

Engagement Summary

Creating the Vermont Conservation Plan Draft Framework Report



WELCOME TO THE
VERMONT CONSERVATION PLAN
PROJECT



Engagement Summary

This document summarizes the key engagement steps that contributed to the creating of the Draft Framework report for the Vermont Conservation Plan.

Engagement with key stakeholders has been a strong focus and commitment of the work to create the draft framework for the Vermont Conservation Plan.

January 2026

Table of Contents

- PHASE 2 – Engagement steps for creating Draft Framework Report..... 4
- Dedicated project website to support engagement..... 5
- Phase 1 Engagement – developing the Conservation Inventory 6
- Technical Advisory Committee – refining the Draft Framework Report.... 7
- Regional Listening Sessions – Summer 2025..... 10
- Regional Listening Sessions – Feedback and Analysis..... 12
- Public comment and submissions 15
- Next steps16

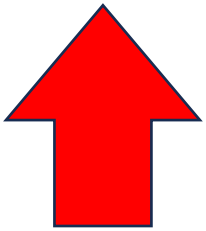
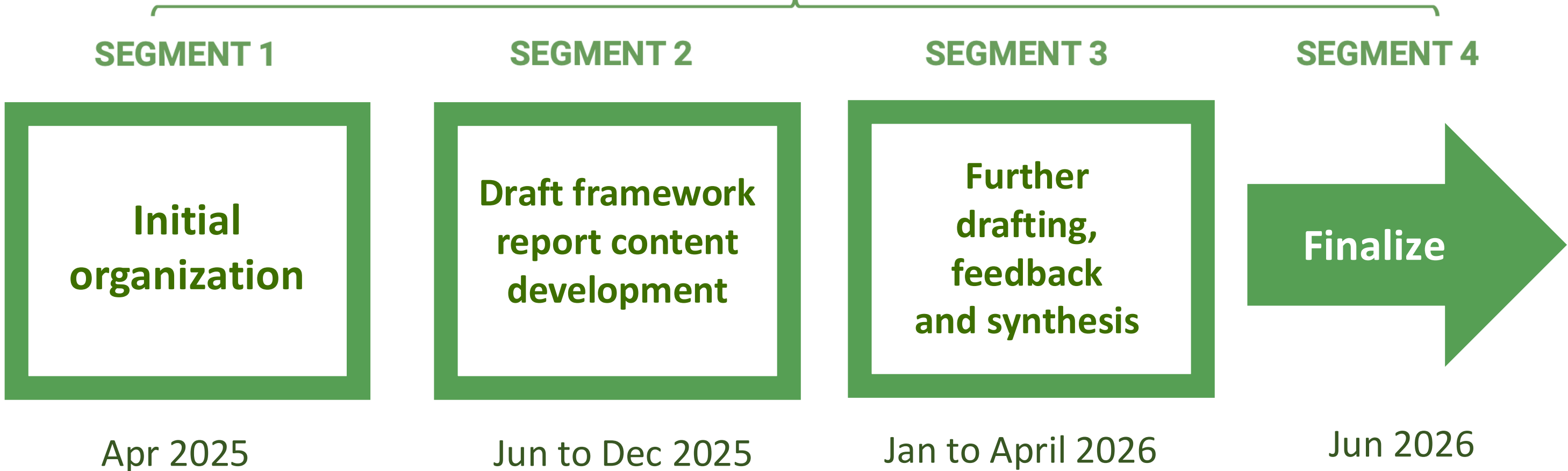
STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The input from stakeholders in helping develop and refine the Draft Framework Report was gathered using the following key steps:

- Ongoing input and suggestions from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), via regular meetings
- Public input at Regional Stakeholder Listening Sessions – held in July / August 2025, These are being held in multiple locations around the State.
- Public input on the draft Objectives and Pathways, via survey and direct submission options on the project website

PHASE 2 – Engagement steps for creating Draft Framework Report

VERMONT CONSERVATION PLAN | PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE



Engagement process

Dedicated project website to support engagement



Dedicated Project Website

The project website provides direct updates on the development of the Vermont Conservation Plan. This includes news on upcoming sessions, opportunity to review draft material, copies of presentations, and access to surveys and direct submissions.

This website is intended to allow stakeholders updated information on the development of the plan.

<https://vermontconservationplan.com>

The Vermont Legislature has directed the Vermont Home Board (VCHB), in consultation with the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR), to lead the process of developing the Vermont Conservation Plan.

Phase 1 Engagement – developing the ‘Conservation Inventory’



Through late 2023 and into 2024, significant engagement work was undertaken as part of the development of the Conservation Inventory.

Stakeholder and community engagement for the Conservation Inventory included:

- 47 interviews
- 21 focus groups with over 350 participants
- Online survey with 147 respondents
- Four working groups comprising over 35 members

There was intentional work undertaken to ensure that the stakeholder groups identified in the Community Resilience and Biodiversity Protection Act were reflected in the interviews and focus group process.

The annex to the inventory report is provides a compilation of the overall engagement during phase.

https://vhcb.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Consolidated-Annexes_DRAFT_PUBLIC_6.24_merged.pdf

PHASE 1 – Stakeholder input

The stakeholder engagement work, done as part of the Phase 1 – Conservation Inventory, was invaluable in informing the initial drafts of the Vermont Conservation Plan Framework Report. It provided a robust foundation of input from a diverse range of key stakeholders.

Technical Advisory Committee – refining the Draft Framework Report

- TAC provided direct input on drafts of the Framework Report and Objectives and Pathways during May through to October 2025.
- Input included direct edits, group discussions and survey.

TAC Input
Ongoing input and suggestions from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), were made via their regular meetings, review of drafts and survey input (see the [project website](#) for more detail on the TAC).



Technical Advisory Committee – refining the Draft Framework Report



[HOME](#) [ABOUT](#) [FRAMEWORK REPORT](#) [TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE](#) [LISTENING SESSIONS](#) [RESOURCES](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Overview

[Meetings](#)

Meeting #8 - January 22, 2026

Meeting #7 - December 18, 2025

Working Lunches November 19 & 21, 2025

Meeting #6 - November 13, 2025

Meeting #5 - September 25, 2025

Meeting #4 - August 7, 2025

Meeting #3 - July 11, 2025

Meeting #2 - June 12, 2025

Meeting #1 - May 29, 2025

TAC Input

The project website offers a full record of the TAC meetings and their input. See the [project website](#) for more detail.

Technical Advisory Committee – refining the Draft Framework Report

Framework Report – TAC suggestions included:

- Introduce a foreword – that helps sets context
- Creating stronger connection between ‘Community Resilience and Biodiversity’
- Stronger emphasis on equity and inclusion
- Outline the planning approach – Underlying principles (what it is / isn’t)
- Strengthen the ‘People and the Land’ – a Vermont tradition
 - *In addition to Vermont’s Working Landscapes*
- Supporting engagement including the Regional Listening Sessions

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provided significant input into the drafting of the Draft Framework Report. The TAC represents a broad range of perspectives from key sectors and stakeholder groups.



VERMONT CONSERVATION PLAN
**REGIONAL LISTENING
SESSIONS**
JULY 23-24 & 29-30, 2025

Regional Listening Sessions – Summer 2025



HOME ABOUT FRAMEWORK REPORT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE LISTENING SESSIONS RESOURCES CONTACT US



SUMMER 2025 REGIONAL LISTENING SESSIONS

Thank you for joining the Vermont Conservation Plan (VCP) Regional Listening Sessions - July 23-24, 29-30, & August 5

The Vermont Conservation Plan (VCP) Regional Listening Sessions were the first round of public engagement after the first phase, an inventory of conservation around the state, concluded. They comprised of an overview of the VCP guiding legislation, timeline, goals, and work to date, such as results from the inventory phase. In addition to providing an opportunity to connect with stakeholders in the conservation community, these sessions included updates from the Agency of Natural Resources and the American Farmland Trust.

Regional Listening Sessions

There were a total of five regional listening sessions – 4 in-person and 1- virtual. They were held on:

- Wednesday, July 23 - Ludlow
- Thursday, July 24 - South Burlington
- Tuesday, July 29 - East Burke
- Wednesday, July 30 - Brandon
- Tuesday, August 5 – Virtual

VERMONT CONSERVATION PLAN REGIONAL LISTENING SESSIONS
JULY 23-24 & 29-30, 2025

We look forward to some great discussions as stakeholders come together for the four Regional Listening Sessions.

Wednesday, July 23 Ludlow The Roundhouse at Jackson Gore Inn, Okemo Mountain Resort, 111 Jackson Gore Rd, Ludlow, VT 05149	Thursday, July 24 South Burlington Delta Hotel, 1117 Williston Rd, South Burlington, VT 05403	Tuesday, July 29 East Burke Burke Mountain Conference Center, 2599 Mount Airy Rd, East Burke, VT 05743
--	---	--

AGENDA

4:00 - 5:00 | OPEN HOUSE & NETWORKING HOUR
Join us for an informal networking hour. We will have refreshments and food available to help fuel the discussions. We will have information posters and the project team will be available to answer questions.

5:00 - 6:00 | PRESENTATION
The presentation will include background & an overview of the Vermont Conservation Plan (VCP), an update on the Draft Pathways to the Future, as well as an update from American Farmland Trust and a Vermont Conservation Design Overview.

6:00 - 7:00 | DISCUSSION & FEEDBACK
After the presentations we want to provide lots of opportunity for you to add your input. There will be informative posters, interactive stations, discussion tables and case study examples. We will be asking you to add ideas and respond to some key questions. This will be an interactive and engaging session.

DON'T MISS OUT - REGISTER NOW!
bit.ly/VCP-RLS

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Annie Decker
Associate Director of Resource Development & Resiliency, VHCB
802-661-8958
annie@vhcb.org

Rebecca Washburn
Director of Lands Administration & Recreation, VT FPR
802-793-3432
becca.washburn@vermont.gov

David Beurle
Chief Executive Officer
Future IQ
612-757-9190
david@future-iq.com

Regional Listening Sessions – Feedback and Analysis



VERMONT CONSERVATION PLAN | REGIONAL LISTENING SESSIONS JULY 23-24 & 29-30, 2025

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.

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.

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.

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.

SUPPORT OUTDOOR RECREATION

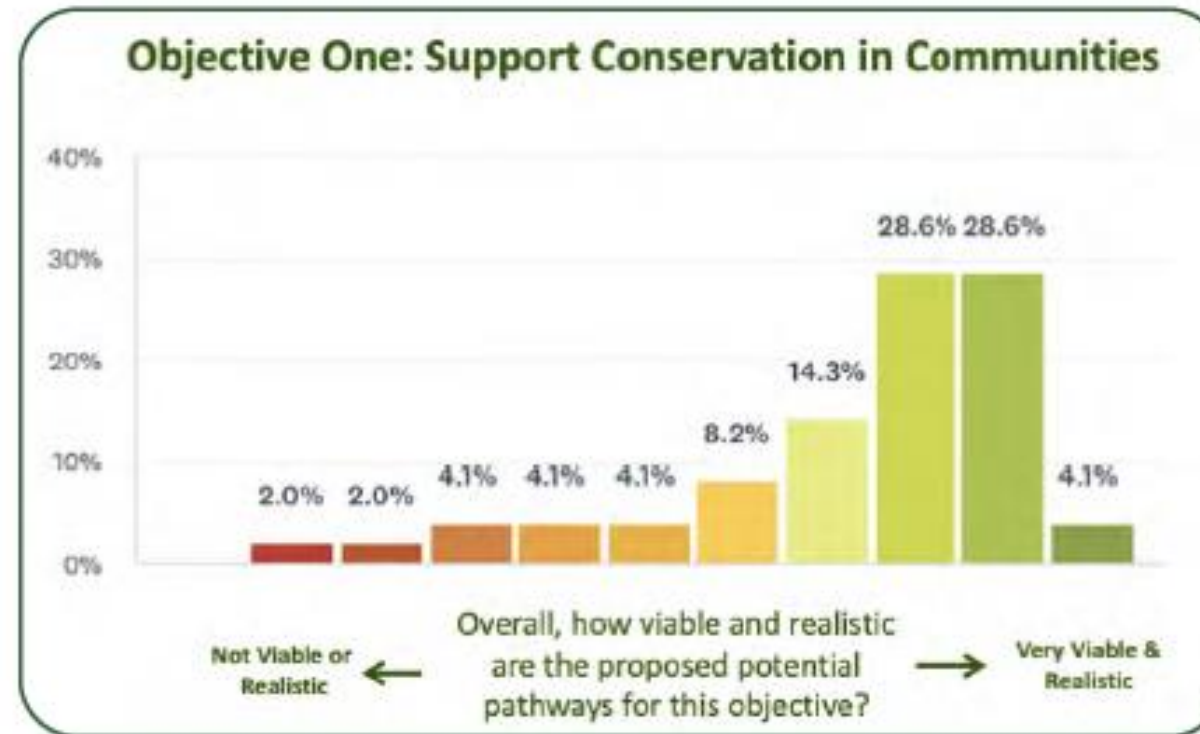
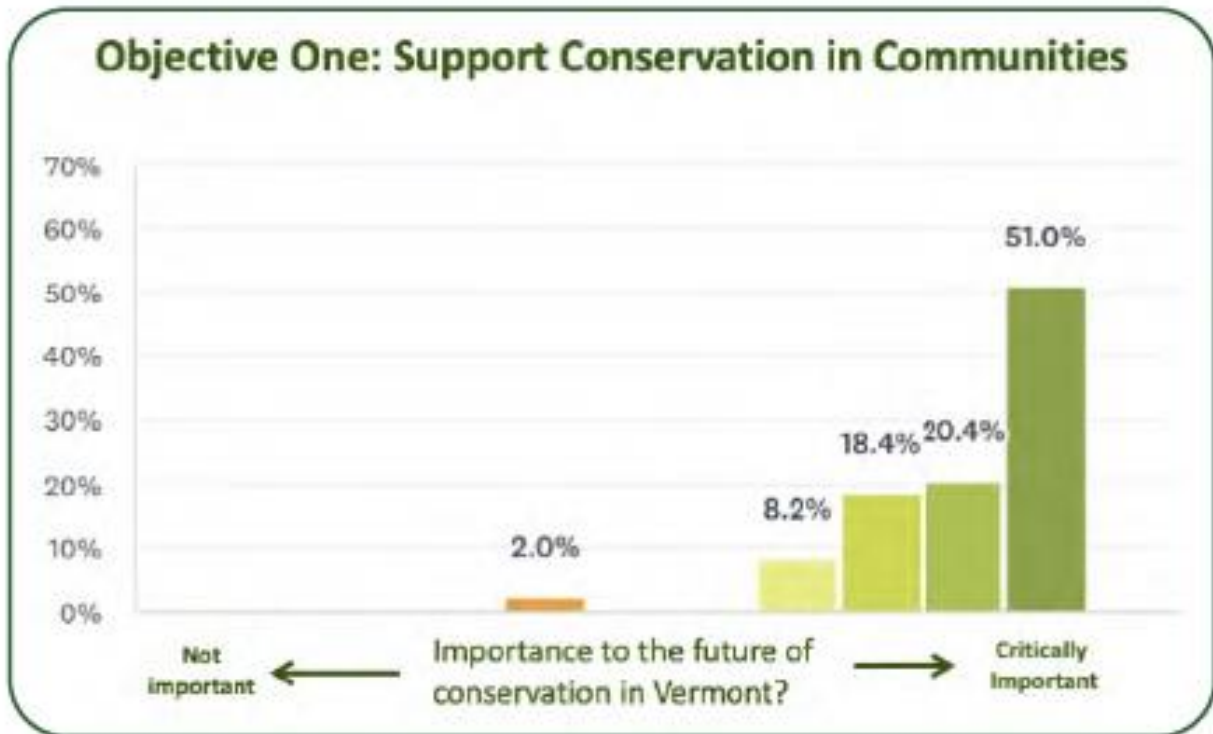
This pathway will promote diverse outdoor recreation opportunities through strategic investments in land protection and management. We need to identify ways to improve recreational access while protecting ecological values as well. This pathway's actions could be coordinated with the implementation of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

Regional Listening Sessions

These sessions attracted approximately 200 attendees and provided important additional input on the draft objectives and pathways. The format for the session was presentations, and then interactive exercises to capture ideas and input.



Regional Listening Sessions – Feedback and Analysis



Regional Listening Sessions

The Regional Listening Sessions were three-hour programs that included presentation on key aspects of the draft plan, case study posters, and interactive feedback exercises. Participants were asked to assess each of the draft objectives, in terms of how important they saw that objective for the future of conservation, and how viable and realistic were the associated potential pathways.

Fast Facts

- The responses were very similar from the four in-person sessions, and the virtual listening session.
- Overall, there was strong support for the three proposed objectives, which provides validation that these are on the right track and that they reflect the important issues.
- The support for the potential pathways was more 'muted', reflecting that some people did not see them as particularly viable and realistic. This was often related to the cost of implementation in a challenging funding environment. This provided good input on where the pathways and actions need more refinement.

Regional Listening Sessions – Feedback and Analysis



SUMMER 2025 REGIONAL LISTENING SESSIONS

Regional Listening Sessions

The full results from the regional listening sessions, and the input received is included on the [project website](#)

Summer Regional Listening Sessions: Draft Objectives & Pathways

There were five regional Listening sessions held in late July and early August. These sessions sought comment on the Draft Objectives and Pathways that were developed from the Phase 1 work, and initial work for Phase 2. The direct input from the Regional Listening Sessions is summarized in the following documents:

[In-Person Regional Listening Sessions Feedback >>](#)



[Virtual Listening Session Feedback >>](#)



Public Submissions: Draft Framework Report

Public Submissions: Draft Framework Report

In October 2025, the Draft Framework Report was posted for comment. The Draft Framework report was developing using input from the Regional Listening Sessions, and input from the Technical Advisory Committee. The public and stakeholders were invited to comment and provide feedback on the Draft Framework report by either a survey and / or direct submission. The comment period was open from October 24, 2025 to November 28, 2025. A summary of these survey results and submissions is in the following documents:

[Draft Framework Report Survey Results »](#)



[Compilation of Direct Submissions »](#)



[Submission by Standing Trees »](#)



PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS

In October 2025, the Draft Framework Report was posted for public comment. The public and stakeholders were invited to comment and provide feedback on the Draft Framework report by either a survey and / or direct submission. The comment period was open from October 24, 2025, to November 28, 2025. A summary of these survey results and submissions is on the [project website](#).

Next steps – ongoing engagement

- **Stakeholder-Led Listening Sessions**

- The Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) is offering small mini-contracts of up to \$4,000 to support community organizations and partner groups in hosting **Stakeholder-Led Listening Sessions** focused on the draft Vermont Conservation Plan. These sessions are intended to create accessible, locally grounded opportunities for Vermonters to review draft plan content and share input, lived experiences, and priorities.

- **Winter Regional Listening Sessions**

- The VCP is holding the next round of Regional Listening Sessions throughout the state of Vermont on Mondays from 4:00pm – 7:00pm in February and March 2026

ONGOING ENGAGEMENT

During the first half of 2026, there will be more opportunities for engagement.

More details on these ongoing engagement sessions is on the [project website](#).

Monday, February 2 South Burlington	Monday, February 9 Lyndonville	Tuesday, February 17 Montpelier	Monday, February 23 Randolph	Monday, March 2 Rutland
4:00pm – 7:00pm	4:00pm – 7:00pm	4:00pm – 7:00pm	4:00pm – 7:00pm	4:00pm – 7:00pm
Delta Hotels Burlington 1117 Williston Rd South Burlington, VT05403	Burke Mountain Room, Vermont State University Campus 1001 College Road Lyndonville, VT05851	Unitarian Church of Montpelier 130 Main Street Montpelier, VT05602	Vermont State University 124 Admin Road Randolph, VT05061	The Franklin Events Center One Scale Ave, Suite 92 Rutland VT05701