A watercolor illustration of the Earth, showing blue oceans, green continents, and white clouds, rendered in a soft, painterly style.

# 2024-2025 Annual Plan



March 31, 2025 - Select Board Review



## *2023-24 WCC Priorities directed by the Select Board*

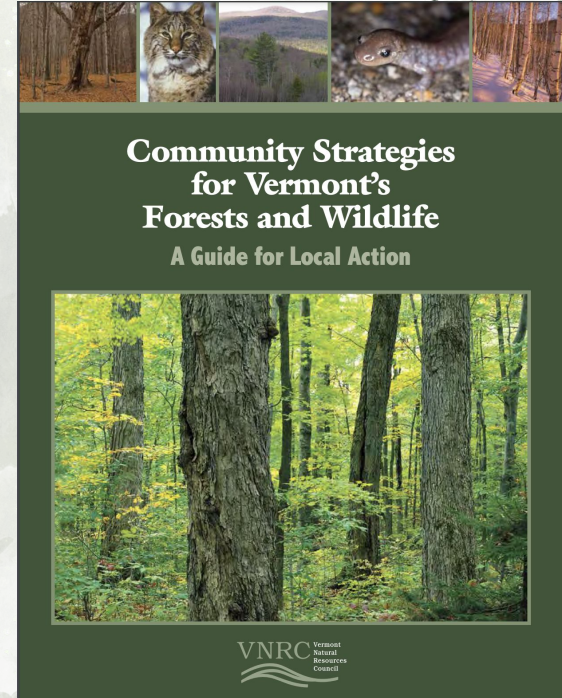
- » Examine the ecological, functional and habitat values of the Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor and the Worcester Range.
- » Update existing data, analysis, reports and assessments to support development and conservation decision making in and around the Shutesville Hill Wildlife Corridor and Worcester Range.
- » Develop and propose language updates to the Unified Development Bylaws. (e.g. Section: Identification and regulation of areas needing conservation protection)
- » Integrate the Community Values Mapping data – e.g. Forest Resources map attached to the Municipal Plan – onto the Town maps.



# *Community Strategies for Vermont's Forests and Wildlife*

## *A Guide for Local Action*

- ❖ Identify the location and extent of important **resources** (e.g. air, surface and ground waters, soils and their capabilities, mineral and other earth resources, streams, lakes, ponds, wetlands, and floodplains, unique or fragile biologic sites, scenic and recreational resources, plant and animal life, especially the rare and endangered species, prime agricultural and forest land, and other open lands) 24 V.S.A. § 4505
- ❖ Set priorities for resource protection
- ❖ Recommend strategies for conserving forest lands that are needed to support forestry, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, recreation, and other public values.



**Waterbury Conservation Committee Mission:** The Conservation Commission is a Town appointed Board of nine members that works under the auspices of the Planning Commission and the Select Board. It is the mission of the Town of Waterbury's Conservation Commission to preserve, protect, and enhance Waterbury's biodiversity; natural, scenic, and recreational resources; and other lands which have historic, educational, cultural, scientific, architectural, or archeological values in which the public has an interest and to assist in planning for the continuing benefit of the townspeople.



## 2024 A Year in Review

### Key Accomplishments

- **Engaged the Community at the Local Energy Action Partnership (LEAP) Fair**
- **Thatcher Brook - Riparian Area Planting**
- **Thatcher Brook Invasive Species Assessment:**
- **Research and Data Collection:** The Commission collaborated with the Waterbury Recreation Commission, volunteers and environmental organizations to conduct critical research in the following areas:
  - Municipal Plan and Maps:**
    - Confirmed WCC Priorities with SB and PC
    - Completed data & fact gathering desk reviews of Environmental & Conservation focused Federal, State and Local laws, regulations, policies, plans and procedures
    - Interviewed 17 experts (Natural Resources, Fish & Wildlife, Forest Parks & Rec, CVRPC, DEC- wetlands, (2) adjacent ConCom, etc.)
    - NRI Vendor Selected; Contract negotiation underway
    - Performed on-site parcel assessments
  - Water Quality Monitoring:**
    - Established work group partnership with UVM Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources - Environmental Problem Solving grad students
    - Performed on-site parcel assessments
  - Invasive Species Assessment and Management Planning**
    - Performed on-site parcel assessments





## 2025 Objectives

- Iteratively define Waterbury's annual conservation priorities with engaged partners.
- Provide strategic recommendations to the Waterbury Planning Commission and Select Board that inform the 2026 town plan and bylaws
- Promote Waterbury's biodiversity, natural, scenic, and recreational resources and other lands, through communication and education, in an effort to grow residents' participation and interest.
- Recommend and advise 2025 conservation projects with engaged partners as needed or opportunities arise.
- Develop/Cultivate partnerships with other conservation organizations (State/Municipal/Non-Profit)



## 2025-26 Goals

- **Budget & Funding:** Raise \$40,000 through town budget, grant, and/or private funding to support educational activities and a thorough natural resource inventory of the Town of Waterbury to be completed by June 2026.
- **Mapping & Surveying:**
  - Plan for and conduct an in-depth seasonal natural resources inventory for the Town of Waterbury. The purpose of the inventory is to map, assess and analyze the natural heritage elements deemed important for long-range preservation of biological diversity. Maps generated from these efforts will be included in the 2026 Municipal Plan update.
  - Assess which town owned lands have or need land management plans.
- **Community Outreach & Engagement:** Identify and implement three new channels for promoting WCC news and opportunities to engage the public by September 2025. (events, social media, earned media, emails, etc.)
- **Partnerships:** Identify at least 5 key partners required for the WCC to achieve its 2025 goals.





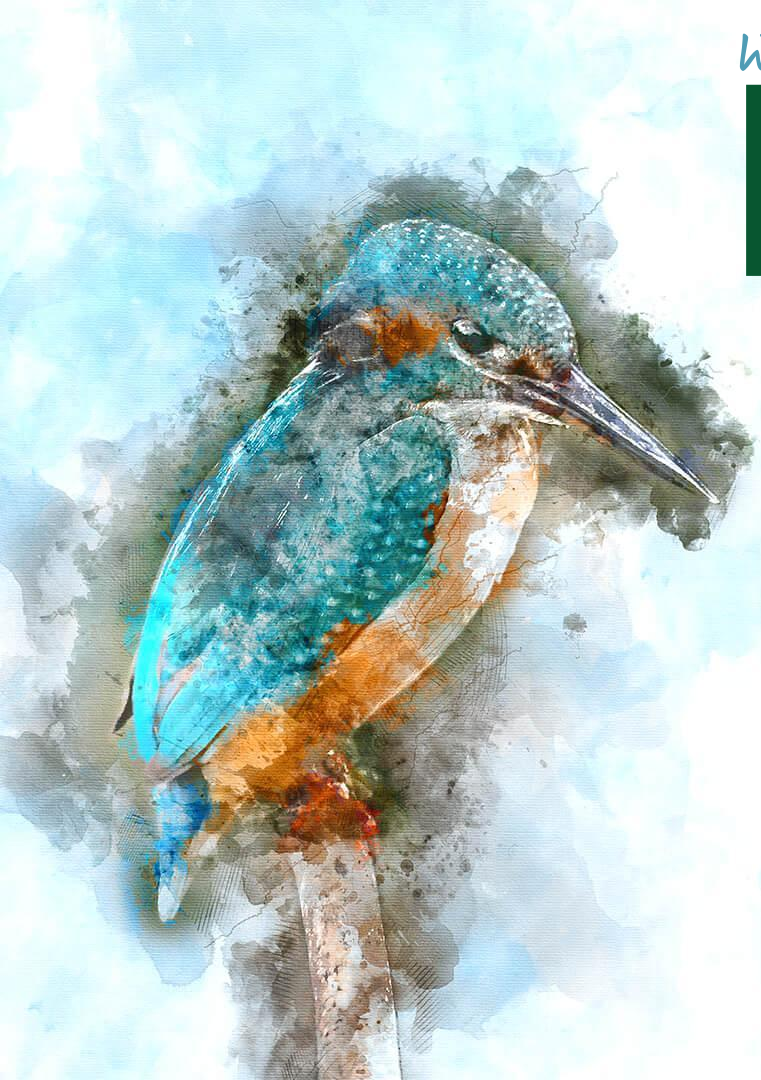
## *Challenges and Opportunities*

- » **Flood Resilience:** The impacts of an ever changing climate and extreme weather events have become increasingly evident in our region, and the urgency of addressing flood risks has never been greater.
- » **Climate Impacts:** Rising temperatures and unpredictable weather patterns continue to impact local ecosystems. The Commission will work to incorporate climate resilience into future projects.
- » **Sustainable Funding:** As we continue to expand our programs, securing additional sustainable funding sources will be essential.
- » **Community Engagement:** While public participation has increased, reaching all segments of the community remains a priority.

# What's coming up for the WCC

April 2025

May 2025



- ❑ Receive and review UVM Environmental Problem Solving - Final Proposal for Waterworks
  - ❑ Draft and submit Capacity building and Tiny Grant applications
  - ❑ Engage Arrowwood to finalize contract and begin NRI work
  - ❑ Research land management plan templates, use cases, and creation protocols.
  - ❑ Brainstorm and identify channels through which to engage Waterbury residents, local community members, and partnerships
  - ❑ Participate in Quarterly SHWC Partnership meeting
  - ❑ Identify and prioritize creating or strengthening relationships with top 5 partners
- ❑ Determine/Communicate Water Quality recommended actions to SB/Town Manager/Alex Tuscany
  - ❑ Confirm NRI priorities and monitor progress
  - ❑ Outline plan for outreach, content ideas, and engagement opportunities.
    - ❑ Launch Facebook/Instagram with informational, inspiring, and engaging content
    - ❑ One quarterly event (maybe a property walk?)
    - ❑ Two partnered events for the year
    - ❑ Regular submissions to Waterbury Roundabout





# APPENDIX

January - June 2024

July - December 2024

January - March 2025

April 2025

**Develop 2023-24  
Annual Plan**

- Goals, Priorities, Initiatives, Budget, Performance

**Assess Performance  
Gaps & Develop  
Solutions**

- Non-Regulatory
- Regulatory

**Implement Solutions**

- **Non-Regulatory:** NRI, LEAP Fair etc.
- **Regulatory:** Municipal Plan, Bylaws etc.

**Key Accomplishments**

- Confirmed WCC Priorities with SB and PC
- Completed data & fact gathering desk reviews of Environmental & Conservation focused Federal, State and Local laws, regulations, policies, plans and procedures
- Performed 11 on-site parcel assessments
- Established work group partnership with UVM Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources - Environmental Problem Solving grad students
- Interviewed 17 experts (Natural Resources, Fish & Wildlife, Forest Parks & Rec, CVRPC, DEC- wetlands, (2) adjacent ConCom, etc.)
- NRI Vendor Selected; Contract negotiation underway
- Published 2024 WCC Annual Report
- Townspeople approved WCC proposed budget

Monitor  
Reflect  
Sustain2023-24 Goals Provided to WCC by SB  
**October 2023**Proposed Solutions & Budget Accepted  
by SB & PC Chair  
**December 2, 2024 & December 30, 2024**Secure Permission to Contract  
with Arrowwood  
SB & PC Chair Planned for:  
**March 31, 2025**Kick-off NRI  
First week of  
April