OBJECTIVE ONE: SUPPORT CONSERVATION IN COMMUNITIES

This objective is focused on how to better connect people and communities to the land. It aims to advance conservation in ways that benefit people and communities by protecting natural and working lands, enhancing recreation, and supporting equitable access.

Conservation investments benefit people and communities and make our lands and watersheds healthier. The conservation of natural and working forests and agricultural lands and the expansion of recreational and educational opportunities all connect people with the land. All these benefits help fulfill the overall vision of CRBPA - Act 59.

Potential Pathways to the Future

These potential pathways are an initial starting point to developing the Vermont Conservation Plan, These will be further refined by the various technical working groups and shaped by stakeholder input.

PROMOTE NATURAL AREAS AND SUSTAINABLE WORKING LANDS

This pathway will identify strategies and investments to make conserved working lands more resilient, ecologically functional and healthy. We need more technical and financial supports to make ecologically beneficial land management practices viable for landowners. This pathway will 'lift up' related work under Vermont's Forest Future Roadmap, Food Security Roadmap and other related plans.

INCREASE EQUITABLE ACCESS

This pathway aims to identify investments and programmatic opportunities that will expand and improve equitable access to conserved lands, land-based enterprises and recreational opportunities.

SUPPORT OUTDOOR RECREATION

This pathway will promote diverse outdoor recreation opportunities through strategic investments in land protection and management. We need to identify ways to improve recreational access while protecting ecological values as well. This pathway's actions could be coordinated with the implementation of the state's blueprint for outdoor recreation, *Move Forward Together Vermont*, aimed at strengthening outdoor recreation opportunities across the state.

STRENGTHEN CLIMATE RESILIENCE

This pathway will identify actions and investments in nature-based solutions that make Vermont's communities and conserved lands more resilient in the face of climate change. These actions will yield multiple benefits, including community resilience, habitat connectivity, improved water quality and critical resource protection. This pathway will be coordinated with Vermont's Climate Action Plan and Resilience Implementation Strategy.

EXPAND PLACE-BASED EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

This pathway will promote educational opportunities that connect Vermonters to the natural world, and expands cultural empowerment that promotes human-earth connections. It will also help communities, landowners and land managers understand why, how and where to conserve lands.