

**Windham NRCD**  
**Board of Supervisors Meeting**  
**February 24, 2026**  
**Board Packet**  
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Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District

Supervisor Meeting

6:00 PM, Tuesday, February 24, 2026

301 Barrows Rd

Brattleboro, VT 05301

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83604538356>

Agenda

*Land Acknowledgement*

*We respectfully acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Abenaki People, who have stewarded this land throughout the generations.*

Review Agenda for Additions or Changes

New Business

1. NRCS Updates
2. Avian Technician Position - **Board to Potentially Approve Hire of Avian Technician for 2026**
3. FY27 Budget - **Board to Potentially Establish Budget Subcommittee**
4. New Office Space Update

On-Going Items

1. VACD Updates
2. Annual Gathering/Act 59 Listening Session Planning
3. Monthly Report on District Activities

Secretary's Report

**Approve minutes from January 27, 2026**

Review Upcoming Supervisor Meeting Dates:

Next meeting: March 16, 2026

Other Business

Future Agenda Items:

# Staff Survey (Pay Increases and Building)

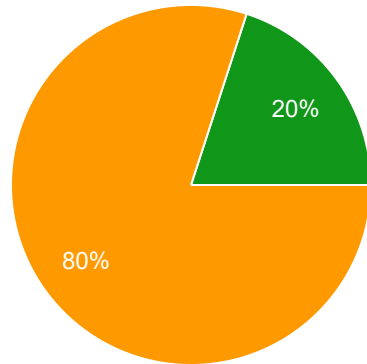
5 responses

[Publish analytics](#)

If funding is limited such that we have to choose between pay raises and renting an office space, what would your preference be?

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5 responses

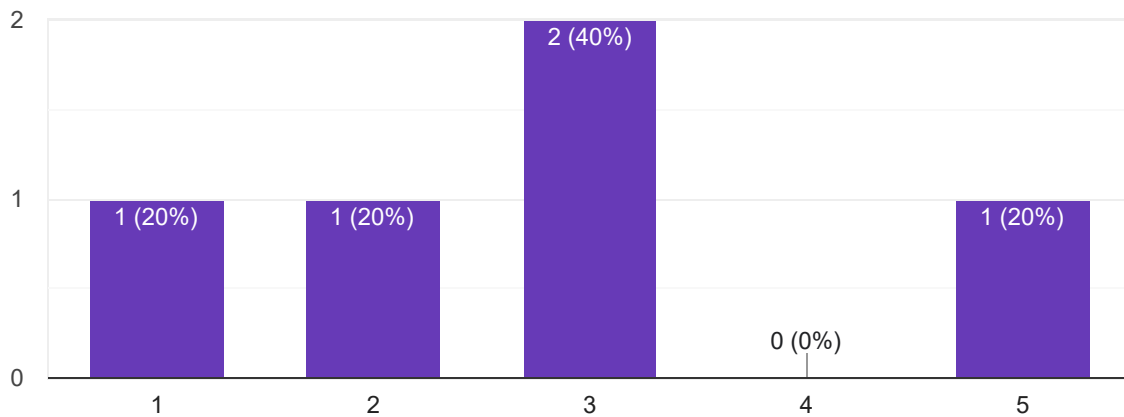


- I would be willing to forgo my step increase in FY27 if it allows us to rent an office space
- I would be willing to forgo a cost-of-living increase in FY27 if it allows us to rent an office s...
- I would be willing to forgo both my step increase and a cost o...
- I would prefer to receive both pay increases rather than rent...

How many days do you typically work in the office each week currently? (I realize this varies seasonally, so please estimate an average for the year)

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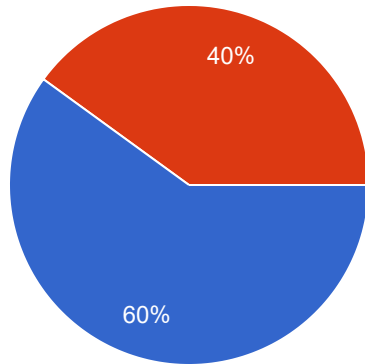
5 responses



How likely would you be to work more days in the office if we had a more adequate working space?



5 responses

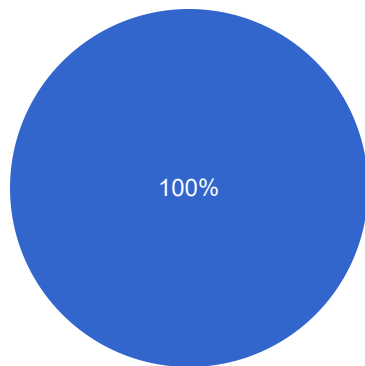


- Much more likely
- Somewhat more likely
- Not more likely at all
- Less likely (I prefer to work in the office in our current space)

If we choose to move into a new space and it is more publicly visible and accessible, it may be necessary to arrange coverage to welcome walk-ins and respond to requests for assistance. Would you be willing to commit to one day per week of serving this role if so? (depending on how we arrange things with partners it could be less, but for the purposes of this question, please assume it would be one day per week year round).



5 responses



- Yes
- No



Do you have any other thoughts you'd like to share about this decision?

5 responses

No

One thing that is important to take into this decision is how likely we might be to lose our space anyway, due to administration changes. And if it is likely, we as an organization have some capacity for working entirely remotely for a short period of time if needed, but I think if we find a really good opportunity, it isn't a bad idea to get in front of that before it happens.

Maybe have a chat with staff or staff + board about funding ideas. A go-fund me/ mailing to fundraise, limit unfunded work by sending only one staff member to events (such as VAWQP, VACD annual meeting, board meetings, other), limit professional development/ staff trainings as current staff are trained up?

nope

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**State of Vermont**  
**State Natural Resources Conservation Council**  
PO Box 231  
Waitsfield, VT 05673  
[conservation.vermont.gov](http://conservation.vermont.gov)

## Supervisory Union Guidance

### February 2026

#### **Supervisory Union Structure**

Supervisory Unions are intermediary governmental structures in between Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCDs) at the local level and the State Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC) at the state level.

The formation and structure of supervisory unions is outlined in statute under [Title 10 Chapter 33](#).

There are currently six Supervisory Unions in Vermont. All fourteen NRCDs in Vermont belong to a Supervisory Union:

#### Central Supervisory Union

- Winooski NRCD
- White River NRCD

#### Northeast Supervisory Union

- Caledonia County NRCD
- Essex County NRCD
- Orleans County NRCD

#### Northwest Supervisory Union

- Franklin County NRCD
- Grand Isle County NRCD
- Lamoille County NRCD

#### South Central Supervisory Union

- Otter Creek NRCD
- Rutland NRCD

#### Southeast Supervisory Union

- Ottauquechee NRCD
- Windham NRCD

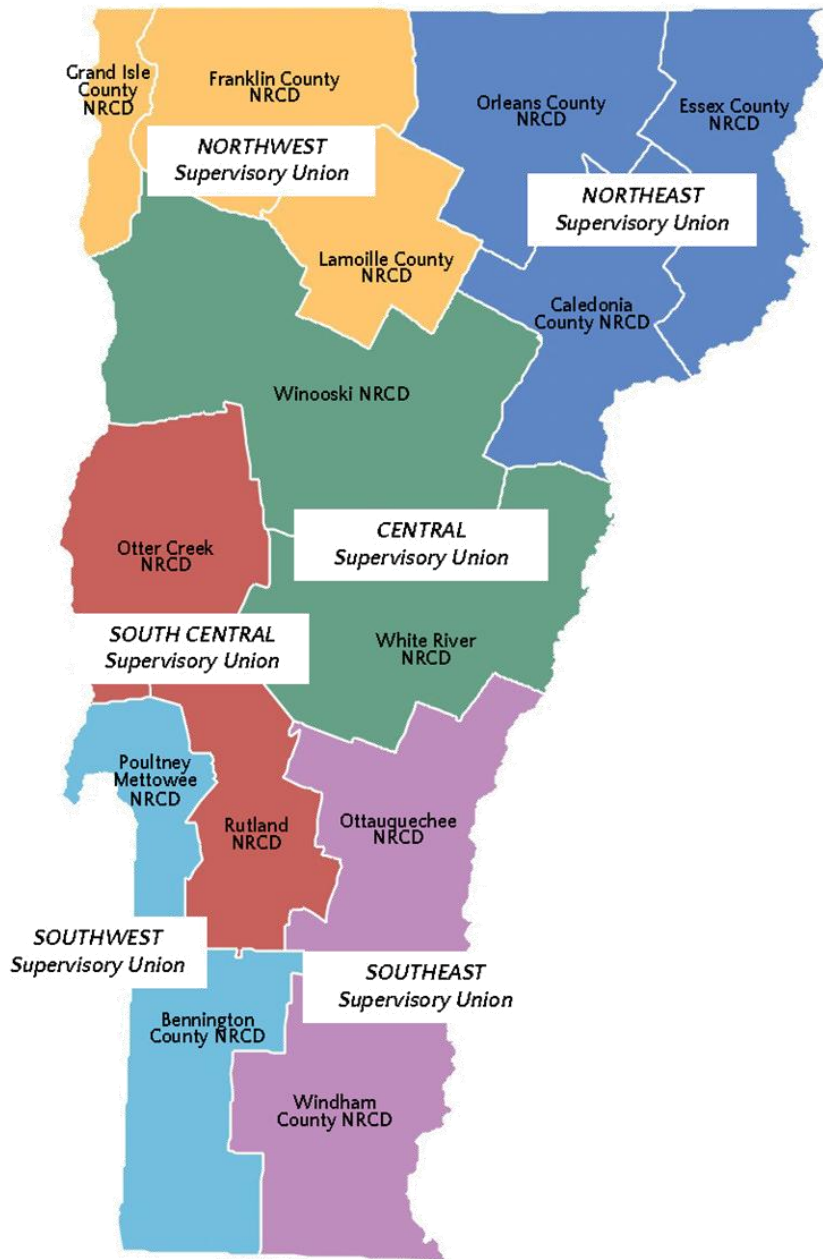
#### Southwest Supervisory Union

- Bennington NRCD
- Poultney-Mettowee NRCD



State of Vermont  
State Natural Resources Conservation Council  
PO Box 231  
Waitsfield, VT 05673  
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State Natural Resources Conservation Council  
Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Districts  
*Supervisory Unions*



### **Powers & Duties of Supervisory Unions**

Supervisory Unions are created for administrative purposes, such as helping to carry out a broadened program of conservation, as needed, as well as facilitating communication and coordination with local, state, and federal entities. ([10 V.S.A. § 801](#)). Per statute ([10 V.S.A. § 805](#)), the board of directors of the Supervisory Union has the following powers and duties:

- (1) It shall keep a record of all proceedings and resolutions and provide for an annual audit of receipts and disbursements.<sup>1</sup>
- (2) It shall offer appropriate assistance to the member districts.
- (3) It shall coordinate the programs of the member districts so far as this may be done by advice and consultation.
- (4) It shall elect a Council member to represent their union for a two-year term. The Council member must be a district supervisor from a district within the union, but need not be on the union board. They may also elect an alternate Council member who must be a supervisor from a district within the union and need not be on the union board.
- (5) It may employ a union conservationist and shall determine his qualifications, duties and salary, with the advice and approval of the Council, but he or she must be an employee of the State of Vermont under the classified system.
- (6) It shall provide for the execution of surety bonds for all employees and officers who are entrusted with funds.<sup>2</sup>
- (7) It may, within appropriation limits, enter into agreements to furnish financial or other aid to any agency, governmental or otherwise, in planning for the conservation, development, and use of natural resources.

Please note that Supervisory Unions are nonregulatory entities. They serve a function of providing assistance to their member districts, coordinating services and resources across districts, and facilitating communication and coordination between districts. At their most basic level, Supervisory Unions are the mechanism of electing district supervisors to Council and should meet at least once per year. (See below.)

While enabled in statute, historically, Supervisory Unions have not themselves employed employees or held funds or grant agreements. That remains a possibility, and if a Supervisory Union is interested in moving in this direction, NRCC can help answer questions about this process and provide support around administrative and organizational requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> Supervisory Unions should keep minutes of their meetings. Historically, Supervisory Unions themselves have not been entrusted with funds or had their own budgets. Because of this, there is no need for an annual audit, unless the Supervisory Union itself becomes an entity that holds, receives, or distributes funds or other assets.

<sup>2</sup> To date, no Supervisory Union officers have been entrusted with funds. If a Supervisory Union were to receive, hold, or disburse funds or other assets, then arrangements for the appropriate bonding and insurance should be made. Please contact the NRCC Administrator with questions.



### **Electing Supervisory Union Board Members**

Supervisory Unions operate as boards. Each NRCD that is a member of the Supervisory Union appoints someone to serve on the Supervisory Union board. Each NRCD that is a member of the Supervisory Union may also choose to appoint an alternate to the Supervisory Union board. ([10 V.S.A. § 803](#)) Note that statute does not provide for specific terms or election intervals for Supervisory Union board members. In the absence of guidance, districts may make Supervisory Union board appointments whenever they choose. It is recommended that appointments be recorded in the minutes of a meeting of the NRCD's board of supervisors.

### **Supervisory Union Meetings & Records**

Supervisory Unions are governmental subdivisions of the State of Vermont. This means they are subject to Open Meeting Law and Public Records laws. Accordingly, meetings of Supervisory Unions should be warned the same as district meetings and minutes should be taken and posted publicly. As with district meetings, it is recommended that Supervisory Union meetings be set on a regular schedule. This can help with compliance around meeting notices but can also help ensure a regular schedule for SU Rep elections and other business. If a regular schedule is not established, it is recommended that Supervisory Union meetings be treated as special meetings, subject to 48-hour meeting notice requirements.

NRCC has created a section of its [website](#) dedicated to Supervisory Unions. This page can help Supervisory Unions meet notice requirements for public meetings and host meeting minutes to comply with open records laws. Supervisory Unions are encouraged to coordinate with the NRCC Communications Manager, Julia King, to facilitate communications about Supervisory Union meetings. Please reach out to Julia at [julia.king@partner.vermont.gov](mailto:julia.king@partner.vermont.gov) to get SU meetings posted on the NRCC website. In addition, going forward, the NRCC Administrator will ask for copies of Supervisory Union meeting minutes to be retained on file.

### **Electing Supervisory Union Representatives (SU Reps) to NRCC**

Supervisory Union boards are responsible for electing a representative to serve on the NRCC Board. NRCC encourages Supervisory Unions to also elect an alternate. Per 10 V.S.A. § 805:

[The Supervisory Union board] shall elect a Council member to represent their union for a two-year term. The Council member must be a district supervisor from a district within the union, but need not be on the union board. They may also elect an alternate Council member who must be a supervisor from a district within the union and need not be on the union board.

Statute does not establish a specific election cycle, so each Supervisory Union must determine the start and end of the two-year term for their Supervisory Union Council Representative. Once that term is established, it should be communicated to NRCC. It is recommended that the Supervisory Union elect their Representative to Council (and any Alternate) at its



annual meeting. The election should be made by a vote of the Supervisory Union board, and the outcome should be recorded in the meeting minutes. Election outcomes should be communicated to NRCC as soon as possible. NRCC may create and distribute forms to facilitate this reporting.

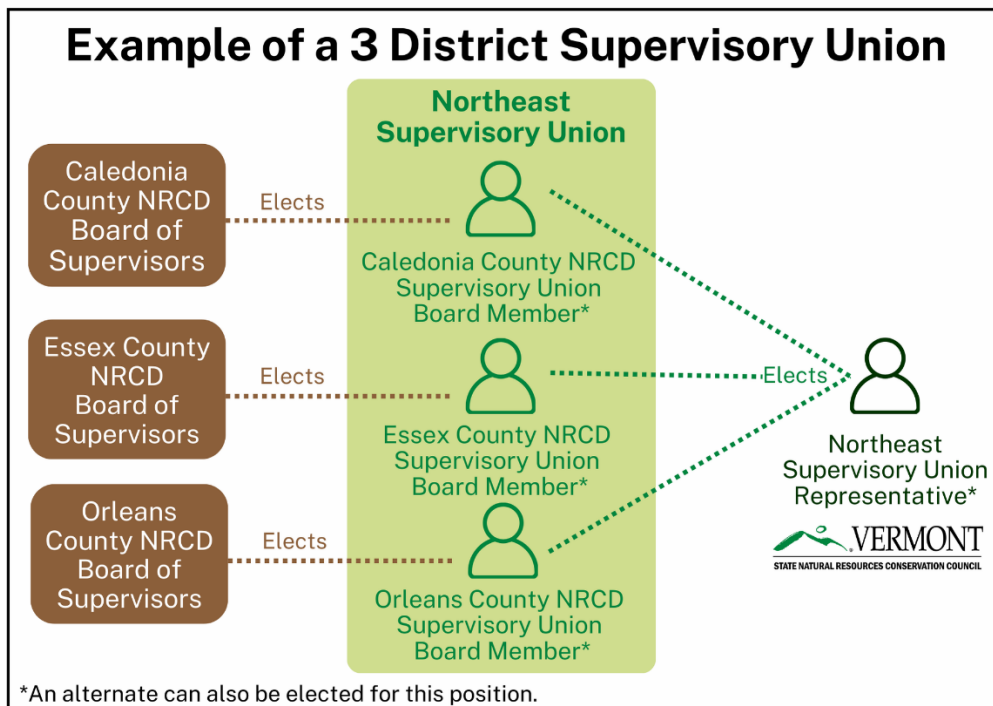
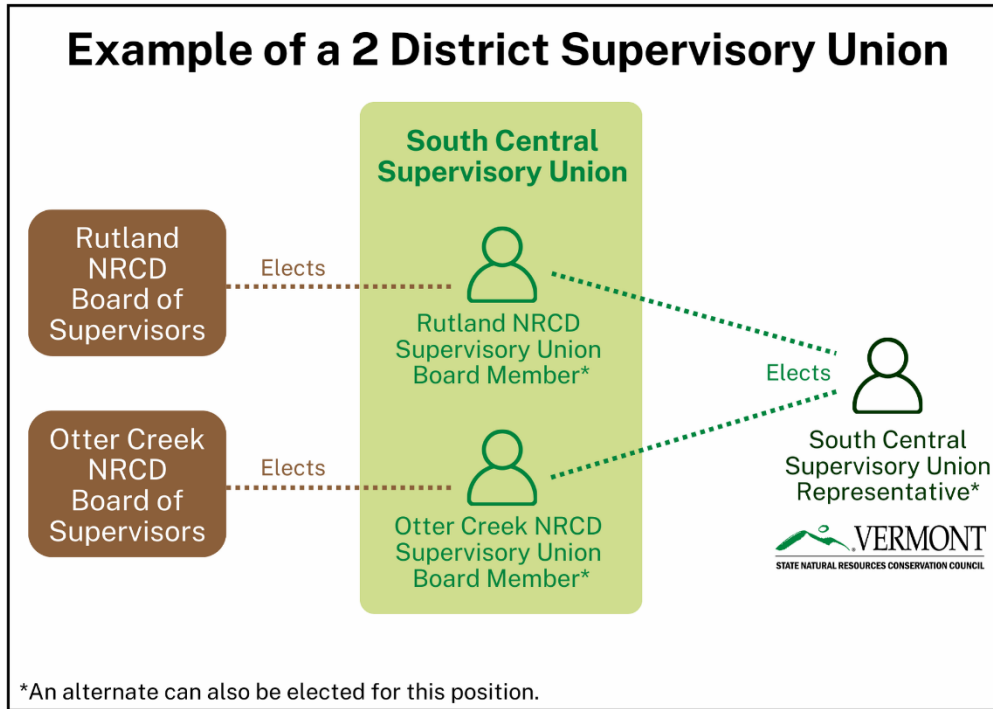
Currently, four of the six Supervisory Unions are two-member unions. While statute calls for Supervisory Union Representatives to Council be elected by the Supervisory Union board, in practice, designation of the SU Rep and SU Rep Alternate should be made by consensus to avoid deadlock. NRCC encourages districts to work collaboratively to find equitable solutions for representation, including strategies such as:

- Alternating which district the SU Representative comes from, and/or
- Dividing the SU Representative and SU Alternate Representative positions between the districts

Please note, these strategies are not required but rather are provided as examples of ways to navigate potential conflicts. Regardless of whether or not consensus is achieved, or whether alternate agreements are made between districts, a formal vote should still be made and recorded in the meeting minutes at the start of each two-year term.



## Supervisory Union Elections Procedures Examples



### **Role of the Supervisory Union Representatives (SU Reps) to Council**

SU Reps are voting members of the State Natural Resources Conservation Council (NRCC) and represent the districts on NRCC. Through the SU Reps, six of the nine voting members of NRCC are district supervisors. The remaining three NRCC voting members are representatives from state agencies.

Through Council, SU Reps play a role in carrying out the following duties and responsibilities, as defined in statute ([10 V.S.A. § 708](#)):

- (1) Offer appropriate assistance to the supervisors and directors of districts and unions;
- (2) Keep the supervisors and directors of each district and union organized under this chapter informed of the activities and experience of all other districts and unions and facilitate an interchange of advice and experience between districts and unions;
- (3) Coordinate the programs of the districts and unions so far as this may be done by advice and consultation;
- (4) Secure the cooperation and assistance of the United States and any of its agencies and of agencies of this State in the work of districts or unions;
- (5) Disseminate information throughout the State concerning the activities and programs of the districts and unions organized hereunder;
- (6) Act upon petition by any two or more districts lying within the limits of the territory proposed to be organized into a union asking that a supervisory union be organized to function in the territory described in the petition;
- (7) Supervise and oversee annual election of district supervisors.

More on NRCC's statutory powers and duties can be found in [Title 10 Chapter 31](#).

At a minimum, SU Reps are expected to attend NRCC board meetings to help inform the direction of the organization and its services to districts. They also play a critical role in bringing information from the district level into conversations at NRCC board meetings, including helping inform our state and federal agency partners about district work and district needs.

See below for an NRCC organizational chart.





For more information about Supervisory Union structure or operations, please contact NRCC Administrator Clare Ireland at [Clare.Ireland@partner.vermont.gov](mailto:Clare.Ireland@partner.vermont.gov).



## February 2026 Report on District Activities

- *\*This report covers district activities between January 24 and February 20*



*District staff joined the Southern Vermont Natural History Museum Staff at the museum's Pool Nature Center for a tour, snowshoe and discussion about opportunities for collaboration*

### **Financials:**

- As of 1/31/2026 we have a balance of \$31,229.08 of equities minus liabilities (on a cash basis). For comparison, we had:

\$14,046.83 on 1/7/26 (last month)

\$36,217.99 on 1/31/25 (last year)

- We have \$7,752.58 in pending bills. We've been delaying payment on some items as we wait for payment from funders.
- We have \$85,445.90 in outstanding invoices, of which \$21,032.47 is overdue.

## **General Updates**

### **AmeriCorps**

- Isabel organized a staff lunch for district, CRC and VLT staff so everyone could meet the 3 new AmeriCorps Servicemembers and learn about their respective roles and opportunities for collaboration.

### **Sales Programs:**

-We have \$16,280.91 in sales as of 2/17. For reference, we had \$13,317.99 on the same date last year.

### **Ag-CWIP:**

- Hosted a farm team meeting
- Continued assisting farms through NMP class
- Hosted Conservation Speed Dating
- Hosted Local Fund Pool meeting and began crafting fund pool
- Heather spoke to a class at the community college about jobs where you work with soils
- Heather prepared our semi-annual report for July-December and Cory submitted the invoice. Since these invoices are paid semi-annually, they are our largest invoices and the long delays in payment by NRCC present a challenge for us.

### **AFT RCPP:**

- January invoice submitted.
- Payment was received on our September invoice finally.
- Payment was received for December and January invoices recently (not reflected in above totals under "financials." It is good to see AFT making payments again.

### **NACD TA:**

- Payment was received last week on our invoice for Q2. We'll invoice again at the end of March for January-March. We've underspent this agreement so far, but with planning work picking up now we expect to catch up quickly.
- **Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) Watershed Planning:**
  - Isabel has been working with CRWFA and UNH extension to develop the reporting deliverables for this grant: a plan and two decision-making tools.
  - Emma has continued to work with partners to develop a series of workshops and demonstration days to promote selected practices to reduce Nitrogen loss from agricultural productions.
  - Our December invoice was paid and our January invoice was submitted. The grant manager at NFWF who handles both of our NFWF grants has been promoted and they are unable to fill her position. As a result, someone else will be covering her role for the time being while still completing their own job. We can expect delays in payments and communications for the foreseeable future. This grant ends at the end of November.
- **NRCC: Tactical Basin Planning:**
  - Isabel hosted, "Working for Wildlife" webinar on 1/28. A recording of this webinar is on youtube.
  - Isabel hosted, "Fish Grow on Trees" webinar on 2/18.
  - Isabel attended the West River Collaboration meeting on 1/29 to provide updates on the Rock River project work.
    - Isabel and Cory continue to meet with the Dartmouth student team and met-up with the team at a dinner pitch event of the student's project. Isabel and Abby met the students at the Rock River sites and at the Dummerston Park and Ride Project site.
  - Isabel attended NRCS' wildlife and forestry subcommittee, Draft Wildlife Action Plan session, Making Flood Risk Visible, Beaverland, and two winter salt week webinars.
  - Isabel and Brenna Christensen (NRCS) went on a site visit to assess beaver dam analog/ strategic wood addition options.
  - Staff completed the Q2 reporting to NRCC and the invoice was submitted. We have no information on when this might be paid. This continues to be one of our slowest paying grants.
- **Grant-in-aid:**
  - Isabel and Cory met with Kelly Beerman (CRC) to discuss how our organizations will apply for 2026 funding
  - We submitted a proposal for 2026 water chestnut and greeter program work

- Cory attended the Wilmington Selectboard meeting on February 17. The selectboard approved our request for \$3,500 for the Lake Raponda Greeter Program, plus the cost of the portable toilet at the boat launch.
- **Trees For Streams:**
  - Three tree plantings have been approved. We are still awaiting a grant agreement to see how much of these awards will be funded.
  - Two additional planting needs have been identified: Bunker Hill Farm (Isabel is awaiting a response from Todd Menees to apply for funding) and Stickney farm.
- **Vermont Community Foundation:**
  - The Green River Watershed Alliance met today to discuss the reclassification of the Green River.
- **Watershed Grant:**
  - Whetstone watershed grant planning meeting was held to discuss a 2026 application
  - Abby and Sam Pierce (VLT) co-wrote the implementation grant for this work
- **SE VT CISMA:**
  - Isabel attended a Friends of Island Park (FOIP) meeting on 1/29. FOIP has asked the Conservation District to create an introduced plant management plan on the Hinsdale Island.
- **WUV Workforce Capacity Building Grant:**
  - Cory has continued to meet with Dave Dore to work through Quickbooks issues. Work has focused on developing and implementing allocation models for fringe and indirect costs across our grant structure.
  - We are still waiting for payment on final balance on the agreement that ended 12/31, as well as our up-front-payment for the new agreement.
- **NFWF Forest and Rivers Fund Grassland Bird Project:**
  - Cory, Binee (Cheshire CCD) and Cat completed interviews for the seasonal avian technician position. Cory completed reference checks and offered the position to one of the applicants, pending board approval. She has accepted and is scheduled to start March 12.
  - Cory met with Cat to discuss onboarding the technician and the outreach plan for 2026.
- **Whitingham WISPr**
- **NRCC DM Representative:**
  - Cory attended the February NRCC Meeting.
  - Cory developed a survey for district managers to gather input and concerns about the UCA/MOU revisions, as well as the news about districts being allowed to serve as Technical Service Providers.

- **MARC Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant Lake Raponda Shoreline Erosion Control Final Design Grant**
  - Cory and Abby attended the project kickoff meeting with DEC staff, Town of Wilmington staff and DuBois & King engineers on February 19. One significant outcome of the meeting was a determination by Marie that two of the stormwater practices we were planning will be fundable by the clean water block grant (we thought we'd need local match for these when we reached the implementation stage). This lowers the amount of local funding we'll need by ~\$8,000 and increased the likelihood we're able to implement this project.
  - We're aiming for a fall implementation, assuming we can secure grant funding in time. Marie said we can apply for implementation funds with only 60% designs (which we'll have in early spring).
  - Town manager Scott Tucker suggested we attend a selectboard meeting with 60% designs so we can allow public comment one additional time. He'll ask the selectboard to approve the matching funds needed to implement this project at that meeting.
  
- **MARC Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant SEVCA Stormwater and Wetland Restoration Preliminary Design Grant**

**Other:**

- Cory and Emma attended VACD Advocacy Day at the Statehouse on February 13th. We were able to meet with several of our representatives and had productive conversations. Cory provided testimony to the House Environment Committee. Our request continues to face an uphill climb, although a recent draft of the appropriations memo from House Environment recommended our full funding request. House Agriculture has not finished their memo yet. Once the budget crosses over the Senate we will need to meet with Senators Harris and Hashim to ask for their support of our funding request.
- Our application to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to host an Act 59 listening session was approved. We'll have a budget of \$4,000 to fund this event.

*\*note: please see below for a summary of current grant agreements and an acronym list.*

## Reference Materials \*

*\*Not updated monthly, only as grants change status*

## **Current Grant Awards:**

- **MARC Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant Lake Raponda Shoreline Erosion Control Final Design Grant**
  - Grant runs until 12/31/27 with all work required to be completed by 10/31/27. Provides \$44,586 to complete final designs for the set of water quality management practices identified last year during the preliminary design round. Since we worked with DuBois & King on the preliminary design round, our procurement policy allows us to execute an agreement with them for this round of design work without going to bid again.
  - Cindy Ingersoll and Chris Yurek at MARC are the grant contacts.
- **MARC Enhancement Design and Implementation Block Grant SEVCA Stormwater and Wetland Restoration Preliminary Design Grant**
  - Grant runs until 12/31/27 with all work required to be completed by 10/31/27. Provides \$26,572 to complete initial site analysis, alternatives analysis and 30% designs for a preferred set of alternatives at the Southeast Vermont Community Alliance facility in Westminster, VT, near the Henwood Hill Marsh. We'll need to post a RFP for this project.
  - Cindy Ingersoll and Chris Yurek at MARC are the grant contacts.

## **WRC WISPr Funding**

- **This award utilizes funding from the Town of Whitingham up to 10% of the cost of the recently installed wastewater treatment facility (~\$300,000) for natural resources projects in the town. Windham NRC is working with WRC, DEC and the town to identify projects to fund with these funds. Our current subagreement with WRC only supports a buffer planting and invasive species management project along VT-112 in Whitingham at the municipal lot and the Wastewater Treatment Facility.**
- **The current subaward is for \$25,192.71 and runs from 2/27/25 - 11/1/27.**
- **Most of these funds will flow to a licensed applicator performing three successive cutting and/or herbicide applications and a planting crew**

(likely Redstart who gave us a quote), but some funds are held for staff time managing the project.

- Future awards may be executed if suitable projects can be developed. Funds will support Final Design and Implementation, but not preliminary design.
- Margo Ghia at WRC is the contact for this agreement.

### **NRCC One Time Core Funding**

- **Our proposal was partially funded for \$9,858.02. Funded items include:**
  - Laptop
  - Office Printer
  - Project Screen
  - Office Chairs
  - Logo and Outreach Materials
  - Financial Consultant (additionally funding to be paired with WUV funding)
- All funds must be spent by 6/30
- Receipts are required for all purchases, but we have flexibility on breakdown of spending and can include staff time as an expense at billable rate.
- Clare Ireland is the contact for this grant
- An amendment was issued on 4/29/25 for an additional \$4,903 to fund the purchase of a kayak trailer and kayaks or canoes.

### **NRCC Trees for Streams Enhanced Survivorship Award**

- This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Jess Miller is the contact at NRCC for this program.
- Agreement runs 1/1/25 to 10/31/25.

- **Total award of \$2,321.41 for enhance survivorship activities at two past TFS sites: Meadows and Otter Lane.**
- **Funds 32 hours of staff time, mileage and \$695 in supplies.**
- **Isabel Bowman is project manager for this project.**

#### **NRCC Trees for Streams Whetstone Woods Planting**

- **This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Jess Miller is the contact at NRCC for this program.**
- **Agreement runs 4/1/25 to 5/30/25. Reporting and final invoice due to NRCC by 6/13/25. Total award is for \$2,953.70 on an expense reimbursable basis.**

#### **VACD Micro Wetland Planning and Prioritization**

- **This is a grant held by VACD with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Long Island Sound Futures Fund.**
- **We have a subagreement with VACD for \$4,044.05 to fund design work on wetland restoration projects at three sites in the Williams River Watershed.**
- **This agreement funds 75 hours of Isabel's time to work on these designs. Work must be completed by 10/31/25.**

## **NRCC Project Development**

- **This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Lina Smith is the contact for this grant.**
- **We have an award of up to \$6,586.43 in staff time and mileage to complete project development activities for 13 sites on the Rock River.**
- **Isabel will be taking the lead in completing these activities, which will include:**
  - **Outreach to landowners, typically by mailing**
  - **Site visits for interested landowners**
  - **Coordination with DEC staff to develop selected sites for applications for preliminary design funding.**
- **The grant runs 10/1/24 – 3/1/26**

## **Watersheds United Vermont Workforce Capacity Development Grant**

- This 18-month agreement funds a variety of capacity building purchases and investments. The primary components of this are:
  - Funding for a new website
  - Purchase of a storage shed
  - Strategic Planning including a consultant
  - Financial assistance including hiring a consultant to help us set up a better system
  - Creation of emergency and transition plans for district staff.
  - Professional development for staff, including wetland delineation training for Isabel
- Lyn Muno and Tobiah Schulman at WUV are the contacts for this grant.
- 90% of funds will be paid up front, with the remaining 10% upon completion of all grant activities. Agreement includes a claw-back provision if we fail to spend some of the money on eligible expenses.

### **NRCC: Core Agreement (FY25)**

· Block grant administered by NRCC, current agreement has been signed and is awaiting execution for \$35,500. The agreement runs 7/1/24 through 6/30/25. Deliverables on the agreement are:

§ FY25 Work Plan and Budget

§ FY24 Project Results Reporting

§ FY24 Financial Reporting

§ Supervisor Election Process

§ NRCC Supervisor Union Representation

In addition to these deliverables, the agreement lists “operational standards” that the district is expected to maintain. These are:

§ Maintaining an updated natural resource assessment for the district to provide basis for project and program development.

§ Developing projects and programs addressing resource concerns and securing of grants, contractual agreements or other financial support needed to support implementation.

§ Executing annual supervisor election processes, including posting legal notice holding annual board seat elections or appointments and updating the board directory.

§ Holding regular board meetings and annual meeting

§ Maintaining updated policies and procedures

§ Providing monthly financial reports for review by Board of Supervisors or Board Treasurer, including Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Report and Check Register

§ Conducting annual performance assessment and annual employee performance reviews

§ Providing annual financial and performance accountability to NRCC.

§ Clare Ireland at NRCC is the primary contact for this grant.

§ Key due dates:

§ Executed Subagreement – 7/1/24

§ FY26 Budget for NRCC and Legislative Advocacy Work – 7/22/24

§ FY24 Work Plan and Budget – 9/15/24

§ FY24 Projects and Financial Reporting – 9/15/24

§ Supervisor Election Process – 12/15/24

### **NRCC: Basin Planning (FY24)**

This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Timeline is July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024. Our award was for \$21, 555 in funding to support a variety of water quality work and regional coordination, including:

- Running the Local Working Group process
- Attending annual meetings of the LRA, CRC, GRWA and conducting outreach to these and other watershed groups.
- Plan and run a Nitrogen-reduction working group (this will pair with the LISFF project if funded)
- Technical Assistance to non-ag landowners in littoral and riparian settings.
- Support for the basin planning process in Basin 12 (Deerfield).
- Public outreach and education regarding the Lakewise Program at Lake Raponda, South Pond and Sadawga.
- Public outreach and education regarding riparian stewardship through tabling at public events, such as the Guilford Fair and the Herrick’s Cove Wildlife Festival.

### **NRCC Basin Planning (FY25)**

This is a block grant administered by NRCC. Timeline is July 16, 2024 – July 15, 2025. Clare Ireland is the primary contact at NRCC for this grant (with Jess Miller filling in while Clare is on maternity leave) Our award was for \$28,330 in funding to support a variety of water quality work and regional coordination, including:

- Participation in monthly regional coordination meetings by Cory and Isabel.
- Participation by staff in meetings with key stakeholders including the Lake Raponda Association and the Green River Watershed Alliance to increase education and outreach on natural resource restoration and protection needs and opportunities through coordination on opportunities for projects and information sharing. Meetings with other stakeholder groups as opportunities arise to develop new public access greeter programs along the CT river. Also funds participation in the Southeast Vermont Cooperative Invasive Species Management Association steering committee, attendance at Watershed United Vermont's Annual Meeting, West River Restoration Meetings, the Scaling Up Dam Removals Workgroup meetings and the 30x30 workgroup meetings.
- Creation of a district-led Newton Brook workgroup aimed at identifying obstacles to implementation of restoration practices to improve water quality to plan watershed-level monitoring and restoration efforts. Launch a limited water quality testing program on Newton Brook with partners including Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC).
- Tabling (including with the stream table) at public events including Brattleboro's First Friday Gallery Walks, CRC's Riverfest, Mount Snow Wildlife Festival and the Herrick's Cove Wildlife Festival. Staff will also conduct outreach and education to the Lake Raponda, South Pond and Sadawga lake communities regarding the Lakewise Program.
- Continued work on the "Adopt A Storm Drain" Program in Brattleboro.
- 2 workshops on topics such as rain gardens, rain barrels or benefits of riparian buffers.
- Outreach to businesses about best management practices for land along rivers, with the focus being on women and minority-owned businesses.
- Technical assistance to non-agricultural landowners to help them protect water quality, improve flood resilience and support littoral and riparian habitat through appropriate stewardship.
- Targeted outreach to forest landowners to support adoption of agroforestry management practices and to promote the district's skidder bridge program.
- Host a Vermont Invasive Patrollers Workshop to train members of the public on aquatic invasive species identification and reporting procedures.
- Refer water quality concerns to appropriate staff at DEC and VAAFAM.
- Respond to initial contacts from land owners to support identifying and developing future projects for the district's project development program.

- Support Tactial Basin Plan Development by reading and reviewing draft plan and providing feedback and hosting public comment sessions.
- Training for staff including Rivers and Roads Training and Watershed Forestry Partnership's Annual Conference.

### **Ellis Brook Floodplain Restoration and Berm Removal Implementation**

- This is a block grant administered MARC for clean water restoration projects. MARC has awarded us funds to complete the berm removal and buffer plantings on a property in Dover and Wilmington. Mary Nealon and Bear Creek Environmental were contacted to complete the design work and will likely be contacted to oversee the berm removal. We have an executed grant agreement for this project for a total of \$95,195 and all deliverables must be completed by 12/31/24.

### **Dummerston Covered Bridge Access Erosion Gully Design Project**

- This is a block grant administered by the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission, using clean water block grant funding from the State of Vermont. We have been awarded \$17,496.96 to create final designs for the creation of a safe access to the river at the Dummerston Covered Bridge on the West River. The primary contact for this grant is Chris Yurek.
- We have an agreement with Watersheds United Vermont for the implementation of this project. This award is for up to \$39,763 and deliverables must be completed by 9/30/25.

### **Brattleboro Farmers Market Rain Gardens Preliminary Design**

- This is a block grant administered by the Mount Ascutney Regional Commission, using clean water block grant funding from the State of Vermont. We have been awarded \$20,065.05 to create preliminary (30%) designs for the creation of 5-8 stormwater best management practices (BMPs) for the treatment of stormwater before it reaches the Whetstone Brook. The primary contact for this grant is Chris Yurek.

**Southeast Vermont CISMA (these are grants that the district holds but that CISMA partners assist with implementation)**

**Windham Foundation**

○ This is a direct grant to Windham NRCD from the Vermont Community Foundation. This \$3,000 award funds:

- Assessments of town forests, public parks and public-facing businesses for woody invasives.
- Coordination of community workdays to address infestations
- Funding for AIS surveys at Harriman, Somerset and Raponda.
- Funding for the Harriman Greeter Program.

**NRCC: Ag-CWIP**

· This is a block grant managed by NRCC. Emily Nummer is the primary contact. The four-year agreement runs from November 1, 2022 through June 1, 2026. This grant funds:

§ Outreach and education efforts focused on clean water and healthy soils, including workshops for producers and the public.

§ Technical Assistance to producers aimed at supporting practices that protect and restore water quality and soil health; includes on-farm visits by staff as well as coordinating farm teams meetings to develop broad support for producers with partner agencies and nonprofits.

§ Soil sampling assistance

§ Purchase of soil probes to create an equipment library for producers to borrow as needed.

§ Conservation Practice Surveys

§ The purchase of capacity building equipment including cell phones, grant management software and GIS.

**American Farmland Trust RCPP**

- American Farmland Trust has an RCPP agreement to implement regenerative soil health practices throughout New England. We have a contract with AFT for Windham NRCD to host a 0.5 FTE conservation planner position to complete work in Windham, Bennington and portions of Windsor counties.
- Invoices are due monthly for our costs.
- Total contract is for \$200,000 and runs through 9/30/2026.

### **Vermont DEC Grant in aid: Aquatic Invasive Species 2024**

This funding source from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation supports greeter programs and aquatic invasive species survey and removal efforts. Kim Jensen is the primary contact at VT DEC for this work. Olin Reed is the primary contact for support with greeter training and the Survey 123 Application for data management.

Our award includes the following funding:

Water Chestnut Survey and Removal at four sites - \$23,989

Harriman Reservoir Greeter Program - \$6,082

Somerset Reservoir Greeter Program - \$6,000

Lake Raponda Greeter Program - \$20,280

South Pond Greeter Program - \$11,700.

**NRCC DM Rep**

This small agreement with NRCC pays for Cory to act as District Manager Representative. Cory attends statewide coordination meetings, helps plan and facilitate district manager meetings and works to support better collaboration between district managers and with state and federal partners. The agreement runs from July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2026. Clare Ireland at NRCC is the contact for this grant.

### **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Long Island Sound Futures Fund**

- We have an executed agreement with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for the below work:
- Working with Marie Caduto and Marli Rupe (DEC) on an application for a 3-year planning project to begin development of nitrogen reduction modeling for ag practices in the CT River Valley. Project would bring together state, federal and district staff along with researchers from UVM, UNH and Dartmouth to identify practices for Nitrogen reduction on farms. Part of this project will include stakeholder meetings with producers to help build a framework for N reduction practices that are compatible with CT River Valley farms. This could potentially lead to a multi-year implementation project in the future. Proposal would provide \$32,000 for Windham NRCD to serve as the coordinator for the Vermont portion of the project.
  - Application was submitted May 19. We ended up having enough match from VT DEC, NH DES, UNH-Extension, UVM-Extension and other partners to not need any matching funds of our own. This may prove useful down the road if we want to use Ag-CWIP as match for another program proposal. The final proposal was for \$418,596. Much of this will be subcontracted to partners

## **National Association of Conservation Districts Technical Assistance, Education and Outreach Grant**

Windham NRCD partnered with White River NRCD and Bennington NRCD on a application to this funding source to support increased outreach, education and technical assistance to producers. Our application was partially funded for \$291,000. We are using these funds to support adding an agricultural resource specialist who will work with Heather (~\$50,000). Other funds are supporting an engineer in the Rutland office who will support NRCS work throughout the South Zone. Josh Carvajal is the engineer doing this work. We have an agreement executed with White River NRCD as a sub-recipient.

Jennifer Byrne is the contact for this grant.

## **Pending Grant Awards:**

### **Whitingham WISPr (Water Infrastructure Sponsorship Program)**

-The Town of Whitingham is in the process of replacing their wastewater system. This program will provide the town with savings on their clean water revolving fund loan for up to 10% of the total project cost if they spend the same amount on clean water projects during the project timeline. Windham NRCD and Windham Regional Commission have been partnering to develop a suite of projects to take advantage of these funds. The timeline for this work and specific guidance is still being developed by DEC, but we anticipate beginning work in June of 2024. WRC has agreed to serve as the fiscal agent for these funds (will likely be around \$350,000). The district will have significant opportunities to develop and oversee natural resources projects, as there will be too much work in too short of a time for WRC to do the work themselves.

### **Grant proposals and other opportunities**

## **Japanese Stilt Grass Early Detection Rapid Response**

Submitted a proposal for additional funding to continue the mapping and removal efforts for stilt grass. The final proposal is for a 2-year, \$31,221.60 proposal that would support 200 hours per year for Isabel to serve as point person and coordinator on early detection rapid response efforts, 160 hours per year for a seasonal staff person to work on invasives mapping and removal, and funding for contractors to assist with mapping and removal and chemical applications where appropriate. Rachel Cliche at Silvia O Conte NWR is the contact person for this grant.

## Windham County Natural Resource Conservation District Minutes

January 27<sup>th</sup> 2026

Geof's house, 301 Barrows Road, Brattleboro, VT

In person: Cory Ross: Executive Director; Heather Blunk: Agricultural Specialist, Geof Dolman, Linda Corse, Pieter Van Loon board supervisors

Zoom: Isabel Bowman: Conservation Specialist, Abby Reed: Americorps Member, Olivia Carlson: NRCS, Meg Kluge and Katy Morrison: board supervisors

### NRCS updates:

- MOU - Memorandum of Understanding
  - Relationship between conservation district and NRCS
  - Page 4 B1B : districts will adopt
  - This is a statewide issue and we would like council to review it and we believe a lawyer should review it for us
  - There has not been a time outlined
  - Facts out to board by January 12<sup>th</sup>
- UCA
  - Unfunded Coop Agreement. Staff gets gov laptops, us not being able to access offices
  - One on one communication to work through some concerns
  - Gets updated every time we have a new staff member.
- At the next staff meeting we would like to go over the Job Approval Authority (JAA). Building this so that we can become more independent. Cory and Olivia would work together to decide employees JAA. B1d: change language here
  - Conservation Binder goes over all job approval authority. Are you able to reference standards when going out to talk with farmers?
  - Right now Emma K needs to sign our packets so we are trying to streamline these processes.

- This is just a guidance for when working with NRCS and not daily operations.
- We are concerned with the 5-seat limit. We would like to be able to access the office period with everyone so we would just need people to go through background checks and don't even need LINC passes for most employees.
- PII (personally Identifiable Information) we could be held liable if someone violates that
- **REMIND LINDA TO PUT ON THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION COUNCIL (NRCC) AGENDA TO GO OVER THIS (POSSIBLE FEBRUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>)**
- CSP Annual payment is due by February 6<sup>th</sup>, Brattleboro/Windham is in good shape
- CART EQIP March 27<sup>th</sup> 2026
- CSP May 8<sup>th</sup> 2026
- Conservation evaluation CMA (216) reworked to help streamline
- Trainings Food security act HEL 1026 form Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Resources Staff will be doing review tomorrow ATTEND THIS
- RPP national priority, 25% of our applications will be going through this. Trainings tomorrow and Thursday.
- Agro Forestry January 29<sup>th</sup> 1-2pm NH putting it on
- Changes to payment rates: big upsets.
  - Are we going to set up restrictions that will be assessed in the local fund pool or should we allow other practices to be assessed, in hopes of being able to spend all our money assigned in the fund pool. We are leaning towards accepting other practices, unless money changes.
- We are hoping rates will be locked in soon.

### **Financial Reports**

- TOTAL ENDED FOR LIABILITY AND TOTAL EQUITY \$ 17,629.83
- TOTAL FOR GRANTS \$ 330,093.77
- NET INCOME FOR FIRST HALF OF YEAR \$ 41,527.00
- Received all our payments for one grant

- Created a new chart of accounts, did not change amounts of anything but rewrote definitions and lumped and pulled apart.
- Plants and trout expenses are now in income as Cost of Goods sold because that's how Dave recommends we should show it. Includes description of changes, second document shows same thing without description
- Uploaded budget and created a budget of actual yay
  - You can create seasonal budget lines - Cory will get there one day
- We are at 82% income for what we budgeted so far, on track for expenses as well. We are on track for what budget is called for, yay team.
- NACD has committed to give us money, so we don't have cash flow issues.
- This report includes 6 weeks of shut down where we could not bill for the NACD TA grant or AFT grant.
- We have paid all of dues for the year
- \$775 dues to NACD

#### Cost of living index

- We are revisiting now that we have more information. Cory believes that we can afford it. 3% increase to our pay scales and that we do so retroactively which would be a total of \$4,386.37.

**A motion to accept a cost of living increase for district staff was moved, seconded and passed.**

#### Listening Session

- We have applied for a \$4,000 grant to host a listening session for ACT 59 from VHCB. Could be a board meeting and has to be open to the public. Ideally this would replace March Board Meeting, we can cover meeting too
- We can request a VHCB moderator, or we can do it ourselves.
- Act 59 is to do with 30x30, 50x50 concept of conserving land in Vermont.
- Listening sessions are times for us to voice opinions to get to 30x30 to help VHCB develop that plan.

MARCH 16<sup>th</sup> in the evening. Roughly 5:30

Southeast Supervisory Reunion Meeting

- **February 24<sup>th</sup> 7pm** Will be in person but doesn't have to be you can come in zoom.

**WE WILL MOVE FORWARD WITH NOVEMBER Soul Fire Farm Training 6-9PM TRAINING**

VACD has taken lead on two different grants: NACD TA grant and AG CWIP Grant.

- VACD will be deciding on factors as to how money is dispersed. Because we will not be getting all of the money we requested.
- Governors budget is out and we are level funded and we are in there for around 600,000 ish dollars
  - Isabel's proposal to work with a student team at Dartmouth on Rock River project planning was selected! Cory and Isabel met with the professors on 12/11 to discuss the proposal. Cory and Isabel met with this team on 1/14 and will meet with them over the course of two semesters to plan these projects. The first meeting was on 1/16, where students selected three projects to focus on.

**Motion to accept December minutes moved, seconded and passed**

NEXT BOARD MEETING WILL BE ON FEBRUARY 24<sup>TH</sup> AT 6PM

**A motion to go into executive session for personnel matters was moved, seconded and passed.**

**The Executive Session ended at 8:45 PM.**

**Motion made, seconded and approved to approve Isabel Bowman's performance review and find her performance satisfactory.**

**Motion made, seconded and approved to approve Arrow Kitchen's performance review and find their performance satisfactory and to remove the probationary label from their position.**

**Motion made, seconded and passed to adjourn the meeting.**

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Blunk