



**Northwest
Regional Planning
Commission**

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

**September 30, 2026
6:30 p.m. Meeting**

Virtual Access
See link on page 2

Physical location:
NRPC Office, 75 Fairfield Street, St. Albans, VT

- 1. Adjustments to the Agenda**
- 2. Welcome, introductions, opening remarks** –Elisabeth Nance, *Vice-Chair*
- 3. Opportunity for Public Comment**
- 4. Speaker/Public Meeting: Missisquoi and Lamoille River Basin Plans**
Karen Bates, Watershed Planner, VT Department of Environmental Conservation
- 5. Minutes of the July 2026 Meeting** (*action*)
- 6. Commission Reports** (*written reports enclosed*)

Discussion Items:

Finance/Operations– Kirk Waite

Personnel – Bob Buermann

Executive Committee – Peter Zamore

Project Review Committee – William Irwin (*no action needed*)

Plan and Policy Committee- Lori Ruple

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) – Barclay Morris

Brownfields Committee – Chip Sawyer

Vermont Economic Progress Council (VEPC) –Barbara Murphy

Rural Community Transit- Catherine Dimitruk

Healthy Roots Advisory Committee- Marietta Scholten

Northwest Vermont Regional Foundation- Kirk Waite

Office-Staff

7. **Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP)- Endorse CWSP Renewal Request** (*action item*)
2023-2026 Progress Report Enclosed
8. **Commissioner Announcements**

Meeting Access Information

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<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85610707355>

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Meeting ID 85610707355

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NRPC Board of Commissioners Meeting
July 29, 2026 | 6:30 p.m.
Hybrid Meeting (Zoom and St. Albans Bay Town Park)
Lake St., St. Albans Bay, VT 05481

Board Member Attendance: See attached. A quorum was present.

Staff: Catherine Dimitruk, Amy Adams, Bethany Remmers, Danielle Turin, Dean Pierce, Kyle Grenier, Lorna Peters, Nora Brown, Shaun Coleman, Isabelle Walker (intern) and Stewart Stites (intern). Guests: Tim Smith, Tayt Brooks, Kendal Smith

Welcome, Introductions, Opening Remarks

Chair P. Zamore called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm followed by roll call and guest introductions.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Opportunity for Public Comment

None.

Minutes of the June Meeting

Changes: Lines 41-42 to read “VEC meeting will be held on July 30” (not cancelled). Line 84 to read “recommends approval”. B. Buerman asked that the names of officers and representatives are listed in the minutes from now on.

E. Nance motioned to approve the June meeting minutes with amendments. W. Irwin seconded. Motion carried. One abstention.

Economic Status and Outlook

Speakers: Tayt Brooks: Secretary, Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD), Tim Smith: Executive Director, Franklin County Industrial Development (FCIDC), Kendal Smith: Commissioner, Department of Labor (DOL)

Topics included: dairy industry crisis, economic challenges and job losses, lack of industrial space, cost of living, Canadian tourism decline, and economic initiatives and proposals.

An estimated 600 total job losses are anticipated due to closures and layoffs at Perrigo, Franklin Foods, and Vermont Farmers Association (VFA). This is the largest layoff event in the area since 180 jobs were lost at Energizer in 2013. Unlike 2013, current job openings in the county (~100) are insufficient to absorb the ~600 displaced workers. US Immigration office space in St. Albans also closed during the pandemic then staff have shifted from virtual to physical offices last year. This has increased commuters to Chittenden County.

Franklin County has no vacant industrial space suitable for new businesses. There are only older, larger sites like Swan Valley, Lucille Farms and Vermont Brick building are available. High costs for gas, groceries, and electricity pose difficulties for residents.

There has been a 30% decrease in Canadian visitors to Vermont, impacting Franklin County significantly (estimated 30-35% of local tourism). Factors include border closing times, processing delays, and tariffs.

The Governor has proposed project-based TIFs (Tax Increment Financing) currently narrowed to housing (unlocked \$2 billion for infrastructure). ACCD advocates for expanding TIFs to industrial development to support agribusiness and the dairy sector.

Capital Investment Refundable Tax Credit Program would offer tax credits or direct refunds to companies investing in machinery and equipment, even if they have no tax liability.

ACCD's is reviewing regulations affecting the dairy industry, with the goal of modernizing and updating agricultural regulations, similar to efforts in housing and community development.

Discussions are ongoing with VTrans regarding increasing weight limits for trucks hauling milk and forest products. This is currently in a research phase.

Local and Regional Development Initiatives include:

- Opportunity Zones: Designated in Montgomery and Richford. Investors can gain 30% tax savings on capital gains if properties are held for 3 years, or full capital gains savings if held for 10 years. Richford is a new addition with good potential.
- Housing Development: Developers are planning to convert Britain Academy into housing in Bakersfield.
- Catalyst Grants: RPCs and Chambers collaborate on small grants to fund feasibility studies for projects (e.g., bringing water to village cores).

Department of Labor (DOL) is working with affected companies to support ~600 impacted workers and farmers across the agricultural supply chain. DOL offers unemployment insurance, labor market information, job search assistance, resume development, and Workers' Compensation through 10-12 statewide offices. DOL is providing on-site job fairs, office hours and workshops.

Funds are available for education and training programs. NW Tech Center received a \$300,000 grant for electrical services training.

A discussion and question and answer period ensued:

- There are concerns about increased milk hauling distances and the feasibility/cost for farmers to do their own hauling.
- Beta Technologies is expanding to the former GE Aviation facility, currently occupying 40,000 sq ft. Full ramp-up is dependent on FAA certification for electric airplanes, expected in 1 to 1.5 years.
- Plans for a welcome center north of Swanton (between I-89 barrels) are progressing. New England Governors/Eastern Canadian Premiers Meeting is scheduled for August 9-10, focusing on trade and tariffs.

- Passenger Rail to Montreal: Discussions with VTrans, New York State, Amtrak, and Transport Quebec are ongoing, with Amtrak expected to issue an RFP for Central Station construction plans soon.
- Border Staffing: CBP and CBSA apps provide real-time and historical wait times at border crossings, aiding travel decisions.
- There is a need for more comprehensive economic data on the total contribution of the working landscape (forest products, agriculture) to the state's economy.
- There is a need for developing diverse affordable housing options (townhouses, starter homes) to retain families with children, rather than solely focusing on apartments.

Land Use Review Board (LURB) and Act 250

Speaker: Sarah Hadd, LURB

The LURB was reconfigured from the Natural Resources Board under Act 181 of 2024. The goal is to modernize and standardize land use review processes, especially concerning Act 250.

RPCs must have regional plans confirmed by the end of 2026. NRPC was the first to achieve confirmed plan status. The LURB issued a 77-page response to NRPC's regional plan which the LURB aims to make more concise.

Regional plan confirmation is crucial for creating Act 250 exemption areas through tiered systems. Tier 1B communities receive exemptions for up to 50 housing units in projects upon regional plan confirmation. Tier 1A offers broader delegation for both residential and commercial exemptions. Some communities are adopting a "wait and see" approach, while others are closely monitoring. Interim exemptions were extended by Act 152. The first applications are anticipated in early August, with the review process expected to take several months.

The LURB is actively guiding Tier 1A implementation and actively reviewing other regional plans. The LURB's online database is now accessible.

Act 152 (S325) is effective on July 1, 2026. It repealed the road rule, repealed Tier 3, extends temporary Act 250 exemptions for housing to 2028, and extends municipal plans expiring during this period until the end of 2027. The exception is the accessory on-farm business exemption. A report on this exemption is due to the legislature in November 2026.

The LURB acknowledged that the deadlines for regional plans preceded a robust community engagement, which may have led to "discord." A key focus for the next year is to improve communication, accessibility, and dialogue with communities. LURB members are available to local select boards and planning commissions.

S. Hadd praised NRPC for its exceptional in-person community engagement efforts, which were vital in overcoming challenges, especially in areas lacking established municipal plans or regulations. P. Zamore praised staff on the regional plan update.

FY27 Transportation Planning Initiative Work Program

K. Grenier provided a brief overview noting the TAC reviewed and approved the work program.

136 *B. Buermann motioned to approve the FY27 TPI Work Program. Y. Dandurand seconded. Motion*
137 *carried.*

138

139 **FY27 Committee Assignments**

140 Committee assignments are included in the Board packet.

141 *Y. Dandurand motioned to approve the committee assignments. B. Young seconded. Motion*
142 *carried.*

143

144 C. Dimitruk noted that committee assignments are not permanent but allow members to join later.

145

146 **Other Business**

147 B. Morris emphasized the importance of representation on NRPC committees as it provides
148 valuable support and a voice for local priorities. TAC representation has been down for some time.

149

150 S. Jensen emphasized the impact of TIFs on education funding.

151

152 *B. Buermann motioned to adjourn. E. Nance seconded. Motion carried.*

153

154 Meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

FY27 NPRC Board of Commissioners- Meeting Attendance													
Municipality	Board Member	Jul 7/29/26	Aug No Meeting	Sept 9/30/26	Oct 10/28/26	Nov No Meeting	Dec TBD	Jan 1/27/27	Feb 2/24/27	Mar 3/31/27	April 4/28/27	May 5/26/27	June 6/30/27
Erkln Cty Youth	Vacant												
GI Cty Youth	Vacant												
Alburg Town	Alex McCracken												
Alburg Town	Danielle Choiniere	X											
Alburg Village	Vacant												
Alburg Village	Vacant												
Bakersfield	William Irwin	X											
Bakersfield	Linda McCall	X											
Berkshire	Vacant												
Berkshire	Claude Charron												
Enosburg Falls	Leonard Charron												
Enosburg Falls	Vacant												
Enosburgh Town	Jesse Woods												
Enosburgh Town	James Oullette												
Fairfax	Barbara Murphy	X											
Fairfax	Mike Bishop	E											
Fairfield	Julia Callan	X											
Fairfield	Chuck Verderber	X											
Fletcher	Michelle Frennier	E											
Fletcher	Lori Ruple	X											
Franklin	Yvon Dandurand	X											
Franklin	vacant												
Geogia	Doug Bergstrom	X											
Georgia	Kirk Waite	X											
Grand Isle	Barclay Morris	X											
Grand Isle	Howard Demars	X											
Highgate	Jack Pelkey	X											
Highgate	Anna Comiskey	X											
Isle La Motte	Sylvia Jensen	X											
Isle La Motte	Mary-Catherine Graziano	E											
Montgomery	Vacant												
Montgomery	Mark Brouillette												
North Hero	Andy Alling	X											
North Hero	Vacant												
Richford	Marissa Tessier												
Richford	Vacant												
Sheldon	Vacant												
Sheldon	Mathew Stebbins	X											
South Hero	Peter Zamore	X											
South Hero	Bob Buermann	X											
St. Albans City	Elisabeth Nance	X											
St. Albans City	Chip Sawyer	E											
St. Albans Town	Marietta Scholten	E											
St. Albans Town	Jonathan Giroux	E											
Swanton Town	Nicole Draper	X											
Swanton Town	Nicholas Brosseau	X											
Swanton Village	Heidi Britch-Valenta	X											
Swanton Village	Damon Broderick	X											
	# Municipalities	16											

QUORUM = 12

E= Excused ; X=Present

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
July through August 2026

	Jul - Aug 26	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
Income				
4016 · Economic Development	0.00	71,750.00	-71,750.00	0.0%
4021 · Energy/Climate	0.00	212,560.00	-212,560.00	0.0%
4030 · ACCD	0.00	690,211.00	-690,211.00	0.0%
4035 · Transportation	32,453.99	629,870.00	-597,416.01	5.15%
4044 · Municipal & Partner Services	0.00	59,500.00	-59,500.00	0.0%
4045 · Emergency Planning/Telecomm.	0.00	54,400.00	-54,400.00	0.0%
4047 · Municipal Assessments	72,579.00	72,579.00	0.00	100.0%
4050 · Municipal Contracts/Community	0.00	109,200.00	-109,200.00	0.0%
4055 · Brownfields Programs	5,146.23	348,750.00	-343,603.77	1.48%
4056 · Water Quality/Natural Resources	1,111.14	249,200.00	-248,088.86	0.45%
4058 · Clean Water Service Provider	0.00	2,059,000.00	-2,059,000.00	0.0%
4059 · RSEP-St. Albans Town & City	0.00	14,500.00	-14,500.00	0.0%
4080 · Misc. Income	0.00	14,650.00	-14,650.00	0.0%
4600 · Interest Income	1,310.05	3,000.00	-1,689.95	43.67%
Total Income	112,600.41	4,589,170.00	-4,476,569.59	2.45%
Expense				
5010 · Salaries & Wages	187,877.98	1,083,850.00	-895,972.02	17.33%
5015 · Employer Social Security	11,434.47	67,199.00	-55,764.53	17.02%
5016 · Employer Medicare	2,674.21	15,716.00	-13,041.79	17.02%
5020 · Fringe Benefits	41,461.59	271,469.00	-230,007.41	15.27%
5030 · Travel	3,603.83	28,650.00	-25,046.17	12.58%
5040 · Advertising	2,631.00	5,000.00	-2,369.00	52.62%
5050 · Miscellaneous Expense	0.00	14,650.00	-14,650.00	0.0%
5055 · Insurance-Liability	11,205.47	22,000.00	-10,794.53	50.93%
5080 · Meetings	1,762.87	19,450.00	-17,687.13	9.06%
5085 · Membership Dues	4,166.25	15,000.00	-10,833.75	27.78%
5090 · Technology and GIS	174.12	18,400.00	-18,225.88	0.95%
5095 · Software	1,137.40	54,000.00	-52,862.60	2.11%

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual
July through August 2026

	Jul - Aug 26	Budget	\$ Over Budget	% of Budget
5100 · Supplies & Furniture	2,598.19	21,200.00	-18,601.81	12.26%
5660 · Postage	0.00	3,600.00	-3,600.00	0.0%
5680 · Printing & Copies	0.00	9,700.00	-9,700.00	0.0%
5700 · Telephone	3,032.86	22,000.00	-18,967.14	13.79%
5800 · Bank Service Charges	30.00	200.00	-170.00	15.0%
6300 · Professional Services	7,439.75	767,010.00	-759,570.25	0.97%
6301 · Professional Brownfields	0.00	80,000.00	-80,000.00	0.0%
6302 · Professional CWSP Lamoille	0.00	430,000.00	-430,000.00	0.0%
6303 · Professional CWSP Missisquoi	22,625.90	1,414,500.00	-1,391,874.10	1.6%
6304 · Professional RLF	4,195.00	138,800.00	-134,605.00	3.02%
6400 · Building/Utilities	2,218.88	62,042.00	-59,823.12	3.58%
6560 · Payroll Expenses	742.00	4,500.00	-3,758.00	16.49%
Total Expense	311,011.77	4,568,936.00	-4,257,924.23	6.81%
	-198,411.36			

Open Invoices as of August 31, 2026 -\$339,671.83 Original Mortgage

Franklin County Industrial Dev Corp - outstanding mortgage **\$45,003.70 \$130,000**

8:35 AM

09/22/26

Accrual Basis

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Balance Sheet
As of August 31, 2026

	<u>Aug 31, 26</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1000 · People's Checking Account	129,634.37
1020 · People's Money Market Account	146,762.03
1035 · New England Federal Cr~1Year CD	50,120.18
1036 · New England Fed Cr-CD 5 Year	67,613.59
1037 · Lamoille CWSP	410,412.71
1038 · Missisquoi CWSP	1,503,042.53
1040 · Union Bank - RLF 10 PCPI	415,197.35
1041 · Union Bank - RLF 23	10.00
1080 · Petty Cash	9.05
Total Checking/Savings	2,722,801.81
Accounts Receivable	
1200 · Accounts Receivable	-339,671.83
Total Accounts Receivable	-339,671.83
Other Current Assets	
1400 · Prepaid Expenses	16,198.59
1499 · Undeposited Funds	158,403.70
Total Other Current Assets	174,602.29
Total Current Assets	2,557,732.27
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>2,557,732.27</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 · Accounts Payable	14,137.11
Total Accounts Payable	14,137.11
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	790.15
2001 · Accrued Exp	14,043.70
2100 · Employee Health Ins. Payable	454.21
2110 · Health Equity	2,709.60
2120 · Accrued Payroll	41,889.65
2130 · Accrued Vacation	64,626.38
2213 · VT Tax Withholding Payable	2,795.54

8:35 AM

09/22/26

Accrual Basis

Northwest Regional Planning Commission
Balance Sheet
As of August 31, 2026

	<u>Aug 31, 26</u>
2215 · Retirement Payable	11,778.90
2250 · Deferred Revenue	<u>1,423,503.15</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>1,562,591.28</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>1,576,728.39</u>
Total Liabilities	1,576,728.39
Equity	
Building Reserve	80,000.00
Equipment Reserve	20,000.00
Long Term Reserves	279,520.00
PAT Reserve	22,000.00
3900 · Fund Balance	777,895.24
Net Income	<u>-198,411.36</u>
Total Equity	<u>981,003.88</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>2,557,732.27</u></u>

Committee and Staff Reports – September 2026

Committee Chair/Appointee	Meeting Date	Next Meeting Date	Main Agenda Items/Topics
Executive <i>Peter Zamore</i>	9/15/26	10/19/26	Review of necessary building repairs and fall meeting schedule
Finance/Operations <i>Kirk Waite</i>	none	10/7/26	No meeting.
Personnel <i>Bob Buermann</i>	none	TBD	No meeting.
Project Review	9/9/26	10/14/26	See business report.
Plan and Policy <i>Lori Ruple</i>	none	10/14/26	No meeting.
Transportation Advisory Committee <i>Barclay Morris</i>	none	10/8/26	No Meeting.
Brownfields Adv. Committee <i>Chip Sawyer</i>	8/10/26	10/19/26	Approved assessment funding for the Messenger Building in St. Albans City. Approved funding for a Corrective Action Plan at 200 Bridge in Sheldon.
VT Economic Progress Council, Barbara Murphy	9/24/26		No local projects on the agenda; report to be provided
Rural Community Transportation <i>Catherine Dimitruk</i>	none	10/12/26	No meeting

NRPC has a YouTube channel for Board meetings, trainings and select committee meetings.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1JLkE8lwP-Vjd-5RYRaQjQ>

Transportation

- North Hero village site visits with VTrans Traffic Operations and town staff to evaluate and identify Vehicle Speed Feedback signage locations on US 2.
- Bakersfield Selectboard meeting to discuss sidewalk planning for locations along VT 108, south of the VT 36 intersection and grant opportunities.
- Targeted municipal outreach for Better Roads grant announcement – Municipal grants are due to VTrans on October 30, 2026.
- Rail Trail Economic Impact Assessment project- participated with VTrans Rail Trail and Planning staff on the consultant selection committee.
- Supporting the Village of Swanton with guidance on new and updated EV charging station signage, in preparation for both new and replacement charging stations in several village locations.
- NRPC is working with the Town of St. Albans and Collins Perley Sports Center (CPSFC) to demonstrate a need for a pedestrian crossing on VT 104 between CPSFC and the convenience store, hotel, etc. Pedestrian crossing data is being collected and will be used to help support the crossing design and various, necessary state application processes.
- Traffic counts in Georgia and Fairfax.
- Continued collaboration on the “TAC Working Group” along with other RPCS and VTrans Planning staff to process recent TAC member surveys, and develop best practices and toolkit resources for successful TAC participation.

- Collaborating with the Town of St. Albans and VTrans to locate new Vehicle Speed Feedback Signs (VSFS) on VT36/Lake Road in the village of St. Albans Bay.
- Causeway Funds Project Development:
 - Advanced planning for the Swanton-area Causeway project by refining project status, identifying appropriate preliminary scoping work, and clarifying the rationale for further advancement.
 - Completed scoring of consultant Statements of Qualifications for the Black Falls Road project and advanced the consultant selection process. .
 - Attended the Bakersfield Select Board meeting to update the Town on progress with this new funding and get Town support to move forward with the Lost Nation Rd culvert project.

Emergency Management

- Met with VEM Mitigation staff to review priority projects for the region including potential flood buyouts and transportation infrastructure upgrades.
- Assisted American Red Cross volunteer coordinator with planning for shelter manager training and related information for communities.
- Met with AHS Field Director regarding community shelter grant opportunities.
- Supported VDH Medical Reserve Corps with individual and community preparedness activities.
- Continued development of Hazard Mitigation Plans for Berkshire, and Swanton.
- Met with VEM staff regarding recently release FEMA mitigation and EMPG funding.
- Provided general technical assistance to mutual aid and Regional Emergency Management committee members.

GIS

- Working on a Kiosk Map for Alburgh, highlighting trails and area services and businesses.
- Updating the Zoning data on the Vermont Geodata Portal for the City of St. Albans.

Brownfields

- Managed active task orders for assessment or cleanup planning on the following sites:
 - Highgate Village Core. Supported the Town of Highgate with project management for building materials abatement funded by an RLF grant and loan. Building materials abatement was completed at the end of August.
 - 113 Main Street. Coordination with REAC and Qualified Environmental Professional on a State wetlands site visit.
 - 20 LaSalle Street. No activity.
 - 24 Maple St., St. Albans City. Assessment underway.
 - Wheeler Block Building, Richford. Phase 1 Assessment complete. Phase 2 QAPP and Assessment procurement underway.
 - Messenger Building, St. Albans City. Phase 1 Assessment complete. QAPP complete and under review.
 - 200 Bridget St., Sheldon. Corrective Action Plan underway.

Municipal Planning

- Continued to work with Bakersfield Planning Commission on the municipal plan update. Presented a full draft plan to the public at the September Planning Commission meeting. Began preparing final edits to respond to public comments. Funded by a Municipal Planning Grant.
- Coordinated with North Hero Planning Commission to analyze survey results and prepare for plan drafting. ne. Funded by a Municipal Planning Grant.
- Held an outreach event with the Grand Isle Planning Commission for a Zoning Bylaw update funded by a Municipal Planning Grant.
- Met with the Fairfax Planning Commission to review draft sections of the Fairfax Town Plan as part of the Fairfax Town Plan update, funded by a Municipal Planning Grant.

- Met with the Alburgh Planning Commission to discuss necessary revisions to the town's Flood Hazard Bylaw for continued participation in the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Provided Sheldon and North Hero with zoning services, DRB and PC clerk services, and E911 Coordination services to Sheldon.
- Supported the Town of Highgate's village wastewater project. Met with project engineer and coordinated with municipal representatives. Provided support in managing project budget, NBRC grant amendments and project schedules and deadlines.
- Met with the Lavin Vision Steering Committee to discuss results from the workshop in August, brainstorm a draft vision statement, and consider concept layouts in relation to the vision statement. Next meeting is October 13.
- Supported Town of St. Albans with zoning bylaw updates to implement the Transit Oriented Development Master Plan for the growth areas on northern Route 7 and around Exit 19 of I89, including developing a new zoning district use table and associated definitions.
- Prepared draft flood hazard and river corridor regulations for the Town of Sheldon.
- Provided an updated draft of zoning regulations to the Montgomery Planning Commission.
- Met with the Town of Fairfax to discuss capital planning and budget needs.
- Coordinated FY27 Municipal Planning Grant application support for municipalities, including for the Town of Fairfax, Town of Bakersfield, South Hero and Franklin.

Regional Planning

- Conducted outreach and met with Fire Districts across the region to gather information, assess capacity and needs for regional support and coordination, funded by a grant from the Vermont Bond Bank.
- Applied for and received a Rural Implementation Program grant from the Boston Federal Reserve to augment our work support small water systems through additional consultations, grant support and technical assistance.

Climate & Energy

- Continued assisting municipalities in the implementation of Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) construction projects with technical assistance; began outreach and application assistance for Municipal Energy Revolving Fund (MERF).
- Coordination with Northwest Career and Technical Center on green technology models for training, funded through EECBG in partnership with Saint Albans City.
- Submitted a successful proposal to administer statewide engagement effort on Comprehensive Energy Plan update.
- Continued statewide administration of Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) with Climate Action Office.
- Continued planning of and publicity for 2026 WindowDressers build in collaboration with Saint Albans Energy Committee.

Water Quality

- In role as the regional Clean Water Service Provider (CWSP) for Lamoille and Missisquoi basins:
 - Continued to prepare required self-assessment materials and assemble project documentation as part of requests to the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation seeking reappointment as the Clean Water Service Provider for the Missisquoi and Lamoille basins.
 - Conducted annual Basin Water Quality Council meetings for the Lamoille and Missisquoi basins, including project site visits and discussion of implementation priorities.
 - Advanced Clean Water Service Provider projects through task award amendments and resolution of implementation and eligibility questions. Continued development of program administration improvements, including automated application and project-status tracking and refinements to the online funding application to emphasize cost effectiveness.

- Continued implementation of Operation and Maintenance requirements by executing site access agreements (easements and licenses), resolving policy questions, and preparing service agreements for new implementation projects.
- Met with partners to clarify role of road associations in project advancement and access to clean-water funding. Participated in stream-restoration and hydraulic and hydrologic modeling training to strengthen technical capacity supporting project review and implementation.
- As part of Regional Water Quality/Tactical Basin planning work:
 - Completed regional-plan conformance reviews of two Tactical Basin Plans and prepared correspondence and presentation materials documenting the reviews.
 - Reviewed revised draft of Stormwater Utility Study Committee report.
 - Provided technical assistance on local water-quality issues, including culvert replacement, beaver conflicts, shoreline concerns, and municipal project priorities.
 - Loaned additional Clean Water project signs (posting of signs is required to improve visibility of completed restoration projects) and updated sign inventory.
 - Took over coordinating the monthly Missisquoi Bay Partners Meetings for Missisquoi watershed organizations. Organized two meetings where partners discussed organizational updates, grant opportunities, and social media policies.
- In support of the Regional Stormwater Education Program:
 - Continued public outreach efforts related to stormwater education, including development of interactive raingarden display materials and a rain-barrel raffle.
 - Hosted two successful stream cleanups in August in St Albans City.
- As part of project investigating the economic impacts of water quality:
 - Completed data compilation, organization, and metadata documentation, creating a consolidated dataset for economic-impact analysis.
 - Concluded development of methods incorporating lake visibility and cyanobacteria mapping, and completed initial modeling of the economic effects of water quality..
- Private Roads Road Erosion Inventory Project:
 - Finalized data layer of all private road segments in the Lake Champlain Basin with slope and hydrologic connectivity data.
 - Met with subcontractor to refine prioritization for REIs on private road networks.
 - Conducted GIS analysis to test and further refine prioritization methodology.
- Georgia Silver Lake Road Project:
 - Continued assistance for the Town of Georgia by managing a culvert and floodplain/wetland restoration project. Selected a consultant for preliminary design work, developed contracts and attended a Select Board meeting for questions regarding the preliminary design phase of the project, and provided updates to consultants, landowners, and the Georgia Conservation commission.

Workforce & Economic Development and Northern Vermont Economic Development District (NVEDD)

- NVEDD is a partnership with Lamoille County Planning Commission, Lamoille County Industrial Development Corporation, Northeastern VT Development Association, Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation and Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corporation.
- Refined the scope and budget for the Village of Swanton's NBRC project in advance of submitting a budget and scope amendment. The project consists of several projects in the village center.

Building/Office: Met with structural engineer to assess building foundation and porch. Upgraded security system. Chainsaw work for downed branch on garage and parking area from windstorm.

Project Review Committee: Monthly Business Report

Month: September 2026

Project Reviews

1) **Project Type: Act 250- Round Barn Housing Limited Partnership**

Project Location:: 29 Faywood Road, Grand Isle

Substantial Regional Impact: Yes ☐ No ☒ (*If yes, Board action required*)

- *Project Details*: A new 16-unit senior housing building at the existing Round Barn Apartments development, followed by demolition of the existing 16-unit senior housing “Round Barn” building. The new 16-unit building and existing “Annex” building will be served by an existing shared mound wastewater disposal system and a new municipal water service connection. The project also involves general stormwater, utility, and parking improvements.
 - *Project Comments*: The Committee noted the building’s significance to the community and suggested the applicant consider options for re-use of the historic lumber.
 - *Conformance with Regional Plan*: Yes ☒ No ☐
-

2) **Project Type: Act 250- Tyler Gotshall**

Project Location:: 39 McCoy Woods Rd, Alburgh

Substantial Regional Impact: Yes ☐ No ☐ (*If yes, Board action required*)

- *Project Details*: Parking area approximately 100' x 50' to park vehicles for HVAC & Propane Company.
 - *Project Comments*: The Committee requested an extension of the comment period to wait for additional information regarding wetlands permitting.
 - *Conformance with Regional Plan*: Yes ☐ No ☐
-

Board Action Necessary: None.



Clean Water Service Provider Renewal for 2027-2031

Accomplishments, Challenges and Planned Improvements

NRPC's current Clean Water Service Provider term (2023-2026) has produced substantial progress in both basins while building a pipeline for future construction. Basin 6 has \$2,374,182.61 in completed or active implementation awards associated with an estimated 182.80 kg/yr in annual phosphorus reduction; Basin 7 has \$356,525.12 in awards and a revised post-implementation estimate of 32.82 kg/yr. The following sections summarize accomplishments, project development, administration, challenges, and planned improvements.

MISSISQUOI, BASIN 6

NRPC's work as the Clean Water Service Provider for Basin 6 (Missisquoi) may be summarized as follows.

Progress Toward Targets (Implementation Projects and "Adoptions")

During the current term, NRPC has successfully directed Water Quality Restoration Formula Grant funding toward non-regulatory clean water projects throughout the Missisquoi River basin. Total formula grant funds awarded for completed or active implementation projects stand at \$2,374,182.61, yielding an estimated annual phosphorus reduction of 182.80 kg/yr at an overall average cost-effectiveness of \$9,947.90/kg.

Key structural implementation achievements in Basin 6 include:

- **Trout Brook Reservoir Dam Removal:** A major dam removal project awarded \$1,017,617.75, resulting in the basin's single largest phosphorus credit to date at 47.10 kg/yr (\$21,605.47/kg).
- **Sleeper Pond Dam Removal:** Completed in partnership with the Missisquoi River Basin Association (MRBA) for \$217,630.00, achieving 30.28 kg/yr in annual reduction at a highly efficient cost-effectiveness rate of \$7,187.25/kg.



Figure 1 Trout Brook Dam removal



Figure 2 Sleeper Pond dam removal

- **Trout River M02 Floodplain & Stream Restoration:**

Awarded \$302,583.00 for floodplain reconnection, which in time is expected to deliver 14.63 kg/yr in P reduction.

- **Riparian Buffer Planting Initiatives:** Multiple buffer planting projects, including Giddings Brook (\$67,484.00, 24.12 kg/yr), Mid-Missisquoi (\$14,381.00, 4.74 kg/yr), and Black Creek (\$25,869.76, 5.89 kg/yr), offering cost-effectiveness between \$2,798/kg and \$4,392/kg.



Figure 3 Trout River restoration

These projects demonstrate significant progress toward our assigned 4-year cumulative target, while serving as possible templates for high-yielding dam removal and floodplain restoration practices.

Project Pipeline (Design + Development Work)

To ensure a continuous supply of construction-ready projects, NRPC has built an extensive project pipeline with the support of its project partners.

- Final Design Phase: NRPC has awarded \$1,042,187 across 14 final design projects, targeting an additional 212.70 kg/yr in annual phosphorus reduction at an average



Figure 4 Hayes-Mid Missisquoi Riparian Planting

design cost-effectiveness of \$7,416.73/kg. Total projected implementation costs for this final design cohort range from \$4.1 to \$4.3 million. Notable final design efforts include *Trout River Floodplain Restoration in Montgomery Center*, *Black Falls Brook Floodplain Restoration*, and *Marsh Brook & Rock River Tributary Restoration Projects*.

- Preliminary Design Phase: 5 projects totaling \$174,468 in awards are underway, representing 117.16 kg/yr in potential P reduction (\$3,912.48/kg avg) and future estimated construction costs between \$238,000.00 and \$318,000.00. This includes significant stream restoration along *The Branch* (\$57,505 awarded, 92.16 kg/yr target) and *Marsh Brook* (\$42,343 awarded, 16.51 kg/yr target).
- Project Identification & Development: NRPC has invested \$126,097 across 10 distinct project identification and scoping efforts to identify new clean water opportunities.

Outreach & Engagement

NRPC and its watershed partners have conducted targeted outreach across municipalities, landowners, and local conservation organizations throughout Basin 6.

Consistent with DEC's project development process, engagement strategies have generally focused on building trust with private landowners, evaluating site constraints, and securing formal landowner willingness prior to committing design funds. By leveraging local conservation district networks, NRPC as CWSP has fostered new project opportunities in high-priority sub-watersheds such as the Rock River, Marsh Brook, and Black Creek corridors.

LAMOILLE, BASIN 7

NRPC's work as the Clean Water Service Provider for Basin 7 (Lamoille) has likewise combined implementation projects, project-pipeline development, and targeted outreach, as summarized below.



Figure 5 Giddings Brook Planting

Progress Toward Targets (Implementation Projects)

During the current term, NRPC has supported non-regulatory clean water projects across the Lamoille River basin. Total Water Quality Restoration Formula Grant funds awarded for completed or active implementation projects stand at \$356,525.12. These projects were initially estimated to yield 41.55 kg/yr in annual phosphorus reduction, with a post-implementation revised credit calculation of 32.82 kg/yr at an overall average cost-effectiveness rate of \$16,029.33/kg.

Key implementation achievements in Basin 7 include:

- Holmes Meadow Floodplain Restoration: Awarded \$113,856.31 for floodplain reconnection, delivering 13.70 kg/yr in annual phosphorus reduction at a cost-effectiveness of \$8,310.68/kg.
- Rocky Woods Strategic Wood Additions: A major instream/floodplain restoration project awarded \$104,973.06, yielding 2.45 kg/yr in revised post-implementation phosphorus credit (\$42,811/kg).
- Wolcott Town Forest Road and Trail Project: Awarded \$71,781.00 for forestry erosion control, which will be delivering an estimated 3.11 kg/yr in annual reduction (\$23,084.79/kg).
- Cemetery Brook Floodplain Restoration: Awarded \$41,388.00, which is associated with an estimated 11.59 kg/yr in annual reduction at a cost-effectiveness rate of \$3,572.55/kg.



Figure 6 Holmes Meadow Floodplain Restoration



Figure 7 Haynesville Brook Buffer Planting

- Haynesville Brook Buffer Planting at Fishers Folly Drive: Completed in East Hardwick for \$14,526.75, providing 1.74 kg/yr in riparian buffer reduction (\$8,348.71/kg).
- Lake Elmore VT Fish & Wildlife Access Stormwater: Completed stormwater treatment project awarded \$10,000.00, delivering 0.23 kg/yr in P reduction, at an estimated average cost of \$43,478 per kilogram.

These projects demonstrate reasonable progress toward our assigned 4-year cumulative target when considering both fully closed projects and projects that have been implemented or will be implemented.

Project Pipeline (Design + Development Work)

Again with the support of its project partners NRPC has advanced a diverse group of projects through preliminary and final design to position them for future construction.

- Final Design Phase: NRPC has awarded \$119,140 across 4 final design projects,

representing 27 kg/yr in estimated annual phosphorus reduction at an average cost-effectiveness of \$13,869.46/kg. Total projected implementation costs for this cohort range from \$138,000 (Low) to \$153,000 (High).

- Preliminary Design Phase: NRPC has cultivated a substantial pipeline in preliminary design, awarding \$442,985 across 13 projects. These projects represent 345.9 kg/yr in potential annual phosphorus reduction at an exceptional average preliminary cost-effectiveness of \$4,136.85/kg. Projected future construction costs for this preliminary cohort range from \$3.2 to \$3.4 million.
- 2.2. Project Identification & Development: NRPC has invested \$19,250 across 6 scoping and development efforts to identify new non-regulatory project opportunities.

Outreach & Engagement

NRPC and its watershed partners have conducted targeted outreach across municipalities, landowners, and local conservation organizations throughout Basin 7.

Consistent with DEC's project development process, engagement strategies have focused on landowner communication, municipal road and stormwater assessments, and evaluating site constraint. By leveraging local conservation district networks, NRPC as CWSP has fostered new project opportunities in high-priority sub-watersheds such as Cemetery Brook, Centerville Brook, Haynesville Brook, and the upper Lamoille River corridor.

MISSISQUOI AND LAMOILLE BASINS – ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Maintenance & Verification

To guarantee long-term phosphorus reductions, NRPC actively oversees Operations and Maintenance (O&M) activities and tracks practice verification schedules across completed sites.

Project Oversight & Delivery

NRPC maintains judicious oversight over project managers, subgrantees, and—when in its purview—technical consultants. Our goal is that projects remain on schedule and within approved or amended budgets. Local project managers lead day-to-day operations, supported by NRPC's overarching administrative, legal, and compliance oversight.

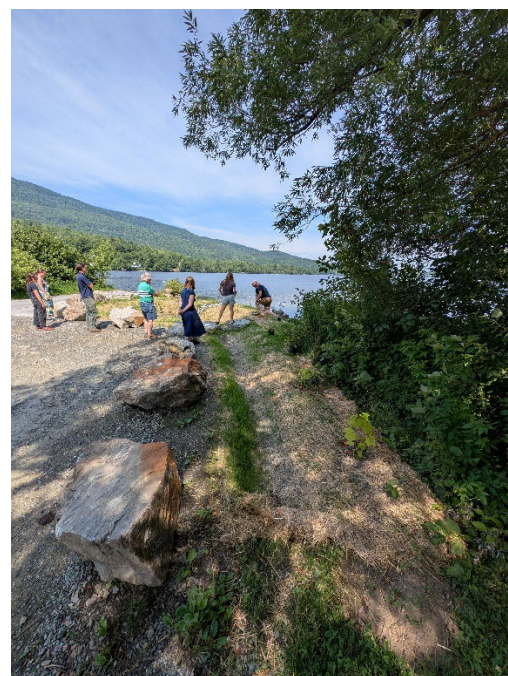


Figure 8 Lake Elmore VT Fish & Wildlife Access Stormwater

Oversight includes regular project tracking thorough invoice and deliverable reviews against state standard milestones. It also includes providing technical assistance with procurement procedures. NRPC also has authority to conduct site visits during construction.

Basin Water Quality Council Coordination

NRPC works with the Basin Water Quality Council (BWQC) in each basin to enable the BWQC's review of formula grant allocations and vote on proposed projects. NRPC handles meeting logistics, prepares application summaries, and ensures full transparency. All council decisions, meeting minutes, and meeting materials such as project evaluations are posted publicly on the NRPC website in compliance with Open Meeting Law and statutory public participation guidelines. Materials are accessible at <https://www.nrpcvt.com/services-programs/water-resources/clean-water-service-provider/>, <https://www.nrpcvt.com/services-programs/water-resources/cwsp-water-quality-councils/>, <https://www.nrpcvt.com/services-programs/water-resources/cwsp-agendas-minutes/>, and related links. Meeting recordings are online at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLWK5KSOPRFsVfmHrNa2wvUEWdHyOxprA4>

Governance & Program Management

NRPC has established strong administrative, fiscal, and governance systems to fulfill all statutory requirements under Act 76 and the CWSP Rule. Fiscal operations feature strict separation of duties, GAAP-compliant accounting internal controls, FDIC-insured account management, and transparent interest tracking devoted back to project funds. NRPC maintains compliance with conflict-of-interest disclosures, procurement policies, subgrant administration standards, records retention schedules, and annual independent financial audits.

Challenges

Operating an evolving regional clean water program in two sprawling basins has presented distinct programmatic and basin-specific challenges:

- Building the governance and operating framework was a major undertaking.
- Developing a strong project pipeline—and helping potential project sponsors move ideas forward—has been a recurring challenge.
- The emphasis on phosphorus reduction and cost effectiveness does not always line up neatly with other watershed priorities.
- The rules for which projects can be funded have been complicated and have continued to evolve.
- The work does not end when a project is funded. There is another layer of work once a project is approved.

Looking Ahead / Improvement Efforts

NRPC is considering and pursuing improvements for the next term that respond directly to the challenges described above: expanding the project pipeline, shortening approval-to-contract timelines, and strengthening post-construction maintenance and verification. Examples include:

- **Pipeline Expansion via 'Block Grant Lite':** Continuing to provide streamlined scoping subgrants to partners to build a larger queue of high-yield projects.
- **Standardized Procurement & Contracting:** Refining subgrant templates and task award procedures to shorten the timeframe between BWQC approval and contract execution.
- **Enhanced O&M Workflows:** Implementing systematic post-construction inspection schedules and multi-year contractor task orders to ensure verified practice longevity.
- **Expanding Partner Scoping Grants:** Utilizing Block Grant Lite allocations to enable partners to cultivate new project opportunities.

“Vermont Corridor East Alburg Bridge Project”

FEDERAL RAILROAD ADMINISTRATION Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program



The Northwest Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), in partnership with the New England Central Railroad (NECR), received a Federal Railroad Administration Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Grant Program project.

NRPC received \$3,950,000 from the FSP program with a \$1,050,000 local match provided by project partners the New England Central Railroad (NECR) and VTrans for a total project cost of \$5,000,000. NECR will provide a 20% cash match of \$1,000,000. VTrans will provide a 1% in-kind match of \$50,000. Funding will cover the completion of an alternatives analysis, the development of required documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and preliminary engineering.

The NRPC is one of eleven commissions serving Vermont municipalities. NRPC is a governmental organization uniquely positioned to coordinate and guide activities between state and local governments. The region is located in Franklin and Grand Isle Counties in northwestern Vermont. NRPC provides leadership and technical expertise to encourage cooperative planning within and among the region's communities and area-wide interests.

The NECR is a New England regional shortline railroad that serves four states. The NECR operates from The Vermont-Canadian border to the Port of New London, CT, serving rural and urban communities in the region. NECR is the host railroad for Amtrak's Vermonter passenger train service that currently operates daily between Washington, DC and St. Albans, VT. Commodities transported include steel, lumber, heating fuels, & automobiles.

This project will look at alternatives to repair or relocate, as well as perform an environmental assessment of the East Alburg trestle. The wooden trestle is over 100 years old and 3,500 feet long. It connects the U.S. with Canada and currently provides freight rail supply chain access to both US domestic and international trade commodities. The State of Vermont, in partnership with other northeast states and Amtrak, has plans to re-establish intercity passenger rail service to Montreal. The NECR mainline on either side of the trestle was upgraded for future passenger train operations with a USDOT TIGER grant (59 MPH). The newly designated Vermont Corridor (VTRANS) would extend service north

to Montreal, with creation of a customs preclearance facility at Montreal's Central Station, add frequencies, and reduce travel time. This route includes the East Alburg Trestle that is currently restricted to 5 MPH for all trains and is frequently subject to unscheduled repair work outages. This project will address the needs to support future passenger rail service and continued rail freight movement. The project is supported by VTRANS and Amtrak.

