



Windham County Conservation District

Summer 2020

Newsletter



Did you know that grassland birds are undergoing the most dramatic decline of any bird community in the continental United States? Managing your property for grassland birds in Vermont presents an opportunity to conserve both our agricultural and ecological heritage. If you own at least 10 acres of open field, pasture, or meadow, please consider joining the Vermont Center for Ecostudies' [Grassland Ambassador](#) program and becoming grassland bird conservationist. VCE's Grassland Ambassadors program works with farmers and grassland habitat owners to find a pragmatic balance between human and avian needs. Contact VCE's Grassland Ambassador coordinator, Kevin Tolan, at grasslands@vtecostudies.org to learn more, and find recorded webinars on grassland bird management and ecology [here](#).



A male Bobolink surveys his territory
(Photo by Cory Ross)

Game of Logging

2020 Game of Logging – chainsaw training this fall



This program is designed for novice to advanced chain saw users. Novices develop safe and productive habits from the start, while experienced chain saw users improve their skills and “unlearn” bad habits and unsafe techniques.

In this hands-on training, one instructor works with a group of up to ten participants to ensure that each participant has time to practice the techniques and receive personal feedback. Participants receive individualized coaching at a series of in-the-woods practice stations. By listening to explanations, watching demonstrations, and practicing techniques, participants come away with better work habits and greater confidence in their ability to safely fell trees and work in the woods.

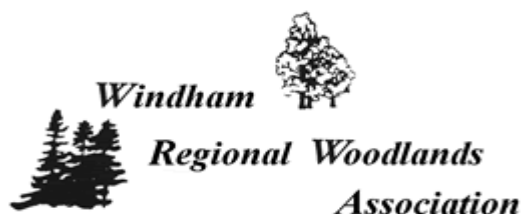
Level 1 focuses on introducing the participant to open face felling and the development of techniques to safely use it. Topics covered include personal protective equipment, chainsaw safety features, chainsaw reactive forces, bore cutting, pre-planning the fell, and understanding hinge wood strength.

Level 2 focuses on maximizing chainsaw performance through basic maintenance, carburetor setting, and filing techniques. Limbing and bucking techniques are introduced, spring pole cutting is covered and more felling is practiced.

For more information and to register, please visit:

[Website: Game of Logging](#)

Sponsored by:



2020 Plant & Trout Sale



Plant orders wait to be picked up and planted



Trout are bagged for pick-up

The 2020 Plant Sale required a different approach in this year of COVID-related challenges. Many thanks go out to our volunteers who worked some long hours in getting the orders packed and ready, as well as Geof Dolman who volunteered his barn for our preparation work. Thanks also to Academy School and the West Brattleboro Fire Station for allowing us to use their parking lot for plant sale pick up. We sold over \$12,000 in plants and trout this year! Thank you to all of our customers for supporting the Conservation District with your purchases. Happy Gardening! *If you have requests for plant varieties you would like us to offer in 2021, please email us at:*

windhamcountynrcd@gmail.com

Conservation groups partner to fight invasive species in Windham County

The Windham Conservation District is teaming up with a number of conservation groups and individuals to launch a Comprehensive Invasive Species Management Association (CISMA) in Southeastern Vermont. This CISMA will bring together experts on preventing, identifying and removing invasive plant species to help educate the public. We are planning a series of webinars to launch this coming Fall that will be a great resource for landowners big and small on how to best manage their land to support native plant species. Like the CISMA on Facebook to make sure you find out about programming once its scheduled: [Southeastern Vermont CISMA](#). We will also post updates on CISMA Programming on the District Webpage at www.windhamcountynrcd.org

This workshop series is supported by a grant from the New England Grassroots Environmental Fund

**GRASS
ROOTS
FUND**

VT Public Access Greeter Program helps protect our lakes and reservoirs



A public access greeter conducts an inspection at Harriman Reservoir this summer

The Conservation District was awarded grant funding from the Department of Environmental Conservation to manage Public Access Greeter Programs at Lake Raponda, Harriman Reservoir and Somerset Reservoir. With additional funding support from Great River Hydro, the Town of Wilmington and the Lake Raponda Association, these programs will help to educate boaters about the importance of cleaning and drying their boats in between uses while also conducting inspections to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species into these water bodies.

The Importance of Riparian Plantings

One of the most effective things we can do to protect water quality here in Vermont is to ensure our rivers and streams have a buffer of healthy, native vegetation on their banks between the water and any development or agriculture. Natural vegetation can filter and remove runoff from agricultural activity and from impervious surfaces such as roads and parking lots. Trees can also shade streams and rivers, keeping them cool during the warmer summer months. Elevated water temperature can be a stressor to the natural riparian ecosystem, particularly to our native and stocked trout populations.

The Conservation District receives grant funding to identify, develop and implement riparian buffer plantings to protect water quality. If you own property along a stream or river and are interested in exploring options for a buffer planting, please reach out to us at windhamcountynrcd@gmail.com or 802-689-3024. There may be funding available to cover trees and planting expenses.



Volunteers from Grafton Elementary help with a buffer planting in Grafton in 2019

Small Livestock or Dairy Farms –

Learn More about Nutrients on Your Farm

Develop Your Own Nutrient Management Plan with Support from the Windham Conservation District

Sign-Up for the VACD RCPP Program

Are you a “Certified Small Farm Operation” or are you a non-certified small farm that mechanically spreads manure or fertilizers on farm fields? If so, we’d like to help you learn more about nutrient management and develop a **Nutrient Management Plan for your farm while funds are available to cover the tasks associated with this effort.**

This program can help:

- Farmers of all sizes adopt new techniques to manage nutrients and protect water quality downstream
- Certified Small Farm Operations meet State requirements to have a Nutrient Management Plan
- Balance nutrients on fields for better crop yields
- Get soil samples done for all farm fields
- Cut costs by reducing unnecessary fertilizer applications

Sign up now to take advantage of the opportunity for assistance to prepare you for a 6-session Nutrient Management Class (NMP) led by UVM Extension in January-March of 2020. Farmers who have attended this class leave with greater knowledge of their fields, of the nutrients available on their farm, and how to best manage these resources to maintain crop yields and protect water quality.

The VACD RCPP program will cover the costs of all the preparation for the class including soil and manure samples, maps, required documentation, a one-year free subscription for the Go Crop software used during the class, as well as the cost of the classes (including lunch). We will also provide assistance to you throughout the class. The class will likely be located in White River, VT, although if enough Windham County Farms sign up it may be located further south in Springfield, VT.

This is a great opportunity to take advantage of assistance from the Conservation Districts and UVM Extension in getting an NMP. For more information, please contact Cory Ross at the Windham County Natural Resources Conservation District:

windhamcountynrcd@gmail.com

802-689-3024

Conservation Practice Surveys

The District has grant funding to conduct conservation practice surveys of farms in Windham County. Have you implemented and paid for conservation practices on your farm in the last x years? The State of Vermont is interested in collecting data on these practices and how they are protecting water quality. Eligible practices include:

- Manure Injection
- Cover Crops
- Conservation Crop Rotation
- Livestock Exclusion Fencing
- Conservation Tillage
- Riparian Buffers

If you have paid for any of these practices and are willing to sit down with us for a 30-minute interview, please reach out to [Cory Ross](mailto:Cory.Ross@vt.gov) at 802-689-3024.