



# Caledonia County

## Natural Resources Conservation District

481 Summer Street, Suite 202 St. Johnsbury, VT | 802-424-3149 | [www.caledoniadistrict.org](http://www.caledoniadistrict.org) | [emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org](mailto:emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org)

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### Request for Proposals

#### Jackson Dam Removal Design Services in Hardwick, Vermont

##### Schedule

Monday, June 22, 2026	RFP released
Wednesday, July 1, 2026	Questions due
Wednesday, July 8, 2026	Questions answered
Monday, July 27, 2026	Proposals due
Friday, July 31, 2026	Consultant selected

##### Contact for Proposals

Emily Finnegan  
District Manager  
Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District (CCNRCD)  
[emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org](mailto:emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org)

**Proposals shall be submitted via email as a single PDF to [emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org](mailto:emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org) by 5:00 pm on Monday July 27, 2026. Proposals submitted by other means or past the deadline will not be considered.**

##### Purpose

Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District is seeking an engineering team to provide conceptual (30%) design services for the potential removal of the Jackson Dam in Hardwick, Vermont. The Town of Hardwick has expressed strong support for further evaluating the possibility of dam removal and associated river restoration in the context of discussions on town-wide resiliency. Additional information, regulatory review, funding analysis, and community conversation will still be necessary before any long-term decisions are considered regarding the future of the dam.

If this dam is removed, it will be a large, expensive project and will require a unique approach. The 30% design phase will require a significant level of effort in terms of data collection, further discussion of feasibility and approach, design services, regulatory coordination, and public engagement.

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### Project Description

The July 2023 and July 2024 flood events in Vermont accelerated ongoing conversations in Hardwick regarding infrastructure vulnerability, floodplain management, river corridor dynamics, emergency management, housing, and long-term community adaptation. In this context, community members and town officials expressed interest in the potential flood resiliency benefits of removing the Jackson Dam, located near the intersection of VT Route 14 and VT Route 15 (44.51694, -72.37824). The impoundment behind the dam is called Hardwick Lake. The Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District (CCNRCD) facilitated a dam removal feasibility analysis for Jackson Dam. The analysis was conducted by SLR International (SLR) and completed in early 2026. Given the dam's deteriorating condition and hazard classification, a proactive and phased approach to removal with targeted sediment removal and stabilization was strongly recommended to avoid the risks associated with an uncontrolled failure and to restore flood resilience, ecological function, and long-term river stability. Hydraulic modeling also showed that dam removal paired with channel lowering and floodplain restoration would reduce water surface elevations during both large and small flood events, extending upstream to Cottage Street. CCNRCD worked closely with the Town of Hardwick and a Hardwick-based steering committee to share the findings of the report with the Town of Hardwick Selectboard and the Hardwick Electric Department Board of Commissioners.

Following the presentation of the feasibility analysis, SLR and CCNRCD worked with Vermont regulators to outline a scope of work and potential timeline for a conceptual (30%) design for dam removal with partial sediment removal. The Hardwick Selectboard reviewed the proposed conceptual (30%) design scope of work and an estimated budget, and agreed to work with the project team to continue exploring potential future pathways related to the site, including dam removal and associated river restoration.

The feasibility analysis is available on our website, [www.caledoniacountynrcd.org](http://www.caledoniacountynrcd.org), as well as on the Hardwick town website at [https://hardwickvt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/2026-03-13\\_JacksonDamMemo\\_V2.pdf](https://hardwickvt.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/2026-03-13_JacksonDamMemo_V2.pdf). Additional data associated with the feasibility analysis, including drone footage of the impoundment during the annual winter drawdown, is available upon request. Please email Emily Finnegan at [emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org](mailto:emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org) to request this data.

### Project Team

The project team consists of Kristen Leahy, the Hardwick Zoning Administrator and Floodplain Administrator and Resilience and Adaptation Coordinator; Emily Finnegan, the District Manager of the Caledonia County Natural Resources Conservation District; and a steering committee made up of five to seven members of the Hardwick community.

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Kristen Leahy and the steering committee will take the lead on public engagement. The hired engineering firm will not be expected to plan the public engagement process but will be expected to present at public meetings and engage with the public one-on-one at designated times and locations, ideally in-person as much as possible. The demonstrated ability to work closely with a dynamic and engaged project team and clear availability for meaningful public engagement will be crucial for a successful proposal.

Emily Finnegan at CCNRCD will be the primary point of contact for the hired engineering firm. CCNRCD will also assist with coordination related to permitting and regulatory review, and facilitate communication within the project team, as well as between the project team, regulators, funders, and the Hardwick community.

### **Dam Description**

The Jackson Dam, constructed in 1920 and rebuilt in 1952, is in poor condition and is classified as a Significant Hazard Dam according to the Vermont Dam Safety Program. The location of the dam is 44.51694, -72.37824. The dam is owned by the Hardwick Electric Department, a not for profit, locally owned municipal electric utility. With an upstream drainage area of 117 square miles, Jackson Dam impounds approximately 0.9 miles of the Lamoille River and 1.8 miles of Alder Brook creating Hardwick Lake. Hardwick Lake has a surface area of approximately 180 acres and a 900 acre-feet storage capacity at normal pool level (Green, 2024, Appendix A). The dam is drawn down during the winter months to help with ice jam flooding. According to initial estimates, the impoundment has filled with a substantial volume of sediment estimated between 640,000 and 2,520,000 cubic yards. The dam was originally intended to store water for hydroelectric production at downstream Pottersville Dam in Wolcott but has not been used for this purpose in many years. The dam now has limited use for recreation in the large but shallow Hardwick Lake.

### **Scope of Work**

The conceptual 30% design scope of work has six defined tasks that the project team envisions occurring in a relatively sequential order. At the end of each task, there will be a defined check-in point to ensure that the project team is in agreement that dam removal remains a feasible option as more data and public input is collected.

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Task	Description
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Data Collection &amp; Field Reconnaissance</b>
1.1	Section survey and sediment probing (17 cross sections)
1.2	Infrastructure and resource conflicts
1.3	Sediment samples (15 samples)
1.4	Survey dam, bridge, and sediment end points (set pins)
1.5	River walk/ paddle to review geomorphology
1.6	Plant and invasive inventory
1.7	Existing conditions base map
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Hydraulic Analysis</b>
2.1	Hydrology updates
2.2	Existing hydraulic model updates with new survey
2.3	Model validation with recent flood data
2.4	Prepare inundation maps
2.5	Existing conditions technical memo
2.6	Project team meeting, virtual
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Hydrology / Storage Analysis</b>
3.1	Hydrograph development (S, M, L Floods)
3.2	Model change of dam storage to floodplain storage
3.3	Unsteady 1D model, add hydrographs to EX model
3.4	Evaluation of downstream impacts
3.5	Hydrology / Storage technical memo
3.6	Project team meeting, virtual
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Dam Removal Alternatives and Concept Design</b>
4.1	Alternatives analysis (full dam removal, with 2 sediment alternatives)
4.2	Project team, virtual
4.3	Regulator and interested parties meeting, in person
4.4	Review of well logs and impact of impoundment change
4.5	Concept design (30%), plan, sections, profile
4.6	Initial engineer's opinion of cost
4.7	Summary memo update, implementation plan
4.8	Project team, virtual
4.9	Public meeting, in person



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<b>5.0</b>	<b>Drawdown Design</b>
5.1	Drawdown design draft, erosion control and phasing
5.2	Project team and regulator meeting
5.3	Drawdown Final design and cost (90%)
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Drawdown Permit Assistance</b>
6.1	USACE
6.2	VTDEC Water Quality Certification
6.3	VTDEC Dam Safety
6.4	VTDEC Stream Alteration
6.5	VTDEC Wetlands
6.6	VTDEC Construction General Permit?
6.7	Town Zoning / NFIP
6.8	Plan edits (100%)

**In addition to the task list above, the consultant should also include in their Scope of Work:**

- A wetland delineation that would need to occur during the 2026 growing season
- A rendering depicting possible scenarios related to alternatives explored in “Task 4 Dam Removal Alternatives and Concept Design” to be used in public engagement activities; this will need to be available for a public meeting prior to February 2027
- A Benefit Cost Analysis using the FEMA Benefit-Cost Calculator (most up-to-date version available) to prepare the project for potential future federal funding sources
- A memorandum briefly summarizing results and conclusions regarding the potential of removal to improve aquatic organism passage
- An estimate of the potential phosphorus reduction benefits associated with each sediment removal design alternative

**Other notes on the Scope of Work:**

- As listed in the task table, on-site and virtual meetings with the project team, regulators, funders, and the public will be required as part of the process. Please include a detailed breakdown of your cost for preparation, travel to, and attendance for at least four in-person meetings and four virtual project team meetings
- CCNRCD will take the lead on engagement with the Vermont Department of Historic Preservation and Vermont Fish & Wildlife, but the consultant should be available to respond to technical questions from these entities as needed

**Anticipated Project Timeline**

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Task	Description	Schedule
Engineering firm begins data collection - Task 1	Data Collection & Field Reconnaissance	August - November 2026 <b>Must be complete by December 31, 2026</b>
Task 2	Hydraulic Analysis	December 2026 - February 2027
Task 3	Hydrology/Storage Analysis	December 2026 - February 2027
Task 4	Dam Removal Alternatives and Concept Design	February - July 2027
Task 5	Drawdown Design	March - April 2027
Non-binding question added to Town Meeting	Pending approval of steering committee, selectboard, and project status	March 2027
Task 6	Drawdown Permit Assistance	April - May 2027

### Future Phases of Work

Although the above task list covers only conceptual (30%) design, qualified consultants may also be considered for continued work through future phases of this project beyond the conceptual design phase. To be considered for future phases of this project, please provide a:

- 1) Budget table for the current Conceptual Design phase Scope of Work, and
- 2) Cost range estimate and general description of potential work tasks on future Final Design and
- 3) Implementation phases anticipated to include assisting CCNRCD with final design, permitting, contractor solicitation, construction oversight, and reporting

CCNRCD understands that this estimate may vary considerably depending on the outcome of the Conceptual Design phase, therefore, consultants will not be locked into this estimated budget amount if awarded for future phases. Please note, submitting information for the potential to be Qualified for Future Phases is not required for an engineering firm to be considered for the tasks of the Conceptual Design phase, although it may be taken into consideration by the review team for those firms that choose to submit the information.

### Proposal Format

The submitted proposal should include:

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- A narrative response that describes the approach to be taken in addressing the task list
- A cost proposal and proposed timeline that is laid out to correspond to each of the tasks listed in the task table above, including whether the task would need to be sub-contracted
- A staffing summary plus one-page biographies for each member of the consultant's team
- If more than one firm is part of a team, the lead firm shall be clearly identified with all subcontractors and their roles identified
- A summary of the consultant's experience with dam removal projects; CCNRCD is especially interested in seeing examples of projects that involved significant public engagement
- Three references with contact information, including phone number and email address

### Selection

The selection committee will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated experience with dam removal design and permitting in Vermont rivers
- Knowledge of hydrology, hydraulics, aquatic organic passage, ecological processes, and fluvial geomorphology
- Clarity and presentation of proposal
- Demonstration of successful cooperation with non-governmental organizations and local, state and federal agencies, including cost management
- Proposed cost and schedule
- Ability to complete project in a timely manner without conflict with existing workloads
- Demonstrated ability to communicate technical findings clearly to the public will be strongly considered

Qualified disadvantaged (DBE) and women-owned (WBE) businesses are encouraged to submit proposals. Proposers are required to document whether the individual is a DBE or WBE. CCNRCD, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42 U.S.C §§ 2000b to 2000b-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, will afford disadvantaged business enterprises full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award.

### Questions

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Questions may be submitted to [emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org](mailto:emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org) before 5:00 pm on July 1, 2026. A comprehensive answer sheet will be distributed to all interested parties by July 8, 2026 or sooner.

This solicitation in no way obligates CCNRCD to award a contract. A contract will only be awarded as deemed in the best interest of CCNRCD.

Proposals shall be submitted via email as a single PDF to [emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org](mailto:emily@caledoniacountynrcd.org) by 5:00 pm on Monday, July 27, 2026. A consultant is anticipated to be selected, based on the criteria above, by Friday July 31, 2026. Note that telephone or in-person interviews may be conducted by CCNRCD and their partners, which may alter the schedule for selection.

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