

From: Jill Arace <Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 1:53 PM
To: jkitchel@leg.state.vt.us <jkitchel@leg.state.vt.us>
Cc: rstarr@leg.state.vt.us <rstarr@leg.state.vt.us>; Chrissy Gilhuly <cgilhuly@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: Conservation Districts FY 2023 Appropriations Request

Dear Chair Kitchel.

I am writing to provide information regarding the Vermont Natural Resources Conservation Districts' FY23 appropriations request. In addition to the budget public hearing, the Vermont Association of Conservation Districts and District Managers have been providing testimony about our funding request to the House and Senate Agriculture Committees. Attached you will find our appropriations request document, as well as a memo that addresses questions we have received from the policy committees. As the Appropriations Committee, we believe it is important for you to also have this information. I respectfully request that you share this information with other Senate Appropriations Committee members.

Vermont's Natural Resource Conservation Districts received the most support of any group in the form of public comments on the Governor's budget, with 107 comments submitted asking for increased funding for Conservation Districts. In addition, Vermont's Climate Action Plan calls for increased funding for Conservation Districts. For FY23, we respectfully request the following state appropriations:

- an additional \$1,388,000 in base funding to increase VAAFMs' NRCC base budget to \$1.5 million
- \$2.1 million in one-time funding for a 3-year Agricultural Resource Specialist Training Program
- \$248,000 in one-time funding for immediate equipment and capital improvement needs

Thank you for your consideration. We hope you are able to support our request, and we stand ready to provide any additional information you may need.

Sincerely,

Jill

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