

Rumney Memorial School

For Immediate Release

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Winooski Conservation District Approved for Funding to Design and Construct a Stormwater Installation at Rumney Memorial School in Middlesex

BERLIN, VT – The Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VT DEC) awarded an Ecosystem Restoration Program grant to the Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District (WNRCD) to design and construct a stormwater installation at the Rumney Memorial School in Middlesex that will address its contribution to sediment and runoff into Martin's Brook (locally called Shady Rill).

Rumney Memorial School is located on Shady Rill Road, Middlesex VT, which runs parallel to Martin's Brook. Rumney's campus is composed of a terraced school yard, graveled parking lot and drop off area, and like many schools has a significant building footprint. The project team identified at least six areas where opportunities exist on Rumney's campus to improve stormwater management. The ongoing building renovations on a large portion of the site increased the need to address specific target location first. The area selected for final design and construction is located to the left (or northwest side) of the building, which coincidentally sits behind the school's outdoor classroom and receives a large quantity of stormwater runoff from both the school building and neighboring properties. Currently, stormwater from these areas flows into a grassed ditch and into a small pipe that runs under the road and into the school's property across the road. After a storm event, the field is saturated with water, these high flow events are causing additional erosion to Martin's Brook where it drops over a steep embankment. WNRCD has teamed with engineers from Stone Environmental (Montpelier) and landscape architects from SE Group (Burlington) to move the concept design to final design and finally, construction.

Coined 'The Learning Stream', the designers 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 some of the sediments 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. By enabling children to contribute to the discussions of the design and to provide hands on help come time to plant the carefully selected species of vegetation, they will not only have a chance to better understand the impacts and stormwater, but they may also communicate the importance of stormwater mediation to their parents or other important adults in their lives. The Winooski Natural Resources Conservation District (WNRCD) envisions this as key to keeping clean waters clean and to help address issues of the larger watershed: Lake Champlain.

The WNRCD also received funding from the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to the New England Interstate Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP) for a stormwater education program aimed at school children, which will be integrated into the process at Rumney Memorial School.

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, contact Corrina Parnapy at the Winooski Conservation District at 802-828-4493 x110 or corrinawinooskinrcd.org or visit: www.winooskinrcd.org

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