

News & Events

Emergency Plan Reviews

The Addison County Emergency Planning Committee, ACRPC, and Vermont's Homeland Security Unit are planning a series of Emergency Plan Reviews in the upcoming months. The first meeting will be held in the City of Vergennes in mid-February. Planners are creating a scenario that will allow communities to review and test their existing plans. Groups of communities will be invited to spend an evening reviewing their plans, working through any issues that may come up and to see how the sharing of resources during a disaster may be accomplished. Five of these regional reviews are planned for the coming months. Once every community in the region has had a chance to attend their review session, plans can be improved in anticipation of a second series of tabletop exercises to be held this fall, funded by a grant from Vermont Emergency Management.

In addition to these locally generated exercises, Middlebury has been asked to represent Public Safety District C in exercising the region's Commodity Points of Distribution (C-POD) plans. C-PODs are locations which have been identified to serve as depots for FEMA-supplied food and water. Representatives from Addison County dominated the attendees at a managers training session and are expected to perform well at a tabletop exercise scheduled for January 24th in Rutland. A live drill will be held in late May. Look for invitations for all these events to come out in the near future, or contact Tim Bouton at ACRPC offices.

Vermont Spatial Data Partnership Roundtable Meetings

The VT Spatial Data Partnership has scheduled a Roundtable meeting for January 7, from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at Vermont Technical College in Randolph. Informal conferences called "Roundtables" are held twice a year (also in July) and are comprised of several concurrent sessions each hour, consisting of presentations by spatial data specialists and discussions about issues relevant to the GIS community. Roundtables provide VSDP members and others an opportunity to network and learn from one another.

The cost for participation is \$35. Please contact Leslie Pelch at 802-882-3002 or lesliep@vcgi.org for more information.

Biodiversity Workshop for Envirothon Coaches

February 12, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Vermont Technical College Old Dorm Lounge

The VT Envirothon Planning Committee invites all Envirothon Coaches and potential coaches to a free day of learning about Biodiversity in preparation for the Vermont Envirothon's 2009 environmental issue and community project. Instruction includes how to use NEWILD software, developed by the U.S. Forest Service to help landowners better manage their land for wildlife. Every year high-school-aged Envirothon teams study learning objectives that focus on soils, forests, water environment, and wildlife. Then each year, the North American Envirothon chooses an environmental issue to challenge students in learning about their natural world. This year, the environmental issue—biodiversity—will challenge participating students in a real-world way. They will make recommendations for managing a local parcel of land for its biodiversity and present these to a panel of judges at the Vermont Envirothon in May.

Who should attend this free workshop:

- Coaches (doesn't have to be a teacher) interested in the subject of biodiversity who want additional information. Teachers can earn up to ½ credit toward recertification.
- Potential coaches interested in learning more about the Vermont Envirothon. A portion of the workshop will cover what the Envirothon is and how to get involved.
- Any organization, agency, youth group, or church who thinks they or their organization might want to consider working with a team of five high-school-aged youth to compete in the Vermont Envirothon.

Bring a lunch and a PC laptop if you have one. Everyone attending will receive a CD with NEWILD that they can take back to their classroom or nature center.

Please RSVP to Kathleen Diehl at 802-747-6702, kdiehl@fs.fed.gov or Carrie Riker at 802-888-9218 X17, carrie.riker@vt.nacdnet.net.

For more information on the Envirothon, visit www.envirothon.org.

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Census 2010 is coming to Vermont!

Census 2010 will be a headcount of the entire nation, providing basic population and housing counts and characteristics, forming the basis for most data produced in the United States. The basic methodology is that surveys will go out to Housing Units, Housholders will open the survey and fill it out, and Census workers will follow up with phone calls, visits and questionnaire assistance for unreturned surveys. Enumerations and follow up will be conducted by Census Block, and data for Blocks are built up into other geographies, such as Town or City, County and State. This data is used for Federal apportionment of funds, so it is critical that the data be accurate and that everyone be counted.

Prior to the Census process, the US Census Bureau must update Census addresses with the assistance of local officials, manage the participant statistical areas program, conduct boundary and annexation surveys, and open Census offices. Town Clerks will be asked to verify municipal boundaries and Town Officials will be asked to provide data on each building in their community.

The US Census Bureau has already begun hiring Partnership Specialists and Regional Technicians. This is an opportunity for employment for people in your community. Census employees work out of their home or as clerks in the Burlington or Williston offices. The position is 20-30 hours per week, with a one to two year term, with both weekend and evening hours required. The applicant must be 18 years or older, possess a car and valid driver's license, be a U.S. citizen, and pass a written test and background check. For job postings, visit <http://www.usajobs.gov>. Search 'Partnership' or 'Census Technician' in 'Boston'. Or call 1-877-355-6188.

For more information on the US Census, contact:
Vermont State Data Center - <http://crs.uvm.edu.census>
Boston Regional Census Office - www.census.gov/robos/www
Census 2010 Website - www.census.gov/2010census

Vermont Women's Fund Grants

With approximately \$125,000 available for grant awards in 2009, the Vermont Women's fund (VWF) is seeking grant proposals from non-profits and related organizations for programs serving Vermont women and girls. Grants are made from a \$2.5 million endowment built by more than 1,000 Vermonters. These grants help women and girls become economically self-sufficient, strengthen their personal and community leadership skills, establish safe relationships, and lead healthy lives. Since 1998, VWF has awarded \$925,000 to 119 organizations working to ensure that all women and girls realize their potential and to build strong, vibrant communities throughout Vermont.

The deadline for submissions is January 12, with funding decisions announced at the beginning of May, 2009. Visit www.vermontwomensfund.org for details and information on funding criteria and guidelines, as well as application materials.

Livable Communities Awards

Four companies have won the 2008 Livable Communities Awards, cosponsored by AARP and the National Association of Home Builders, for creating homes that are safe, accessible and easy to live in. One of the awards went to HallKeen, the Braverman Company and New Boston Fund, for developing a mixed-use complex in Winooski, Vermont. For photos, videoclips and more information, visit www.aarp.org/homedesign.

DOE Recognition of High-Performance Green Buildings

DOE's Building Technologies Program is requesting submissions from groups seeking to be formally recognized as members of the High-Performance Green Building Partnership Consortia. Groups must meet specific qualifications and promote high-performance green buildings and net-zero energy commercial buildings. For more information visit www1.eere.energy.gov/buildings/highperformance/.

Grants

USDA Rural Development Community Facility Program Loans and Grants

Applications are now being accepted for loans, grants and loan/grant combinations to construct, improve or purchase facilities and/or equipment that provide essential services to a rural community. Examples include public safety, health care, cultural & educational resources, and public buildings.

Eligibility: Rural communities and non-profit organizations that serve communities with a population of 20,000 or less. Grants are based on the need of the project and the median household income of the community. See grant eligible communities: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt/vtnhcfgranteligibility.htm> .

Application deadlines:

Grants and Loan/Grant Combos: January 20, 2009

Loans (long term, low interest/fixed rate): Accepted anytime!

Special Disaster Funding may be available if you apply now. The project does not have to be related to the disaster.

Contact Susan Poulin at 802-828-6032 or Susan.Poulin@vt.usda.gov

For detailed Program information go to: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rhs/cf/cp.htm> .

Vermont Community Climate Change Grant Program

The Agency of Natural Resources administers a new grant program which will make \$360,000 available to local communities for improving energy efficiency, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and increasing the use of clean, renewable resources. The funding for this initiative comes from the first installment of Vermont's \$1.8 million, five-year settlement payout against American Electric Power Corp., the nation's largest operator of coal-fired power plants. Up to \$12,000 will be awarded to each town project, and local communities will be required to provide a 10 percent match. Application deadline: January 15, 2009 (may be extended).

For more information and to download an application, visit the agency website at: <http://www.anr.state.vt.us/air/Planning/hm/ClimateChange.htm> or call 802-241-3840, or toll free in Vermont 888-520-4879.

USDA Rural Development Rural Business Enterprise Grant

Vermont anticipates a statewide allocation of approximately \$176,000 for Fiscal 2009 and is now inviting applications to compete for funding for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant. Funded activities must provide technical assistance, loan funds, or construct a facility (owned and operated by the applicant) that will benefit a small business or businesses (less than 50 employees and less than \$1 million in gross profit). Application packages can be found on-line at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/vt/vtnbrbegapplications.htm> . To learn more about the program, visit <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rbs/busp/rbeg.htm> . Addison County applicants should call Sherry Paige in Montpelier at 802-828-6034 or contact her at sherry.paige@vt.usda.gov to pre-screen your project, which is highly recommended. Application deadline: March 2.

A Rural Business Enterprise Grant was awarded for FY 2008 to UVM for an Artisan Cheese Institute to provide technical assistance to 25 small scale Vermont cheese makers to develop individual protocols for Risk Reduction Management, including some cheese makers in Addison County.

Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund

In 2008, the VSJF celebrated 10 years of grant making to entrepreneurs and organizations in Vermont's natural resource and green economy markets. Over the last 10 years, grantees used \$2.7 million in VSJF grants to leverage an additional \$11.8 million to implement their projects, test their ideas, and assemble the building blocks of a green economy.

In addition, the VSJF's Peer to Peer Collaborative program has become even more relevant given Vermont's pressing economic issues and emerging private sector opportunities. Rising energy costs, energy security, climate change, food safety, sustainable businesses and communities are issues that VSJF is making progress on with the help of its grantees and partners - through its market building strategies.

In 2009, VSJF is looking ahead to the creation of a VSJF risk capital fund, accelerating the market for locally grown, locally used biofuels and livestock feed through grant making and technical assistance, helping growing companies through the Peer to Peer Collaborative, and harnessing the power of the Vermont brand for Vermont grown, sustainably produced wood products. See www.vsjf.org for information.