

Resources for Conservation Commissions

(Not a comprehensive list!)

Online Maps and Data

ANR Natural Resources Atlas: Geographic information about environmental features and sites that the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources manages, monitors, permits, or regulates.

BioFinder: A map and database identifying Vermont's lands and waters supporting high priority ecosystems, natural communities, habitats, and species.

Forest Stewardship Atlas: Geographic data related to forests. Over 50 forestry-related datasets are organized into six different themes: Productivity, Ecological Resources, Water Resources, Scenic and Recreational Resources, Human and Environmental Constraints, and Stewardship.

Vermont Center for Geographical Information: Source of geographic data, information and activities.

Supporting Resources and Organizations

Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions: AVCC is a non-profit organization specifically set up to provide support for Conservation Commissions – from educational opportunities to resources to small grants to a directory of conservation success stories from within the state.

Audubon Vermont: Provides forest bird habitat assessments for owners of large tracts of forestland (including municipalities) in select locations.

Climate Change in Vermont: The Agency of Natural Resources maintains a webpage with the most recent state information and resources supporting climate change science, goals, and actions.

Department of Environmental Conservation

- Green Infrastructure Collaborative
- Lakes and Ponds Program
- Local Municipal Actions Program
- Rivers Program
- Wetlands Program

Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation

- Forestry Program
- Recreation Program
- Urban and Community Forestry Program

Department of Housing and Community Development: This department within Vermont's Agency of Commerce and Community Development supports local and regional planning efforts. It offers a variety of community development opportunities including state designation programs, funding and incentives, and land use planning resources.

Vermont Coverts: Provides training opportunities for landowners to learn about the natural resources on their land.

Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department

Community Wildlife Program: This program provides technical assistance of many types to Conservation Commissions.

Vermont League of Cities and Towns: Offers a variety of resources to support local efforts particularly in water quality planning.

Vermont Natural Resources Council: Offers a variety of resources to support communities in conserving and protecting natural resources through four program areas: Energy and Climate Action, Forests and Wildlife, Water, and Sustainable Communities.

Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Districts (NRCDs): While projects vary somewhat depending on region, the NRCDs provide landowners and agricultural producers with technical, financial and educational assistance for working with state and federal programs, including water quality protection, erosion control, riparian plantings, and education about natural resources.

Vermont Planning Information Center: A clearinghouse of information for planning commissions, zoning boards, development review boards, conservation commissions, and their staff and all others involved in land use planning and regulations in Vermont.

Vermont Woodlands Association: Provides educational trainings and programs about natural resources.

Natural Resources Planning

Conserving Vermont's Natural Heritage: Provides a framework for land use planners of how to look at the natural world at different ecological scales as well as a range of options for taking action on each of the scales. Use this to understand more about the scientific concepts.

Community Planning Toolbox: The Toolbox introduces users to the issues, techniques, and resources related to smart growth and natural resources planning. It includes case studies showing how and why different communities have used various tools.

Community Strategies for Vermont's Forests and Wildlife - A Guide for Local Action: Provides detailed information about a range of regulatory and non-regulatory options for taking care of forests and wildlife, including sample language. Use this to better understand each of the potential tools for local action discussed in the presentation.

Mapping Vermont's Natural Heritage: Provides a seven map Natural Resource Inventory for every town in Vermont and explains how to prioritize these features and include them in municipal land use planning. Use this to help access ecological data and wrestle with what it means. *COMING SOON! When available, there will be a link from the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's Community Wildlife Program page.*

The Planning Manual: From the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development. Provides information about how to write each section of the town plan, as well as information about public participation. Read this to better understand how to undertake municipal land use planning in Vermont.

Smart Growth: An overview of the principles of smart growth.

Land Conservation

The Nature Conservancy

New England Forestry Foundation

Northeast Wilderness Trust

Trust for Public Land

Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department

Vermont Land Trust

(And many local or regional land trusts! The above list includes only those working statewide.)

Funding

Agency of Commerce and Community Development Grants and Incentives

Agency of Natural Resources Grants and Loans

Agency of Transportation's Better Roads Grant

Association of Vermont Conservation Commission's Tiny Grants

New England Grassroots Environmental Fund

The Vermont Community Foundation

This list was compiled by the *Community Wildlife Program*, of *Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department*. This program provides technical assistance to Conservation Commissions across Vermont.

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