to: **PO Box 1114, Montpelier, VT 05601**. Thank you!

