

Vermont NRCS State Technical Committee Meeting

October 16, 2024

In-person: USDA State Office, Colchester

Virtual: Microsoft Teams

NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 22, 2025

Attendees (Colchester): Travis Thomason (NRCS), Luis Aponte (NRCS), Bob Thompson (NRCS), Jim Eikenberry (NRCS), Diana Dellinger (NRCS), Angela Hyldburg (NRCS), John Roberts (FSA), Eileen Powers (FSA), Chris E. Smith (USFWS), Shawn White (UVM Ext), Ryan Joseph (Senator Sanders Office), Michael Fernandez (Bennington Co NRCD), and Eamon Twohig (VT DEC).

Attending (MS Teams): Phyllicia Moore (NRCS), Dave Blodgett (NRCS), Sarah Larose (NRCS), Olivia Carlson (NRCS), John Van Hoesen (NRCS), Stephanie Vasilopoulos (NRCS), Dave Zimmermann (NRCS), Sarah Waring (RD), Morgan Sanders (FSA), Thomas Renner (Congresswoman Balint's Office), Laura Ranker (VT DEC), Dave Adams (VT FW), Jill Arace (VACD), Alli Lewis (VAWQP), Nina Gage (VAAFM), Ryan Patch (VAAFM), Paul Hamelin (VFWD), Stacy Cibula (VHCB), Alissa White (American Farmland Trust), Vern Grubinger (UVM Extension/VVBGA), Julie Callahan (UVM Extension), Kris Stepenuck (UVM), Susan Hodgson (UVM Ext./NE Climate Hub), Brad Roy (VT Rural Water Association), Margaret Fowle (Audubon VT), Nancy LaRowe (NOFA-VT), Susannah Howard (UFLT), Theresa Vander Woude (EPA), Kira Jacobs (EPA), Eric Howe (LCBP), Sarah Damsell (OCNRCD), Cory Ross (WCNRCD), Jennifer Byrne (WRNRCD), Caroline Sherman-Gordon (Rural Vermont), Pam Bryer (VAAFM).

Vermont NRCS State Technical Committee Meeting

October 16, 2024 | 9:30 am-12:00 pm

USDA State Office, Colchester and MS Teams

Agenda

Time	Topic	Speaker
9:30 – 9:35 am	State Conservationist Welcome	Travis Thomason
9:35 – 9:45 am	Farm Service Agency Update	John Roberts
9:45 – 9:55 am	Rural Development Update	Sarah Waring
9:55 – 10:10 am	Legislative Update	Congressional Delegation
10:10 – 10:40 am	Conservations Programs Update - FY24 Recap - FY25 Focus - FY25 Subcommittee info	Diana Dellinger
10:40 – 11:00 am	NRCS Updates - Locally Led Conservation Delivery - Organizational Re-Alignment - State Technical Committee 2.0	Travis Thomason
11:00 – 11:30 am	Vermont's PFAS/PFOS Strategy	Eamon Twohig, VT DEC Pam Bryer, VAAFM
11:30 – 11:55 am	Partner Updates	
11:55 – 12:00 pm	Wrap-up	Travis Thomason

Welcome:

Travis Thomason, State Conservationist, NRCS Vermont

Welcome. Review of ground rules for hybrid meetings. Review of the agenda.

Farm Service Update:

John Roberts, State Executive Director, FSA Vermont

Lana Walden will assume the position of Deputy State Executive Director as of Monday, Oct. 21, 2024. This is a new position for FSA. We will be doing a bit of reorganization after that, as they are not giving us any other additional positions to accommodate this new position. Determined to not let this impact the field staff.

Continuing to deal with disaster relief. Eileen Powers is the FSA Disaster Programs Specialist. Working under a Continuing Resolution and we don't currently have a Farm Bill.

- As a result of this, there is no CRP/CREP. We have no authority to do site visits or project planning for new projects or increased acres on current projects. We can maintain existing projects, funding that has been committed and acres already in the program. This follows true for NRCS as well. Ben and Phil work for the State under an agreement so they can continue to do outreach with producers, but FSA cannot process any new requests.
- July 2024 Floods, Disaster Declaration - ECP Sign-up to be announced, but have been taking applications since the floods. Thanks to VACD staff we have been doing site visits. ECP Sign-ups for Essex, Caledonia, Chittenden and Washington as soon as next week. EFRP will be running as well.

Comments/Questions:

Comment: After Tropical Storm Irene, FSA put out a summary of data on the farms impacted; acres by commodity and county of losses reported. Will you be putting out data regarding the farms impacted by flooding in 2023 and 2024?

Response: Request noted.

Rural Development Update:

Sarah Waring, State Director, RD VT/NH

Hired a Deputy State Director, Steffan DeFeo, this summer. Started with the agency during COVID.

We were able to get two of our Value Added Producer Grants (VAPG) through the national office. Those announcements have been made or will be made soon.

Huge September round for the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) grant. Averaging 50-75 applications per round, which is a lot for one person, as the environmental review and eligibility review takes some time.

Conversations related to Disasters: RD handles housing in rural communities (single family and multi-family). We sent our teams out to the FEMA Disaster Recovery Center and the Farmer Recover Center (Lyndonville).

- One of the conversations with the Under Secretary and Secretary's Office is how to devise a different strategy to allow for flexible funding that would give us the ability to design a state-by-state disaster response, so we can fill the gaps in infrastructure and housing and small business support coming out of a disaster. (Current funding is for one national program and all states with natural disasters compete each calendar year for that funding.)

- Another conversation we're having is regarding programs that have not been utilized out of disasters. One of the programs is farm worker housing. One of the flexibilities we'd love to be able to address with the Secretary and with our friends on the Hill is how to utilize our housing programs for both farmers and farm workers post disaster. That is often a gap because we can't support farmers with their home damages because they are a business at their place of residence. SBA won't do it either. So, the farm, home residents and Homeworker residents' programs have often been neglected after a disaster, which means that's often a gap for agricultural producers.

Comments/Questions:

Question: What is the projected strategy to address the gap of service for farmer housing, farm worker housing in particular?

Response: That is what we are working on. Currently, our agency only has the authority in a disaster to move additional appropriated funds as Congress appropriates them for us. And Congress has, in history, only given us funds for our existing programs - 504 Home Repair Program, Community Facilities Program, and our Water and Environmental programs. When they do that, they miss our 515 Farmworker Housing and 523 Site Loans and various other small business support programs that we have available. What we are attempting to do with our Secretary's Office is to ask for the funding in a different way that would allow us to do some behind the scenes work to first identify what the gaps are on the ground and then go and apply for money, state by state, to go into any of the 74 grant and loan programs that we have. So it would be that Congress gives it to us in one place and then we can identify needs in Vermont. We want to put it in these 15 different places or two or six, but we're not locked into the three that Congress has utilized over and over.

Legislative Updates

Senator Sander's Office

Ryan Joseph, Outreach Representative (VT), ryan_joseph@sanders.senate.gov

- Congress is in recess until after the election
- Before recess Congress passed a continuing resolution (CR) to fund the government through December 20, 2024.
- What comes next is largely dependent on the election (in 2 weeks), hoping Congress will finalize the FY25 budget and we're expecting that to include the FY25 Congressionally Directed Funding (CDF) spending requests.
- Other items could include a Veteran's package, the Farm Bill, National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) relating towards Ukraine, Middle East, and disaster funding.
- We're not expecting much more for the 118th Congress.
- Nutrition remains the main "sticking point" for the Farm Bill. Senator Sanders and the entire Democratic caucus remain fairly resolute, protecting those critical programs.
- Additional disaster funding is not likely to be passed before the election. And that said, the delegation continues to press on this with a bipartisan group of Senators to get disaster relief through any legislative vehicle possible for both the 2023 and 2024 storms.

Senator Welch's Office

No update

Congresswoman Balint's Office

Thomas Renner, Community Liaison/Constituent Services Representative (VT), thomas.renner@mail.house.gov

- Currently in recess until after the November 5th elections.
- Several folks in the congresswoman's party had asked for the speaker to bring them back to pass some supplemental FEMA aid, but the speaker chose not to do that.
- Unsure what work will be completed after the election.

Comments/Questions:

Comment: (Caroline Sherman-Gordon, Legislative Director, Rural Vermont) I want to use this opportunity to thank the delegates from Senator Sanders' office and Senator Welch's office for the introduction of the livestock owned by communities to advance Local Foods Act, S5106. A piece of legislation that we hope to add to the Farm Bill that would clarify on the federal level that on-farm slaughter is legal. Many of you might know that this is an issue that Vermont has been working on for decades, and this is an initiative where we are at a shoulder close with our state Agency of Agriculture and thankful for Welch's, Sanders' and Cory Booker's leadership in this Senate with the recent bill introduction.

<https://www.welch.senate.gov/welch-introduces-local-foods-act-to-better-support-rural-producers-and-communities/>
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/5106>

NRCS Conservation Programs Update *(See slides for details)*

Diana Dellinger, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs

Introduction of new ASTC Programs, Diana Dellinger and Programs Team

- Diana has worked for the agency for nearly 20 years, most recently PA and previously in CA.
- Programs Team:
 - Jason Fleury, Stephi Drago, Julie Grey – Easements
 - Heather, Stephanie, Diane – EQIP/CSP/Various Programs Support
- ASTC for Partnerships which includes RCPP – Luis Aponte

FY24 Conservation Delivery Accomplishments

- * Preliminary Obligation Summary – over \$29 million
 - EQIP: ~\$21 million with ~23% HU producers (133 contracts for HU producers); ~33k acres, 411 contracts
 - Most contracted practices: brush management, cover crop, fencing, grazing, etc.
 - AMA: ~\$213k; 62 acres, 11 contracts
 - Most contracted practices: High tunnels with supporting practices (cover crop, mulching, no till)
 - CSP: ~\$2.6 million with ~37% to HU producers; ~11.5k acres, 70 contracts
 - Most contracted practices: Structures for wildlife (bat/bird houses), mulching, cover crop, several forestry and grazing practices, etc.
 - ACEP (ALE & WRE): ~\$3.5 million; ~2800 acres, 15 contracts
 - RCPP18: ~\$2.15 million; 79 applications ranked, 25 contracts
 - 2132 – VT DEC (water quality and erosion issues on farms)
 - 2311 – American Farmland Trust (targets farms in the CT River watershed, farm sustainability and plant productivity)
 - 2280 – Orleans Co. NRCD (water quality for Lake Memphremagog)

* Official data source for NRCS Conservation Program Data: [RCA Data Viewer | NRCS](#)

Comments/Questions:

Question: Has CSP increased? Has CSP Assist been impactful?

Response: Yes, CSP has increased significantly (historical data can be provided at a future meeting). And CSP Assist has definitely been impactful.

Comment: Adding structures for wildlife (for CSP) is the path of least resistance for planners that's why it is so popular.

Question: Do you have the numbers broken down by county that could be shared NRCD DMs?

Response: All available data for implementation of conservation programs is available at: [RCA Data Viewer | NRCS](#).

Question: What is the driver to the increase in CSP? Are landowners recognizing the value, is that more of the way you're selling it or is there something else that's kind of happened to make that shift?

Response: All the above plus an increase in training to staff and an increase in minimum payments to \$4k. Some NRCDs found it easy to sell as many producers already saw the value in the program. NRCDs who receive NACD TA funding have a directive to do CSP outreach and we have been successful doing that and raising awareness. ~ \$1 million increase in CSP obligation from FY23 to FY24.

Question: How many EQIP projects were attributed to Source Water Protection and the targeted watersheds?

Response: That information is tracked nationally. One (1) application was obligated under the Source Water ranking pool for \$413,296. Stony Brook – Black River.

2025 Conservation Delivery Focus

- Preliminary Advisory Allocation (See slides, subject to change)
 - FY24 ~\$29.3 million; FY25 ~\$35.3 million; Increase of ~\$6 million
 - FY23 ~\$21.5 million
 - These figures do not include RCPP allocations
- Preliminary Local Funds Investment (~\$5 million earmarked)
 - Orleans Co – Invasive Species Control
 - Winooski River – Streambank Stabilization
 - Windham Forest – Forestry and wildlife
 - Windham Small Scale – Grazing, crop, and irrigation practices
 - Northwest Zone – Terrestrial wildlife habitat
 - Tri-District – Soil Health
 - White River Ottawaquechee – Agroforestry and small-scale agriculture
 - Ompompanoosuc – Beaver habitat
- State Priority Resource Practices
- 2025 CSP State Priority Resource Concerns
- Application Deadline:
 - All Other Programs - August 23, 2024
 - ACEP - January 24, 2025
- Ranking Deadline:
 - CSP Classic – January 24, 2025
 - All Other Programs – February 7, 2025
 - ACEP – May 10, 2025
- Contracting and Obligation in the spring and early summer 2025
- FY26 Application Deadline – August 22, 2025

Comments/Questions:

Question: Can funds be moved from some pools to others or are these locked in? For example, if there is more CSP participation can EQIP funds be used for that?

Response: We must maintain funding integrity. CSP funds must be used for CSP projects and EQIP funds for EQIP projects. I (Travis) do have quite a bit of autonomy to use general EQIP for various fund pools. As Diana mentioned, it depends on the applications that are submitted. You can't cross programs, but I have a lot of autonomy to shift things around within a particular program.

Question: When do you start accepting FY26 applications?

Response: We accept applications on a continuous basis. So, anyone can walk in the door and submit an application at any period of time, and we'll collect them. August 22, 2025, is the drop-dead deadline to submit for fiscal year 2026 funding.

Question: When will we know for sure what the FY25 allocations are?

Response: There's a continuing resolution right now. These are advisory allocations. They can definitely change based on when Congress passes a final budget. Typically, they don't, but we're just issuing the advisory right now because there is a possibility that they could change. We will know final allocations when Congress passes a final budget.

Question: Related to the FY25 State Priority Resource Practices, this list appears the same as FY24. How do you take into consideration other recommendations?

Response: We take all recommendations, we look at data, we look at demand, we look at recommendations from the local work groups, and from the sub committees. And just because we received public comment that you want to make a change doesn't mean that we're going to adopt it. There are a lot of voices in the room, and we want to make sure that we're being inclusive. We appreciate all the feedback and then based on all of the comments, we felt like this was the best path forward.

Question: Can you clarify - last year high tunnels were funded under AMA but the perception is this practice is under EQIP - has this changed?

Response: High tunnels are funded under both AMA and EQIP.

Question: Could we have further conversation about the CSP ranking date and what that looks like "on the ground"?

Response: District Manager's should reach out to their local District Conservationist for those detailed conversations.

FY25 State Tech Subcommittee

- Make your voice heard - If you aren't already, we strongly recommend you join a subcommittee.
 - They are by expertise and really make these suggestions on funding levels and ranking pools and give more feedback than what you're able to at general State Technical Committee meetings.
 - Each subcommittee will collect information and submit it to the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs by **May 16, 2025**. This information will be used to guide development of FY26 State Ranking Pool and Spending Plan.
 - Subcommittee Schedule review
-

NRCS Updates *(See slides for details)*

Travis Thomason, State Conservationist

FY 25 Vermont Conservation Delivery Schedule Gantt Chart

- Review of timeline for FY25 and FY26 *(See slide for details)*
 - Orange - Financial Assistant; Green - ACEP; Blue - State Technical Committee work
- Review of Mission and Vision
- History of NRCS and NRCD's – goes back to the Dust Bowl era of the 1930's
 - Successful Outcomes through NRCD's as envisioned by Hugh Hammond Bennett (1952)
 - Locally Led Conservation Delivery (LLCD)
 - Inform and Invest
 - Strategic Vision *(See slides for details)*
 - Partner Centric
 - Cost Effective
 - Focus and Targeted
 - Outcome Driven
 - Strategic Forecasting
 - Conservation District Conversation Action Plans (CAP)

- Locally Led Conservation Plans (formerly Local Fund Pools)
A stepped approach to funding: "... By 2029, VT NRCS will target utilizing up to 80% of its Farm Bill funds to fund LLCs developed and approved through the locally led process. Starting in 2026, we plan to target 50% of the EQIP allocation to the LLC process, followed by 60% in 2027, 70% in 2028, and reaching a maximum investment in LLC of 80% by 2029. A stepped investment approach will allow NRCS and NRCD leadership to learn and fine-tune the process each year. By focusing on locally led and driven conservation priorities, we can more effectively leverage funds, efficiently utilize resources, and strategically deliver conservation assistance. ..." [SB_VT_440-25-06 PGM – Locally Led Conservation Delivery (LLCD)]

Vermont NRCS Organizational Re-alignment

- Shifting from 4 Zones (4 District Conservationists) to 7 Teams (7 District Conservationist)
 - Aligns with FSA and closer aligns with NRCDs
 - Joe Buford, acting ASTC M&S and Phyllicia Moore, ASTC FO are the Leads for this transition

State Technical Committee 2.0 *(See slides for details)*

- Revisit frequency and content of State Technical Committee meetings
- Determine what success looks like
- Clarify roles, broad representation of interest groups
- Standardize subcommittee meetings
- Survey delivery targeted for 1st quarter of CY25

PFAS Roadmap *(See slides for details)*

Eamon Twohig, Residuals Management & Emerging Contaminants Program Manager, VT DEC

<https://dec.vermont.gov/pfas>

- PFAS chemistry overview
- Man-made "forever" chemical developed in the 1930s for the nuclear industry
- PFAS Cycle
- The definition of PFAS is still being debated, varies by group
- Review of different versions of PFAS (PFOA, PFOS, etc.)
- Groundwater standards mimic drinking water standards (and are going to be stricter)
- Required to be as strict as EPA, but Vermont is usually more strict
- 2019 study found all soil tests/samples had PFAS, but that doesn't mean there is some local point source of contamination. It could just be ambient atmospheric deposition. Rain dust.
- Common exposed pathways: food packaging, dust, carpet, cosmetics, biosolids (least amount)
- In Vermont, PFAS contamination was initially discovered in 2016, when perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), was found in the water supply in Bennington and North Bennington.
- Since then, VT-ANR-DEC has undertaken significant efforts to protect Vermonters.
- Roadmap to Address issue: Reduce, Identify, Protect, Encourage
 - **Reduce or Eliminate** PFAS in Commercial Products and Industrial Uses
 - **Identify** Sources of PFAS Exposure in Vermont
 - **Protect** Vermonters from Existing Exposures to PFAS
 - **Encourage** EPA to Provide National Leadership on the Management of PFAS

VT PFAS Hotline: 802-693-0206 | <https://dec.vermont.gov/pfas>

Eamon Twohig: eamon.twohig@vermont.gov

Comments/Questions:

Comment: Is their guidance for landowner/producer if they get their soil tested and their PFAS levels are high?

Response: There aren't answers and we encourage everyone to advocate for federal standards. The state of Maine has some commodities specific standards. Having Vermont standards only could be a disadvantage to Vermont producers. EPA is doing what they're calling a whole farm risk assessment right now. Results are supposed to be out in late 2024, where they're going to be looking at exposures of a farm family, drinking water, soil crop, folks that eat the food that they grow and trying to figure out where should some threshold be and so that that looks.

Question: Where is Vermont on remediation?

Response: Generally, remediation is very difficult. Putting a resin-based filter or a carbon-based filter on water is doable, especially if it's for your home. Going and pumping and treating groundwater, it's possible, but a lot of money, a lot of resources there would depend on, the need when it comes to solar. Now you're talking about even more challenging media. There are products out there that are like carbon where you blend it in, and it immobilize the PFAS so that it would be less likely to leach. They're not sure about crop uptick yet, that research is ongoing. I would say it's probably like the mushroom idea in that without being able to know what's happening, they're not destroying what's there. They're probably transforming what's there. I think you must be very cautious.

Comment: Provided a link to a peer article about a study in 2022 their showed seven out of ten most used herbicides have incredible high levels of PFAS. It is an unlisted ingredient in many herbicides, pesticides, insecticides. An immediate thing that we could do is try our best to reduce the use of herbicides in the name of conservation.

Response: The paper that was cited was about insecticides, not herbicides. EPA has asked for the paper to be retracted. The peer group has published a paper in the last six months that reviews the sources of PFAS in pesticides, and they don't even reference that paper. So essentially, the "see it all" paper that had those really high levels of contamination, they have not been able to figure out where that PFAS contamination came from. I would not take the results of that study as indicative of and even the statement that it's surfactants in the pesticides that were causing the contamination is an erroneous statement because those chemicals are not allowed in pesticides. It's really important to figure out where contamination is occurring. I'm not saying that it's not of interest, but that specific study should not be the one that throws everyone into cartwheels because it's really questionable results.

Question: I was told by a federal employee in recent years was if there is PFAS found in the soil, because the federal government didn't have a plan, it would make them ineligible for federal money. Is this true?

Response: We're in conversation with Gene Kim, our National Aquatic Ecologist, who is our PFAS specialist. In short, finding PFAS on the farm doesn't make a farm automatically ineligible for USDA conservation programs. This is handled on a case-by-case basis; producers who have questions should contact their local NRCS office.

Question: Has there been state or federal discussion to build an overlapping proximity buffers of these sites to at least come up with like probability of risk exposure (like radon)?

Response: No. PFAS acts differently as it must be ingested, expect for things like sunscreen.

Comment: <https://extension.umaine.edu/agriculture/guide-to-investigating-pfas-risk-on-your-farm/>

Thank you to Eamon and Pam!

Partner Comments

Kira Jacobs, EPA Region 1 Source Water Protection Coordinator - EPA and the Forest Service helped launch a Northeast Mid-Atlantic Partnership for Forests and Water. We are hosting a 1.5-day forum Nov.

20 and 21 in CT (no fee to attend). If you are interested in learning more, our website is:
<https://northeastmidatlanticpartnershipforforestsandwater.com/>

Michael Fernandez, District Manager Bennington Co NRCD and Jennifer Byrne, District Manager, WR NRCD just completed part 1 of the [Farm Force Boot Camp](#) with the [Virgin Islands Department of Agriculture](#) (VIDA). Farm Force Boot Camp is part of a year-long Conservation Career Workforce Development Program. This Vermont-based “mini boot camp” is the first of two intensive in-person training sessions. The second will be held in the Virgin Islands in February 2025. The Corps Network, through AmeriCorps and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), funds both events and the yearlong program.

Wrap-up

Travis Thomason, State Conservationist, NRCS Vermont

Future meetings:

- January 22, 2025, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm (focus on partner updates)
- April 30, 2025, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm (focus on USDA Local Work Group presentations)
- July 16, 2025, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm (focus on FY26 Conservation Delivery plans)
- October 22, 2025, 9:30 am – 12:00 pm

Thank you so much.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm

Welcome to the ...

VT State Technical Committee Meeting – October 16, 2024



Ground Rules for Hybrid Meetings

REMOTE attendees:

- MUTE your microphone in TEAMS
- Attendance: Type your name, title and affiliation into the chat (if system allows)
- Questions: “Raise your hand” or type your question in the chat
- **Important reminder:** The Teams chat is for questions or comments relevant to the current topic/presentation. Please do not have “side conversations” in the chat

IN-PERSON attendees:

- Attendance: Sign in on the attendance sheet
- We are using a video camera (Poly), which is in the south-east corner of the room
 - Talk clearly and look towards the camera (Poly)
 - If also logged into TEAMS, mute your computer's microphone, speaker & camera
 - Poly will serve as the microphone, speaker, and camera for the room
 - Please avoid side conversations as the Poly will pick them up and make it difficult for Teams participants to hear and it will distort the recording and transcript
- Questions: Raise your hand or use the chat in Teams



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NRCS Programs Update

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FY24 Programs Update Report

- **Meet the Staff**
- **FY24 Conservation Delivery Accomplishments**
 - Preliminary Obligation Summary
 - EQIP, AMA, CSP Preliminary Obligation Summaries
 - ACEP (Wetlands and ALE)
- **FY25 Focus for Conservation Delivery**
- **FY25 State Tech Subcommittee Schedule**

Meet the Programs Staff

01:01:26

Chat People Raise React View Notes Rooms Apps More Camera Mic Share Leave

USDA | diana.dellinger@usda.gov

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Dellinger, Diana - FPAC-NRCS, PA

Fleury, Jason - FPAC-NRCS, VT

Drago, Stephanie - FPAC-NRCS, VT

Grey, Julia - FPAC-NRCS, VT

Wetzstein, Heather - FPAC-NRCS, VT

Vasilopoulos, Stephanie - FPAC-NRCS, VT

Aponte, Luis - FPAC-NRCS, VT

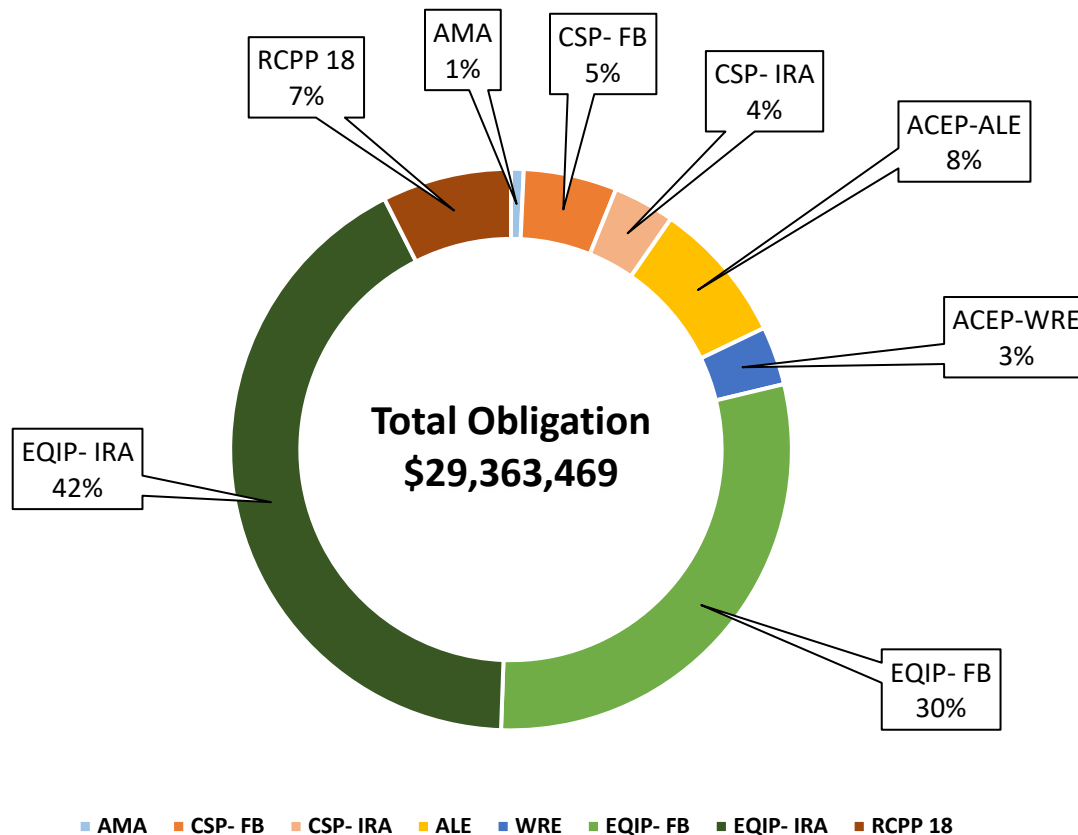
Ladue, Diane - FPAC-NRCS, VT

A group of people are standing on a rocky path near a stream. The path is made of large, flat stones and is partially covered with water. The people are dressed in outdoor gear, including hats and backpacks. The background is a lush, green forest. The text "FY24 Conservation Delivery Accomplishments" is overlaid on the right side of the image in a green, sans-serif font.

FY24 Conservation Delivery Accomplishments



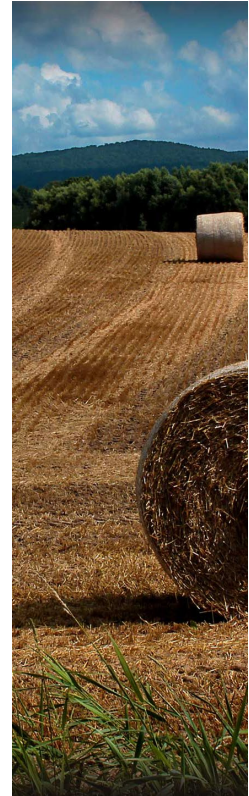
Preliminary Obligation Summary



Program	Preliminary Obligation
AMA	\$ 213,724
CSP- FB	\$ 1,577,547
CSP- IRA	\$ 1,041,906
ALE	\$ 2,423,088
WRE	\$ 995,221
EQIP- FB	\$ 8,654,742
EQIP- IRA	\$ 12,267,000
RCPP 18	\$ 2,190,241

EQIP- Preliminary Obligations

- **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)**
- **Total Acres Planned: 32,907 ac**
- **Total Contracts Written: 411**
- **Total Obligation from all EQIP Funding Sources- \$20,921,742**
 - EQIP Farm Bill- \$8,654,742
 - EQIP IRA- \$12,267,000
- **Funds Obligated to Historically Underserved Clients - \$5,113,134 (23% of total obligation)**



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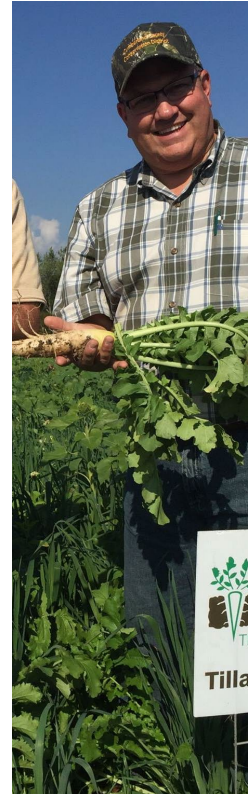
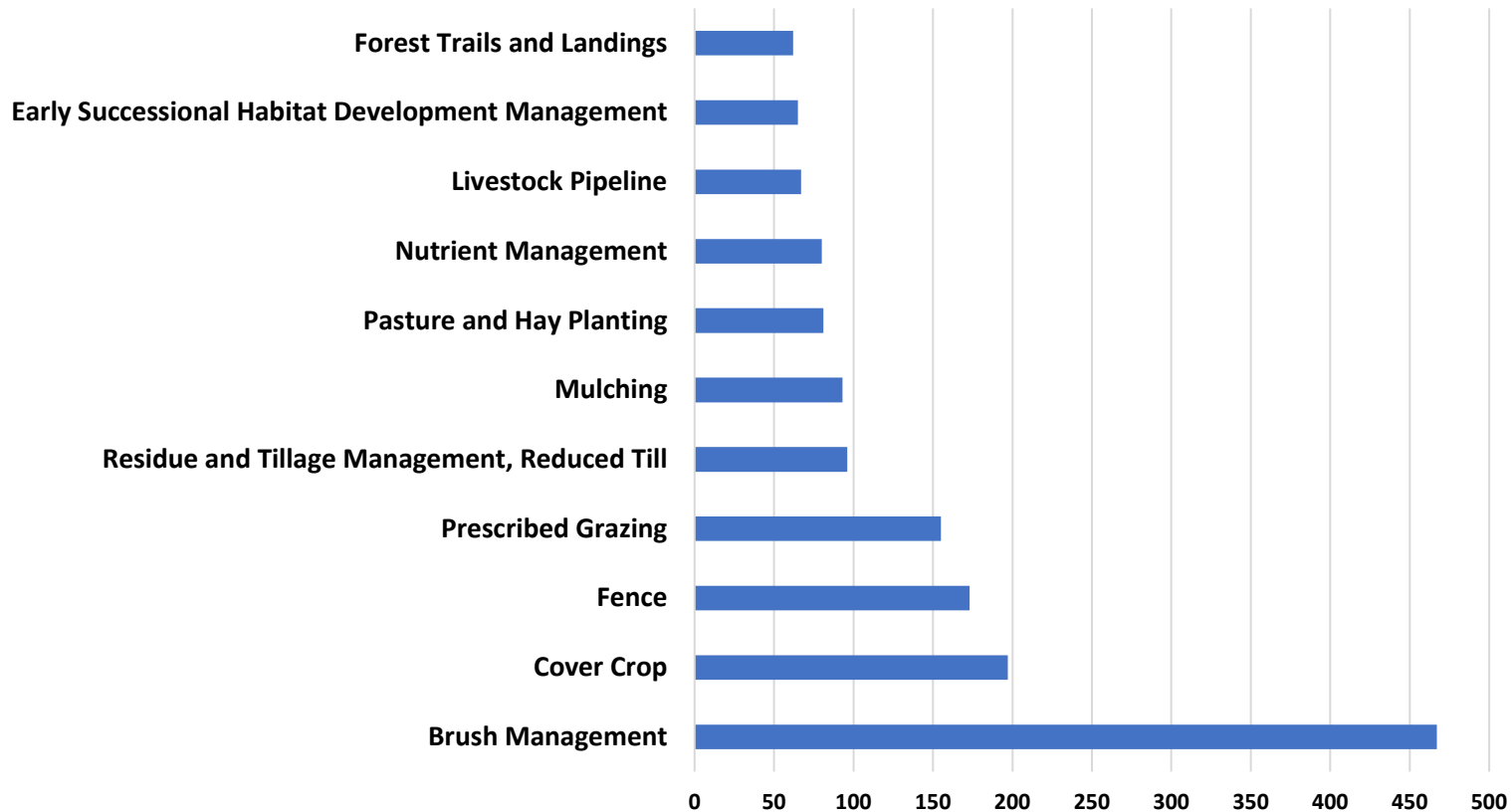


United States
Department of
Agriculture

FY24 Conservation Delivery Accomplishments

EQIP- Contracted Practices

Planned Instances



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AMA- Preliminary Obligations

- **Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) and Risk Management Agency (RMA)**
- **Total Acres Planned: 62 ac**
- **Total Contracts Written: 11**
- **Total Obligation from all AMA Funding Sources- \$213,724**
 - Farm Bill \$120,120
 - RMA \$93,604
- **Most Contracted Practices**
 - High Tunnels and supporting practices (Cover Crops, Mulching, and No-Till)

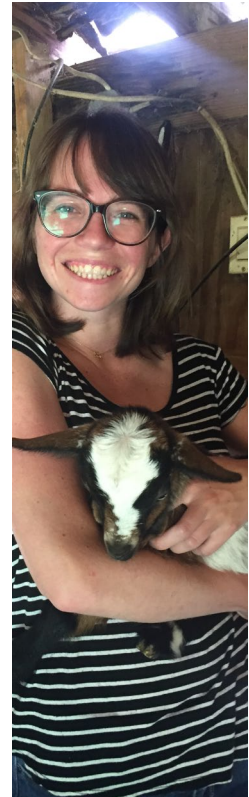


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CSP- Preliminary Obligations

- **Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**
- **Total Contracts Written: 70**
- **Total Acres Planned- 11,492 ac**
- **Total Obligation from all CSP Funding Sources- \$2,619,453**
 - CSP- IRA- \$1,041,906
 - CSP- Farm Bill- \$1,577,547
- **Funds Obligated to Historically Underserved Clients - \$989,726 (37% of total obligation)**



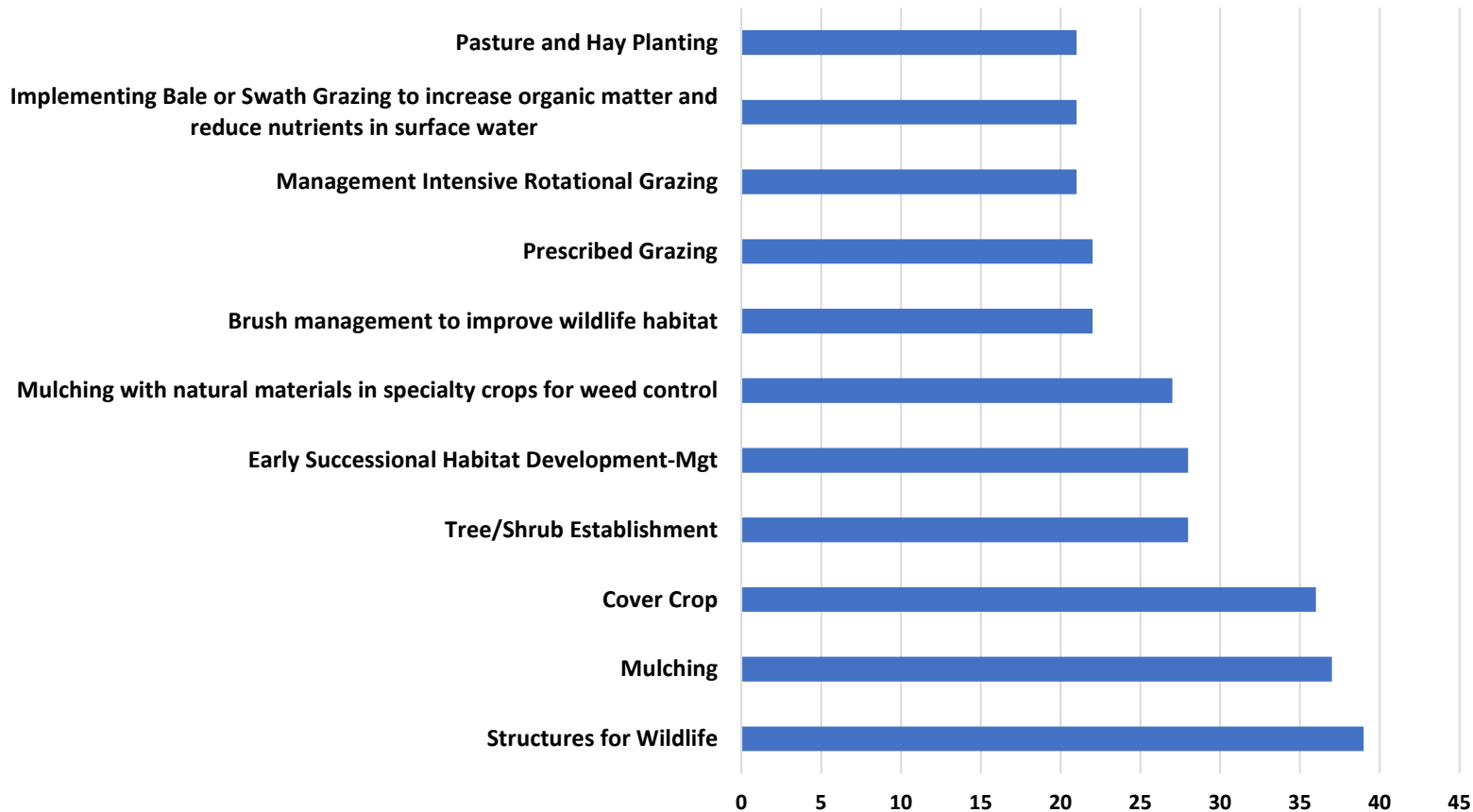
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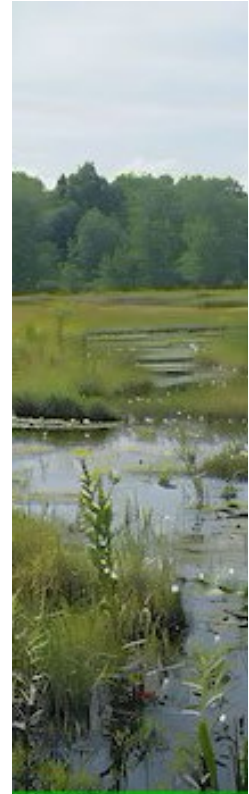
CSP- Contracted Practices

Planned Instances



ACEP- Preliminary Obligations

- **Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)- Agricultural Land Easement (ALE) and Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE)**
- **Total Contracts Written: 15**
- **Total Acres Planned: 2797 ac**
- **Total Obligation from all ACEP Funding Sources- \$3,497,187**
 - ACEP- ALE: \$2,423,088
 - ACEP-WRE: \$995,221
 - RCPP US-Held: \$78,878



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RCPP18 FY24 Delivery

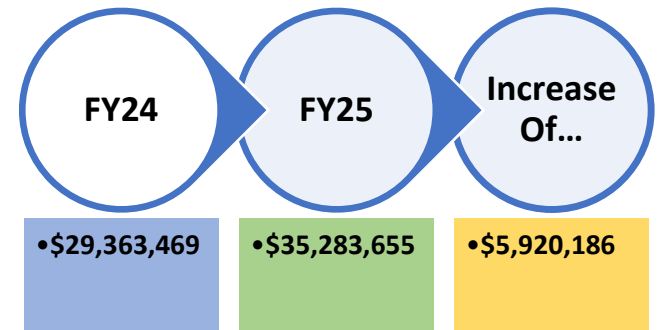
- **Total Applications: 79 Applications ranked**
- **Total Contracts: 25 Contracts**
- **Total dollars obligated: \$2,149,840.00**
- **Total Per Project:**
 - 2132: \$1,804,895.00
 - 2311: \$308,070.00
 - 2280: \$36,875.00
- **Great work from our field staff and our RCPP partners!**



FY25 Conservation Delivery Focus

Preliminary Advisory Allocation

Program	Allocation
ACEP- ALE	\$2,608,858
ACEP-WRE	\$1,118,483
ACEP- IRA	\$3,044,227
AMA	\$132,000
CSP- Classic	\$1,450,000
CSP-IRA	\$1,500,000
EQIP	\$8,087,377
EQIP-IRA	\$16,538,465
EQIP- GWW	\$162,806
EQIP- NWQI	\$641,484
TOTAL	\$35,283,655



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Preliminary Local Funds Investment

Local Fund Pools

Orleans

- Invasive Species Control-\$300,000

Winooski River

- Streambank Stabilization-\$750,000

Windham Forest

- Forestry and wildlife-\$400,000

Windham Small Scale

- Grazing, crop, and irrigation practices-\$250,000

Northwest Zone

- Terrestrial wildlife habitat-\$1,500,000

Tri-District

- Soil Health-\$750,000

White River Ottauquechee

- Agroforestry and small scale agriculture-\$800,000

Ompompanoosuc

- Beaver habitat-\$200,000

State Priority Resource Practices

2025 EQIP State Priority Resource Practices Includes:

- **Waste Storage Facility (CPC 313)**
- **Residue and Tillage Management, No Till (CPC 329)**
- **Cover Crop (CPC 340)**
- **Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (CPC 345)**
- **Fence (CPC 382)**
- **Pasture and Hayland Planting (CPC 512)**
- **Heavy Use Area Protection (CPC 561)**
- **Nutrient Management (CPC 590)**
- **Tree/Shrub Establishment (CPC 612)**
- **Waste Transfer (CPC 634)**

State Priority Resource Concerns

2025 CSP State Priority Resource Concerns Include:

Agricultural Land Ranking Pools	Non-Industrial Private Forestland Ranking Pools
Degraded Plant Condition	Degraded Plant Condition
Pest Pressure	Fire Management
Livestock Production Limitation	Pest Pressure
Field Sediment, Nutrient, and Pesticide Loss	Aquatic Habitat
Soil Quality Limitations	Soil Quality Limitations
Terrestrial Habitat	Terrestrial Habitat
Concentrated Erosion	Concentrated Erosion
Wind and Water Erosion	Wind and Water Erosion

FY25 Program Deadlines

- **Application Deadline-**
 - All Other Programs- 8/23/24
 - ACEP- 1/24/25
- **Ranking Deadline**
 - ACEP- 5/10/25
 - CSP Classic- 1/24/25
 - All Other Programs- 2/7/25
- **FY26 Application Deadline- Aug. 22, 2025**



FY25 State Technical Committee



Make Your Voice Heard

- Working groups and subcommittees will identify priority resource concerns, suggest funding levels, establish funding cycles, suggest ranking pools and categories, establish other ranking priorities, and refine the use of the Conservation Assessment Ranking Tool (CART) for Fiscal Year 2026.
- Upon completion of each subcommittee, the information collected should be submitted to the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs by **May 16, 2025**. The information collected will be used to guide development of Fiscal Year 2026 State Ranking Pool and Spending Plan.



Subcommittee Schedule

- **Soils Subcommittee** - November 21, 2024 & May 1, 2025 (1pm-2:30pm)
- **Water Quality Subcommittee** – March 12, 2025 & June 2, 2025 (9 am – 10:30 am)
- **Climate Subcommittee** - October 11, 2024; November 8, 2024; December 13, 2024; January 10, 2025, February 14, 2025, March 14, 2025, April 11, 2025, May 9, 2025, and June 13, 2025 (9am-11am)
- **Urban and Small Agriculture Subcommittee** - October 17, 2024, January 16, 2025, April 17, 2025, and July 17, 2025 (1:00pm-2:30pm)
- **Forest and Wildlife Subcommittee** - February 5, 2025, and April 9, 2025 (10am-11:30am)
- **Wetland Reserve Easement Subcommittee** - March 24, 2025 (10:00am-11:30am)
- **Working Lands (EQIP/CSP) Subcommittee** - May 15, 2025 (9:30am-12:00pm)



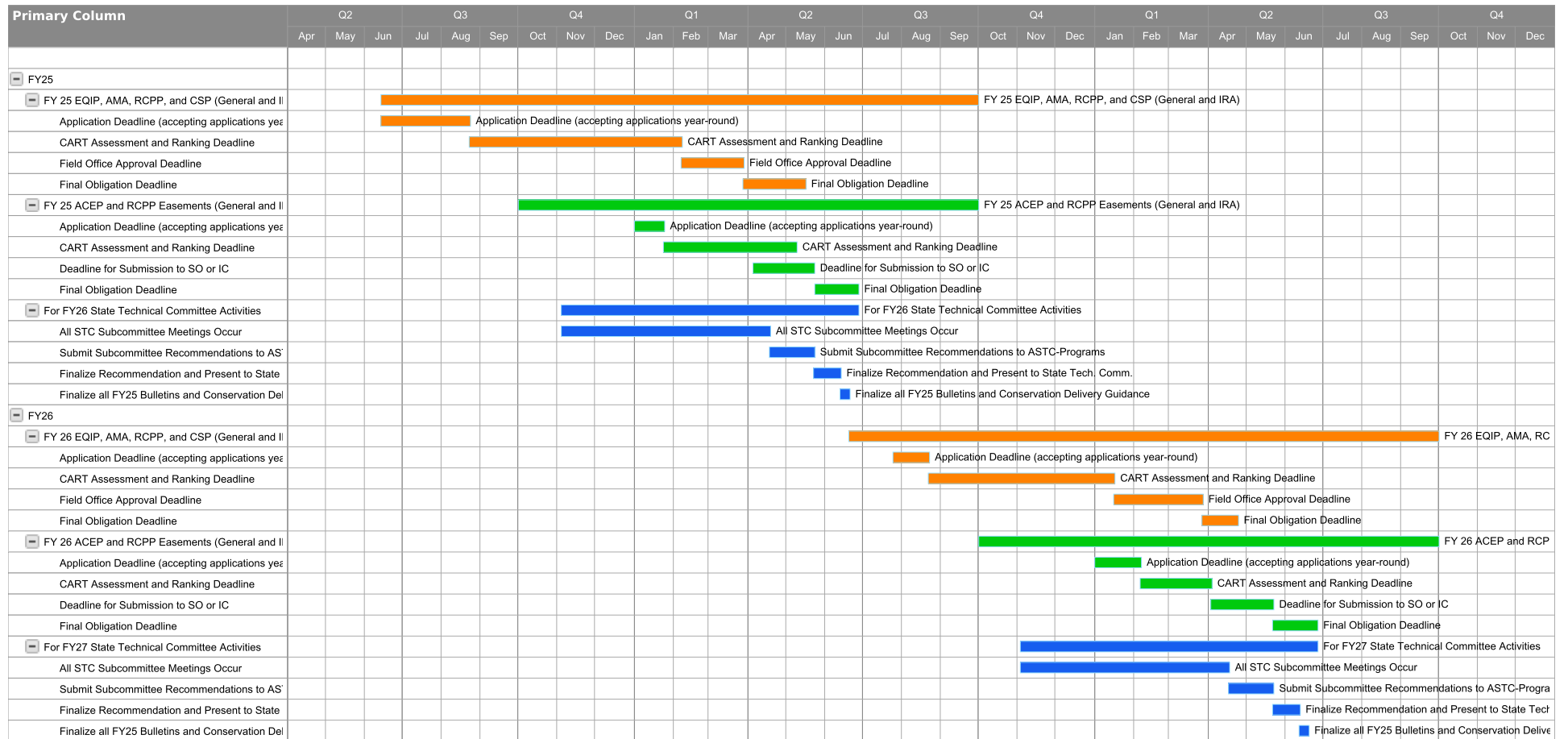
Questions?



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FY 25 Vermont NRCS Conservation Delivery Schedule





State Technical Committee – Oct. 2025 update

Travis L. Thomason – VT NRCS State Conservationist

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Natural Resources Conservation Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Mission

*We deliver
conservation solutions
so
agricultural producers can
conserve natural resources
and
feed a growing world.*

Vision

*Clean and abundant
water,
healthy soils,
resilient landscapes
and
thriving
agricultural communities
through
voluntary conservation.*

“Helping People Help the Land”



Locally Led Conservation



History of NRCS and NRCD's



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Hugh Hammond Bennett

– *“The Father of Soil Conservation”*

“Basically, the economic stability of [nations] depends on how [producers] use and care for their land. The sooner an understanding of the inescapable need for the conservation of soil and water permeates the nation, the sooner conservation farming can be spread across the land to hold soil while using it. **In this way, the welfare of present and future generations and the permanent security of the nation can be maintained.**”

(Bennett, *Elements of Soil Conservation*, 1952)



Importance of NRCD's

“Lasting conservation can neither be carried out nor maintained without the willing and earnest cooperation of landowners and operators. Unless [producers] are given a guiding responsibility in the program, without coercion of any kind, there is little chance for the accomplishment of enduring conservation. **The best way for doing this is by directing the job locally through the [producer]-voted and [producer]-directed soil conservation districts now covering most of the agricultural land of the nation.**”

(Bennett, *Elements of Soil Conservation*, 1952)

Vermont Natural Resources
Conservation Districts



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Successful Outcomes through NRCD's

*During a three-year drought in the 1950s, dusters returned. There were big storms covering roads and spinning over towns but nothing like Black Sunday. Droughts in 1974-1976 and 2000-2003 made the soil drift. But overall, the earth held much better. Why no second Dust Bowl? In 2004, an extensive study of how farmers treated the land before and after the great dusters of the 1930's concluded that soil conservation districts kept the earth from blowing... **What saved this land, this study found, was what Hugh Hammond Bennett had started: getting farmers to enter contracts with the soil conservation districts and manage the land as a single ecological unit...** Hugh Bennett died in 1960 at the age of 79... His legacy, the soil conservation districts spread throughout America, is the only New Deal grassroots operation that survives to this day.*

Egan, Timothy (2006). *The Worst Hard Time*.
Retrieved from <http://books.google.com>



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Locally Led Conservation



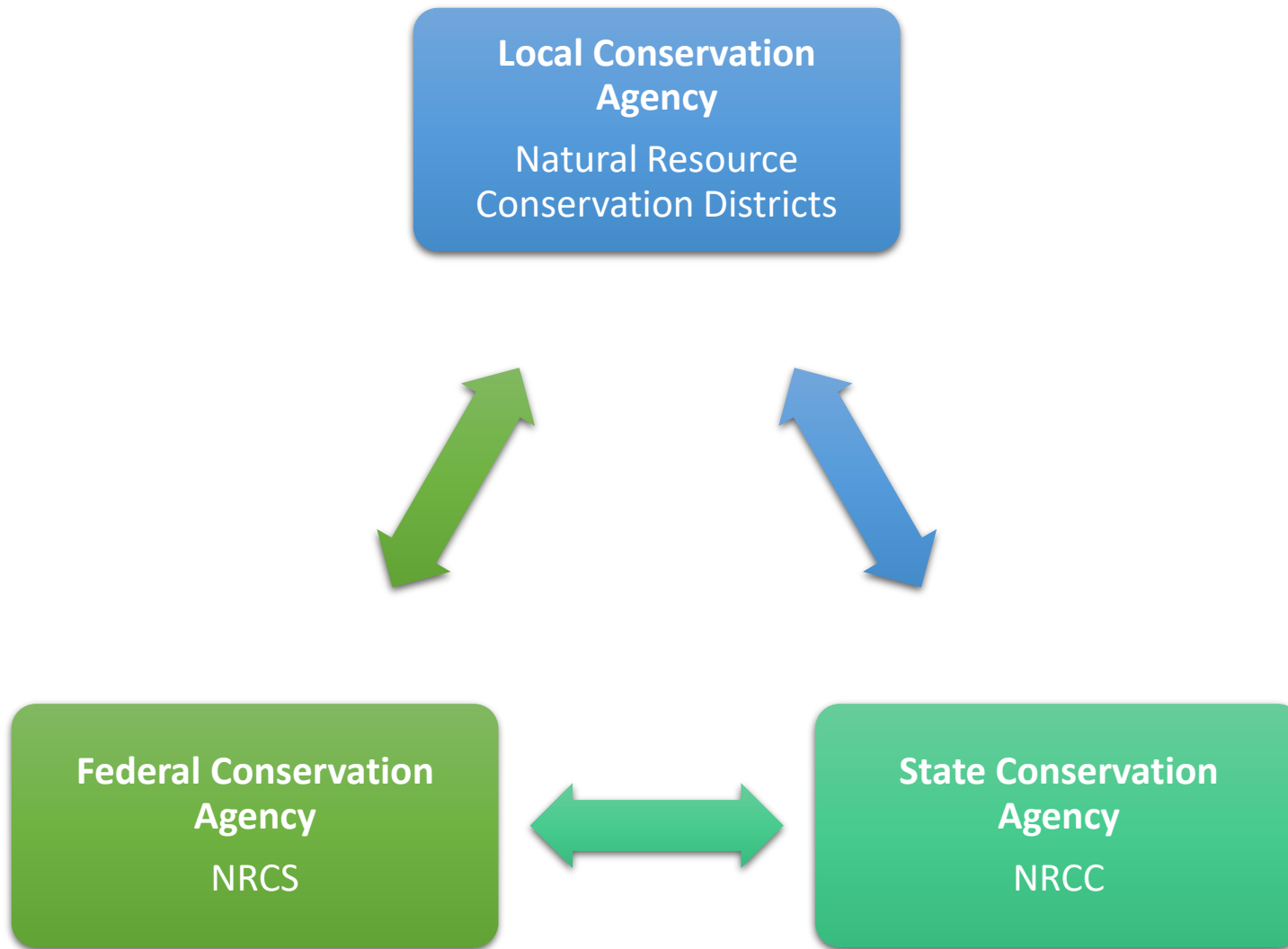
Conservation Partnerships



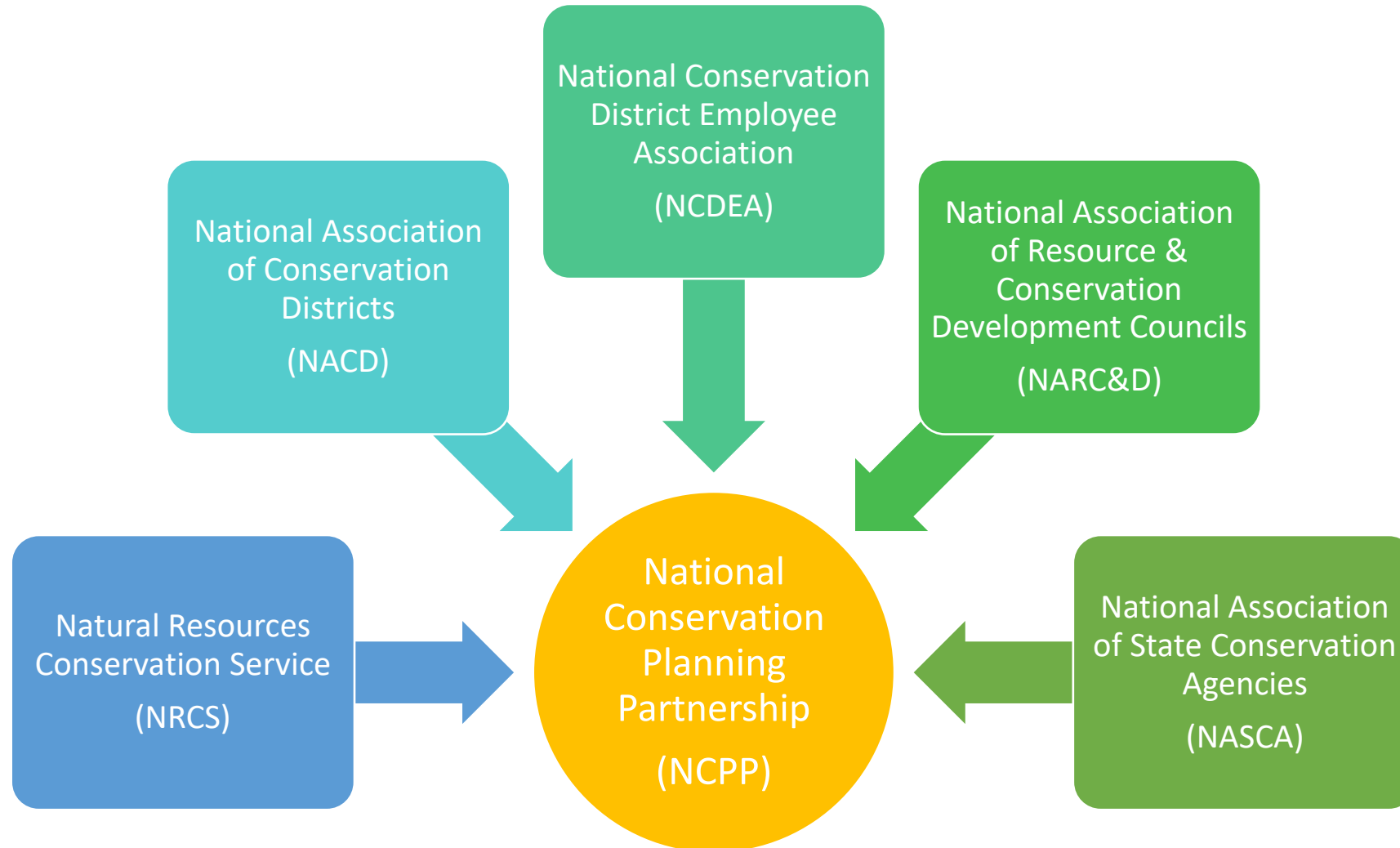
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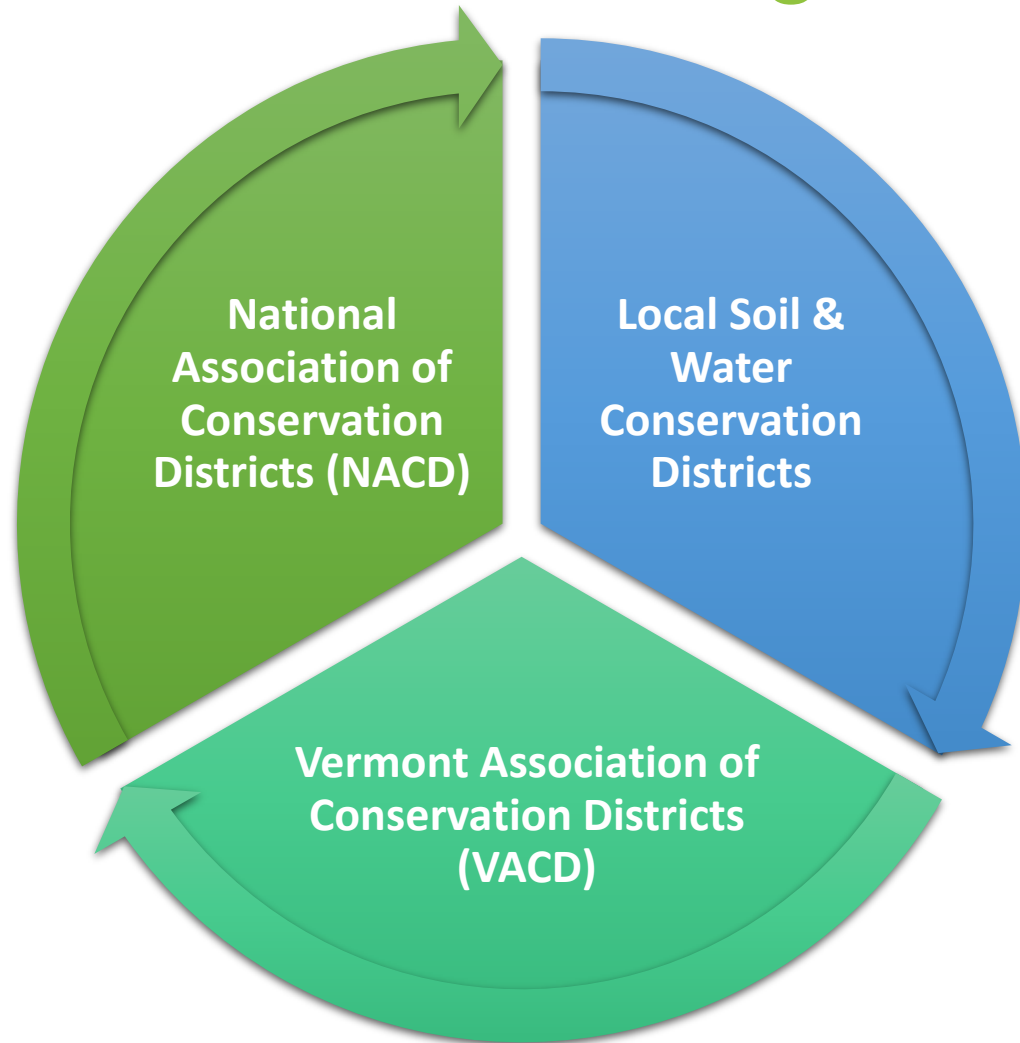
Locally-Led Conservation



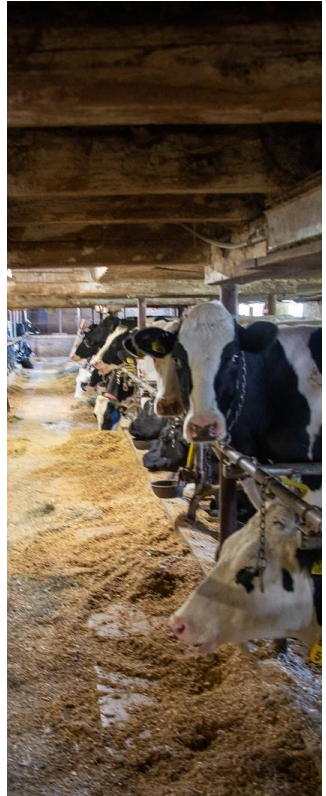
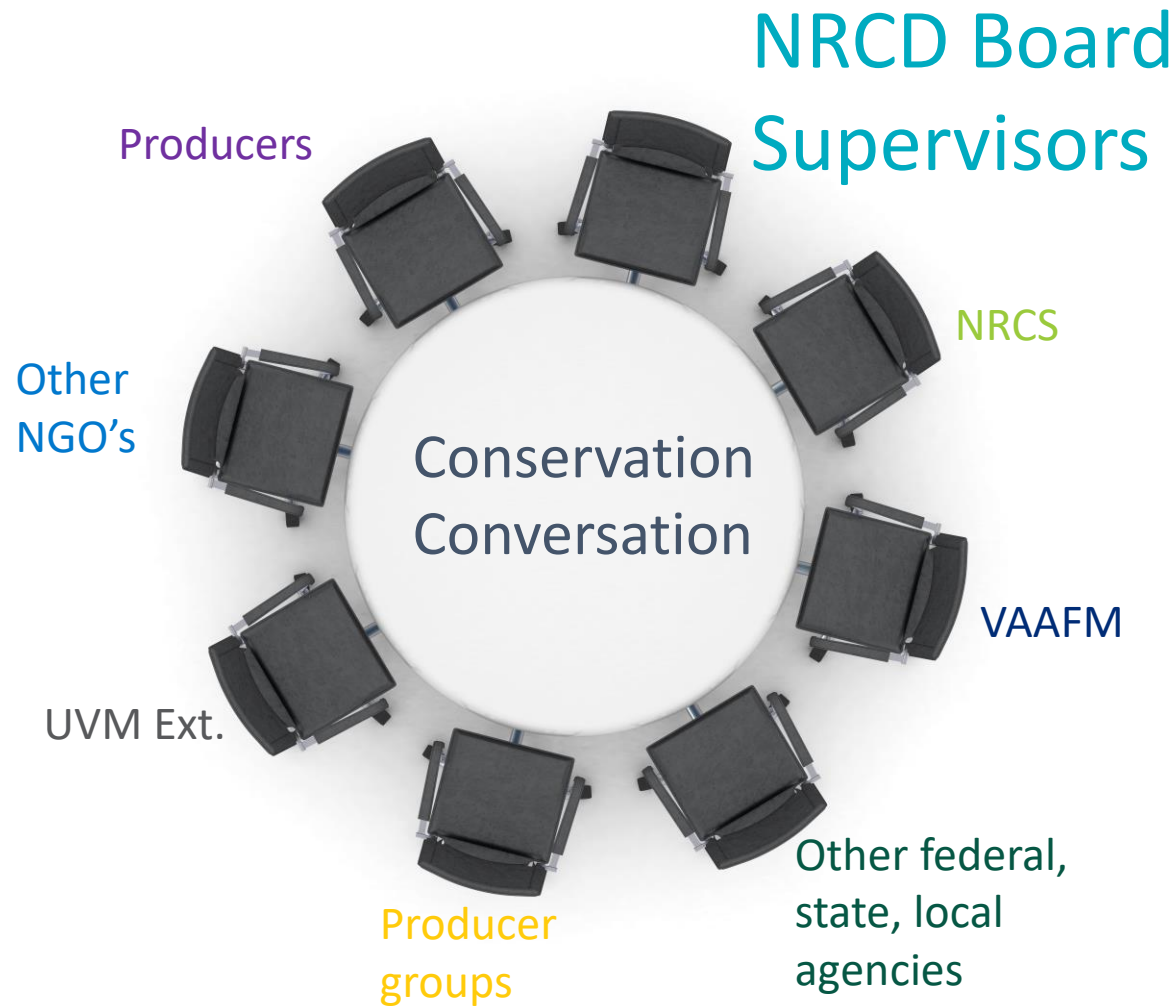
Conservation Partnerships



Conservation District Organizations



TLT's Vision of Natural Resource Conservation Districts



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Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)



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Locally Led Conservation



Strengthening *Locally Led Conservation Delivery* in Vermont



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Locally Led - Inform and Invest (FA)

• *Inform*

- Provide recommendations to NRCS via Local Work Groups and report to State Tech. Committee on April 23, 2025
- Feedback on:
 - Priority natural resource concerns
 - General program recommendations
 - Training needs
 - Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) improvements or interims

• *Invest*

- Recommend how NRCS will invest FA in local conservation priorities
- Tier to Conservation Action Plan (CAP)
- Locally Led Conservation Plans (mini RCPP proposals)
 - *Formerly known as “Locally Led Fund Pool” proposals*



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Locally Led Conservation Delivery (LLCD)

- What and Where?
 - Locally Led Conservation Delivery (LLCD) model
 - A strategic approach to conservation delivery across Vermont.
- Why?
 - Partner-centric
 - Mission delivery optimization
 - Focused and targeted EQIP delivery
 - Outcomes-driven (environmental, social, economic)
- Who and When?
 - All VT offices and NRCD's in FY2025, with proposals for FY2026.



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Why LLCD Strategic Vision?

- Partner-Centric: NRCS and NRCD's works closely with local, state, federal, and non-governmental organizations to strategically focus our investments on the *highest-priority needs* in Vermont.
- Cost-Effective: By collaborating with partners, NRCS and NRCD's leverage additional funding sources from other partner groups to make the most effective use of federal conservation funds. Leveraging funds increases the total conservation investment and provides economic stimulus to local and regional economies.
- Focused & Targeted: Instead of funding conservation projects on a random, farm-by-farm approach, NRCS and the NRCD's target their conservation investments in focused areas to achieve clearly defined natural resource goals as identified by local partners through a locally led process. This targeted approach harnesses the power of multiple landowners in one area undertaking similar conservation projects to achieve a watershed or regional result.



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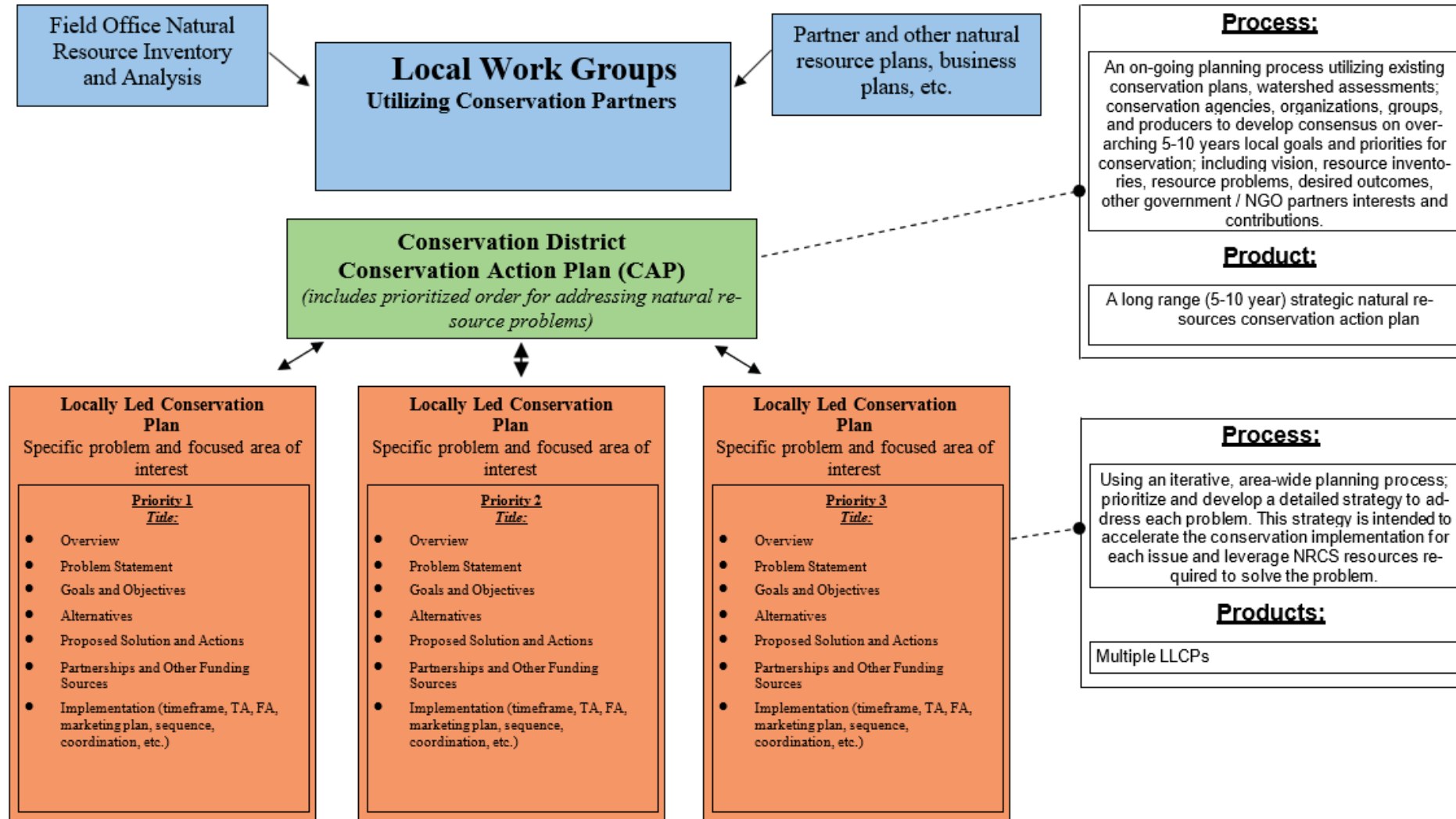
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Why LLCD Strategic Vision?

- Outcome-Driven: This strategic approach emphasizes planning with the end in mind. NRCS and NRCD's will work with local partners to set measurable goals to track and achieve meaningful conservation outcomes.
- Strategic Forecasting: The strategic nature of targeting conservation delivery helps NRCS, NRCD leadership, and field staff better understand short-term and long-term priorities across Vermont. These priorities will enable the partnership to better track, plan, and monitor conservation projects in real-time. Leadership's ability to forecast budget into the future will drive strategic investments today, for a better tomorrow.
- *Is there potential for NRCD's to aggregate feedback opportunities for/from multiple agencies?*



LLCD Strategic Framework



Field Office Natural
Resource Inventory
and Analysis

**Local Work Groups
Utilizing Conservation Partners**

Partner and other natural
resource plans, business
plans, etc.

**Conservation District
Conservation Action Plan (CAP)**
*(includes prioritized order for addressing natural re-
source problems)*

Process:

An on-going planning process utilizing existing conservation plans, watershed assessments; conservation agencies, organizations, groups, and producers to develop consensus on overarching 5-10 years local goals and priorities for conservation; including vision, resource inventories, resource problems, desired outcomes, other government / NGO partners interests and contributions.

Product:

A long range (5-10 year) strategic natural re-
sources conservation action plan

**Locally Led Conservation
Plan**

Specific problem and focused area of
interest

Priority 1
Title:

- Overview
- Problem Statement
- Goals and Objectives
- Alternatives
- Proposed Solution and Actions
- Partnerships and Other Funding Sources
- Implementation (timeframe, TA, FA, marketing plan, sequence, coordination, etc.)

**Locally Led Conservation
Plan**

Specific problem and focused area of
interest

Priority 2
Title:

- Overview
- Problem Statement
- Goals and Objectives
- Alternatives
- Proposed Solution and Actions
- Partnerships and Other Funding Sources
- Implementation (timeframe, TA, FA, marketing plan, sequence, coordination, etc.)

**Locally Led Conservation
Plan**

Specific problem and focused area of
interest

Priority 3
Title:

- Overview
- Problem Statement
- Goals and Objectives
- Alternatives
- Proposed Solution and Actions
- Partnerships and Other Funding Sources
- Implementation (timeframe, TA, FA, marketing plan, sequence, coordination, etc.)

Process:

Using an iterative, area-wide planning process; prioritize and develop a detailed strategy to address each problem. This strategy is intended to accelerate the conservation implementation for each issue and leverage NRCS resources required to solve the problem.

Products:

Multiple LLCs

*LLCP's = mini-RCPP proposals

Benefits of LLCD

- High-level of clarity on what we do, where we're headed, and how to get there
- Ability to focus investments (resource allocation) on high-priority needs
- Coordinate partner investments and resources
- Strengthen the locally led conservation process
- Increase operational efficiency at all levels
- Conveniently share success stories with the public and stakeholders



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FY25 Guidance Documents and Timeline

United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service	356 Mountain View Drive, Suite 105 Colchester, VT 05446 Phone: 802-951-6796 Fax: 855-794-3677
Vermont Bulletin: SB_VT_440-25-06 Subject: PGM – Locally Led Conservation Delivery (LLCD)	Date: October 11, 2024

Purpose: To provide Vermont NRCS (VT NRCS) employees, Natural Resource Conservation Districts (NRCD), and partners with guidance regarding the Locally Led Conservation Delivery (LLCD) process to be implemented in fiscal year 2025.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2025

Background:

Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Service (VT NRCS) and the Natural Resource Conservation Districts (NRCD) work closely with private landowners, local and state governments, and other conservation partners to develop solutions for natural resource challenges. NRCS and NRCDs have collaborated at the local level for over 85 years to ensure federal conservation funds address local conservation issues. More information about the historic relationship between NRCS and Conservation Districts can be found at: [Vermont Association of Conservation Districts. Our Land. Our Water. Our Future. \(vtncd.org\).](https://www.vtncd.org/)

Over the few decades, NRCS' approach to conservation delivery has been to fund conservation projects by individual farm and on a random, merit-based process. As federal budgets and resources fluctuate, we seek to find more strategic and efficient ways to deliver conservation in Vermont. As such, VT NRCS and NRCD leadership have developed a new paradigm for delivering technical and financial assistance through USDA's Farm Bill programs. We call this new way of doing business the Locally Led Conservation Delivery (LLCD) model. The LLCD model focuses on leveraging partnerships and funding to invest federal dollars strategically to restore, conserve, and protect Vermont's working landscapes.

This new Locally Led Conservation Delivery model is:

- **Partner-Centric:** NRCS and NRCD's works closely with local, state, federal, and non-governmental organizations to strategically focus our investments on the highest-priority needs in Vermont.
- **Cost-Effective:** By collaborating with partners, NRCS and NRCD's leverage additional funding sources from other partner groups to make the most effective use of federal conservation funds. Leveraging funds increases the total conservation investment and provides economic stimulus to local and regional economies.
- **Focused & Targeted:** Instead of funding conservation projects on a random, farm-by-farm approach, NRCS and the NRCD's target their conservation investments in focused areas to achieve clearly defined natural resource goals as identified by local partners through a locally led process. This targeted approach harnesses the power of multiple landowners in one area undertaking similar conservation projects to achieve a watershed or regional result.
- **Outcome-Driven:** This strategic approach emphasizes planning with the end in mind. NRCS and NRCD's will work with local partners to set measurable goals to track and achieve meaningful conservation outcomes.
- **Strategic Forecasting:** The strategic nature of targeting conservation delivery helps NRCS, NRCD leadership, and field staff better understand short-term and long-term priorities across

Farm Production and Conservation
FSA | NRCS | RMA | Business Center
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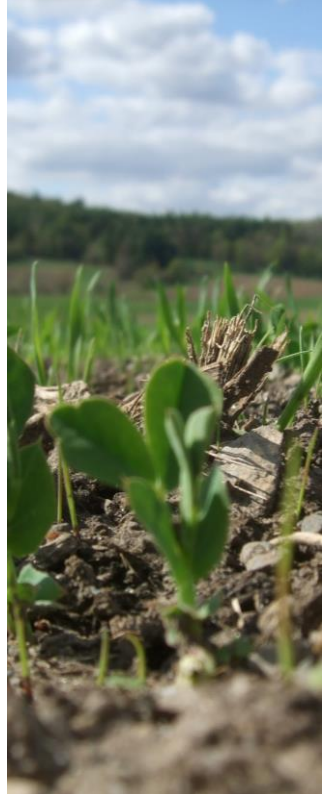
Appendix A – Locally Led Conservation Delivery (LLCD) 2025 Timeline

VT NRCS and NRCD Leadership Team (LT) Schedule for FY 2026 LLCD Delivery

Deadline	LT Task	Notes
October 18, 2024	DC and DM review content and prepare to review with NRCD board.	• If a mutual decision to pursue an LLCP is made, DC's and DM's should plan to review with NRCD boards by Dec. 15, 2024.
November 15, 2024	ASTC-FO and DM Representatives ensure CAP development is proceeding.	• Request State Office staff to help.
March 28, 2025	Final LLCP's are submitted to the ASTC-Programs	• DC's and DM's must use Appendix B and C (LLCP Templates) and Appendix F (LWG Feedback form) for submissions.
April 11, 2025	LLCP group review at NRCS LT meeting. DM Reps and VACD leadership invited.	• ASTC-Programs and ASTC-FO summarizes outcomes of all team LLCP's. • Local leadership (DC and DM) present new and scope-change LLCP. LT decides: - o Portfolio ready. - o Changes needed. - o Withdraw LLCP for FY 2026.
April 23, 2025	NRCD's present LWG feedback and LLCP proposals at April State Technical Committee meeting.	• This will be an annual occurrence during the April State Technical Committee meeting.
April 25, 2025	ASTC-FO ensures final LLCP's have been submitted.	• ASTC-FO must concur with changes made to LLCP.

Locally Led Conservation Plan (LLCP) Example

- Goal: Improve soil health and plant productivity
- Geographic Area: Landscape-scale area (watershed) or smaller
- Targeted resource concerns
 - Excessive Plant Pressure
 - Inadequate Feed and Forage
 - Soil Erosion
- Core conservation solutions (practices)
 - Forage and Biomass Planting (512)
 - *Supporting*: IPM (595), Prescribed Grazing (528), and Herb. Weed Treatment (315)



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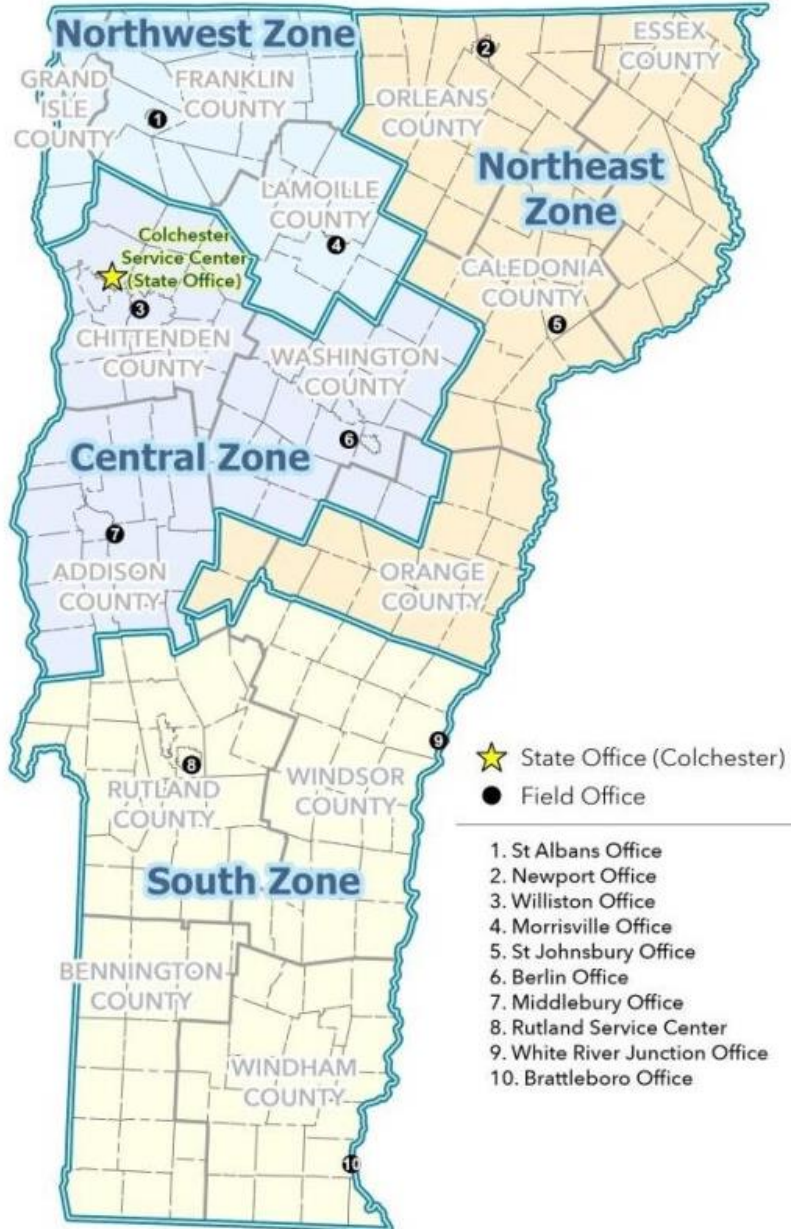
Vermont NRCS Organizational Re-alignment



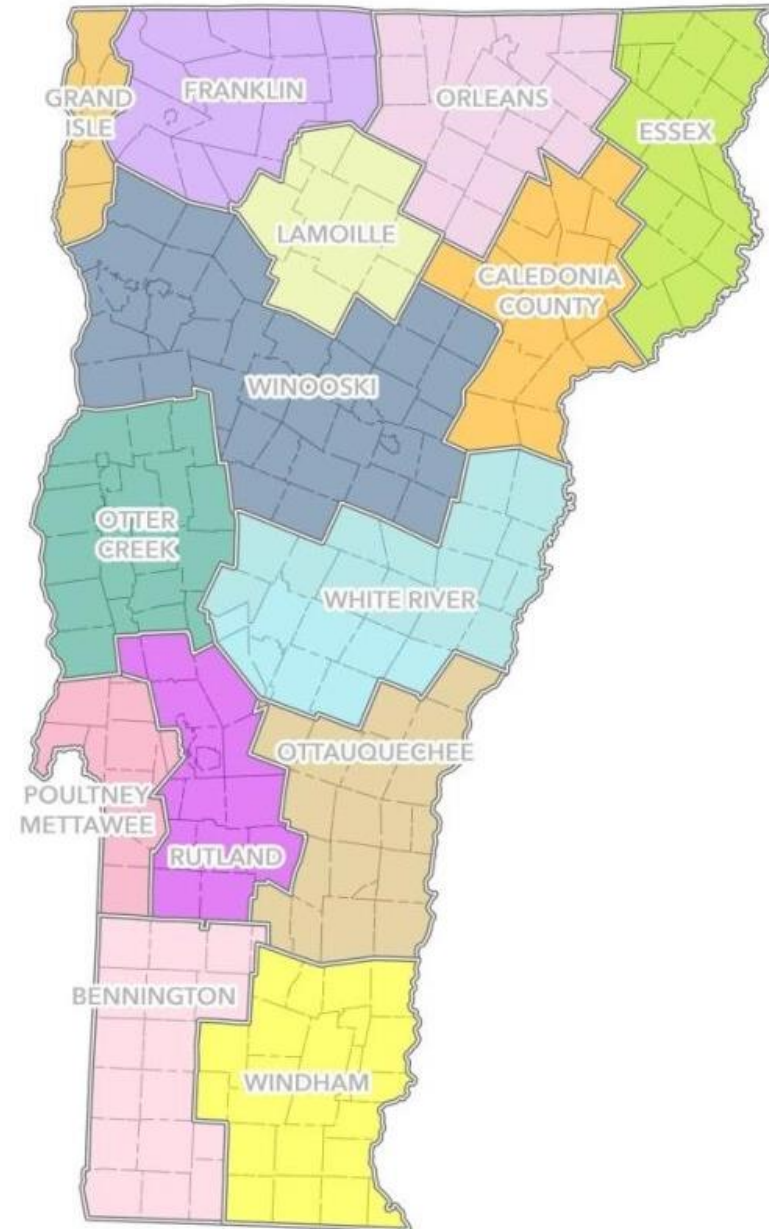
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Vermont NRCS Zones and Field Offices



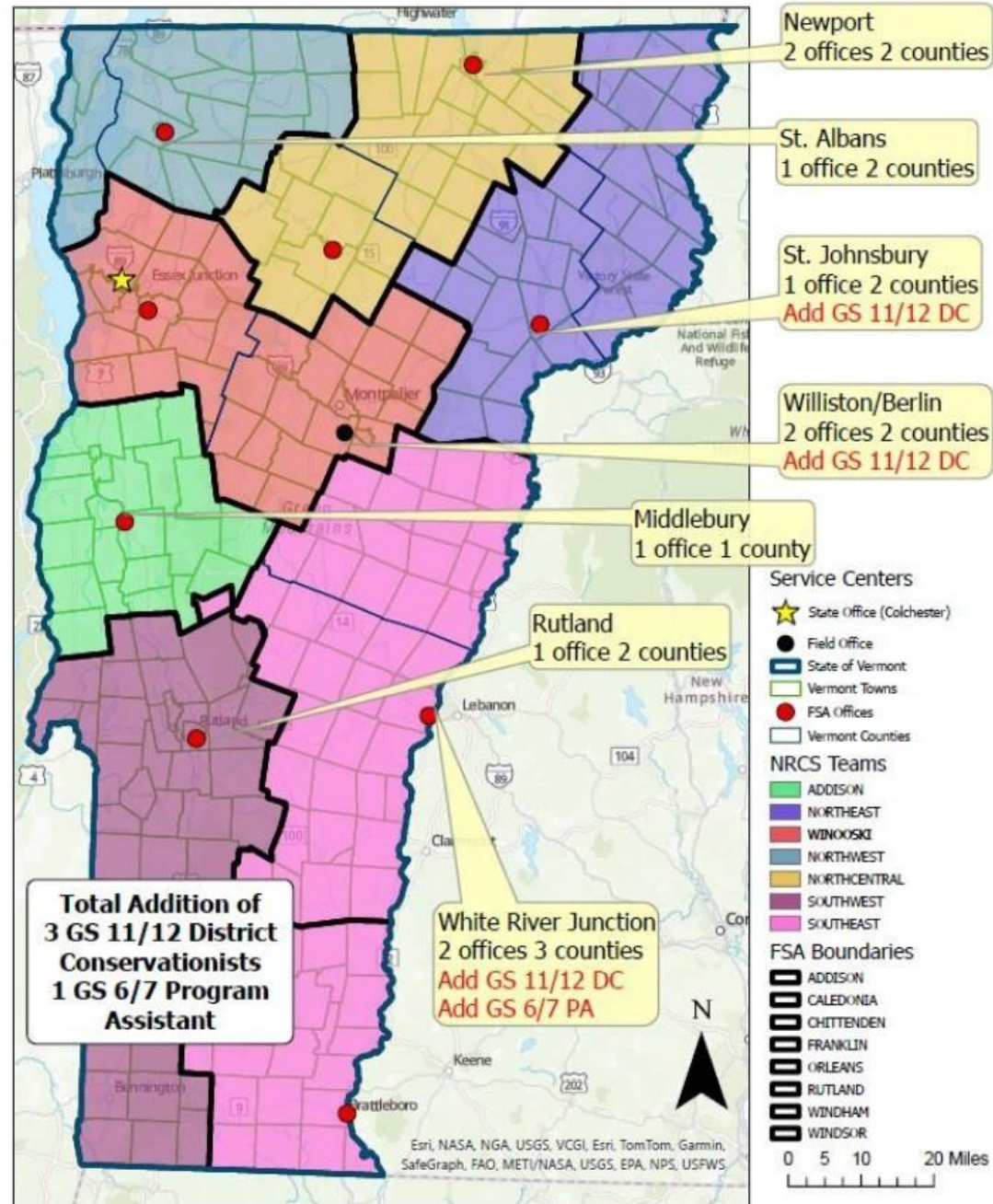
Vermont Conservation Districts





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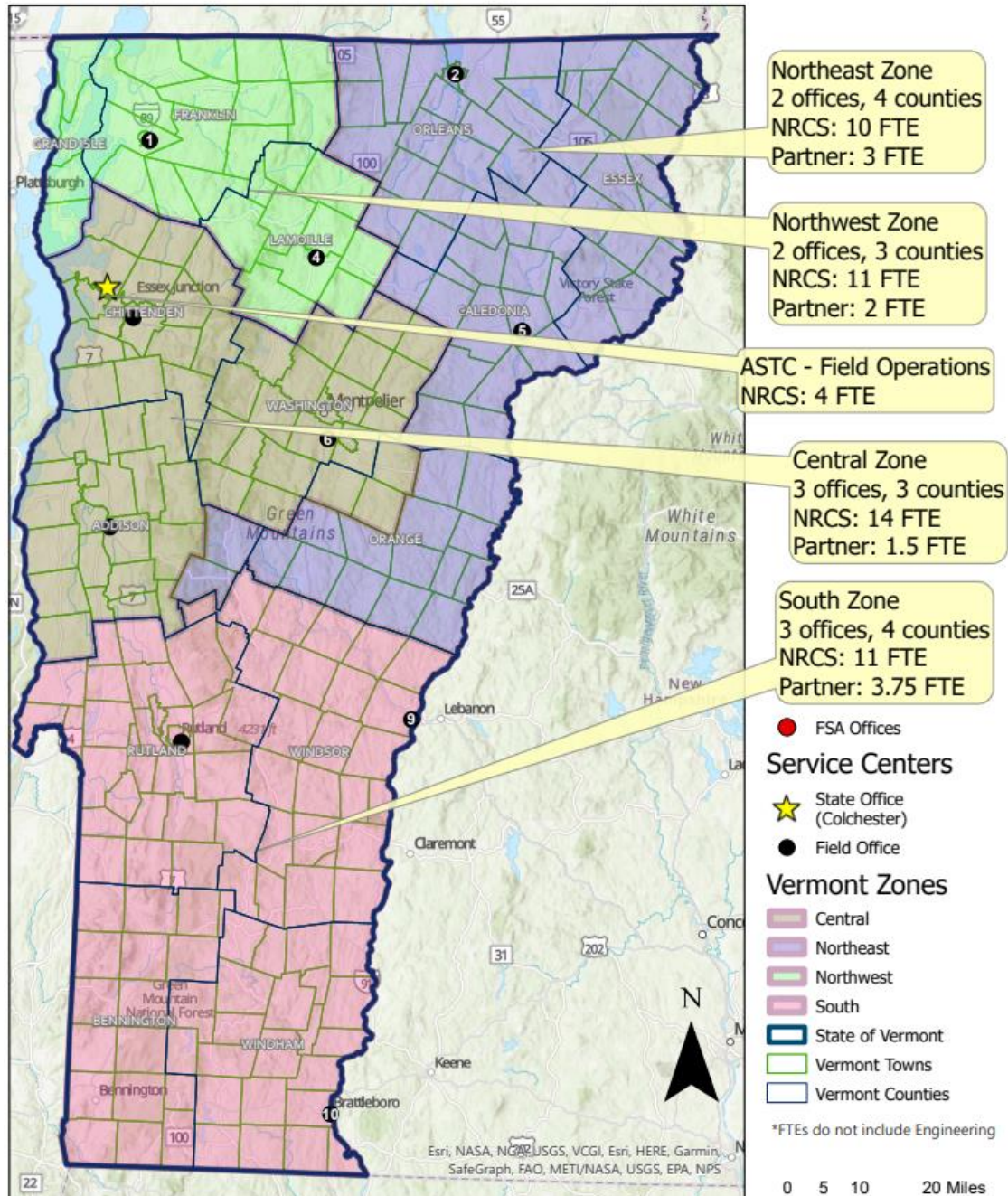
Recommended Field Operations Structure



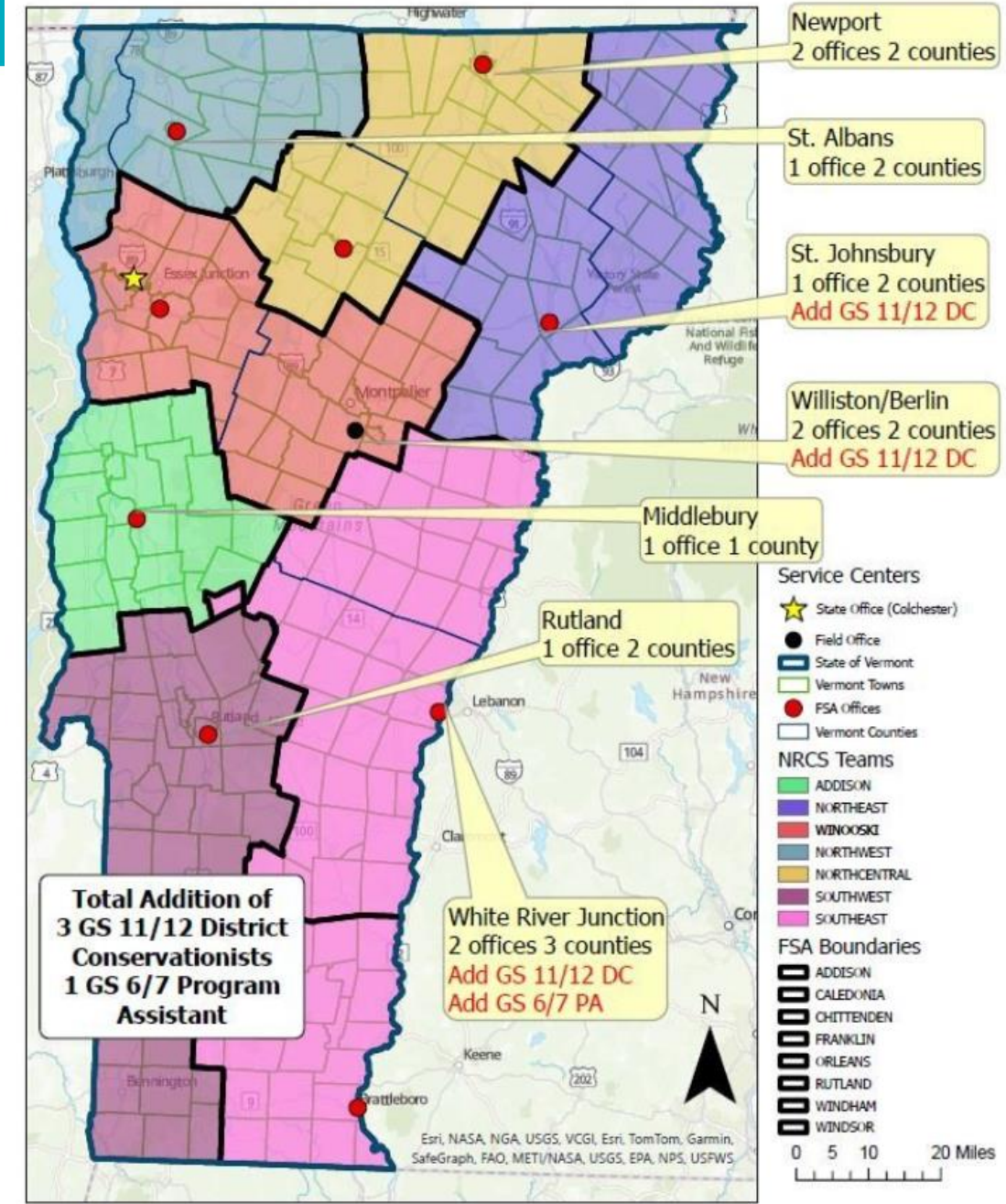
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Field Operations Structure - Existing



Recommended Field Operations Structure





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State Technical Committee – v 2.0



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Survey STC for Meeting Improvements in FY25

- Revisit frequency and content of State Tech. Committee meetings to ensure goals and objectives are met
- Lean into what is working well and what needs to be improved
- Clarify roles – STC members and public
- Standardize subcommittee meeting objectives and outputs
- Ensure broad representation of interest groups
- Survey delivery targeted for 1st Q. CY25



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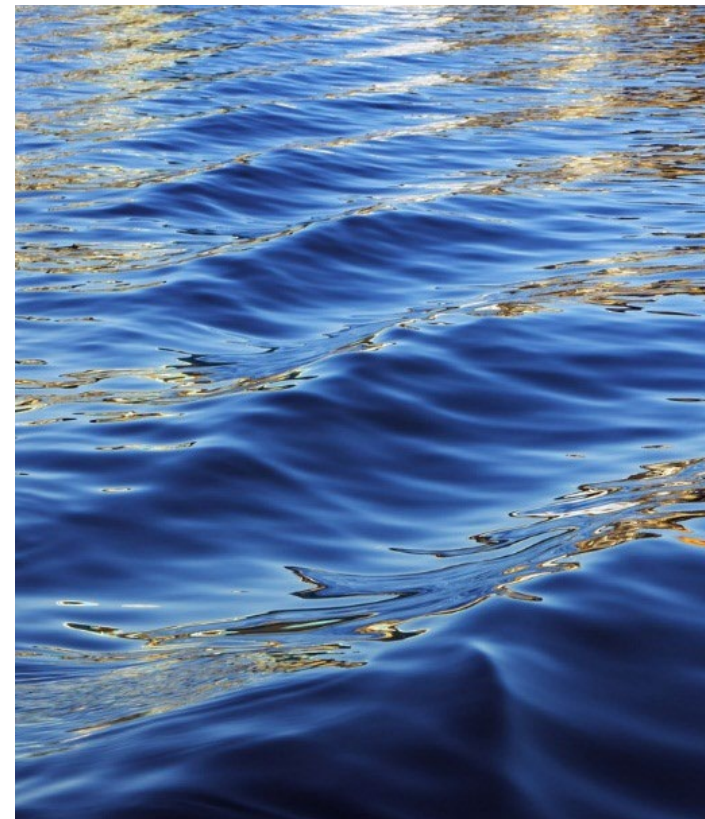
To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992

(English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

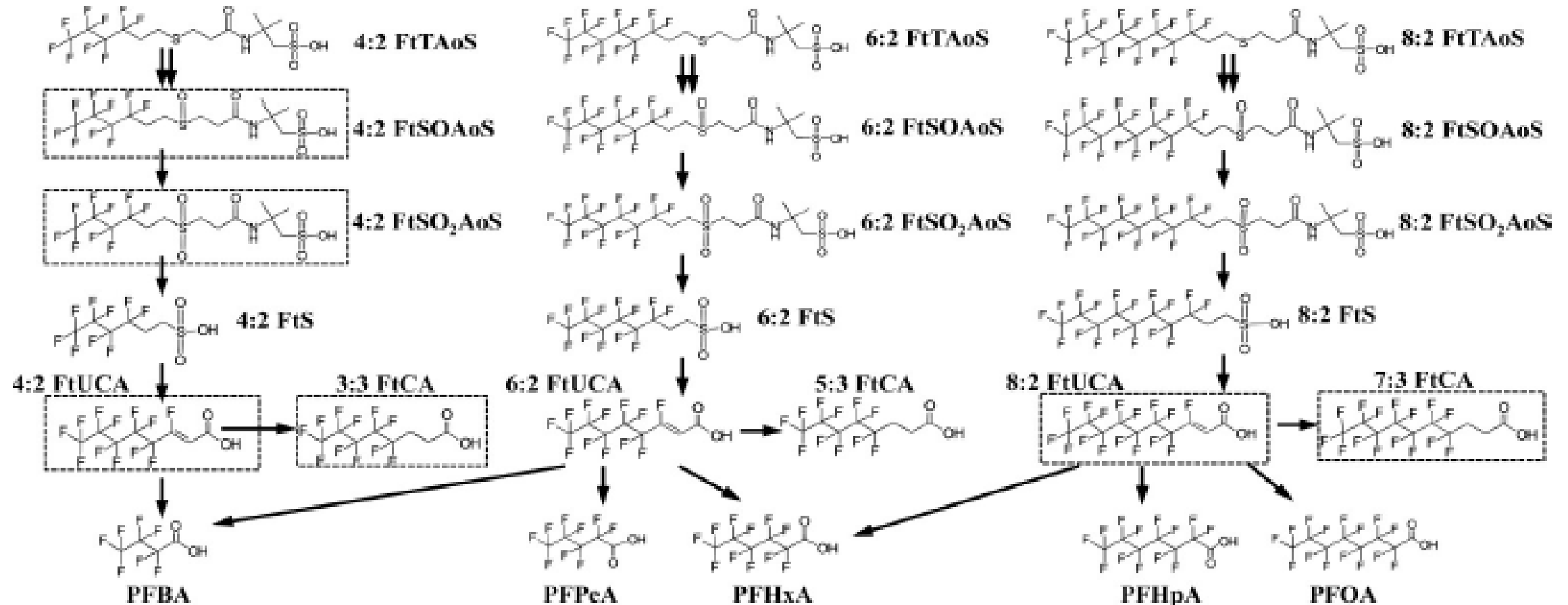


PFAS Roadmap

June 2024



Background: PFAS Transform, Don't Degrade



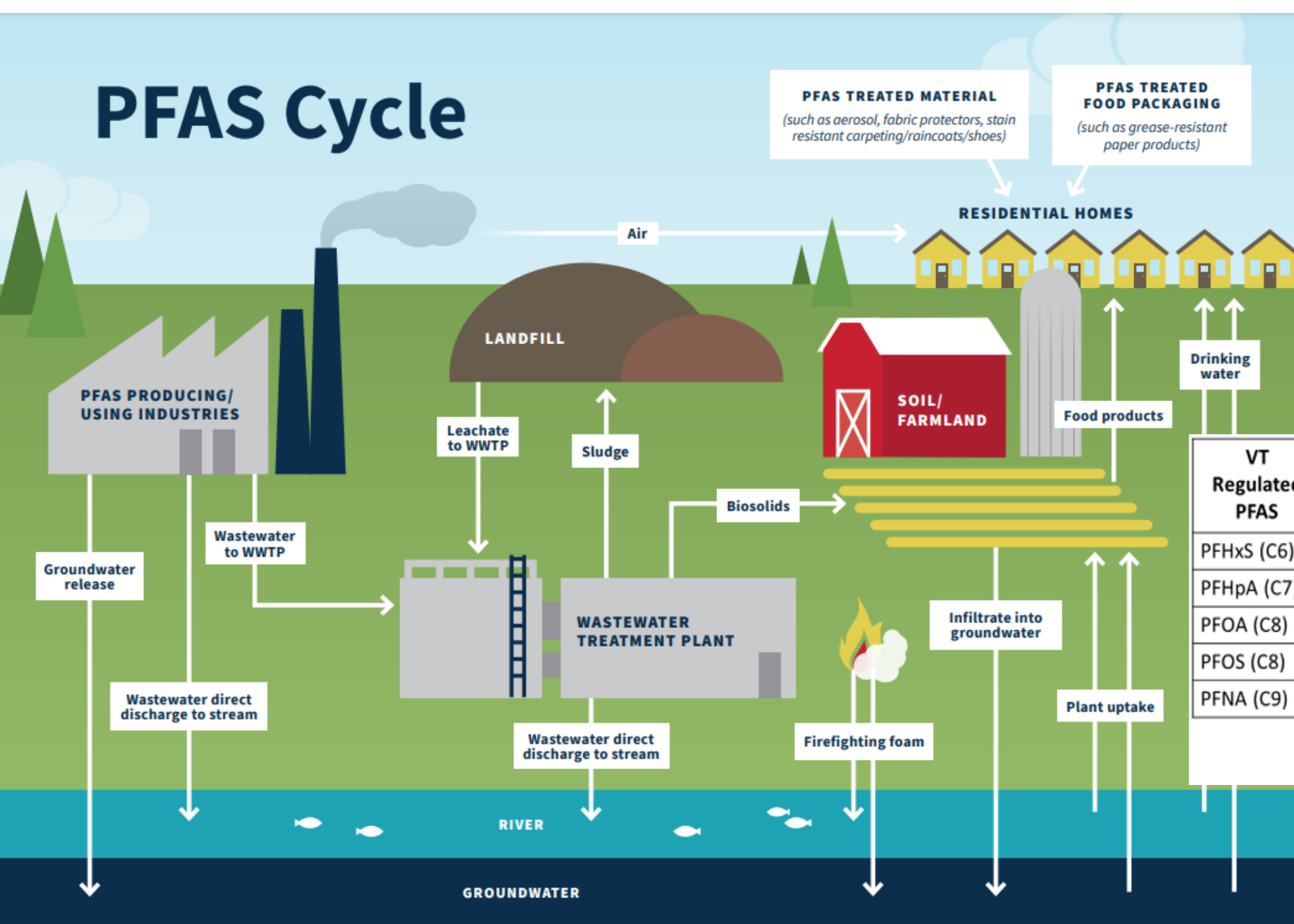
Rhoadsetal.*Environ.Sci.Technol.*2008

Benskinetal.*Environ.Sci.Technol.*2013

Harding-Marjanovic,K.C.etal.*Environ.Sci.Technol.*2015



PFAS Cycle



VT Regulated PFAS	Health Advisory/ MCL (ng/L)	Groundwater Enforcement Std (ng/L)	Residential Soil Dermal Contact (mg/kg)
PFHxS (C6)	20 ppt (*)	20 ppt (*)	1.22 ppm (sum)
PFHpA (C7)			
PFOA (C8)			
PFOS (C8)			
PFNA (C9)			

(*) = any combination of the 5 compounds



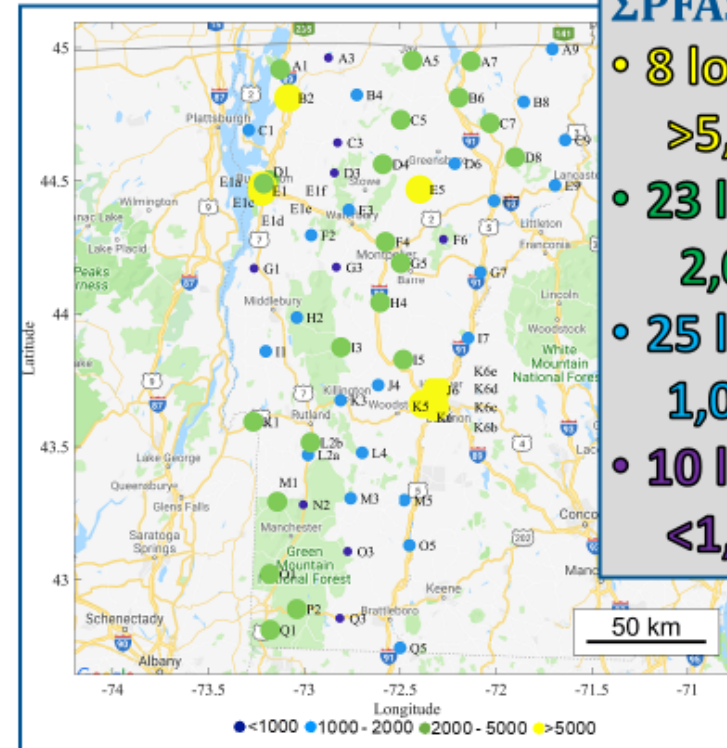
The University of Vermont



Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in Vermont Shallow Soils

Wenyu Zhu, Ph.D.
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
University of Vermont

Harrison Roakes, P.E.
Sanborn, Head & Associates



EPFAS (n=66)

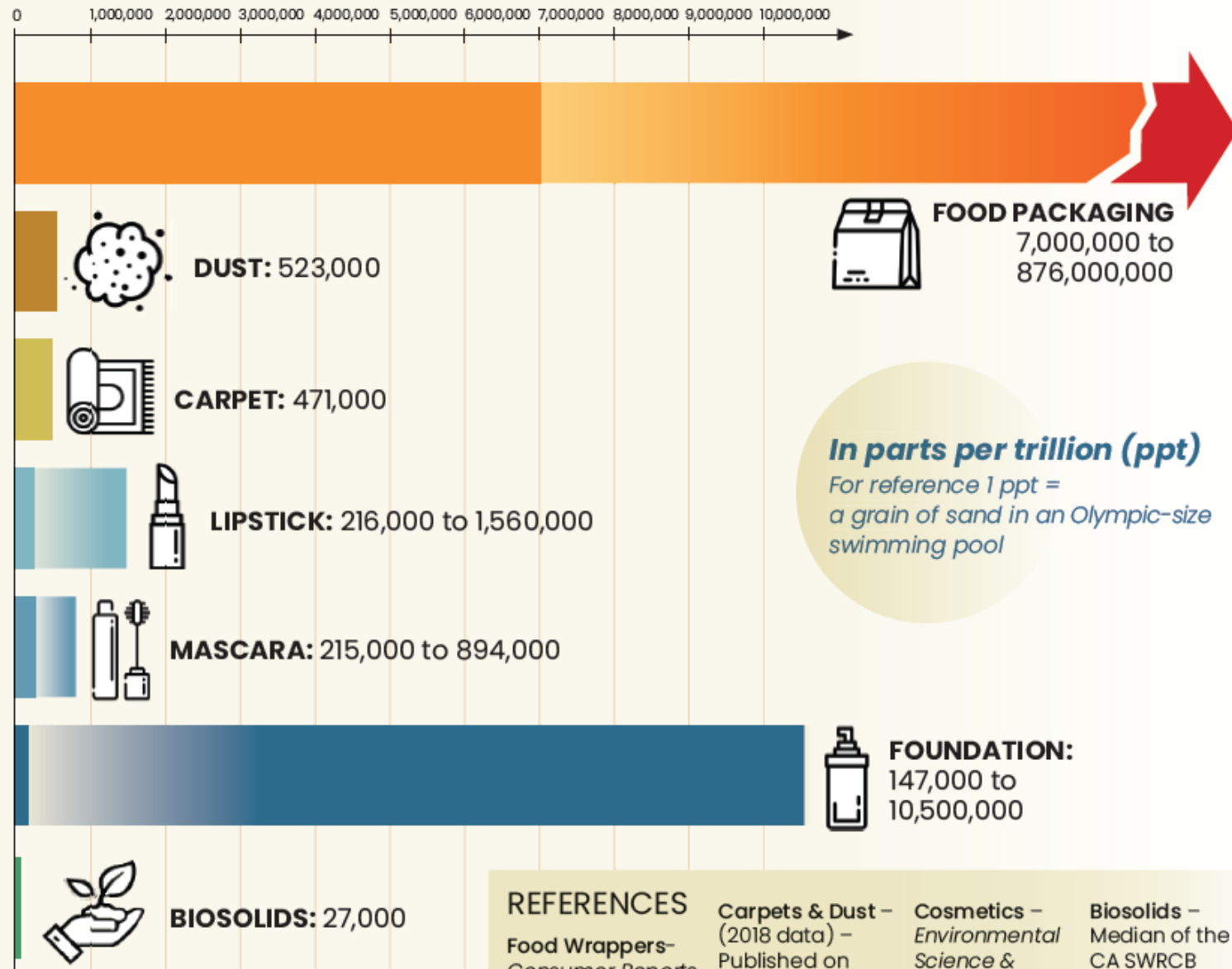
- 8 locations >5,000 ng/kg
- 23 locations 2,000-5,000 ng/kg
- 25 locations 1,000-2,000 ng/kg
- 10 locations <1,000 ng/kg

3

Mean = 1ppb PFOS and VT-5 @ 1-2 ppb



RELATIVE RANGES *in parts per trillion*



REFERENCES

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(May 2022)

Carpets & Dust -
(2018 data) -
Published on
May 14, 2020 in
Chemosphere.

Cosmetics -
*Environmental
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Technology* -
June 15, 2021

Biosolids -
Median of the
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Investigative
Order (2020)

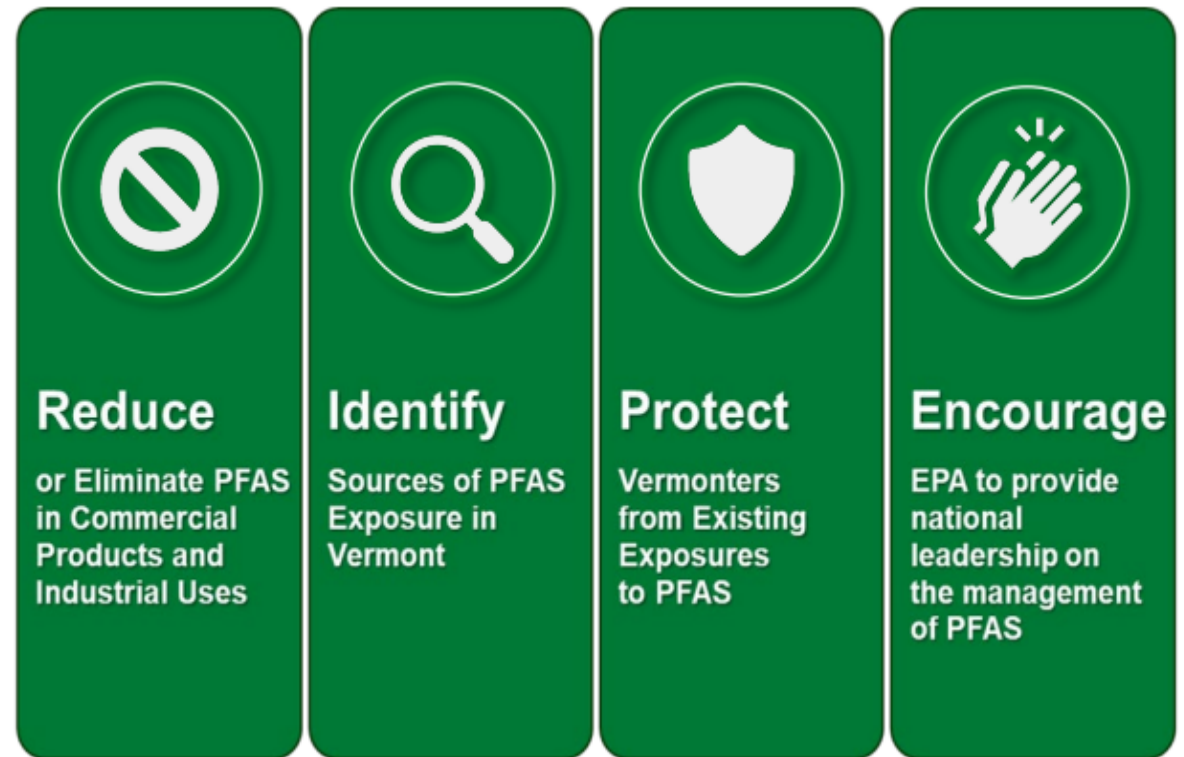
In Vermont, PFAS contamination was initially discovered in 2016, when perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA), one type of PFAS, was found in water supply wells in **Bennington and North Bennington**.

Since this discovery, VT ANR-DEC has undertaken significant efforts to protect Vermonters, including:

- Testing and remediating PFAS in public water systems.
- Responding to known contaminated sites.
- Evaluating PFAS concentrations in surface waters, wastewater treatment facilities, common household products, and agricultural inputs.

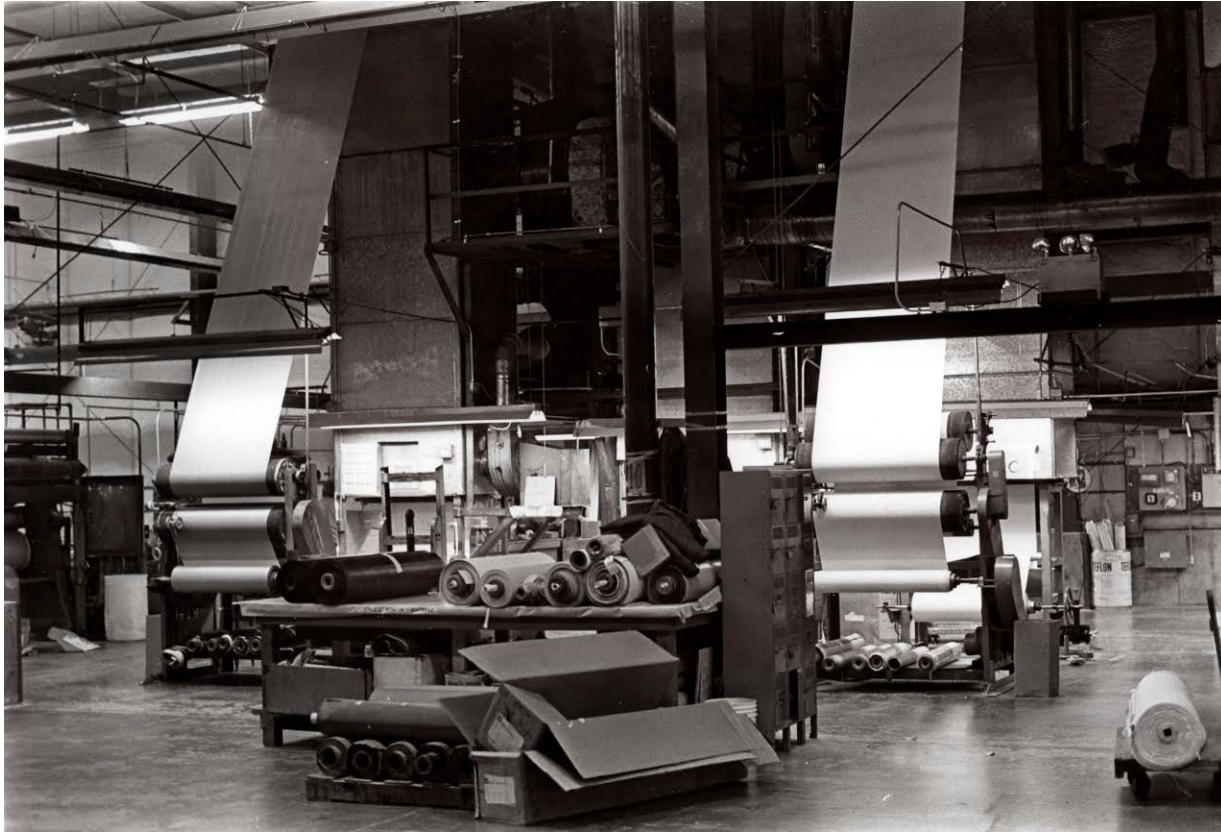


Vermont's PFAS Roadmap



North Bennington/Bennington PFOA

“Teflon Town: ChemFab's toxic legacy” -VT Digger



File photo/Bennington Banner

“Once The Pride Of North Bennington, Chemfab Made Fabrics Used Worldwide, And In Space” - VPR



DAVID ZALUBOWSKI / AP



Reduce or Eliminate PFAS in Commercial Products and Industrial Uses

Act 36: An act relating to restrictions on perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances and other chemicals of concern in consumer products

Developing Legislation and Regulations that Address Intentionally Added PFAS in Certain Products

Strengthen Existing Pollution Prevention Programs in DEC

Update: artificial turf, cookware, personal care products, juvenile products, textiles, PPE

- Firefighting Foam (class B).
 - Food Packaging.
 - Rugs and Carpets, Aftermarket Treatments
 - Ski Waxes
-
- Regional PFAS Legislation, NEWMOA
-
- Reducing use of toxic chemicals and generation of hazardous waste
 - Pretreatment Discharge Program
 - Public Education



Identify Sources of PFAS Exposure in Vermont

Investigate PFAS Occurrence in Private Water Supplies

- Private Well Testing Program, 500 residences
POET installation, site investigation

Implement Strategies to Address PFAS in Municipal Wastewater

- Comprehensive Testing at Vermont's POTWs
- Industrial Discharge Monitoring Requirements
- Pretreatment Discharges from Metal Finishers
- Testing Discharges to POTWs in Select Towns
- Monitoring and Managing PFAS from Landfills

Investigate PFAS Occurrence in Food Wastes that are Recycled to the Land

- EPA Pollution Prevention Grant 2022-2024

PFAS Impacts in Water Systems

VT MCL: **20 ppt** for PFOA, PFOS, PFHxA, PFHpA, PFNA

Public Water Supplies

- 620 systems subject to VT testing requirements (public community and NTNC systems).
- 19 (3%) systems have exceeded VT's current PFAS MCL
- 93 (15%) systems have a detectable level of a regulated PFAS

Private Water Supplies

- Approximately 40% of VT's drinking water is through a private supply.
- Sampled 514 wells.
- 11 (2%) exceeded VT's MCL
- 22 (4%) exceed EPA's proposed MCL
- 116 (23%) have a detectable level of a regulated PFAS

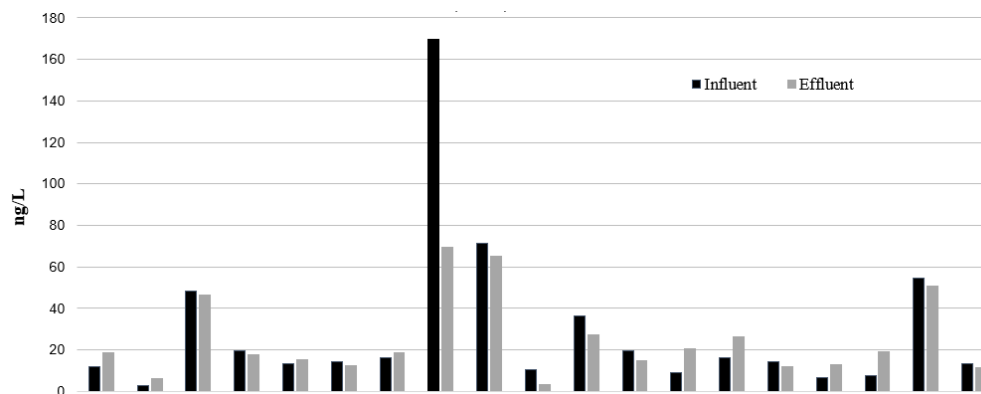
PFAS Impacts in Wastewater Systems

WWTF/POTW Testing

- Phase 1: testing influent and effluent, quarterly at all POTWs
- Grab samples (3 of 4 quarters complete)
- Avg influent = 26ppt (2-1349 ppt)
- Avg effluent = 68ppt (5-2323 ppt)
- Phase 2: Conduct sampling within sewers for source identification

Sewer Sampling

- Conducted testing within sewers of two VT communities
- Testing pump stations with measured flow allows for calculation of mass of PFAS (g/day) contributing to the POTW influent from that location
- Results show that **residential sectors** of towns contributed more mass of PFAS to POTW

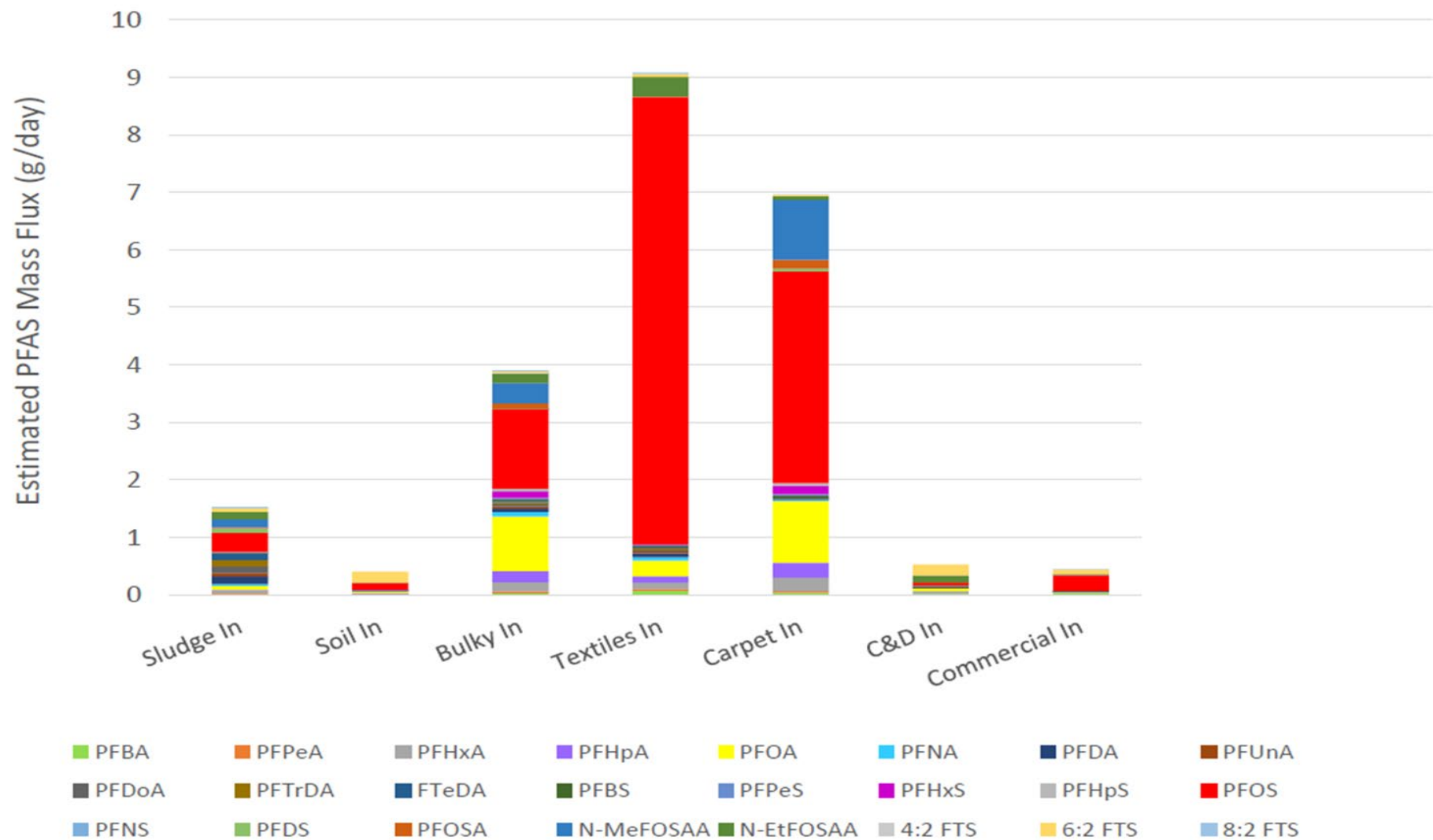


PFAS Testing Results at VT Land Application Sites

- 2019, tested soils and groundwater at all active class B biosolids and septage land application sites (~30 sites)
- If PFAS detected above VT GWES,
 - test proximate drinking water wells (0.25 mi)
 - site closed for land application and corrective action plan developed
- # active permits prior to testing = 14
- # active permits post testing = 4

- 65 fields had soil tested
- Avg VT PFAS in soil = 13.7 ppb (<0.5-48.5 ppb)
- 141 groundwater wells tested
- 31 (22%) of wells tested above VT GWES
- 44 private drinking water wells tested
- 0 (0%) of DW wells with PFAS above VT MCL and only a few had any detections

Major PFAS sources: Landfill Waste





Protect Vermonters from Existing Exposures to PFAS

Key Action Items

- ▶ Continue implementation of the Vermont PFAS Maximum Contaminant Level.
- ▶ Develop laboratory capacity in Vermont.
- ▶ Engage with impacted water systems to ensure maximum utilization of state and federal funding to address PFAS.
- ▶ Update drinking water standards based on EPA's regulation to establish national PFAS MCLs.
- ▶ Continue to identify and remediate PFAS contamination sources at sites across Vermont.
- ▶ Continue to evaluate the need for a Vermont Water Quality Standard based on expanded surface water and fish tissue testing.
- ▶ Develop an interim strategy to reduce risks associated with managing biosolids and residual materials that contain PFAS.
- ▶ Monitor potential discharges of PFAS from landfills, assess impacts to groundwater or water supplies, and provide treatment/remediation.
- ▶ Hold PFAS manufacturers accountable.



Protect Vermonters from Existing Exposures to PFAS

Public Drinking Water Systems

- PFAS VT MCL @ 20 ppt
- Testing at all PCWS and NTNCs, and select TNCs
- Response/Remediation based on levels of PFAS
- Funding: SRF, Emerging Contaminants Grants
- EPA's proposed MCL

Investigating and Remediating Sites Contaminated by PFAS

- Airports and Fire Fighting Facilities
- Superfund Sites

Adopting Water Quality Standards and Monitoring Surface Waters for PFAS

- Water Quality Standards (bioaccumulation stds)
- Monitoring Surface Water and Fish Tissue



Protect Vermonters from Existing Exposures to PFAS

Investigations and Response to PFAS in Wastewater Sludges

Reducing the Impacts of PFAS from Landfills on the Environment

Holding PFAS Manufacturers Accountable

- Interim Strategy for PFAS in Biosolids

Table 2. PFAS Screening Values (Residual Materials)

PFAS Compound	Concentration (ug/kg; ppb)
Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS)	3.40
Perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)	1.60
Perfluoroheptanoic acid (PFHpA)	0.84
Perfluorononanoic acid (PFNA)	0.44
Perfluorohexane sulfonate (PFHxS)	0.38

- Monitoring and Managing PFAS from Landfills
- Leachate treatment
- State's Lawsuit against 3M, DuPont



Encourage EPA to Provide National Leadership on the Management of PFAS

Key Action Items

- ▶ Establish surface water standards for the protection of human health.
- ▶ Advocate that EPA ban or restrict certain PFAS containing products using the Toxic Substances Control Act.
- ▶ Establish standards for classes of PFAS.
- ▶ Provide research on the health effects for additional PFAS compounds.
- ▶ Improve and expand methods for detecting PFAS compounds in environmental media.
- ▶ Provide guidance/regulation for the disposal and destruction of PFAS.

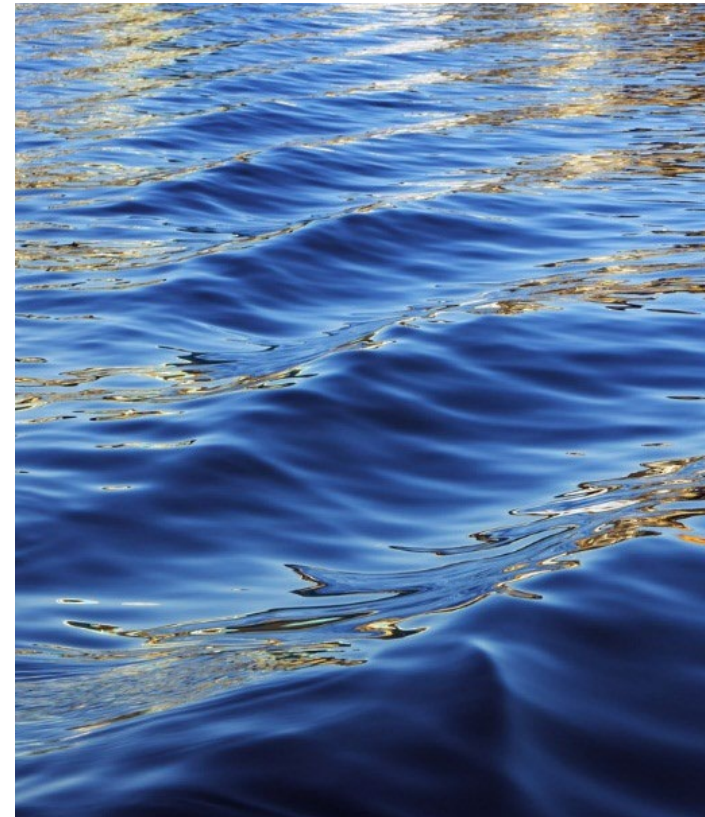
VT PFAS Hotline: (802) 693-0206

<https://dec.vermont.gov/pfas>

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Resources





Vermont State Technical Committee FY 2025 Dates

January 22, 2025

April 30, 2025

July 16, 2025

October 22, 2025

