

# Help Decide Vermont's Pathways to Conservation!

## Why?

Stakeholders across Vermont celebrated the passage of the Community Resilience and Biodiversity Protection Act in June of 2023. This legislation puts Vermont on course to protect the ecological functions of our landscape by sustaining biodiversity, ecological connectivity, healthy communities, water quality, climate resilience, and working lands economies. To achieve this vision, Vermont established the ambitious goals of conserving 30% of Vermont's landscape by 2030 and 50% by 2050. The Vermont Legislature has directed the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to collect public input as they inventory the current state of conservation in Vermont and develop a long-term plan to reach these ambitious goals. **We want to hear from you to design equitable and effective pathways to conserve and protect Vermont's lands and waters.**

## What?

We are collecting feedback from various stakeholders for an inventory of current and possible conservation in Vermont. Key themes include:

- **Values.** What is important to have in the 30x30 and 50x50 Conservation Plan?
- **What counts towards the goals.** What land and water is already conserved or protected in Vermont? Which of the categories defined by the law do those lands fall into? How should conserved agricultural lands be counted? How can land protection and conservation programs best protect watershed health? Are there other categories of protected land that should be included?
- **Practices, Programs, Methods.** What are the conservation practices and related programs on these lands (what are they, what do they do, how do they contribute, and what metrics do they use?) and what new practices, programs, or methods should be developed to achieve the 30x30 and 50x50 goals?
- **Equity.** How equitable are existing land protection and conservation strategies and programs? How can we achieve more equity and access in our conservation processes, strategies and programs?
- **Funding.** What are existing and potential funding sources that can be leveraged to accelerate conservation to reach the 30x30 and 50x50 goals?



## Who?

We invite comment from public and private land managers, land trusts, funders, environmental justice and conservation policy advocates, Indigenous groups, representatives from historically marginalized and disadvantaged communities, farm, forest and recreation land owners, representatives from working lands enterprises, outdoor recreation organizations, municipalities, conservation commissions, local grassroots initiatives, and other individuals and groups who support and benefit from conservation investments.



## How and When?

We are creating multiple avenues for public input, including stakeholder work groups, focus groups and public roundtables, interviews, surveys, and general public meetings. To learn more about these different avenues for participation, you can visit <https://www.vhcb.org/our-programs/VCSI>. Below is an outline of opportunities to get involved.

Date	Format	Questions or Input Requests
Nov '23 - Feb '24	Interviews, Surveys	Key Stakeholder Input on questions, gather general feedback
Feb - Apr 2024	Focus Groups	Detailed stakeholder input in affinity-based (farmer, municipalities, etc) groups
Feb - Mar 2024	Working Group Roundtables	Provide feedback on progress of working groups (conserved land categories, agriculture, aquatic systems, and state lands)
Apr 2024	Summary of Findings	Review summary of findings to provide feedback at Public Meeting
May 2024	Conservation Listening Session	Provide feedback on inventory summary of findings; identify outstanding questions and gaps
May 2024	Interviews, surveys, focus groups	Answer outstanding questions, gather additional detail
Jun -Jul 2024	Internal Drafting	Inventory report drafted and submitted to Legislature