

**Rutland Natural Resources Conservation District (RNRCD)**  
**Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes**  
**USDA Service Center, Rutland**  
**May 23, 2024**

**Supervisors Present:** Alan Shelvey, Mike Pedone, Sean Barrows and Lee Turner

**Also, Present:** Nanci McGuire, Phyllicia Moore, NRCS, District Conservationist, Devon Snyder, NRCS, Soil Conservationist, Les Wright NRCS, Watershed Engineer, and Whitney Burgess, Ag Outreach Specialist

**Meeting called to order at 9:40 a.m.**

**Minutes from the March 7, Meeting** - A motion was made by Lee and seconded by Sean to approve the minutes. This was voted on and the motion passed.

**Financial Reports** – Reports for March and April were reviewed and discussed.  
2024 Spring Tree and Trout Sale Financial Reports were reviewed and discussed.  
A motion was made by Sean and seconded by Lee to approve financial reports. This was voted on and the motion passed.

**Ag Outreach Specialist Report:** (Whitney Burgess)  
Whitney provided a presentation on the results of the **Locally Led Conservation Survey**.

**Survey Participants**

Bennington: 26  
Rutland: 26  
NY: 1

**District of Residence**

Bennington:26  
Poultney Mettowee: 12  
Rutland: 12  
NY: 1  
Not sure: 2

**Roles of Responders**

Farmer: 36  
Community Member: 22  
Landowner: 14  
Forester: 8  
Resource Professional: 5  
Farm Worker: 2  
Maple Producer: 1

**Land Use Conservation Priority Ranked**

1. Crop Land
2. Forest
3. Farmstead
4. Pasture

**Resource Concern Areas (top three)**

Rutland: Soil quality limitations, weather resilience, field sediment, nutrient, and pathogen loss  
Bennington: Weather resilience, Soil quality limitations, degraded plant condition/wind and water erosion

Nanci thanked Whitney for assisting with the Tree Sale.

**NRCS Update:** (Phylicxia Moore)

- Phylicxia introduced Devon Snyder, Soil Conservationist to the Board and provided a presentation on the FY25 Locally Led Funding Pool Proposal that has been submitted to the State Technical Committee for review and approval. FY25 application consideration cutoff date is Aug. 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Operations Program:** (Les Wright)

Les provided an overview and handouts on this program.

**District Manager Report:** (Nanci McGuire)

**District Manager Meetings** - I participated in meetings on April 1, and May 13

**VT Envirothon Steering Committee Meeting** – I participated in this meeting on March 18, where we discussed the logistics of the Training Day at Marsh Billings Farm in April and the Statewide Competition on May 14, at the Kehoe Conservation Camp at Lake Bomoseen.

4 schools registered with a total of 9 teams.

White River Valley High School

North Country Career Center (Newport)

Hartford Area Career & Technology Center

Hannaford Career Center (Middlebury)

Stafford Technical Center Forestry & Natural Resources

**Statewide Competition** - I attended this event on May 14, where North Country Career Center (Newport), Hannaford Career Center (Middlebury) and Stafford Technical Center Forestry & Natural Resources competed (White River Valley High School and Hartford Career Center were not able to attend the event)

There was a total of 6 teams.

North Country Career Center won the Statewide Competition and will be going to the National Envirothon Competition in July at Hobart & Willam Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY.

Stafford Technical Center Forestry & Natural Resources got 3<sup>rd</sup> place overall but came in first place for Forestry, Aquatics and Wildlife.

**Agency of Agriculture Listening Session/Local Work Group Meeting** - I attended this meeting at the VT Farmers Food Center on March 20. This meeting was led by the Agency of Agriculture staff.

Phylicxia and her staff, Poultney Mettowee NRCD staff, and Michael, District Manager with the Bennington NRCD were also in attendance.

The goal of this meeting was to bring landowners together to listen to concerns that they have and to discuss them.

The 2024 Locally Led Conservation Survey for Rutland and Bennington Counties was discussed and then handed out to participants.

Participants were encouraged to complete the survey and invited to attend the Local Work Group Meeting on March 28, to discuss the results of the survey and make recommendations based on the available NRCS practices to the NRCS State Technical Committee.

I was not able to attend the Local Work Group Meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Otter Creek Coordination Meetings** – Alan, Mike and I participated in this meeting on March 28.

This group consists of folks from Trout Unlimited, US Fish & wildlife, VT Natural Resources Council, VT Fish & Wildlife, Watersheds United Vermont, local watershed groups, Rutland and Otter Creek Conservation Districts, staff from DEC and others who are currently working in the Otter Creek Watershed.

Erin Rogers with Trout Unlimited reviewed a map that she created that identifies active projects that partners are currently working on in the Otter Creek Watershed. The group suggested that projects from the Watershed Projects Database (WPDB) be added to the map.

Projects on the map should be dam removals, flood resiliency and buffer plantings.

Next steps: reach out to groups to find out who is interested in these kinds of projects that are being mapped and if they have the capacity to do the work. Next Meeting is Thursday, May 16 from 10:30 – 12:00 via zoom.

**May 16, Meeting** – Alan and I attended this meeting where Erin Rogers reviewed an updated map with the group. The map identifies new projects, active projects, and priority areas. It was suggested that projects identified in Stream Geomorphic Assessments and River Corridor Plans in the Otter Creek watershed be added to this map. The purpose of the map is to do more focused restoration projects in specific watersheds with willing landowners. Shannon Pytlik and others suggested that an important next step might be to focus on forming a Watershed Group/Organization for the Otter Creek. The next meeting will be after field season (sometime in November).

**GRANTS:**

**Tactical Basin Planning (TBP)** – Our workplan for FY25 was submitted to Angie for review and approval on April 3. The workplan was reviewed and discussed with the Board. We should be receiving a contract between NRCC and the District sometime before July 1, 2024.

**LCBP Clean Water and Healthy Ecosystems Grant** - (Town of Proctor SWMP)

Watershed Consulting Associates are continuing to work on completing the (4) 30% designs that were discussed with the Town.

- #1. Proctor High School (Infiltration Chambers or Bioretention)
- #2. Elementary School (Bioretention, Sand Filter, or Gravel Wetland)
- #3. Proctor Library (Bioretention)
- #4. Riverside Cemetery (Swale Improvement or Sand Filter)

Deadline on this agreement is August 31, 2024.

**Otter Creek Basin Clean Water Service Provider, Clean Water Projects** - (SWMP for Clarendon River Watershed in the Town of West Rutland)

Fitzgerald Environmental are continuing to work on field surveys and identifying potential projects. Evan and Frank are planning to meet with Sean in early June to review the projects that have been identified and do some site visits. The deadline on this agreement is June 30, 2025.

**Otter Creek Basin Clean Water Service Provider, Clean Water Projects** – (Sargent Brook-Cold River Floodplain Restoration/Berm Removal)

- Alan and I participated in a kickoff Meeting via zoom on April 18, with Evan and Frank with Fitzgerald Environmental, Angie Allen and Jess and Conner (Landowners).
- Evan and Frank visited the site on May 16, and met with Jess and Conner and completed the field survey. The next steps are to process the field survey data and complete computer modeling throughout the summer.

There will be an on-site meeting once the field survey data and computer modeling has been completed.

The deadline on this agreement is January 31, 2025.

**Other Business:**

**Bridget Bowen Stepping Down** – Bridget notified the Board on May 2, that she will be stepping down effective immediately. The Board discussed purchasing wooden plaques for both Bridget and Ted to show our appreciation for their many years of service and dedication to the RNRCD Board.

**VACD Update** – Alan reported on the VACD Executive Committee Meeting that he participated in on May 16.

**Next Meeting** - Tuesday, June 25, 2024, at 9:30 at the USDA Service Center at 170 South Main St., Ste 4, Rutland.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.**