



News Release

Contact:
Kevin.Lambert@usda.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture Invests \$17.5 Million in Vergennes Water & Waste Disposal Project

\$25 Million Initiative will Address Aging Infrastructure to Improve Public Health, Reduce Environmental Impacts

VERGENNES, Vt., April 21, 2022 – U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) State Director for [Rural Development](#) Sarah Waring today announced \$17.5 million in loan and grant funding for the [City of Vergennes' water and wastewater infrastructure project](#). Made through [USDA's Water & Waste Disposal Loan & Grant Program](#), the investment will combine with \$7.5 million in leveraged funds secured through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and American Rescue Plan Act via the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VTDEC). Voters approved the \$25 million bond measure in March, and the project will take place in two segments, including an overhaul of the wastewater treatment facility, five sewer main segment replacements and a pump station upgrade.

“Clean drinking water and basic sanitation should be available for all rural communities,” said Sarah Waring, State Director of USDA Rural Development in Vermont and New Hampshire, “but it shouldn’t come at the cost of the environment or the community’s growth and development. On the day before Earth Day, we are so happy and honored to invest in this transformative project with \$17.5 million from the Water and Waste Disposal loan and grant program. With their historic decision to initiate this essential infrastructure project, the people of Vergennes are taking action against climate change while improving public health and expanding opportunities for new businesses and new residents.”

Situated along Otter Creek, a direct tributary of the Lake Champlain, Vergennes has outdated and inadequate water infrastructure. Discharge into the Lake violated the state’s water-quality bill, Act 64, as well as permitting standards set by the EPA’s National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Once the project is complete, Vergennes will meet NPDES and Act 64 requirements. The project will improve sanitation and public health, mitigate climate change risk, and elevate overall water quality in the watershed.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure

improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, tribal and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit www.rd.usda.gov. If you'd like to subscribe to USDA Rural Development updates, visit the [GovDelivery subscriber page](#).

USDA touches the lives of all Americans each day in so many positive ways. Under the Biden-Harris Administration, USDA is transforming America's food system with a greater focus on more resilient local and regional food production, fairer markets for all producers, ensuring access to safe, healthy and nutritious food in all communities, building new markets and streams of income for farmers and producers using climate-smart food and forestry practices, making historic investments in infrastructure and clean energy capabilities in rural America, and committing to equity across the Department by removing systemic barriers and building a workforce more representative of America. To learn more, visit www.usda.gov.

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