

News Release

Contact: Corrina Parnapy, District Manager

Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District

corrina@winooskinrcd.org

Winooski NRC D Announcing New Staff

The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District is pleased to announce two new dedicated staff members joining the WNRCD team; Kristen Balschunat and James Mazzola. Kristen will be leading outreach efforts within the areas of Agricultural Assistance, Urban Conservation and Habitat Restoration. James will be assisting with water quality monitoring and habitat assessment and restoration work.

Kristen has joined the WNRCD staff as a Conservation Specialist. Kristen grew up in the Lake Champlain Basin, in Glens Falls, NY. After earning a B.A. in Geography from SUNY Geneseo, she worked as an environmental educator for four years. She taught experiential science curriculum to students of all ages with The Wild Center, Shaver's Creek Environmental Center, The Appalachian Mountain Club and The Ecology School. Kristen completed hydrology research with the National Science Foundation REU program, where she investigated the impact of urbanization on stream stability. Kristen has worked for multiple farms in the Northeast, including Foggy Meadow Farm in Benson, VT. She is committed to maintaining Vermont's rural landscape in balance with the health of the watershed. Finally, Kristen is an active citizen scientist, involved in projects like eBird, iNaturalist, spotted salamander research and bird banding. In her free time Kristen enjoys hiking, birding, painting, gardening and canoeing. Kristen can be reached at: kristen@winooskinrcd.org

James has joined the WNRCD staff assisting with water quality monitoring efforts and habitat restoration work as the Stream Sampling Coordinator Intern. James is a recent graduate from Castleton University with a Bachelor's degree in Ecological Studies. He grew up in the small town of Shaftsbury VT where he found his passion for the outdoors. Through the years and dedication of becoming an Eagle Scout and studying wildlife to become a better conservationist and hunter, it lead to him becoming an avid outdoorsman. His studies at Castleton have only furthered his interest in wildlife management and habitat restoration. He is excited to work for the WNRCD and build his skills in conservation, wildlife management and habitat restoration. James can be reached at: james@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 based in solid science to provide solutions within the areas of agricultural

assistance, forestland enhancement, urban conservation and watershed stewardship. For more information on the WNRCD, please visit: www.winooskinrcd.org

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