



# ACRPC

*update*

February 2009

## ACRPC Energy Committee Program: Community Hydro Power

Thursday, February 26, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Ben Gordesky, founder of Earthbound Services, LLC will present a program on Community-scale Hydro Power Projects - their mechanics, design, scale, costs, benefits, environmental impact, feasibility, and regulatory requirements. For more information, see his website: [www.earthboundservices.com](http://www.earthboundservices.com), or contact Elizabeth Golden at 388-3141 or [egolden@sover.net](mailto:egolden@sover.net).

## Legislative Breakfasts

The Bridport Grange #303 has announced their schedule of this year's Legislative Breakfasts, and welcomes everyone to attend to spend some quality time with your legislators. This is your opportunity to learn what is going on in Montpelier first hand, and express your concerns and your hopes for Vermont's future to your elected representatives. The Legislative Breakfasts are a long time tradition in Vermont, and Addison County is unique in the frequency of these informal meetings of legislators with their constituents.

Beginning with the first Legislative Breakfast on Monday, February 2, 2009 at the American Legion in Middlebury, the Bridport Grange, with assistance from the Addison County Farm Bureau, will offer twelve gatherings, also in Bristol, Shoreham, Weybridge, Whiting, Orwell and Vergennes. The Breakfasts Programs typically run from 7:30-8:45 a.m., with an optional breakfast served at 7:00 for a reasonable cost. The exception is the Agricultural Lunch at the Bridport Community Hall on Monday, March 16, from 12:00 noon-1:45 p.m. The format of each event includes a Legislative Report from the participating Legislators, followed by a question and answer period. Questions are limited to two minutes each, and the Legislators have three minutes to respond.

The Grange is hoping to encourage a broad cross-section of the County's citizens to participate in the Breakfasts, to represent their unique perspectives of what Vermont needs and what Legislators can do for them. The early schedule of 7:30 a.m. and variety of locations around the county is offered to permit working people to come on over on their way to work, to make their concerns known and ask about issues that are utmost on their minds. Monday morning was selected because it is the only day the Legislators have off from their duties in Montpelier. There is a "no cancellation" policy, so the Legislative Breakfasts are held regardless of the weather.

A special event is planned for Monday, March 2 – the Governor's Breakfast - at the American Legion in Middlebury. The final Legislative Breakfast will be held at the Bridport Grange Hall after the Legislative Session is adjourned for the year. (Date and time TBA.)

## Commission Calendar

February	2	7 am	Legislative Breakfast, Middlebury Legion
	4	6:30	Executive Board
	6	12:00	Energy Committee
	9	7 am	Legislative Breakfast, Bristol Legion
	11	7:30	Full Commission
	12	9-12	Western Corridor Meeting
	16	7 am	Legislative Breakfast, Shoreham CC
	18	7:00	TAC
	19	7:00	ACSWMD
	23	7 am	Legislative Breakfast, Weybridge CC
	24	7:00	Natural Resources Committee
March	25	6:30	Executive Board - Strategic Planning Session for Survey Respondents
	26	7:00	Community Hydro Power Program
	2	7 am	Governor's Legislative Breakfast, Middlebury American Legion
	6	12:00	Energy Committee
	9	7 am	Legislative Breakfast, Whiting Town Hall
	11	7:30	Full Commission
	12	9-12	Western Corridor Meeting
	16	12:00	Legislative Agricultural Lunch, Bridport Community Hall
	18	7:00	TAC
	19	7:00	ACSWMD
	23	7 am	Legislative Breakfast, Vergennes Legion
25	6:30	Executive Board	
26	7:00	Energy Program: Photovoltaics	
30	7 am	Legislative Breakfast, Bristol Legion	

Meetings are open to the public and unless otherwise noted held at ACRPC. Selected minutes are available online at [www.acrpc.org](http://www.acrpc.org). For further info, contact 388-3141.

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# News & Events

## **Municipal Grant Awards FY2009**

Addison County has received four MPGs for FY2009, for a total of \$35,225:

Town of Bristol: Zoning and/or Subdivision Bylaw Update -- \$13,125: Implementation of a newly completed Town Plan including complete review of all existing zoning districts, update of zoning bylaws, creation of new maps, and consideration of subdivision regulations, all with as much public input as possible.

Town of New Haven: Municipal Plan Update -- \$6,600: To complete the Town Plan Update that was partially funded by a previous grant.

Town of Orwell: Zoning and/or Subdivision Bylaw Update -- \$7,500: The project reviews and revises the Land Use Regulations, encompassing both zoning and subdivision regulations, in preparation for Village Center Designation.

Town of Shoreham: Municipal Plan Update -- \$8,000 Grant fund will support the Town Plan update.

Through a competitive process, 40 Vermont towns across the state were awarded funds for a diverse collection of planning projects. The vast majority of the projects this year are traditional planning activities such as updating town plans, maps and zoning bylaws. The Department of Housing and Community Affairs is part of the Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development. For more information please visit: <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/MPG.htm>

## **Addison County Green Energy Expo Saturday, March 21, 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Middlebury Union High School Admission \$2 adults/\$1 children/\$5 families**

The second annual Addison County Green Energy Expo will take place at Middlebury Union High School offering an exhibition and workshops where beginners and experts alike can visit with local companies with renewable energy, green building and efficiency products and services. Participants will take away many of the tools and resources needed to move toward a clean and green energy future. If you are a homeowner, business, farmer or forestland owner - make plans now to join us at Middlebury Union High School on March 21, 2009. # Enjoy local food. Lots of door prizes!

Visit the website for details on sponsoring, exhibiting, and attending the Green Energy Expo: [www.greenenergyexpo.biz/](http://www.greenenergyexpo.biz/)

## **Tour Bond Island in Cornwall Sunday, February 22 10:00-12:30**

Meet at Cornwall Town Hall at 10:00 a.m. to join Rose Paul on a magical snowshoe trek through high and low swamp at Bond Island. Witness unusual pairings such a huckleberry and black spruce, and if weather allows, search for tracks in the snow. Bond Island was recently protected by The Nature Conservancy. Tour is free and open to the public. Directions to TNC events can be found at : [www.nature.org/vermont/events](http://www.nature.org/vermont/events) or by calling 802-229-4425 ext 105.

## **Addison County Regional Planning Commission Strategic Planning Session February 25 at 6:30 p.m.**

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission is currently re-evaluating its long-term Strategic Planning goals. In an attempt to serve our region and regional clients better, we developed a brief survey to help inform the plan we create and actions we take. Thank you to everyone who completed our survey. We are now analyzing and compiling the data from the survey. Everyone who completed our survey is invited to meet with us on Wednesday, February 25 at 6:30 p.m. for an evening meeting with our Executive Board (with a catered dinner) to help us incorporate the data collected into a Strategic Plan that ACRPC can adopt at its Annual Meeting in May and implement through our Workplan. If you plan to attend, please contact Elizabeth Golden at 388-3141 or [egolden@sover.net](mailto:egolden@sover.net), so that we may make arrangements for seating and your dinner. Thank you all for taking the time to help us with our work. We look forward to hearing more of your thoughts and ideas on February 25.

## **VBSR 2009 Legislative Reception Thursday, February 12, 5-7 p.m. Main Street Grill, Montpelier**

Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility will be meeting with legislators at the Main Street Grille, 118 Main Street, Montpelier, to support sustainable economic development policy that promotes Vermont's people and values; budget decisions with a long-term investment strategy that supports people, communities and critical infrastructure; accessible and affordable health care for all; safe and affordable future energy supply; and investment in public transportation. For more information, see their website: [www.vbsr.org](http://www.vbsr.org)

# News & Events

## Transportation Study Underway in the Western Corridor

Addison Regional Planning Commission, in conjunction with The Vermont Agency of Transportation, the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization (CCMPO), and the remaining four Regional Planning Commissions (RPC's) that make up the state's western corridor, are partnering in an effort to develop a Transportation Management Plan for western Vermont, from the Massachusetts state line to the Canadian border. The Plan will determine the most effective ways to improve the transportation system in western Vermont over the next 20 years, and provide us with a blueprint for wisely investing resources to enhance and balance our transportation systems in the years ahead.

The goal of the study is to optimize the use of our existing transportation systems and develop the necessary connections between rail, highway and public transportation so they form a seamless web of options for both passengers and freight. In addition, the Plan will also explore ways to coordinate land use and transportation planning, encourage collaboration and connectivity among regions, promote innovative, fiscally sound financing and investment solutions with minimum impacts to the human and natural environment.

The study goals are as follows: (1) to maximize highway system efficiencies and increase safety along Vermont's Western Corridor, (2) improve freight movements along the corridor, (3) increase public transportation usage and enhance regional connectivity for passenger travel, (4) support corridor investments that promote economic vitality in the region, and (5) preserve the quality of life of communities along the corridor.

Study work began approximately one year ago. During the spring and summer of 2008, the Regional Planning Commissions and the CCMPO worked with the consultant team performing the study to develop a detailed report on the existing conditions along the corridor. Did you know that over 47 million tons of freight either come into, out of, through, or moved within the Vermont borders in 2006...or that 86% of this freight was moved by truck while 13% was moved by railroads? This is significant because the top five commodity groups by tonnage are gravel, logs (and other rough woods), non-metallic minerals, food, and coal. When you consider freight value, electronics, food, machinery, and other mixed freight dominate. This demonstrates how the importance of rail cannot be underestimated. It can provide a comparatively inexpensive mode of transportation for heavy bulk freight while simultaneously removing significant amounts of heavy freight trucking from our road system.

In addition to the existing conditions report development, four focus groups made up of local business leaders, organizations, and the general public were brought together to help identify issues

and concerns that should be considered as the study progressed. Some of the common themes voiced expressed the need for: (1) more effective communication and coordination at all levels of government to improve mobility for people and goods and promote economic vitality in the region, (2) improved maintenance and upgrade of the existing transportation infrastructure, (3) more streamlined approval and permitting processes, (4) an improved broad-based better public understanding of the transportation network and its importance to the local and state economies, and (5) improved mobility involving those modes of transportation which best allow residents to remain integrated into community life. There were many other issues identified that are not listed here and these can be accessed at the website below.

Since the fall of 2008, the study work has been focused on developing projections of future conditions along the corridor. This work will be completed over the next few months. At that point, ACRPC will sponsor a public meeting(s) to review work done to review and comment on the draft documents and recommendations that have been developed. The final study documents will be completed sometime around mid-summer. For further information and to view work completed to date, visit the website [www.vtwesterncorridor.org](http://www.vtwesterncorridor.org) This has been set up for the public to access information and to provide comments on-line. For further information, you can also contact Richard Kehne, ACRPC Senior Transportation Planner at 802-388-3141 or [rkehne@sover.net](mailto:rkehne@sover.net).

## VSJF Biofuel Grants

The Vermont Sustainable Jobs (VSJF) has available \$155,000 through three competitive rounds of grantmaking for biofuels related on-farm demonstrations, education, research and development projects.

1. Oilseed Crop Research and Development: \$70,000 in funding for 3 to 4 projects that will conduct oilseed crop feedstock research and development that lead to increased acreage of oilseed crops to be processed in-state for fuel for Vermont's farms and communities, while generating accurate data that can be used to support the feasibility of these enterprises. Proposal deadline February 13.
2. On-Farm Biodiesel Facility: \$65,000 Funding for the development of an on-farm biodiesel facility which serves the needs of the host farm, other farms, and/or the surrounding community through the production of biodiesel and livestock meal from oilseed crops such as canola, sunflower, soy and camelina. Facility should be able to produce a minimum of 50,000 gallons of biodiesel per year. One project will be funded. Proposal deadline February 27.
3. Biomass-to-Biofuels Course Development: \$20,000. Proposal deadline March 13.

For more information go to: [http://www.vsjf.org/grant\\_seekers/current\\_grants.biofuels.shtml](http://www.vsjf.org/grant_seekers/current_grants.biofuels.shtml)

# Grants

## Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FP&R) has available approximately \$100,000 in grants from the 2009 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). LWCF grants provide up to 50 percent matching assistance to the state and local governments.

Eligible applicants include cities, towns, villages, school districts, fire districts and inter-municipal districts. Since its inception in 1965, the LWCF has provided communities and state agencies with more than \$28 million for the acquisition, conservation and development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. More than 66,000 acres of outdoor recreation land have been acquired and more than 500 recreation projects have been developed or restored. All lands acquired with LWCF funds are held in perpetuity for recreational use.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Program promotes parks and open spaces and provides outdoor recreation opportunities. Funds are derived from federal recreation fees, Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) revenues from leasing oil and gas sites in coastal waters, federal surplus real property sales, and a portion of federal motorboat fuel taxes. Funds are distributed by the Department of the Interior National Park Service (NPS). In Vermont, LWCF is administered by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation.

The deadline for 2009 applications is noon, Friday, February 27, 2009. For individualized technical assistance with an application or for further information, contact Pat Peterson, Administrator, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation at 802-241-3653. Pat encourages any prospective applicant to contact her for a tutorial session via telephone for an overview of the 2009 grant application cycle and important considerations for potential applicants, as well as information on climate change issues facing Vermont and how communities can best protect LWCF investments into the future.

## Municipal Education Grants

The Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) is offering the Municipal Education Grant (MEG) program again this year, and we encourage municipal officials to take advantage of this no cost educational opportunity! Municipalities can submit grant applications before May 15, 2009 to bring MAC staff to their offices for a free on-site training. You may view descriptions of VLCT's Land Use Workshops at: [http://www.vlct.org/d/mac/VLCT\\_MEG\\_Trifold08.pdf](http://www.vlct.org/d/mac/VLCT_MEG_Trifold08.pdf) as well as fill out a MEG application at: <http://www.dhca.state.vt.us/Planning/MEGApplicationPackage.pdf> To schedule a land use training contact Abby Friedman, MAC Director at 800-649-7915 or [afriedman@vlct.org](mailto:afriedman@vlct.org). Apply now as funding may run out before the May 15, 2009 deadline.

## CEDF Grant

The Department of Public Service is now accepting proposals for the CEDF Grant program, which funds renewable energy and combined heat and power technologies that generate electricity and are grid-connected. The Department expects to award \$2 million in funding for projects in the following categories: Pre-Project Financial Assistance, Small-Scale Systems, Large-Scale Systems, and Special Demonstration Projects. There is a maximum award of \$100,000 for Pre-Project Financial Assistance, \$60,000 for Small-Scale Systems, and \$250,000 for all other projects. The January 2009 Request for Proposals is available at: [http://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy/ee\\_cleanenergyfund.html](http://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy/ee_cleanenergyfund.html) Proposals are due on Friday, February 27, 2009. Also available are low-interest loans for renewable electric projects including wind, solar, hydro, farm methane, and combined heat and power systems. The loan interest rate is 2%, and loans may be used to fund up to 90% of an eligible project's cost, for amounts between \$50,000 and \$1,000,000. Individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and municipalities may apply.

The CEDF is also providing Municipal Technical Assistance grants. This funding is designed to help municipalities, public schools, and Vermont State colleges investigate the installation of a wide variety of renewable energy generation technologies and combined heat and power systems. The maximum grant award is \$5,000, and funds can be used to pay for up to 90% of a project's cost; the grantee must match 10% of the project's cost in cash. Funding is also available through the Vermont Small-Scale Renewable Energy Incentive Program. This Program provides incentive payments to individuals, businesses, farms, schools, and municipalities for a portion of the cost of installing small-scale wind, and hydropower systems. The CEDF will provide nearly \$1.5 million over the next two years for these incentives. Additional information on the Vermont Small-Scale Renewable Energy Incentive Program is available at: [www.rerc-vt.org/incentives](http://www.rerc-vt.org/incentives)

Additional information on the CEDF, including the current grant solicitation, loan application, and municipal technical assistance application, is available in the on the DPS website at: [http://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy/ee\\_cleanenergyfund.html](http://publicservice.vermont.gov/energy/ee_cleanenergyfund.html) or you may contact Anne Margolis, Clean Energy Development Fund Manager, VT Dept. of Public Service at 802-828-4017, 802-828-2342, or [anne.margolis@state.vt.us](mailto:anne.margolis@state.vt.us).

## Safe Routes to School Funds

The Vermont Agency of Transportation's SRTS Program is soliciting applications for planning and program development funding, which results in greater numbers of students who walk and bike to school. Applications due March 13. Go to: [www.aot.state.vt.us](http://www.aot.state.vt.us) or contact Aimee Pope at 802-828-5799 or [aimee.pope@state.vt.us](mailto:aimee.pope@state.vt.us).