



Rural Development
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

A photograph of a rural landscape at sunset. In the foreground is a green field. In the middle ground, there is a large red barn with a blue roof and two silver silos. To the left, there is a smaller green-roofed structure and a white pickup truck. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a sky with orange and purple clouds.

2025 Calendar

Vermont and New Hampshire
Impacts and Investments - Fiscal Year 2024

From the Office of the State Director



Sarah Waring

RD State Director – VT/NH

Those of us who call Vermont and New Hampshire home know well the cycles of the seasons, both annual and political. For me, 2024 represents the end of my time with Rural Development, as another political season moves forward. Yet I move on with a grateful heart, and a mind full of ideas and inspiration from three unbelievably rewarding and productive years of my professional career. And I'm proud to say that over the past few years, RD has invested over \$750 million in towns and people in New Hampshire and Vermont.

This has included large investments in rural broadband, in energy efficiency and clean energy, in small businesses, in disaster recovery and in one of our most critical rural issues—affordable housing. We did this in spite of a hiring freeze, and with often less than 60% of our full staff complement on board. Our staff team is incredibly dedicated and professional. We are small, but mighty! We will

always do our best to serve you, and the needs of your residents and communities. While we don't control a lot of the rules and regulations at the local level, we will be here to do our best to walk you through everything, and to share what we do know. And federal service is often a calling: the people who work here believe in the impacts of the work we do, and are charged with an incredibly complex job to safely and equitably steward taxpayer dollars.

Our mission is one of people and places. It's focused on economic improvement and a better quality of life. It strives to create viable communities where life is affordable for all. In other words, RD public servants stay true to the work because the rules and regulations set the boundaries and opportunities for investments, not the person at the helm of the portfolio.

Our task is to support housing, business and community infrastructure for rural residents and communities who need it most. That is constant, despite the changing seasons. Though it is always hard to say goodbye, I do so with contentment and confidence that what we've achieved during our time together, often in the face of disaster and uncertainty, is something our communities recognize and value, and benefit from every day.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

USDA Rural Development - VT/NH

Fiscal Year 2024 Investments

\$141,195,515

Vermont's Northeast Kingdom receives additional investments as one of five U.S. Rural Economic Area Partnership Zones. In FY23, NEK REAP Zone funding totaled \$9,182,936

VERMONT

Single Family Housing
\$8,588,537

Multi-Family Housing
\$9,685,099

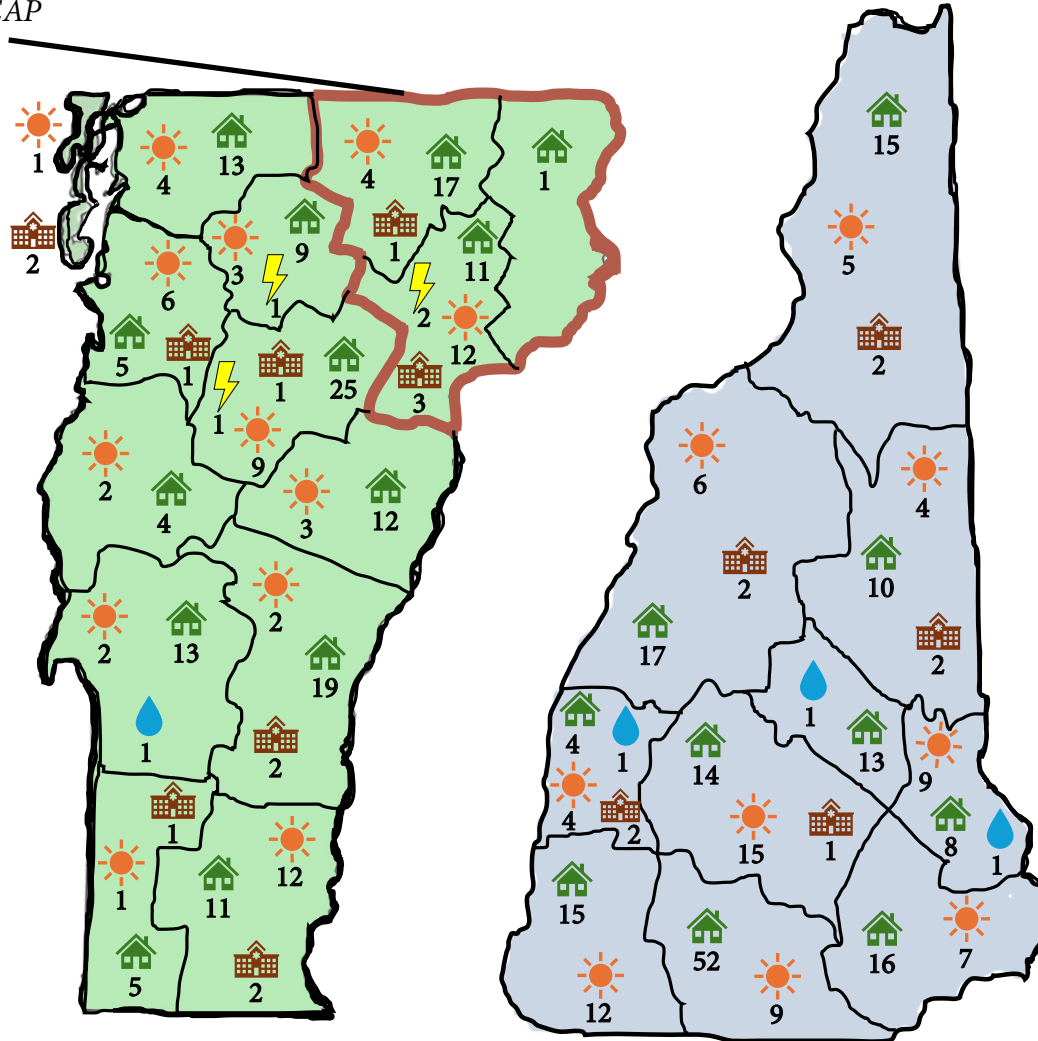
Business Programs
\$27,904,753

Community Facilities
\$12,792,557

Water & Environmental
\$2,245,000

Electric & Telecom
\$24,126,655

Total Funding
\$85,342,600



NEW HAMPSHIRE

Single Family Housing
\$9,747,163

Multi-Family Housing
\$14,519,332

Business Programs
\$20,308,309

Community Facilities
\$6,821,111

Water & Environmental
\$4,457,000

Total Funding
\$55,852,915

of Projects by County





In January 2024, USDA gathered with ag stakeholders at the University of New Hampshire in Durham (*right*) to discuss rural healthcare and farm funding strategies in the Granite State, and their impacts on customers, producers and small businesses.

On site was RD State Director Waring and National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Interim State Conservationist, Joe Buford (*top left*);

Kirsten Corazzini, UNH Dean of College of Health and Human Services (*bottom left, in blue*), and Courtney Tanner, Senior Director of Government Relations at Dartmouth Health (*in red*); and

Devon Cunningham, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Management & Strategy, and USDA's Emily Campbell (*bottom right*).



January

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
			1 New Year's Day	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Projects through Community Facilities (CF) programs and the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) created generational impacts for municipalities, businesses and residents of rural Twin State communities.

(Clockwise, from top right) In New London, Greg Berger (*far right*) gives State Director Waring and energy partners a tour of Spring Ledge Farm, where REAP funds secured a woodchip boiler and 104.5 kW solar array to save roughly \$30,000/yr.; Through an RD home repair grant, Teresa Vetre of Swazey, NH, has a safe, solid new roof over her head; Friends of the Sharon Academy broke ground on a new STEAM learning center in Sharon, VT, with help from a \$1.9 million CF loan; Gary Fox (*left*) with the Town of Rockingham, worked with Bellows Falls Fire Department Chief Sean McGinnis (*right*) to secure CF funds and purchase a new repeater and radios, saving precious time for first responders.



February

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 Washington's Birthday	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	



In March 2024, Fairbanks Museum Director Adam Kane (*top right*), hosted a ribbon cutting to open the new Tang Science Annex, a 21st century learning center made of Mass Timber, sourced from Vermont Eastern Hemlock.

Kane overcame soaring costs by curating help from diverse funding sources including RD Community Facilities programs. The event's guests included a playful Director Waring (*right*); Northern Forest Center President Rob Riley (*top left*); and Oscar Tang, the Annex's philanthropist namesake (*left*).



March

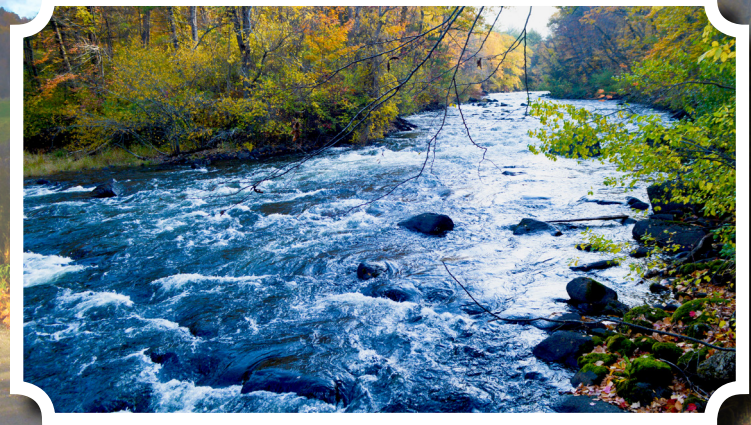
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9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Earth Day is every day at USDA RD, and April 2024 saw innovative funding come online for communities suffering the devastating effects of recent storms and flooding.

RD Director Waring, along with Ted Brady, Executive Director of the Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT), announced a \$1,000,000 Disaster Assistance Fund for municipalities to build financial, operational and managerial expertise following natural catastrophes.

The VLCT and RD, through a cooperative agreement, will support communities with direct, in-person technical assistance in times of need.

(Clockwise, from top left) A garden is ready for planting in Swanton, VT; A Barred Owl surveys fields bounded by rustic country roads in Monkton, VT (*backdrop*); the Winnepesaukee River rumbles west to meet the Pemigewasset and form the Merrimack River in Franklin, New Hampshire.



April

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 <small>Patriot's Day</small>	22 <small>Earth Day</small>	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



In May 2024, city leaders in Winooski, VT, invited federal, state and community partners to break ground on its downtown revitalization.

At VFW Post 1767, the iconic strength of an M4 Sherman Tank set the right tone (*backdrop*), aptly representing the iron will of innovators who brought the project to life. Through CF and Water & Environmental Programs (WEP), RD invested \$20.5 million to help rebuild 4,000 feet of Main Street. The project includes burying utility lines, updating traffic signals, establishing bike lanes, expanding sidewalks, and upgrading water, stormwater and sewer infrastructure.

(*Clockwise, from top left*) Director Waring caught up with Winooski City Manager Elaine Wang before the ceremony; then offered congratulations and a vision for the future while colleagues looked on; Partners posed for an historical shot on Main Street, signifying the start of renewed economic development in the Onion city.



May

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26 Memorial Day	27	28	29	30	31

June is National Homeownership Month, and RD had much to celebrate in 2024! Partners gathered at Lindale Mobile Home Park in Middlebury, VT to 'Cut the TP' on a water and waste infrastructure project that will improve the health and quality of life for 67 residents (*bottom right, backdrop*). In Chester, NH, Isabel Dunlop (*bottom left*) received an American flag from RD Specialist and Veteran Carolyn Chute-Festervan, in congratulations for her new roof, courtesy of an RD home repair grant.



June

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 Juneteenth	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Working with colleagues from other states is a perk of the top job, and for State Director Waring, her Northeast Region of peers truly rocked, like Rhiannon Hampson (*bottom left*).

The group of intrepid economic developers posed outside the mother ship (*bottom right*) during a trip to D.C. (*back row, left to right*): Rhiannon Hampson-ME, Ryan Thorn-WV, Perry Hickman-VA, Brian Murray-NY, Bob Morgan-PA (*front row*): Sarah Waring-VT/NH, Jane Asselta-NJ, Scott Soares-CT/MA/RI, Letitia Nichols-MD/DE.

After a big day of collaborating and planning, they enjoyed some downtime with dinner and drinks in the city (*right*).



July

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

In the summer of 2024, USDA met up with the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) at the Franconia Soaring Association (*backdrop*), nestled in New Hampshire's majestic White Mountains. The nonprofit received a 2023 NBRC Catalyst grant for \$355,834 to build a modern flight instruction facility.

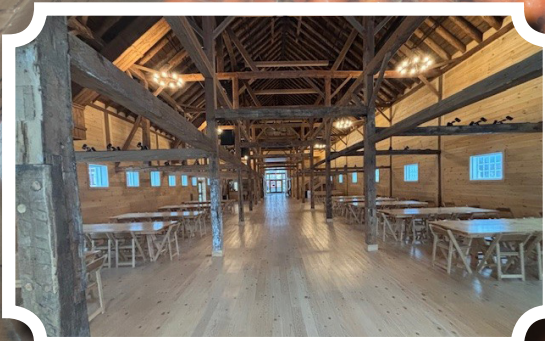
The revamped building hosted the announcement of a 2024 Catalyst grant winner, the Franconia Rink Project, which will use its \$475,000 investment to help create a multi-sport recreational facility, championed by placemakers Jennifer and John Opalinski (*far right*).

Later, a discussion about natural resources and their role in economic development took place at the White Mountain National Forest station in Campton (*right*), which included (*from left*) Marina Bowie with NBRC, Maura Adams and Joe Short with Northern Forest Center, Chris Saunders with NBRC, Director Waring, and Derek Ibarguen with the U.S. Forest Service.



August

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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



Kristen Fountain/VTDigger

A healthy portion of 2024 RD projects in Vermont focused on collaborative food distribution and economic development in the retail space. The Retreat Farm in Brattleboro received a \$350,000 NBRC Catalyst grant and a \$2 million RD Community Facilities loan to rehab and rebuild the North Barn (*top and bottom left*) into a premium event destination; Executive Director Richard Berkfield of Food Connects, a non-profit food hub and educational service in Brattleboro, stood in the footprint of what will be a gigantic walk-in refrigeration unit (*center*) made possible through a \$50,000 Rural Business Development Grant; the Yellow Barn in Hardwick, before and after its renovation (*top and bottom right*), benefitted from diverse funding partners including the Center for an Agricultural Economy, which has transformed the local food system in the NEK with help from more than \$700,000 in RD Business and Community program funding.

September

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
	1 Labor Day	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



Together,
America
Prosper

In the fall of 2024, Vermont Bond Bank Executive Director Michael Gaughan (*left*), invited USDA and other stakeholders to the Charlotte town garage, where he announced \$40 million in Rural Energy Savings Program (RESP) funding secured through USDA RD. Before the event, Director Waring and Gaughan talked shop with VLCT Director Ted Brady and the Bond Bank's Ken Linge (*bottom left, right to left*). Among welcomed guests were volunteer residents and energy planners from Charlotte (*bottom right*), whose work and collaboration were instrumental in securing the transformational investment.



October

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
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12	13 Indigenous Peoples Day	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Good energy was on display in New Hampshire throughout 2024, with RD State Director Waring on the road to engage neighbors, colleagues and partners in the ongoing collaboration to create a sustainable climate future.

Director Waring toured the verdant Wentworth Greenhouses in Rollinsford, where she met business representative Quenby Jaus (*bottom left*), who showed her the 141 kW DC solar array secured through a USDA REAP grant. Family-owned since 1967, the Business is well-respected in the community, and the project will save the 'growing growing' operation more than \$34,000 each year. Expected to generate more than 168,700 kWh of clean solar electricity annually, the array will replace up to 53 percent of the Greenhouses' historic energy consumption.



November

Su	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 <small>Veteran's Day</small>	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 <small>Thanksgiving</small>	28	29
30						



Vermont Broadbands Together



As 2024 closed out, USDA celebrated transformational funding in Vermont. In Island Pond, Director Waring joined Field Services Manager Jared Clark and Executive Director Christa Shute of NEK Broadband (*top left*) to announce a \$2.45 million RD Community Connect grant, and celebrate a \$17.4 million 2023 ReConnect grant. The visit included a fiber-making tutorial from Clark and Community Relations Manager Kitty Ufford-Chase (*top center and right*). General Manager of the Stowe Electric Department, Jackie Pratt (*left*), and her colleagues (*right*) celebrated \$6 million in funding via USDA's Powering Affordable Clean Energy program (PACE), giving central Vermonters more energy access and options.



December

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Christmas	26	27
28	29	30	31			



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With more than 50 loan, grant and loan guarantee programs to stimulate economic development, USDA RD is committed to helping improve the quality of life for rural Americans

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