

Note from the District Manager

I'll admit it, I'm not the biggest fan of Spring. The melting snow reveals all the accumulated mess beneath it. ~~The roads are terrible. The trees have no leaves. At least by the late Spring, it just seems like a waiting exercise for the summer, with so many false starts along the way!~~ Yet, all of this underlines the fact that Spring is a season of hope, potential, and anticipation. And

this, along with the flowers, are aspects of Spring that I do enjoy! This same sense of anticipation surrounds the District at the moment. Having spent the winter planning and writing grants (just shy of \$900,000 raised as of the writing of this letter, with more decisions pending), we are champing at the bit to spend the funds we have been awarded to improve the natural resources and farming landscape in our service area. From the agricultural side of District activities, the Spring thaw means soil and manure sampling. Through June, the District is offering free soil and manure sampling, including the lab fees. If you are a producer in need of soil or manure sampling, please be sure to reach out to Kara and Heather. Not that they need the extra work! Our soil and manure sampling services have become very popular as of late and some weeks they do little else than sampling and interpreting results for producers! On the natural resources side of District activities, this summer is characterized by a number of infrastructure projects, the fruit of successful grant writing cycles in previous years. This week, Dan and Lucas have coordinated the last-minute cutting of trees to prepare for the replacement of a culvert on Woodchuck Hollow Road in Washington and improvements to the road network on Enos, Partridge Hill, and Red Pine Roads in Hinesburg. Tree cutting has to occur prior to April 1 in order to reduce the impacts on Vermont's bat population. The work on Woodchuck Hollow Road is a follow-up on the removal of Hands Mill Dam in 2024. That removal opened upstream habitat to brook trout. The Woodchuck Hollow Road culvert is the next barrier to aquatic organism movement and its replacement will open more upstream habitat. The road improvements in Hinesburg are follow-ups to the Lake Iroquois Watershed Action Plan, also completed in 2024. Bringing these private roads up to the same standards as public roads after recent flood damage will reduce the sediments they contribute to the watershed, improving water quality. Finally, if you also have Spring fever and are ready to get working in your garden and yard, remember that the District tree sale is currently live! Please visit our website to see what we are offering for native trees, shrubs, and flowers and place your order before we run out!

*Dan Koenemann working hard in the WNRCD Berlin Office.
(Credit: Winooski NRCD)*



Tree Plantings on the Horizon

Lucas, our conservation specialist, is getting excited for spring tree plantings in the next few weeks.

We'll start on May 1 at the Ethan Allen Homestead in Burlington, planting 1.65 acres along the Winooski River. Volunteers from New Farms for New Americans and the Winooski Valley Parks District will be joining us. This 100-foot riparian buffer will include 675 trees to improve water quality and habitat.

The next planting will be May 22 in Jericho at Mills Riverside Park, planting 0.37 acres along the Browns River. We'll be joined by Trout Unlimited, members of the Jericho-Underhill Land Trust, the Jericho Underhill Parks District, and Mt. Mansfield Union High School to plant 158 locally grown stems, stabilizing the streambank and reducing sedimentation.

Volunteers are welcome at both plantings. Contact Lucas at Lucas@winooskinrcd.org to get involved.



Lucas Goldfluss setting up for a planting in Hinesburg, 2025
(Credit: Winooski NRCD)

Call for Volunteers!

The Vermont Envirothon is a hands-on competition where high school students test their knowledge of soils, forestry, wildlife, and aquatics. This year's current issue is Non-point Source Pollution: It Begins at Home. Students will learn about non-point source pollution, identify its origins in both urban and rural settings, and present their research at the competition. The event will take place on May 27th at Buck Lake in Woodbury, and we're looking for volunteers to help with judging and scoring, escorting teams, and general event support. Those with experience in nonpoint source pollution are especially encouraged to sign up as judges, but all help is welcome.

Contact Lucas at Lucas@winooskinrcd.org to volunteer and feel free to share with others who may want to get involved!



Unifying Stormwater: Free Property Assessments from WNRCD

The WNRCD is offering free technical assessments for residents with lakeshore or streamside property, or anyone interested in managing stormwater on their property. Each assessment includes a detailed follow-up technical report tailored specifically to your property.

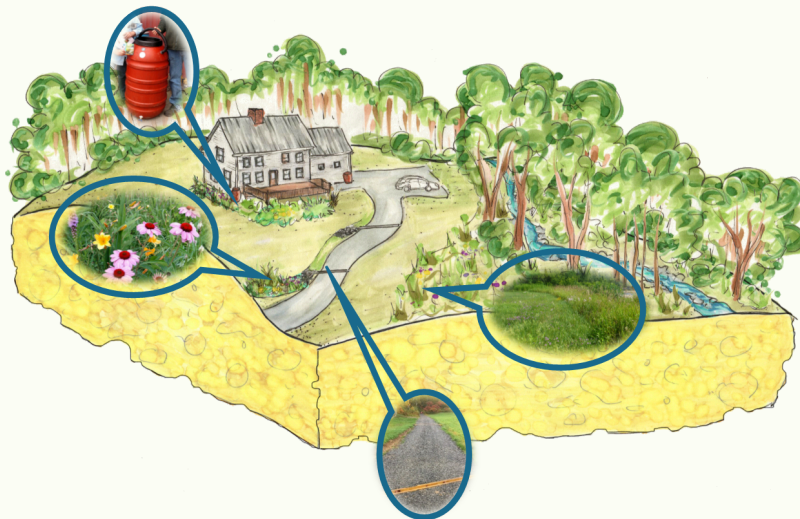
Stream Wise Assessment: Helps streamside property owners protect and enhance vegetated buffers, improve flood resiliency, and support water quality and wildlife habitat.

Lake Wise Assessment: Provides guidance for shoreland property owners to make their land as lake-friendly as possible.

Storm Smart Assessment: Offers technical support for landowners in regards to implementing green stormwater infrastructure like rain gardens, rain barrels, and water bars. These practices slow, spread, and soak in rainfall, which is essential to protecting the Lake Champlain watershed.

In 2026, the WNRCD will offer all three assessments through the Unifying Stormwater Initiative, funded by the Lake Champlain Basin Program. The initiative establishes a consistent and comprehensive framework for stormwater management, promotes lake-friendly living practices, and enhances ecological resilience. During a visit, WNRCD staff will walk your property with you, fill out the assessment protocol, and provide tailored recommendations for best management practices. Stream Wise assessments will focus on streams in the greater Burlington area that have been or will be sampled as part of the LaRosa Partnership Program. Lake Wise assessments will focus on properties around Malletts Bay in Colchester. Any landowner within the Winooski River watershed is eligible for a Storm Smart assessment.

Protect your property and our local waterways! Sign up for a free assessment by filling out this form: [Landowner Interest Form](#) or contacting Lucas@winooskinrcd.org.



Kicking off the 2026 LaRosa Sampling Season!

Since 2012, the Winooski NRCDC has coordinated a statewide water quality monitoring program in Chittenden County, engaging community science volunteers to sample urban and suburban streams affected by nutrient loading, chloride, and other pollutants. This year, the LaRosa Partnership Program (LPP) will monitor sites across Colchester, Williston, Burlington, and Shelburne, including Allen Brook, Potash Brook, Bartlett Brook, Crooked Creek, and several smaller tributaries to Malletts Bay. Many of these locations are in developed areas near roads, neighborhoods, and parking lots, where stormwater runoff can carry nutrients and chloride into local streams.

The LPP, active in Vermont since 2003, provides valuable water quality data to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation and partner organizations through community science efforts. Volunteers collect and analyze samples for total phosphorus, total nitrogen, and chloride during the spring and summer months, while also tracking flow levels and water types. These indicators help identify pollutants from a variety of sources, including stormwater runoff, eroding streambanks, agricultural fertilizers, manure, and road salt.

The WNRCD leads a dedicated volunteer group within the LPP, and will be monitoring a total of 13 sites for the 2026 field season. Most sites are nominated by the VT DEC, while some are proposed by local municipalities. For example, Burlington recently added a site near Blanchard Beach on Flynn Avenue, where nutrient concerns are high due to its proximity to Lake Champlain. Data from these sites contribute to long-term management plans such as Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) plans, which set pollution limits and guide restoration efforts. Through LPP, volunteers gain a hands-on understanding of how pollutants affect streams, rivers, lakes, and ponds, and play a direct role in protecting these waterways by sampling multiple times each season. Volunteers not only help generate meaningful water quality data for the state, but also engage with their local environment and take part in preserving Vermont's water resources. To get involved with sampling, reach out to Lucas at Lucas@winooskinrcd.org.

Someone collects a water sample.
Credit: Saline County
Kansas



WNRCD Agriculture Updates

Free Soil Sampling

The WNRCD will be offering free soil testing and lab fees up until June. This opportunity is open to all farming operations. Please reach out to Kara@winooskinrcd.org if interested.

VPFP

Applications to apply for Vermont Pay for Performance are expected to be available in May or June of this year. VPFP provides performance-based payments to Vermont farmers for reducing phosphorus losses from their agricultural fields.

Please note that if you are receiving payments for practices such as cover cropping, no-till, crop-to-hay (pasture and hay planting), manure injection, or rotational grazing through other programs you may not be eligible for VPFP. You can still apply to the VPFP program, but will need to pull out of one based upon what fits your needs best. Please reach out to our Ag Specialist Kara@winnoskinrcd.org or Heather@winnoskinrcd.org if you need help applying or determining what program is best for you.

Upcoming Ag Events

The District is planning multiple agricultural related events in May and June including pasture grazing walks, bird walks and tree planting demonstrations. Please keep an eye out for an email in the coming weeks to register.

WNRCD Annual Tree Sale

The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District's Annual Tree Sale is now live with an order deadline of **April 30th!**

Explore our fantastic selection of trees, from annual favorites to exciting new varieties. Whether you're looking for fruit and nut trees, conifers, or deciduous classics, we have it all. The theme this year is "Rooted in Vermont". We are emphasizing tree and shrub species that are not only native to Vermont, but also grown in Vermont.

[Link to Tree Sale](#)

You will find a listing of trees and shrubs for sale as well as prices at this site. Order early as some selections may not be available closer to the deadline. Pickup Date is Saturday, May 9th from 9am to 12pm at locations in Berlin and Williston.