



Institute for Energy and the Environment

Vermont Law School

164 Chelsea Street, PO Box 96

South Royalton, VT 05068

(802) 831-1054

Healthy Soils Research Information

Title: Soil Stories: exploring perceptions of soil health in Vermont

Principal Investigator: Katherine Oaks, Global Energy Fellow, Institute for Energy and the Environment, VLS

Purpose and Scope

You are invited to participate in this research because of your experience and interest in issues related to agriculture, soil health, and/or the environment in Vermont.

The purpose of this research is to learn the ways that people in Vermont relate to soil and what varieties of importance it holds for people across the state. We hope to identify ways that the state is supporting soil health management and understand the ways that information flows between and amongst interested stakeholders. We are also interested in developing an understanding of how people in Vermont think about and engage with soil health policy and if there is a need for greater support for soil health in the state. Any and all perspectives on these topics are important and welcome.

There are **no anticipated risks** to you as a participant in our research project. To protect your privacy and anonymity, the information that we collect from you during this interview will be kept confidential in order to avoid any potential risks. We will avoid accidental disclosure of your information by ensuring that no identifying information about you is recorded during the interview. There are also **no costs** to you as a research participant and you will receive **no compensation**.

This is a project of the Farm and Energy Initiative in the Institute for Energy and the Environment at Vermont Law School, and the purpose and procedures have been approved by the law school administration. The project is funded by the USDA National Agricultural Library.

Procedures

If you would like to volunteer, we will ask you to participate in a 30-60 minute interview, wherein we will ask you some questions about your perspective on soil management and soil health policy. We will record and transcribe the interview. Interviews will be conducted by either Katherine Oaks, Jesse Womack, or Russell Mendell.

Confidentiality

We will make every effort possible to keep your information confidential throughout this research process. This means that we will not disclose your identity or any information that would identify you. If you do answer a question in a way that identifies you, we will make sure to secure your anonymity when transcribing the interview. Data collected will be stored without using your name or other identifying information. This is to ensure that only the primary researchers can match you with your answers. Data will be stored on secure servers behind password protection and firewall security, and only the researchers will have access to that data. After your interview is transcribed, we will destroy the audio recording.

Participation and Withdrawal are Voluntary

Participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose to not take part in the research. You are free to not answer any questions if you choose. You are also free to withdraw at any time, should you change your mind and decide you do not want to continue with the interview.

Contact Information: If you have any questions about this project now or at any time in the future, please feel free to contact Katherine Oaks at katherineoaks@vermontlaw.edu.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation is completely voluntary. At any time – now or during the interview – you are free to refuse to participate without penalty of any kind.