

Conserving Land For Richmond's Future



**Renewing Richmond's
Conservation Reserve Fund**



Judy Rosovsky
Chair

Richmond Conservation Commission
(RCC)

RCC website:

[http://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-
minutes/conservation-commission/](http://www.richmondvt.gov/boards-minutes/conservation-commission/)

**It's again time for voters to decide
whether to renew Richmond's
Conservation Reserve Fund**



Richmond's Conservation Reserve Fund

- **2005: Established by voters**
- **2010: Renewed by voters**
- **2015: Renewed by voters (693-223)**
- **2020: Renewed by voters (1304-392); renewal voting changed to annual**
- **2021: Annual CRF renewal**



Richmond's Conservation Reserve Fund

- **Financed by 1 cent on the tax rate (1.35% of total)**
- **FY2021 yield: \$47,300**
- **\$10 on \$100,000 of assessed value**
- **Focuses on conserving local natural, recreational, agricultural and historic resources**
- **The Fund has attracted \$1.4 million in matching funds from other sources (State, Federal, foundations) -- \$4.81 for every Fund dollar spent**



Richmond's Conservation Reserve Fund

Decision- Making

- **Conservation Commission reviews project proposals on continuing basis.**



- **Makes recommendation to Selectboard.**
- **Selectboard approves or disapproves expenditures.**



Why Renew?

Supports Town Plan Priorities

- **“Protect priority natural areas in order to maintain the health and function of those areas and their ecosystem services.”**
- **“Preserve healthy and resilient working lands, agricultural soils.”**
- **“Maintain Richmond’s rural character and scenic beauty.”**
- **“Utilize the conservation reserve fund to protect important natural resources and public access to them where appropriate”**
- **“Utilize best management practices for Richmond-owned, publicly accessible natural and recreational areas.”**

CRF Projects Snapshot

Natural Areas

- Stage Road Community Forest
- Andrews Community Forest
- Huntington Gorge

Working Farms

- Bombardier Meadow
- Andrews Farmland

Recreational Treasures

- Willis Hill
- Johnnie Brook Trail

Historic Sites

- Town Center Portico
- Cong. Church Stained Glass Windows
- Richmond Hill Cemetery

Environmental Research and Education

- Large Habitat Block Survey
- Science-to-Action Report
- Master Naturalist Program
- Lake Iroquois Plant Survey

A 16-year successful track record at protecting water and air quality, biodiversity, working farms and forests, outdoor recreation, historic resources and education





2020 Funded CRF Projects

- Huntington Gorge Steward
- Johnnie Brook Trail Repair and Re-engineering
- Stage Road Town Forest
- Volunteer's Green Tree Planting Supplies

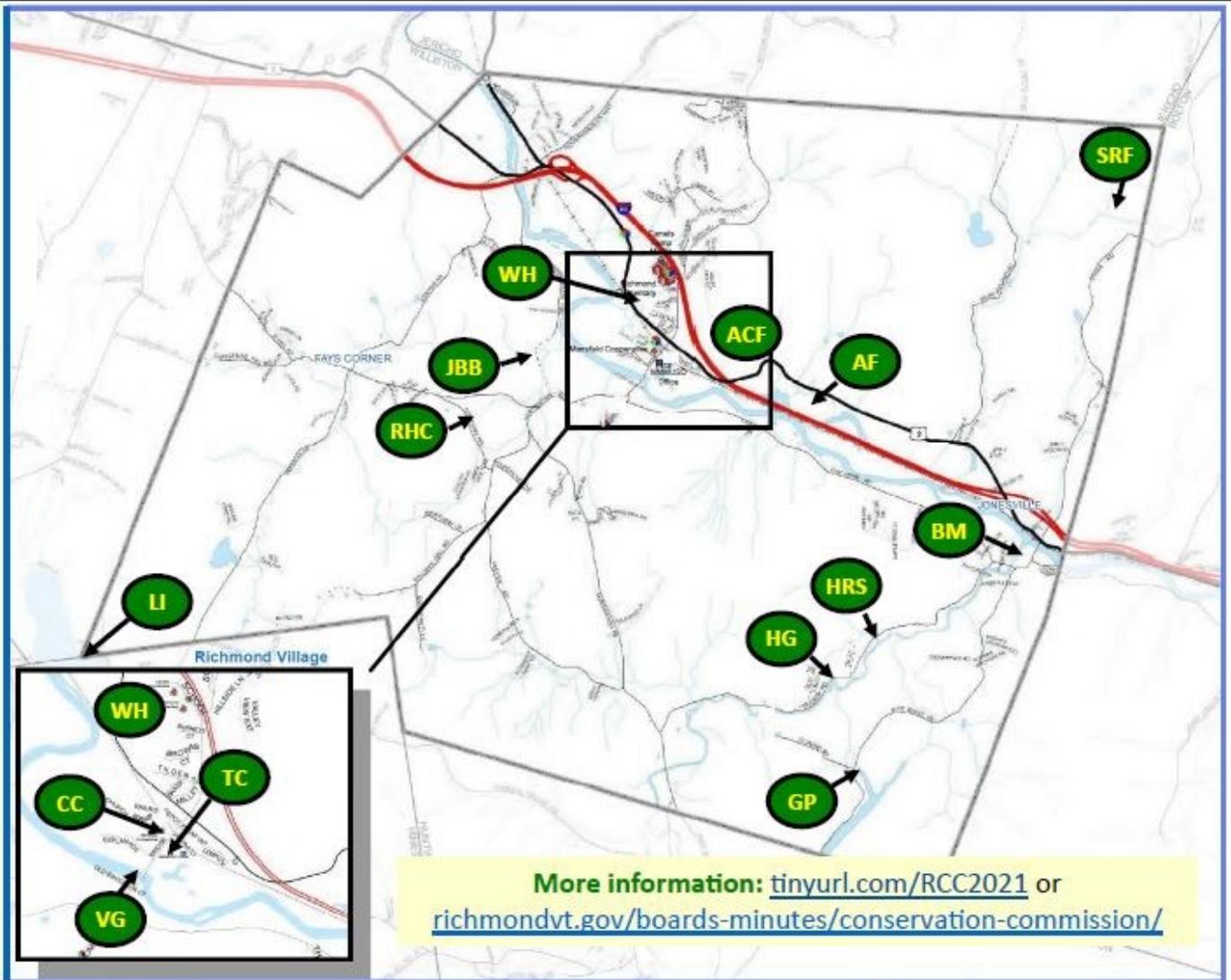
CRF Funded Projects

Richmond Conservation Reserve Fund

Supported Projects
2005-2021

Project Key

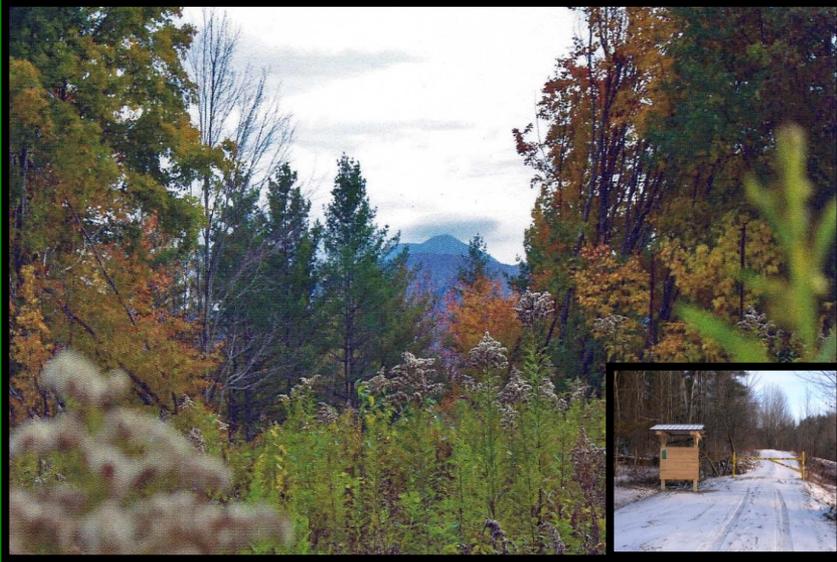
- ACF: Andrews Community Forest
 - AF: Andrews Farmland
 - BM: Bombardier Meadow
 - CC: Congregational Church Window Restoration
 - GP: Gillett Pond Dam Restoration
 - HG: Huntington Gorge
 - HRS: River Steward Program
 - JBB: Johnnie Brook Bridge
 - LI: Lake Iroquois Plant Survey
 - RHC: Richmond Hill Cemetery
 - SRF: Stage Road Community Forest
 - TC: Town Center Portico Restoration
 - VG: Volunteers Green Riprap, and Tree Planting & Protection
 - WH: Willis Hill
- Town-Wide Projects**
 Large Habitat Block Survey
 Science-to-Action Project
 Master Naturalist Program



More information: tinyurl.com/RCC2021 or richmondvt.gov/boards-minutes/conservation-commission/

Recent Uses

Andrews Community Forest



Johnny Brook Trail Repairs



Willis Hill



VT Master Naturalist Program

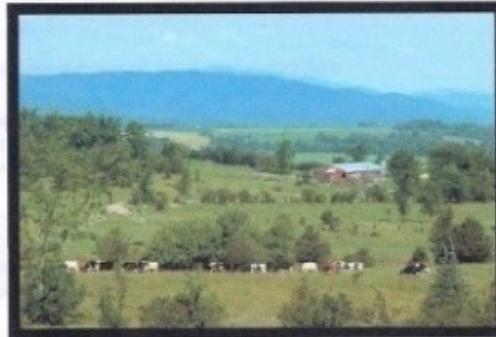


But What About Taxes?

The Evidence:

- Towns with more conserved acreage have lower property taxes.
- Conserved properties demand fewer municipal services.

Land Conservation and Property Taxes in Vermont



By Deb Brighton, Tax Policy Consultant

Return on Taxpayer Funding

To date:

▪ CRF grants	\$ 305,024
• Matching grants won	\$1,465,833
▪ Total value of projects	\$1,768,357

Leverage: \$1 CRF brought in \$4.81

The Question on Town Meeting Day

Article 7

Shall the voters approve funding the Conservation Reserve Fund by adding one cent to the municipal tax rate in the 2021-2022 fiscal year?

It's again time to decide the CRF's future

- **CRF funding expires in 2021**
- **The Conservation Commission recommends a “Yes” vote to continue funding for another year.**
- **Polls open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on March 2 at Camels Hump Middle School.**
- **Absentee ballots now available from the Town Clerk; must be completed and received by the Clerk by March 1st**

Conserving Resources For Richmond's Future



**Renewing Richmond's
Conservation Reserve Fund**

Questions / Comments?