

Franklin County REMC Meeting
November 24, 2025 | 6:00 p.m.
Northwest Regional Planning Commission Office | Zoom

Attendance: Reginald Beliveau, Jr. (Acting Chair, Swanton Village/Town EMD), Micah Genzlinger (Fairfax Fire Chief), Michaela Foody (VEM), Shaun Coleman (NRPC), Jessica Clark Louison (SLR), Josephene Alling (SLR), Roy Schiff (SLR) and Doug Osborne (SLR).

The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. There was no quorum

Public Comment – None.

Introductions / Adjustment of the Agenda – Introductions were made. No agenda adjustments.

Minutes – Tabled.

S. Coleman reported that Lamoille RPC with support from NRPC and NVDA, are finalizing a draft flood resiliency plan for the Lamoille River basin communities. The plan offers a list of resiliency resources and potential mitigation actions for communities to reduce flood risks. The plan has been released for public comment which closes on December 5.

Lamoille River Modeling and Alternatives Analysis Presentation

J. Clark Louison and Josephine Alling from SLR began their presentation with an overview of the project which was funded by an EDA grant through the Regional Planning Commissions and Northern Vermont Economic Development Offices. SLR created a flood model for the Lamoille River (70 miles) from Hardwick to Arrowhead Mountain Lake in Georgia. There is no other model in the state that is this scale. Most are by town or by county. The focus tonight is on Fairfax and Georgia.

The model looks at many different elements including topography, cross sections views of the river, survey points, land cover, water surface elevation, channel elevation, lidar, photos and USGS high water marks. FEMA's new hydrology study for northern Vermont was released in July 2025. The model can tell the extent of flooding for a particular storm event. For example, it can show the extent of 2-, 10-, 25-, 50- and 100-year floods and the depth of flooding. The model can also show the velocity in some locations and the river profile which includes dams and bridge locations.

For accuracy, they look at flood photos from past to ensure what is seen on the ground is also seen in the model. USGS high water marks (HHWMs) from July 2023 flooding were used as well. Accuracy is within 1 ft. It is good for understanding flood patterns.

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There are a lot of different flood mitigation alternatives that could be tested. Locations where maybe a bridge or culvert is restricting the river or a floodplain is disconnected. Some alternatives may be lowering the floodplain which would create more storage, removing berms, and property buyouts plus others.

For tonight, the focus areas for Fairfax include Hunt Street, Maple Street Covered Bridge, VT104/Main St. Bridge, Fletcher Road, Boissoneault Road Bridge, River Road (Stones Brook) Bridge on River Road and Shepardson Hollow Bridge area. Modeling show that flood plain restoration across from Hunt Street – by lowering high ground and reconnecting the flood plain – could reduce 100-year flood levels by 1 to 3 feet in key locations including the near the wastewater treatment plant. For the Hunt Street flood restoration, a feasibility study would determine if lowering floodplain makes sense. A similar opportunity exists near Steeple Market, where excavating the floodplain by about three feet could significantly reduce flood levels, by 1.7 feet, during medium floods.

Several bridges are shown to significantly constrict flow. At the Maple Street Covered Bridge more conveyance is needed. A 6' x 20' single span box dry culver would reduce flood depths by a foot or more in areas of the neighborhood. Replacing the VT104/Main Street Bridge (30') with a sider span (50') could reduce large flood levels by as much as 3.7', although it would require a major construction effort. Other bridges – Boissoneault, River Road, and Shepardson Hollow – are undersized and cause overtopping during medium to large floods. Proposed wider replacements would keep more flood flows beneath the structures and reduce upstream flood depths by several feet.

Additional concerns include erosion on Fletcher Road which slumped following 2023 flooding. The model showed stream velocities for various flood recurrence intervals (2-yr, 10 yr, 25-yr, 50-yr, 100-yr, 500-yr) and how the river and river stone is brushing up against bank. Possible solutions include monitor, evaluate velocities, design stabilization with modeled velocities.

For Georgia, the focus has been the Georgia Industrial Park Water Intake in Arrowhead Mountain Lake. Currently, the water intake is being used by Perrigo Nutritionals, which is one of the largest infant formula producers in the country. Proposed intake solutions

include extending the pipe into deeper water and improving the cleaning and backwash systems at the intake. Overall, the modelling provides a clearer understanding of where targeted localized mitigation – such as floodplain restoration, bridge widening and drainage improvements – could significantly reduce flood impacts in Fairfax and Georgia.

M. Genzlinger noted it would be beneficial to present this information to key staff for the town of Fairfax.

R. Beliveau Jr. thanked SLR for the presentation and added that this information was more tangible for local solutions to flooding than the USACE Silver Jackets study to mitigate flooding from ice jams on the Missisquoi River.

He asked what the scale of impacts would be for downstream areas should the alternative measures be implemented. Jessica replied that these projects are not to the scale that would demonstrate flood impacts to areas further downstream.

The Town of Fairfax's focus areas include Hunt Street, Maple Street Covered Bridge, the VT-104/Main Street Bridge, Fletcher Road, Boissoneault Road Bridge, River Road (Stones Brook), and Shepardson Hollow Road Bridge. Modeling shows that floodplain restoration at Hunt Street—by lowering high ground and reconnecting floodplain—could reduce 100-year flood levels by 1–3 feet in key locations, including near the wastewater treatment plant. A similar opportunity exists near Steeple Market, where excavating the floodplain by about three feet could significantly reduce water levels during medium floods.

S. Coleman noted that NRPC may be applying for funding to perform a flood modeling on the Missisquoi River in Franklin County.

Other Business

None.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:55 p.m.