



REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

ACRPC

update

april 2003

commission calendar

Month	Date	Time	Event
APRIL	9	7:30 p.m.	ACRPC Full Commission Meeting Kirk Alumni, Middlebury College Agenda: Stream Geomorphology
	11	5:00 p.m.	FEMA F.I.R.E. Grant Applications Due
	15	3:00 p.m.	Economic Committee ACRPC Office
	15	6:30 p.m.	Green Mt. Nat'l Forest Planning Holley Hall, Bristol Agenda: Recreation & Land Adjustment
	16	7:00 p.m.	Transportation Advisory Committee ACRPC Office
	21	7:00 p.m.	Utilities, Facilities & Services Comm. ACRPC Office Agenda: Human Services
	29	All Day	Town Officers' Education Conference Rutland Holiday Inn
	30	10:00 a.m.	Local Emergency Planning Committee ACRPC Office
	30	6:00 p.m.	VT Biodiversity Workshop UVM, Williams Bldg., Rm. 301 Info: Jane Moscovitch 229-4425, x116
	30	7:00 p.m.	ACRPC Executive Board Meeting ACRPC Office
MAY	2		LCBP Local Implementation Grants due
	14	7:30 p.m.	ACRPC Full Commission Meeting Location & Agenda TBA
	19	7:00 p.m.	Utilities, Facilities & Services Comm. ACRPC Office Agenda: Fire, Rescue, Police, Emerg.
	21	6:00 p.m.	VT Biodiversity Workshop Rutland Free Library
	21	7:00 p.m.	Transportation Advisory Committee ACRPC Office
	28	7:00 p.m.	ACRPC Executive Board Meeting ACRPC Office

VELCO Transmission Line

VELCO recently sent out a notice of its intent to file a request for a Certificate of Public Good from the VT Public Service Board to upgrade its transmission line and facilities in the region. VELCO was required to send notice to ACRPC and local planning commissions 45 days in advance of any filing. Those documents are available to the public at the ACRPC office and municipal offices. Additionally, VELCO has published a number of studies relating to their proposed upgrade. Those are available at the ACRPC office and at several libraries around the region.

At its March meeting, ACRPC adopted the following resolution related to the VELCO proposal. "Be it resolved that the ACRPC requests that as part of considering the request for a Certificate of Public Good for any electric transmission lines in Vermont, that the Public Service Board consider the impact of electric and magnetic fields on human health both in the design and in the siting of power lines."

Thank You to Randy Friday

ACRPC would like to thank Randy Friday for his participation and efforts on behalf of Vergennes and the region. Randy is leaving Vergennes for a new job as the village manager of Bellevue, Wisconsin, a community of about 13,000 people 20 miles west of Green Bay. ACRPC wishes Randy the best in his future endeavors.

Reminder: ACRPC will be sending out its annual mailing to municipalities shortly. In that packet, we (1) ask for updated contact information on municipal officials, (2) send appointment forms for both the Commission and for the Transportation Advisory Committee, (3) include a local road map to be reviewed for any changes in the last year, and (4) include your Rapid Response Emergency Plan also to be reviewed for changes. We have tried our best to streamline this annual update process and appreciate your efforts in responding.

Meetings are open to the public.
Minutes are available online at www.acrpc.org.
For further information, contact ACRPC at 388-3141.

GMNF Plan Meetings

The third meeting to discuss the Forest Plan revision for the Green Mountain National Forest will be held on April 15. The meeting topic is developed and undeveloped recreation and land adjustment priorities. All meetings will be from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Holley Hall in Bristol, refreshments will be served. The Local Planning Group's public meetings are currently scheduled to run through August.

For more information please contact Melissa Reichert at (802) 747-6754 or gmflplanrevision@fs.fed.us.

Traffic Counts

ACRPC is looking for towns who would like a traffic count analysis performed in their community this summer. Last summer counts were completed in Goshen, Leicester, Orwell and at railroad crossings region-wide. To request a traffic count, call Garrett Dague at 388-3141.

RSMS Program

Funding is available for the RSMS computer program from VT Local Roads for interested towns through September 30.

The RSMS program can help a town assess the condition of their road network, weigh alternatives, and establish long-term maintenance programs and budgets. This program can assist municipalities who have a completed highway structures inventory to inventory their current roadway surfaces and estimate the cost of repair where needed.

If your town is interested in implementing RSMS, call Garrett Dague at 388-3141.

Town Officer Workshop

The Vermont League of Cities and Towns will hold a free introduction to municipal government for town officials. The workshop is specifically targeted to newly elected officials and will be Thursday, April 10 at Middlebury's Interactive TV site at 6:15 p.m. Visit www.vlct.org or call (800) 649-7915 for more information.

This newsletter is financed through the State of Vermont Dept. of Housing and Community Affairs. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the State of Vermont. All programs of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission are handicapped accessible.

Addison County River Watch Collaborative

To support citizen efforts to improve surface water quality throughout the county, ACRPC has begun to develop a closer relationship with county watershed organizations. One such organization is the Addison County River Watch Collaborative (ACRWC), which formed in 1997 to unite citizen stream monitoring efforts.

The Collaborative consists of the Middlebury River Watershed Partnership, New Haven River Anglers Association, the Lewis Creek Association and Otter Creek River Watch. The Collaborative's vision is for Addison County citizens, businesses and governments to incorporate water resource issues in decision-making processes and work together through a coordinated partnership to improve water quality and support the natural ecological functions of surface waters.

In 2002, ACRWC volunteers monitored 41 sites along Lewis Creek, New Haven River, Little Otter Creek and Mud Creek for E. coli, Total Phosphorous, temperature and pH. The results of annual sampling are reported in the yearly Citizen Water Quality Monitoring Program and local newspapers.

For the last three years, Chris Lacey of Ripton has been coordinating the volunteers, samples and report preparation. Chris recently resigned as coordinator, but will remain an active volunteer. One of Chris' goals during his tenure was to increase data credibility so that ACRWC could report its findings with confidence.

ACRWC met this goal by contracting with professional labs to conduct the sample analysis. ACRWC also developed an EPA-approved Quality Assurance Protection Plan (QAPP) to ensure data collection and analysis meets project requirements for data credibility. State and federal agencies have used the data to guide water quality improvement and restoration projects.

According to Chris, the ACRWC data revealed that the two greatest water related problems in the county are consistently high levels of E. coli and Total Phosphorous. Often E. coli levels are high enough to ex-

ceed the State of Vermont Water Quality Standards for Class B waters, those which are expected to be safe for direct contact by people, including swimming. E. coli, while not harmful itself, can indicate the presence of sewage or manure which contains organisms that can cause reparatory or digestive ailments in people.

On the Middlebury River, the data showed E. coli levels exceeding state standards from Route 7 to the river's mouth. As a result, the state placed that segment of Middlebury River on the State's 303 (d) Impaired Surface Waters List. This led to the formation of the Middlebury River Watershed Partnership, an organization dedicated to improving water quality in the Middlebury River through citizen action.

In addition, the ACRWC has confirmed high levels of Total Phosphorous which can negatively impact water quality and increase algal blooms, plant growth, low dissolved oxygen and fish kills.

The greatest organizational challenge facing ACRWC is deciding how to achieve its vision. For six years the Collaborative has collected water quality data giving it a deep understanding of issues facing the basin. Now ACRWC is wrestling with the idea of broadening their mission to include data collection and pro-actively mitigating the sources of water quality degradation. A more proactive approach means the dedication of more volunteer energy and resources.

The energy issue has been solved in part with the recent hiring Sheila Schwangeflugel, from Ferrisburgh, as Director of ACRWC. Sheila brings a wealth of enthusiasm and skills to the Collaborative. In a recent conversation she stated, "I look forward to working with the organization's volunteers, members, and community partners and to participating in charting the sustainable future of ACRWC. Like many in Addison County, the watersheds that make up the Otter Creek Basin play a significant role in my family's daily experience."