



Northwest Regional Planning Commission

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Vermont Agency of Natural Resources SFY 2012 Ecosystem Restoration Grants

As part of the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) on-going efforts to reduce surface water pollution from phosphorus and sediment, the fiscal year 2012 state budget includes capital funds to support ecosystem restoration projects. DEC is currently seeking project pre-proposals due by July 15, 2011. Typical project budgets range between \$10,000 and \$75,000. DEC is specifically interested in proposals designed to improve water quality, including but not limited to projects that:

- improve stream stability
- incorporate the science of fluvial geomorphology in river corridor management decisions
- protect against flood hazards
- improve in-stream and riparian habitat
- mitigate the effects of stormwater runoff from developed land areas
- promote low impact development practices
- protect and restore riparian wetlands
- re-establish lake shoreline native vegetation and related shoreline erosion corrections
- directly address in-lake (internal) phosphorus loading conditions
- enhance the environmental sustainability of agricultural lands

The goal of the Ecosystem Restoration Grants program is to reduce the long-term nutrient and sediment loading from, and/or increase nutrient and sediment storage in, Vermont watersheds.

Pre-proposals should be submitted in electronic format (PDF preferred), clearly marked, and emailed to Heather Bullett (heather.bullett@state.vt.us). The deadline for submission is 4:00 pm on Friday, July 15, 2011. For additional information or questions regarding the pre-proposal process, please contact Eric Smeltzer at: 802-241-3792 or eric.smeltzer@state.vt.us. For assistance with this or other grant applications, please contact NRPC staff at 524-5958.



Park & Ride Survey

Do you commute to work or school? If so, we are looking for your input. The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is planning where additional park & ride lots should be constructed in Franklin & Grand Isle Counties. A park & ride lot is a facility where drivers can park their cars and access public transportation or meet with other drivers to carpool. Your input is greatly appreciated and your answers are strictly confidential. The survey should take less than 5 minutes. Access the survey here: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/nrpcvt_parkandride. Thanks for participating!

Planning for Economic Development: New Local & Regional Requirement

With legislation passed this year, for the first time, both local and regional plans must contain an economic development element, or chapter. While economic development planning was imbedded throughout the enabling statute in the goals and within the plan structure language, separating it out elevates the importance of this facet of planning. As the state embarks on new statewide economic development planning, it is essential that municipalities and regional planning commissions integrate economic development planning with our land use, transportation, infrastructure and housing planning.

Many local plans in our region already contain something that meets or partially meets these new requirements. The effective date of these new requirements is July 1, 2012 which means that any *local or regional plan adopted after that date must contain the new element*. This delayed effective date allows us the time we need to align our planning to meet the statute and Legislative intent.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission is available to work with each of our towns to address these changes. Other partners and stakeholders will undoubtedly offer their assistance or advice as well, including Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation, Lake Champlain Islands Chamber of Commerce and Franklin County Chamber of Commerce.

Please feel free to call with any questions on this new requirement or our offer to assist. We look forward to working with communities on this effort.

24 V.S.A. § 4382 **(new language is underlined)**

§ 4382. THE PLAN FOR A MUNICIPALITY

(a) A plan for a municipality may be consistent with the goals established in section 4302 of this title and compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region and with the regional plan and shall include the following:

(11) An economic development element that describes present economic conditions and the location, type, and scale of desired economic development, and identifies policies, projects, and programs necessary to foster economic growth.

Department of Fish & Wildlife Summer Webinar Series

NRPC will be hosting the DFW's summer webinar training series for RPC staff, town staff and other interested parties. There are four sessions planned throughout the summer. If any of the events below interest you, feel free to join us in our conference room on the following dates:

1. **Tuesday 6/21 from 10:30 - 11:30 Habitat Blocks & Connecting Lands;** This webinar will begin with an in-depth description of how habitat blocks and wildlife road crossings datasets were made, while the second half will focus on their uses in a planning context. (Jon Osborne, VLT & Jens Hilke VFWD)
2. **Tuesday 7/5 from 10:30 to 11:30 Deer Wintering Areas and the Vermont State Wetlands Inventory;** Fish & Wildlife Biologists have revised the older version of the deer wintering areas dataset. The first half of this session will focus on this new data release, how it was done, and how to use it appropriately in a planning context. The State Wetlands office has recently updated the Wetland Rules and made changes to the Vermont State Wetlands Inventory (VSWI) to include more wetlands than previous versions. (Everett Marshall VFWD, Shannon Morisson, DEC)
3. **Tuesday 7/19 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. Town Plan Review;** Vermont Natural Resources Council has completed a review of all town plans and municipal bylaws in the state with respect to their treatment of fish & wildlife resources. This session will highlight the major findings of the report and discuss implications for how municipalities can continue to strengthen planning for fish and wildlife conservation. (Jamey Fidel & Brian Shupe, VNRC & Jens Hilke VFWD) (<http://www.vnrc.org/forest/hot-issues/report-release-wildlife-considerations-in-local-planning/>)
4. **Wednesday 8/17 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. Subdivision Trends;** Vermont Natural Resources Council recently studied Grand List data from 2003 and 2009 to establish a database of parcels of land in the state, compiled by class size, to quantify the extent of subdivision over the last decade, and the degree to which subdivision is affecting the long-term viability of forestland in Vermont. (Jamey Fidel & Brian Shupe, VNRC) (<http://svr3.acornhost.com/~vnrcorg/report/>)

Please RSVP to Katelin Brewer-Colie, Regional planner: kbrewercolie@nrpvt.com.

Farm-to-Plate Strategic Plan: What it means for Northwest Region Growers & Food Businesses

*Chow Bella Restaurant, 24 North Main Street,
Downtown Saint Albans, VT*

Thursday, June 30th, 5:30PM to 7:30PM

Appetizers & Refreshments will be served.



Ellen Kahler, Executive Director of the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund, will present an overview of the report's findings and discuss specific resources and opportunities of interest to the Northwest Region. The event is co-sponsored by the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, the Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation, the Franklin - Grand Isle Workforce Investment Board, the Grand Isle Industrial Development Corporation, and the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce.

From the Farm to Plate Strategic Plan Executive Summary:

In the past 10 years, a growing movement in sustainable agriculture—involving increased local food production and consumption, value-added processing, and diversified farms—has taken off. During the 2009 legislative session, two member-based public policy organizations, Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility and Rural Vermont, crafted and helped win legislative approval for the creation of a Farm to Plate Investment Program (F2P). It was approved by the Senate and House in May 2009 and signed by Governor Douglas, as Sec. 35. 10 V.S.A. chapter 15A § 330. The legislation tasked the Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund (VSJF), in consultation with the Vermont Sustainable Agriculture Council (SAC), with crafting a strategic plan based on a broad scope of work.

The primary goals of the legislation are to:

1. Increase economic development in Vermont's food and farm sector.
2. Create jobs in the food and farm economy.
3. Improve access to healthy local foods.

A key goal of the F2P plan is to identify infrastructure investments and public policy recommendations that will support new and existing agricultural enterprises that increase local resiliency in today's changing times. There are both historic and recent threats to the future of agriculture in the state, including the loss of dairy farms, rising energy and feed costs, the volatility of commodity markets, global competition, and climate change. There are also many signs of expansion and opportunity, especially for diversified and organic farm operations as the model of industrial agriculture faces increasing public scrutiny.

The F2P Plan's ultimate purpose is to encourage policies and strategic investments that accelerate the movement toward strong local and regional food systems. Visit <http://www.vsjf.org/project-details/5/farm-to-plate-initiative> to view a copy of the report prior to the event. For more information contact Greta Brunswick at 524-5958 or gbrunswick@nrpcvt.com.

NRPC New Staff

Allison Stori recently joined Northwest Regional Planning Commission in June 2011 as a regional planner. This marks Allie's return to VT, where she grew up.

Allie is a graduate of the University of Denver, where she majored in Geography and minored in Legal Studies and Fine Arts. Most recently Allie worked for Cherokee County, Georgia, for a period of almost 6 years, as a Planner with a focus on development plan review, reviewing building plans for architectural design requirements, drafting zoning code revisions and providing technical assistance to internal staff, board members, engineers and the general public. Allie's professional interests include historic preservation and re-use, project review, energy planning, local food initiatives, drafting design guidelines, and providing a high level of customer service.

Personally, Allie is an animal lover, who enjoys spending time with family and friends as well as running, road biking, snowboarding, traveling, horseback riding, music and volunteering as an EMT.

Northwest Regional Board of Commissioners

Alburgh Town:	Terry Tatro Barbara Baker
Alburgh Village:	Andrea Beaderstadt One Vacant Seat
Bakersfield:	Nancy Hunt Dennis DeBevec
Berkshire:	Claude Charron Richard Ross
Enosburg Falls:	Richard Roberge Michael Manahan
Enosburgh:	Ronald Duso Lloyd Touchette
Fairfax:	Randy Devine Colleen Steen
Fairfield:	Marilyn Savoy Jason Booth
Fletcher:	Bruce Douglas One Vacant Seat
Franklin:	Doug Clark Clark Hubbard
Georgia:	Jerry Baitz Kirk Waite
Grand Isle:	Edwin Gelinas David Borthwick-Leslie
Highgate:	Pete Paquette Tom Racine
Isle La Motte:	Sylvia Jensen Robin Gutierrez
Montgomery:	Barry Kade Darlene Marrier
North Hero:	John Lambert One Vacant Seat
Richford:	Melissa Wells Harold Foote
St Albans City:	Joseph Luneau Lazarus Scangas
St Albans Town:	Matthew Feske Paul Larner
Sheldon:	Patrick Howrigan Greg Stebbins
South Hero:	Michael Guernsey Bob Buermann
Swanton Town:	Harold Garrett Robert Manning
Swanton Village:	Christopher Leach Neal Speer

NRPC JUNE CALENDAR

June 8th, 5:30pm, Policy/Project Review Committee Mtg., NRPC Conference Room

June 9th, 7:00pm, Transportation Advisory Committee Mtg., NRPC Conference Room

June 16th, 3:00pm, Brownfields Steering Committee Mtg., NRPC Conference Room

June 29th, 7:00pm, NRPC Board Mtg., WIB Training Facility, Precision Lane, Swanton

Regional Technology Teams Plan to Maximize Use of Broadband

Regional Planning Commissions across Vermont are currently assembling Regional Technology Teams made up of stakeholders who can envision what life could be like with universal high-speed broadband availability. Local government, schools, business, non-profits, and others will work together to implement strategies for using broadband access to enhance Vermont's way of life.

Each Regional Technology Team will develop a strategic plan that identifies needs and opportunities related to new technologies, provide strategies to drive adoption of broadband, identify key partnerships that will benefit from the coordinated use of information technology (such as government services, education, health care, business, etc.) and set targets for improvement among those key partnerships.

Participants will also identify broadband technology gaps, set achievable goals for improving use, and convene local & regional events to inform the public about Regional and State Telecommunications Plans. The Regional Technology Plans will be used by state, regional and local officials, including the Vermont Telecommunication Authority.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission's Technology Team will hold its first meeting at the end of June. Ruth Wallman of the Lake Champlain Island Chamber of Commerce, a member of the team for Franklin and Grand Isle Counties said "This is a great opportunity to build on our strengths and use universal broadband access as a tool to enhance education, tourism, industry and community."

For more information or if you are interested in serving on the Regional Technology Team, please contact Catherine Dimitruk, Executive Director, Northwest Regional Planning Commission, Cdimitruk@nrpcvt.com or 802-524-5958.



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