

# NORTHERN VERMONT RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

*“RC&D is committed to helping people develop and care for Vermont’s resources to strengthen our communities. We envision vibrant communities with economies that are based on the sustainable use of the region’s natural resources.”*

RC&D Celebrates Completion of its 5 year Area Plan with signing ceremony!



The Northern VT Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council celebrated completion of its 5 year strategic plan through a signing ceremony with numerous state, local and federal partners participating. The ceremony was supported by the VT Sustainable Forestry Initiative who provided eco-pens to all 27 signors. This plan, called the RC&D Area Plan, covers the 8 counties of central and northern Vermont and identifies perceived needs, potential opportunities, goals, objectives and actions for land conservation, land management, water management and community development. Regional Planning Commissions and Natural Resources Conservation Districts in the RC&D area, are the official sponsors of the RC&D Council and make up its Board of Directors.

#### **Top priority goals for 2011-2015 include:**

- Educate public about agriculture, its importance and needs and the value of the working landscape through regular (at least biennial) programming.
- Educate citizens on the effects of not buying locally and provide them annual updated tools to do so.
- Support development of a local foods system: from the “Farm to the Plate” by being an active annual participant in solutions.
- Provide annual options to loggers for resource protection that also increases work efficiency.
- Abate water quality degradation & phosphorus pollution in 300 locations statewide by 2015.
- Empower citizens from 8 towns to be involved in local decision making by providing them relevant tools and services by 2015.
- Annually equip fire departments and municipalities with technical and financial assistance in rural fire protection.
- Provide assistance to 400 low and moderate income folks to secure adequate transportation for their needs by 2015.
- Implement 5 education and development programs to empower citizens in promoting rural solutions by 2015.
- Develop, improve and maintain 10 recreation resources in the Northern VT RC&D Area by 2015.

Fifty-two actions fall under these 10 goals. For a list of them and how to get involved, please contact RC&D Project Coordinator, Beth Ann Finlay at (802)828-4595 or [beth\\_ann.finlay@vt.usda.gov](mailto:beth_ann.finlay@vt.usda.gov)

## **Portable Skidder Bridge Free Loan & Education Program: 11 Bridges Available for Free**

(RC&D role: Lead Organizer and Program Host of Free Loan and Cost-Share program portions of Skidder Bridge Initiative)

Northern VT RC&D's *Portable Skidder Bridge Free Loan and Education Program* has completed its second full year and has been a success in meeting the goals set for the program - reducing or eliminating sedimentation into streams at skidder crossing locations within the Lake Champlain basin area, and providing exposure and guidance to loggers in the use of portable skidder bridges.

The loan program has eleven bridges available for free loan to loggers working in the Lake Champlain drainage basin. As of the end of September, five bridges are in use and seven are staged and available. Each bridge is designed for portability. Three panels are laid side by side - each 4 feet wide and 20 feet long, making a 12 foot wide bridge.



In between uses, the bridges are staged at three locations—Burlington Electric Department's Swanton concentration yard, Lamell Lumber in Essex Junction, and Canopy Timber Alternatives in East Middlebury. Collectively, the three staging locations provide a pickup point within a reasonable distance from logging jobs within most of the Lake Champlain basin.

RC&D staff obtained grant funding for the program's second year through the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation.

One of the issues identified during the first year of the loan program was that the original standard size bridges will not support the weight of some of the larger logging equipment in use, such as mechanical harvesters and some of the largest skidders. In

response, Gary Sabourin of VT FP&R applied for and received funding to build eleven heavier duty bridges to accommodate the heavier equipment. The RC&D Free Loan and Education Program has received and put in service three of those bridges, and is scheduled to receive two more as they are built. The remainder of the heavy duty bridges are to be put into service in the successful rental programs administered by several Natural Resources Conservation Districts statewide.

During its second year of operation, the loan program continued to facilitate putting bridges to use, with eleven new loans to loggers working in the lake Champlain basin. That brings the total loans made since the beginning of the program to twenty-three.

The response and feedback from loggers continues to be positive and has included suggestions for improvements in the program and use of the



bridges. As a result of having had an opportunity to use a bridge and see first hand their advantages, three loggers who participated in the loan program have applied to the *new Portable Skidder Bridge Cost Share and Education Program* to receive financial assistance to build bridges of their own.

Plans are for the loan program to continue for a third year with funding obtained through the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

For information contact:

Kevin Beattie, Project Coordinator, (802) 548-8246, [kevnshar@comcast.net](mailto:kevnshar@comcast.net)





## Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force



(RC&D role: Lead Organizer and Program Host)

The 2010 RFP initiative provided technical and financial services to 66 Vermont towns on rural water supply development that will improve rural fire protection, save lives and property, and lower fire insurance premiums.

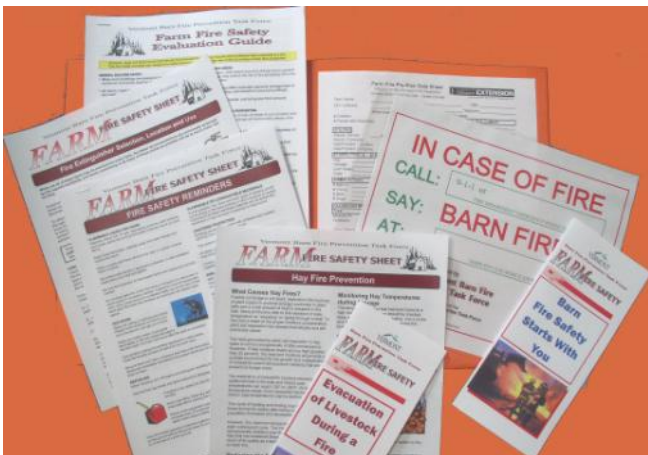
Accomplishments:

- Secured \$155,000 from Vermont legislature to continue the twelfth year of the dry hydrant grant program, including engineering assistance.
- Awarded \$117,177 in dry hydrant grants to install water withdrawal systems.
- Completed 45 dry hydrant projects totaling \$112,500 in state grant funding and invested \$98,950 in local match funding for these state funded projects.
- Completed 4 rural water supply projects with a \$10,000 U.S. Forest Service grant through the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation. These 4 projects generated \$20,722 in local match investment.
- Partnered with VT E911 to update the rural water supply Geographic Information System (GIS) data layer for towns to use at Emergency Responder Dispatch Centers.. Collected points for 183 dry hydrant and 8 drafting sites in 36 towns.
- Distributed the new Published Map File (PMF) information provided by VT E911 designed for responders to use in the field. PMF map information: <http://e911.vermont.gov> & general VT E911 information: [e911-info@state.vt.us](mailto:e911-info@state.vt.us)
- Funded and assisted in the implementation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans by the Two Rivers Regional Planning Commission with Rochester and Newbury (prescribed burns and town ordinance improvements etc.)
- Funded the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans by the Lamoille County Planning Commission with Hyde Park and Johnson; the Two Rivers Regional Planning Commission with Plymouth and Bridgewater; the Bennington County Regional Commission with Arlington, Sandgate, and Sunderland (all three towns covered by the Arlington FD).
- Displayed Fire-wise Fire-Foolish Diorama with companion video at the Home & Garden Exposition and the Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns Fair.. Distributed 40 Fire-Wise/Fire-Foolish videos, 20 Fire-Wise/Fire-Foolish brochures, 10 Dry Hydrant Maintenance videos and 10 Dry Hydrant Maintenance brochures at the event.
- Staffed the Barn Fire Prevention Task Force Sub-committee that explores what actions can be taken to address the rash of barn fires in Vermont.
- Published 3 more barn fire prevention articles in *Agriview* newsletter (6 articles total) targeting the farming community.
- Aired two *Across The Fence* episodes to get the Barn Fire Task Force messages out to the farming community.
- Developed & published a barn fire prevention information packet and handed them out at several county fairs and festivals; the packet is also being translated into Spanish.
- Partnered with local fire departments, communities, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Vermont Department of Forests Parks & Recreation, Vermont Center for Geographic Information, E911, UVM Extension-AgrAbility Program, Senator Sanders Office, VT Division of Labor—Project Work Safe, Co-op Insurance, VT Division of Fire Safety, George D. Aiken RC&D, US Forest Service and the Vermont Coalition of Fire & Rescue Services on 2010 actions.

Lead Contacts:

**Tom Maclay**, Chair, (802) 426-3265, [83creameryst@fairpoint.net](mailto:83creameryst@fairpoint.net)

**Troy Dare**, Engineering Technician, (802) 828-4582, [dryhydrantguy@yahoo.com](mailto:dryhydrantguy@yahoo.com)



Barn Fire Prevention Information Packet Published - Spanish version coming soon!



Town of St. Albans volunteers work together to wrestle their newest dry hydrant into position on Sampson Point Road; on Lake Champlain

## Better Backroads Program - Clean Water You Can Afford

Better Backroads Grants and Technical Assistance Provided

(RC&D Role: Lead Organizer and Program Host)

2010 has been a busy year for the Better Backroads program with technical assistance, grants and artnerships.

Accomplishments:

- Secured an additional \$546,998 in funding from the Vermont Agency of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the Vermont Center for Clean & Clear to continue the 14<sup>th</sup> year of the Better Backroads program.
- Completed 59 Better Backroads grants totaling \$335,789.20 that were paid to 47 towns and organizations; \$20,052.00 went to develop 6 Road Inventory and Capital Budget Plans; \$315,737.20 went to Correct Road Related Erosion Problems.
- Invested \$341,492.44 in local match funding for these projects.
- Partnered with the VT Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) to assess possible projects in the White River watershed and to complete an erosion control project in Tunbridge, which benefited both the municipality (through free labor) and the VT Youth Conservation Corps (through work experience and use of targeted state money).
- Hosted 5 workshops and presentations for 224 participants, including a Road Inventory and Capital Budget Planning training workshop for inventory volunteers in Bakersfield.
- Provided 43 technical assistance site visits to towns and organizations.

Lead contacts:

Alan May, Better Backroads Technician, (802) 828-4595, backroadstech@yahoo.com

Jarrold Becker, RC&D Business Manager (802) 828-4583, rcdbizmanager@yahoo.com

Susan Warren, Chief of Lakes & Ponds Section, VT Agency of Natural Resources, (802) 241-3794, susan.warren@state.vt.us

### Project Information

**Project Name:** Lake St. Catherine Watershed Road Inventory

**Project Manager:** Marli Rupe, District Manager  
Poultney Mettewee Conservation District  
PO Box 209, Poultney, VT 05764  
802-287-8339  
pmnrtd@sover.net

### Description:

Lake St. Catherine is a system of three lakes interconnected by small, navigable channels. Lily Pond is to the north, the main lake in the center, and then Little Lake is at the south end. The lake system drains into the Mettewee river watershed, and ultimately southern Lake Champlain. The Little Lake segment is actually a dammed wetland, with the related rich nutrient base.

The Lake St. Catherine Association, with the assistance of the Poultney Mettewee Conservation District (PMNRCD) and the VT Agency of Natural Resources (Ethan Swift) has been evaluating the water quality concerns in the lake for several years. Approximately 600 homes are around the lake, many of which are now year-round houses as opposed to the original small summer camps. The related development and land use changes (especially camp conversions, clearing of riparian areas, and road development/ management) are considered primary reasons for the increased sedimentation in the lake. Landowners have expressed concerns about shoreline areas that now have only a 1-2 foot depth versus a perception of greater depth some years ago. This perception may be attributed to the increased amount of visible weeds.

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Before & During: Whitingham Ditch & Culvert Work



Ditch Work in Ripton (above) and culvert work in Waterbury (below).



Lake St. Catherine Watershed Road Erosion Inventory and Capital Budget Plan Developed





## Bonnie Clac Becomes More Than Wheels

(RC&D role: Advisory Board Member)

To find out more about Bonnie Clac's name change to More Than Wheels, Inc. and its success in breaking the chain of poor financial decision making and their environmental efforts toward pounds of carbon saved see: [www.morethanwheels.org](http://www.morethanwheels.org) or call them at 866-455-2522.

Better Your Credit. Change your Life.



## Farmers' Markets for All Vermonters - EBT Systems Provide Access Statewide

(RC&D Role: Steering Committee Member and Former Funder)

Now in its fourth year the Vermont Farmers' Market EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer) and Debit Cards Project continues to expand and provide service to 31 farmers' markets around the state. They are now able to sell farm fresh, nutritious food to 3 Squares VT participants, channeling some of the \$108 million that comes into Vermont each year as federal food assistance funds directly to Vermont farmers. For more information contact: Jean Hamilton, Community Food Security & Direct Markets Program Coordinator, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont at 802-434-4122 or [jean@nofavt.org](mailto:jean@nofavt.org)



## Local Growers Guides Published for Chittenden & Washington Counties

(RC&D role: Funder)

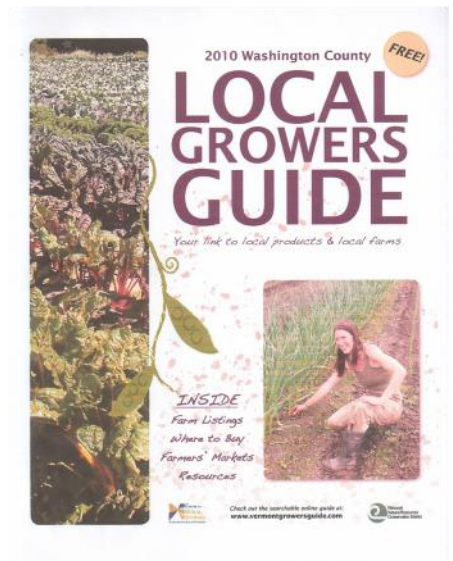
The UVM Center for Rural Studies and the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District have published printed Growers Guides for Chittenden and Washington counties. The guides include farm listings, where to buy local food, and other resources. They complement the popular searchable website [www.vermontgrowersguide.com](http://www.vermontgrowersguide.com), which includes farm and food listings from Addison, Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle, Rutland, and Washington counties.

The Local Growers Guide raises awareness about local food sources, link customers to local products and sales outlets, and supports Vermont farms. The guide contains farmer-submitted information about their farms, their products, and where they sell. Printed copies are available at sites around Chittenden and Washington counties. You can also view and download the PDFs at: <http://www.vermontgrowersguide.com/growers-guide-pdfs/>

Local Growers Guide quick facts:  
URL: [www.vermontgrowersguide.com](http://www.vermontgrowersguide.com)

Find a Print Guide: Look for the guides at local stores, farmers markets, and other community locations. If you would like a stack of guides to distribute, please contact Jessica Hyman at 802-656-9897 or [jhyman@uvm.edu](mailto:jhyman@uvm.edu).

Get Listed: To list your farm or food business in the guide, call 802-656-9897, email [jhyman@uvm.edu](mailto:jhyman@uvm.edu), or go to <http://www.vermontgrowersguide.com/get-listed>



# Major Partners & Friends of RC&D – Thank You!



The RC&D concept doesn't work without the collaboration of partners. We, the Council members, wish to acknowledge that without the help of all who join us in this adventure called RC&D we would accomplish little. We continue to be amazed at that willingness to help when people see that their efforts are helping their friends and neighbors improve the quality of life for everyone. Thanks!

## MAJOR PROJECT PARTNERS

George D. Aiken RC&D Council  
 Greater Adirondack RC&D Council  
 USDA

- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Forest Service
- Rural Development

Environmental Protection Agency  
 Federal Highway Administration  
 More Than Wheels, Inc. (formerly Bonnie Clac)  
 Consulting Foresters Assn of VT  
 Society of American Foresters-Green Mt Chapter  
 NorthWoods Stewardship Center  
 Northeast Organic Farming Assn - VT  
 Northern Forest Canoe Trail  
 U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy  
 U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders

U.S. Congressman Peter Welch  
 VT Legislature  
 Governor James Douglas  
 Abenaki Nation  
 Better Backroads Program Sponsors  
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 VT Forests Forever Friends  
 Missisquoi River Basin Association  
 SFI—Sustainable Forest Initiative  
 VT Center for Geographic Information  
 E911  
 VT Dept of Public Safety-Div of Fire Safety  
 VT Coalition of Fire & Rescue Services  
 VT Coverts, Inc.  
 VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets  
 VT Dept of Buildings & General Services  
 VT Dept of Children & Families  
 VT Sustainable Jobs Fund

VT Dept of Labor-Project Work Safe  
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 VT Department of Tourism & Marketing  
 VT Envirothon Sponsors  
 VT Local Roads Program  
 VT Woodlands Assn/VT Tree Farm  
 VT Youth Conservation Corps  
 VT Agency of Transportation  
 VT Agency of Natural Resources

- Dept of Forests, Parks & Recreation
- Dept of Fish & Wildlife
- Dept of Environmental Conservation-Water Quality Division
- Center for Clean & Clear

VT Department of Education  
 VT Rural Fire Protection Task Force  
 VT Natural Resources Conservation Districts  
 And all committee, community and project volunteers... Thank you!



If you would like to know more about RC&D or would like to help "make things happen" for Vermont communities contact us at: 617 Comstock Rd, Suite 2, Berlin, VT 05602, (802) 828-4595 Fax 223-6163 or [beth\\_ann.finlay@vt.usda.gov](mailto:beth_ann.finlay@vt.usda.gov). Our NEW web page is: [www.nvtrcd.org](http://www.nvtrcd.org)

## RC&D STAFF & CONTRACTED PROFESSIONALS

Beth Ann Finlay, Coordinator  
 Jarrod Becker, Business Manager/Grants Administrator  
 Troy Dare, Rural Fire Protection Engineering Technician  
 Alan May, Better Backroads Program Technician  
 Kevin Beattie, Contracted Skidder Bridge Coordinator

Lamoille County Natural Resources Conservation District  
 Northwest Regional Planning Commission  
 Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District  
 Essex County Natural Resources Conservation District  
 Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission  
 Lamoille County Planning Commission  
 Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District  
 Grand Isle County Natural Resources Conservation District  
 Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District  
 Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District  
 Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission  
 Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District (Alternate)  
 Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District (Alt)  
 Caledonia County Natural Res. Conservation District (Alt)  
 Lamoille County Planning Commission (Alt)  
 Northwest Regional Planning Commission (Alt)  
 Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (Alt)  
 Franklin County Natural Resources Conservation District (Alt)  
 Northeastern Vermont Development Association

## NORTHERN VERMONT RC&D COUNCIL MEMBERS & SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

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## TOWN SUPPORT – THANKS FOR YOUR DONATION!

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Essex	Stowe
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	Wolcott
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## USDA Support Staff

Vicky Drew, State Conservationist  
 Steve Gourley, RC&D Program Manager  
 Dave Blodgett, Zone District Conservationist  
 Corey Brink, Zone District Conservationist  
 John Thurgood, Zone District Conservationist  
 Lorrie Doering, Procurement Assistant  
 Kenneth Hafner, Coordinator, Aiken RC&D  
 Laurie Howard, Computer Specialist

Julie Lawrence, Program Assistant  
 Daniel O'Brien, Computer Specialist  
 Pat Pickett, Contract Officer  
 Z. Reed Sims, GIS Specialist  
 Ellen Sivret, Soil Conservationist  
 Dave Skinas, Archeologist  
 Carol Vartuli, Budget Officer  
 Tom Villars, Soil Resource Specialist

We would like to thank the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service for their outstanding support of the Northern Vermont RC&D Program since 1974. This support has enabled us to focus on project implementation and getting natural resource conservation and community development work accomplished, instead of concerning ourselves with funding overhead costs. This is one of the many partnerships that makes our work successful.