

Winooski Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC)

Meeting Minutes – 18 September 2025

Winooski Basin Water Quality Council Members: ✓

NRCDs		RPCs	
	Peter Danforth, Lamoille NRCD	✓	Garret Mott, CCRPC (Chair)
	Emily Porter-Goff, Alternate		Lisa Cicchetti, CCRPC alternate
	Daniel Koenemann, Winooski NRCD	✓	Royal DeLegge, CVRPC
✓	Lucas Goldfluss, Alternate	✓	Rich Turner, CVRPC alternate
Land Conservation Organizations		Municipalities	
✓	Erin De Vries, VT River Conservancy	✓	Annie Costandi, Essex
	Remy Crettol, Alternate		Vacant, Alternate
Watershed Protection Organizations		✓	Alice Peal, Waitsfield (Vice Chair)
✓	Sam Puddicombe, Friends of the Winooski River		David Stapleton, Moretown, Alternate
	Michele Braun, Alternate		
	Taylor Litwin, Alternate		
	Ira Shadis, Friends of the Mad River		
✓	Julie Frost, Alternate		
	Kinny Perot, Alternate		

CVRPC Staff: Brian Voigt & Lincoln Frasca

Guests: Keith Fritschie (Department of Environmental Conservation)

Call to order & Roll call: G. Mott called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

Updates to agenda: None

Public comment: None

Review & approve minutes from 21 August 2025 meeting (action)

R. Turner made a motion to approve the minutes of the 21 August 2025 meeting. S. Puddicombe seconded. R. DeLegge and E. De Vries abstained, all others were in favor and the motion passed.

Project Proposal Initial Review (see slides)

Friends of the Winooski River introduced five riparian buffer planting projects for initial review.

Riparian Buffer Planting - GMC & VTACT

S. Puddicombe described the collaboration between the Green Mountain Club and Vermont Artisan Coffee and Tea. Both landowners would like to see whatever can be done to improve the river and overall ecosystem health. Plantings would occur in two places across parcel boundaries near Alder Brook. This will also be a good stability project because the banks are sloughing in this area. This will also be a very publicly visible project with walking trails on either side. US Fish & Wildlife Service is providing match for this project.

B. Voigt asked about Friends of the Winooski internal process for prioritizing projects and for more information explaining their expectations that these projects will be highly likely to succeed. S. Puddicombe responded that the first criteria is a willing landowner that is on board to allow a planting and who agrees to allow access for project maintenance for around 15 years. The next criteria are the planting conditions and whether plantings are likely to thrive. Also, support from partnering organizations such as Fish and Wildlife is important for technical assistance.

J. Frost asked for more information about how this project will be made a public example through interpretative signs. She asked if we could expect a more developed application before we vote on this project. S. Puddicombe responded this may be a question for the full BWQC. He doesn't have a set plan for funding the interpretive signs yet. However, the Green Mountain Club has other interpretive signs already installed and VT Artisan Coffee and Tea have a viewing deck overlooking the planting area.

A. Peal asked how you chose a 50-foot buffer and how close to the water do you plant. S. Puddicombe responded that they plant as close to the water as possible and try to cover the entire available floodplain. 50 feet is the buffer width that is needed to achieve maximum phosphorus credits using the FFI tool.

G. Mott asked if the phosphorus reduction seems low for the cost. B. Voigt responded that this project would prove to be cost efficient since it is less than the target cost efficiency of \$15,000 per kilogram.

E. De Vries reviewed all the projects and asked why we are not voting at this meeting? B. Voigt responded that the BWQC agreed two years ago on the process of having a preliminary review meeting before voting. For more complex projects this gives an opportunity to address any questions that come up at the initial review. However, project development proposals can be voted at the first meeting they are introduced.

Riparian Buffer Planting - Graber

This is a planting on the main stem in the Upper Winooski just below Cabot Village. This planting will be beneficial for capturing run off and increasing bank stability. There is potential for neighbors or other family members to see this planting and consider additional plantings on their properties in Cabot.

E. De Vries asked if this is another project that Friends of the Winooski is partnering with US Fish and Wildlife? S. Puddicombe responded that it is possible that Fish and Wildlife may provide match. Even if they do not co-fund a project their technical assistance along with the Audubon Society is offered for free.

B. Voigt noted that the phosphorus credit looks high for a small area. S. Puddicombe said he checked the numbers with the Basin Planner. Around 0.8 credits are coming from runoff and about 0.8 from the stability credit.

Riparian Buffer Planting - Kelly

This is another parcel in Huntington with an adjacent Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District buffer planting from 2016. The wide planting area covers the entire functional floodplain. The landowner may not be staying in Vermont and that poses some questions about long term support for the project.

J. Frost asked why this project has a different stem density? S. Puddicombe responded that DEC requires 300 stems per acre for. Friends of the Winooski have adopted a standard of 400 stems per acre. This is based on the knowledge that some stems will die off. This is an ideal planting location about 100 feet from the river so he believes the stem success rate will be good and planting 350 stems per acre vs. 400 was a way of keeping costs down

E. De Vries asked about the public trail through the property. S. Puddicombe responded that it is not an easement and is maintained by their neighbors.

Riparian Buffer Planting – SHO

This is also a Huntington parcel. This area has an existing buffer and is the proposed planting would be extending that buffer another 100 feet. Audubon is going to plant additional trees upland in clusters for bird habitat.

R. Turner mentioned the website livingculture.org that the owners published that seems to support the work we are doing. Hopefully, this project will influence other people in the community.

Riparian Buffer Planting - Tyler Place Trib

This is the same parcel owned by Jericho Underhill Land Trust that Friends of the Winooski planted this past spring. This will be the fourth planting on this one piece of large agricultural land off Tyler Place Road. There will be a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Planting project on the agricultural side and the CWSP planting will be on the housing side of the river. The higher phosphorus reduction of 3.25 kilograms is because the buffer drainage area is all developed land from the adjacent neighborhood.

B. Voigt asked about the operation and maintenance funding for all five projects. Do you think this will be a 3–5 year expense as was the case with former plating projects or will these be different? DEC is asking about future operation and maintenance needs so more information is useful. S. Puddicombe responded yes, ideally there will be 3 years of maintenance until the trees get above five feet. The sites with Fish and Wildlife funding will also contribute towards ongoing maintenance. These costs reflect the Intervale's projected cost of maintenance per stem. There are less expensive options, but the Intervale provides a conservative estimate.

J. Frost mentioned Friends of the Mad River are getting ready to do more outreach for planting events. What tactics did you use to identify these landowners? S. Puddicombe it varies, and that would be a larger discussion.

A. Peal asked what are the non-state matching funds for these projects? S. Puddicombe it is not specified but generally it is US Fish and Wildlife who is not a State of Vermont phosphorus reporting partner.

K. Fritschie proposed that developing buffer plantings could be a topic discussion for future regional coordination meetings.

Announcements

- **River Corridor Planning & The Flood Safety Act 121 – Municipal Sessions**

- Facilitators : Lake Champlain Sea Grant & The Nature Conservancy
- 14 October 2025 at 6:30PM - CVRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting (discussion)
- 13 November 2025 at 4:00PM - CVRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee Meeting (workshop)
 - See the CVRPC website for [meeting agendas and zoom links](#)

- **Vermont's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)** has released a draft [Cost Rate Methodology \(CRM\)](#) on the State's Environmental Notice Bulletin (ENB) website for a 30-day public comment period

- A public presentation will be held on Wednesday, 8 October 2025 from 2-3pm.

- Attend in person: National Life Building, Davis 2, Catamount Room, in Montpelier, Vermont
- Attend remotely: via MS Teams by following [this meeting link](#)
- **Friends of the Mad River** has issued a [Request for Proposals](#) for a consultant to lead the design and build of a geospatial database for their Clean Water Database Planning Project in the Mad River Watershed, a project funded by the Lake Champlain Basin Program.
 - Deadline for proposals is 24 October 2025. Please direct any questions to julie@friendsofthemadriver.org.
- **CWSP Funding** - The deadline for consideration at the October Winooski River Basin Water Quality Council meeting is 9 October 2025. [Schedule a meeting](#) with Brian & Lincoln for proposal development assistance.

Adjourn

A. Peal made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 PM. R. Turner seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Next meeting scheduled 16 October 2025.

Minutes submitted by CVRPC staff member Lincoln Frasca.