

## **Construction has begun on Stormwater Partnership Project at Rumney Memorial School**

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BERLIN VT- The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, Stone Environmental, SE Group and Canonica Farm and Forest Service have partnered over the past year and a half with the Rumney Memorial School, Middlesex VT, to develop and now implement a project to better manage stormwater runoff from the school campus. Currently, stormwater runoff from the school drains under Shady Rill Rd and through the field across the street; several large gullies have formed where the stormwater runoff drops over the steep embankment into Shady Rill. These gullies impact both the water quality in the brook by adding sediment and phosphorus as well as they impact the long-term stability of the embankment in the field which also houses the school's wastewater leachfield.

This project is being funded with grants awarded to the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District, on behalf of the school, by the Department of Environmental Conservation's Ecosystem Restoration Program. Weather-permitting, the earthwork for the project will be completed before classes resume later this month. Once the earthwork is complete, the area will be planted with a variety of water-loving native plants and woody shrubs – resulting in a stormwater management practice that will both protect Shady Rill and create an improved outdoor space at the school.

Coined 'The Learning Stream', the vision is to take what is currently a weedy ditch and to not only make it a vegetated swale that will slow the flow of water and remove sediments and phosphorus otherwise destined for Martin's Brook, but to also connect it to the school's outdoor learning laboratory. Students already chase frogs in the intermittent stream-like feature, but plants that can help filter the runoff and attract additional wildlife would boost the elementary school's curriculum to 'real time' without leaving the campus. The WNRCD, District Manager Corrina Parnapy envisions partnership projects such as this as key to keeping waters clean and to help address phosphorus reduction issues of the larger watershed: Lake Champlain.

For more information about addressing stormwater on your school campus or involving students in learning about how green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) can improve the water quality of a waterbody near you, please contact the WNRCD at: [info@winooskinrcd.org](mailto:info@winooskinrcd.org) or visit our website at: [www.winooskinrcd.org](http://www.winooskinrcd.org)

The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District is one of 14 conservation districts throughout Vermont. It encompasses all of Chittenden and Washington County as well as parts of Orange County (Orange, Williamstown and Washington). The district relies on grants and individual donations to complete its conservation work. The WNRCD focuses its resources on completing conservation projects within the areas of agricultural assistance, forestland enhancement, urban conservation and watershed stewardship.

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