

Richmond's Save Our Salamanders Network (RSOSN)



RSOSN

A group of citizen scientists
dedicated to monitoring the health
of our frogs and salamanders

Richmond's Save our Salamanders Network (RSOSN) is a group of citizen scientists dedicated to monitoring the health of our frogs and salamanders (aka herps). Current members include a few members from the Richmond Conservation Commission and some other herps enthusiasts in town. This group is trying to orchestrate safer wildlife crossing efforts by placing signs at areas of significant herp road crossing traffic.

We are asking for \$100 in Conservation Reserve Fund funds to cover the fees for safety vests, clickers and two metal crossing signs with an image of a salamander, similar to standard deer crossing signage to alert motorists about a spring migration at a confirmed hot spot for many different species of frogs and salamanders on Cochran Road. Every spring frogs and salamanders move from their upland forests habitats to fish-free vernal pools along the Winooski Rivershore. This takes place on rainy nights between late March to early May. Signs will give Richmond residents the opportunity to prevent unintended casualties of amphibians. Data in the Vermont Herp Atlas (<https://www.vtherpatlas.org/>) shows that some frog and salamander species have population numbers that are declining.

The RSOSN will be responsible for placing the signs on Cochran Rd. by March 15th and taking them down by May 15th. They would look similar existing signs posted in Huntington, VT. We are requesting funds for two aluminum frog crossing signs for \$50 including shipping and taxes and \$25 for the posts, \$40 for safety vests, plus \$10 for clickers to use for counting.

See <https://www.amazon.com/Frog-Crossing-12-Aluminum-Sign/dp/B077NLY2D6> for the signs and see the image below for the vests. The group has been in communication with Pete Gosselin about placing the signs.



G & F 41113 Industrial Safety Vest with Reflective Stripes, Neon Orange

amazon.com

In addition to posting signs and monitoring these crossing sites the RSOSN would like Richmond to formally participate in collecting data to contribute to statewide efforts monitoring the population and health of amphibians throughout Vermont. We would like to request permission to do from the Selectboard.

We invite other Richmond community members to join the fun by attending a training with the North Branch Nature Center via zoom and through other communications to ensure proper training, data collection and safety.



This proposal meets the Conservation Reserve Fund criteria of:

General Criteria A1-A5, protection of natural resource, permanent protection of wildlife, meets natural resources planning requirements, protects and enhances access to a natural resource and is directed at a threatened resource. It meets Natural Resource Protection Criteria B4 and B5: preserving biodiversity and providing a corridor.

Motion for Richmond Conservation Commission to consider:

The Richmond Conservation Commission recommends that the Selectboard approve up to \$150 in Conservation Reserve Funds to cover the cost of safety vests, clickers and 2 metal signs and posts, as described in the Richmond Save Our Salamanders Network proposal dated Oct 10, 2023. The request meets CRF criteria A1-A5 and B4 and B5, as enumerated in the proposal, as related to providing access to and preserving recreational opportunities and conserving an important natural resource. These funds must be expended within 3 years of the date of final approval, by approximately Oct 16, 2023.