



# ACRPC

*update*

July 2008

## Workshop: Solar Hot Water and Space Heating July 24

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission, Energy Committee will be presenting a program on Solar Hot Water and Space Heating on Thursday, July 24 from 7:00 - 9:00 pm at their offices at 14 Seminary Street in Middlebury.

The program will be a thorough examination of the options available for heating a home or small business with solar technology, including solar hot water heaters. This free public program is one in a series of programs on Sustainable Energy Options offered by the ACRPC Energy Committee. For more information on the Committee's activities and future programs, contact Elizabeth Pidgeon at 388-3141.

## Is Flooding Increasing?

June was a month of flashy flooding in our region. It is not "unheard of" or "beyond belief" or "could not be predicted" flooding, but flooding which can be expected from time to time, and has occurred a number of times in the last 15 years (which means most property owners were probably here and can remember it).



*Dugway Road, Ripton, June 16, 2008*

Flooding is increasing, and for a number of reasons: First, changes in rainfall patterns are occurring. It makes no difference if you think it is caused by global warming or something else. The reality is that while average yearly rainfall may remain fairly constant, rain occurs through less frequent, but more intense storms during the year. Reports are that 6 to 8 inches of rain fell in Ripton in just a few hours on June 14th, which overwhelmed the capacity of many culverts and left several roads impassable. Many basements in downtown Rutland were under several feet of water following the same storm.

Secondly, as development changes watersheds by converting farm land and forests to roof tops and big box parking lots, less water soaks in and more rain runs off into our streams and rivers. This increases the amount of water from each rainfall event in our streams and thus increases the flood heights.

Lastly, and of great importance is that we often manage development to be elevated to yesterday's flood, not tomorrow's flood. Because of the changing factors just noted above, flood heights will increase. When a new flood map is produced, it will likely show higher flood levels. This is reality and it is important communities use the newer data and that property owners know their true risk and build accordingly. Further, while many people seem to think it only

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## Commission Calendar

July	9	7:30	Full Commission Meeting
	11	12:00	Energy Committee
	11-12		French Heritage Days Vergennes <a href="http://www.frenchheritageday.com">www.frenchheritageday.com</a>
	16	7:00	Transportation Advisory Committee
	22	7:00	Natural Resources Committee
	23	6:00	Executive Committee
	24	7:00	Energy Workshop: Solar Hot Water
August	1	12:00	Energy Committee
	20	7:00	Transportation Advisory Committee
	26	7:00	Natural Resources Committee

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 information, contact ACRPC at 388-3141

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# News & Events

## **Flooding continued:**

can flood in that 100 year floodplain shown on the map, there is flood risk above and beyond that relatively common and small floodplain. You may be above the 100 year flood level, but may not be safe from a larger storm, as discussed above. Every property is subject to a variable risk of flooding, it just depends on how big the flood must be to have an impact. Portions of a property may have greater or lesser risk, depending on the level above the stream.

## **What can you do to protect your life and property?**

1. Buy flood insurance. Anyone, anywhere, can buy flood insurance as long as their community has joined and complies with the minimal requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). A primary responsibility of your community is public safety, and flood safety is no different than fire or police safety. Insist your community leaders join and comply with the NFIP.

2. If you live in or anywhere near water, know your flood risk. If your property may be flooded, know how to evacuate you and your family---homes and possessions can be replaced, but life is precious and cannot.

3. Avoid building in floodplains, the high risk flood areas. Develop wisely. Communities have land that is not at high risk of flooding.

4. Don't build in a way that pushes flood water on other people's property. It is not a good neighbor policy and may create liability for you.

5. Do not drive through flood water: this causes the most deaths from floods. Six to 12 inches of water can float any vehicle and moving water will carry away people and vehicles.

After the flood water recedes, communities and prop-



*Dugway Road, Ripton, June 16, 2008*

erty owners will consider what they can do to reduce the loss of property or life from the next flood. The most effective solution is to move from or avoid the flood risk areas. The next best option is to elevate structures above expected (future) flood levels. This not only protects the structure, but makes flood insurance cheaper. Many communities and property owners have done some of these things and more can do them. Remember, the federal government cannot prevent flooding or make us whole after a flood. Only by accepting personal and community responsibility will we reduce the adverse impacts of flooding.

*This article was adapted from an editorial written by Larry Larson, Executive Director of the Association of State Floodplain Managers ([www.floods.org](http://www.floods.org)), June 12, 2008.*

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## **FEMA & SBA Damage Assessments in Addison and Rutland County**

Vermont residents and businesses affected by heavy rains and flooding that occurred on June 14-17 in Rutland, Addison, Bennington, and Windsor Counties in Vermont and Washington County in New York can apply for low-interest disaster loans from the U.S. Small Business Administration. Loans of up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, and homeowners and renters are eligible for loans up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property. A Disaster Loan Outreach Center has been established to issue loan applications, answer questions about the disaster loan program, explain the application process and help individuals complete their application at Rutland City Hall. The center will be open Tuesday, July 1–Thursday, July 3 and Monday, July 7–Thursday July

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# News & Events

## **FEMA & SBA Damage Assessments cont.**

10 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m

As of June 24, FEMA in conjunction with VTrans had completed most of its work did not find sufficient damage to meet the \$1-million minimum to qualify the state for a disaster declaration. Initial estimates show that Addison and Franklin Counties would qualify for a declaration, but Rutland County would fall short by about \$60,000. FEMA is looking at additional damage with VTRANS to uncover more public infrastructure damage that can be counted toward the state total. State agencies are also encouraged to document ALL costs associated with the fallout from the storm – including damage, relocation costs, freezing of records, and overtime.

All towns that had any storm damage should report that damage as soon as possible. Individuals with damage that may qualify are encouraged to report the damage to their local town government. For more information, contact Tim Bouton at [tbouton@sover.net](mailto:tbouton@sover.net).

## **Food, Fuel, and the Future of Farming: A Conference on Sustainable Agriculture July 24 & 25**

Vermont Law School has invited a number of national speakers on the topics of national farm policy, industrial agriculture, and biofuels to participate in this two day conference. The event will feature keynote speaker Anna Lappé, best-selling author of *Hope's Edge: The Next Diet for a Small Planet* and *Grub: Ideas for an Urban Organic Kitchen*. She also leads the Small Planet Institute. The conference will feature panels on Industrial Animal Agriculture, Farm Policy, Agriculture's Relationship to Climate Change, and Sustainable Agriculture in Vermont. This is also an opportunity to highlight the sustainable models provided by Vermont's farm and food policy leaders. Includes a tour of a local farm, local and organic lunches, and a special reception. The conference is being held at Vermont Law School's Chase Community Center, South Royalton, Vermont. For additional information contact Peg Elmer at 802-831-1405.

## **Free Crisis & Emergency Risk Communication Seminar**

The Vermont Department of Health is hosting a free 1-day seminar, Crisis & Emergency Risk Communication. The workshop will help you communicate more effectively dur-

ing emergencies and better serve the needs of your community in the event of pandemic flu. The seminar will be conducted by M.E. Franowicz of Clarion Communication, a leader in delivering innovative and dynamic educational programs to public health, health care and community leaders.

The seminar is being offered at locations around the state in July. Please choose the date/location of your choice and go to the website for more detail and to register online. Note: class size is limited and we expect this course to fill quickly. Register now to guarantee your space! For additional information, contact Nancy Erickson, Communication Director, VT Department of Health at 802-863-7281 or at [nericks@vdh.state.vt.us](mailto:nericks@vdh.state.vt.us)

July 15 - Burlington: [www.regonline.com/burlingtoncerc1](http://www.regonline.com/burlingtoncerc1)  
July 16 - Newport: [www.regonline.com/newportcerc](http://www.regonline.com/newportcerc)  
July 17 - Burlington: [www.regonline.com/burlingtoncerc2](http://www.regonline.com/burlingtoncerc2)  
July 18 - Brattleboro: [www.regonline.com/brattleborocerc](http://www.regonline.com/brattleborocerc)  
July 22 - Montpelier: [www.regonline.com/montpeliercerc](http://www.regonline.com/montpeliercerc)  
July 23 - Rutland: [www.regonline.com/rutlandcerc](http://www.regonline.com/rutlandcerc)  
July 24 - Bennington: [www.regonline.com/benningtoncerc](http://www.regonline.com/benningtoncerc)

## **Smartgrowth Vermont Seeking Nominations for Arthur Gibb Award**

In honor of Arthur Gibbs legacy of commitment to safeguarding Vermont's values and unique landscape, Smart Growth Vermont will honor an individual whose leadership, vision and courage has brought about positive and lasting change in the way their community or our state integrates growth and conservation. During his public service to Vermont, Arthur Gibb's success and reputation were attributable to his strong character and personal convictions. The Arthur Gibb Award will be presented to a Vermont resident who, in service to their community and/or state, shares these characteristics, while working to implement smart growth principles.

To download a nomination form and learn more, visit [www.smartgrowthvermont.org](http://www.smartgrowthvermont.org). Or contact Jason Van Driesche, Program Director, at 802-864-6310 or at [jason@smartgrowthvermont.org](mailto:jason@smartgrowthvermont.org). All entries must be postmarked by July 15, 2008.

# News & Events

## Vermont Barn Census



*Do you recognize this Vermont Barn?*

How many barns are there in Vermont? What kind of condition are they in? Are we losing significant numbers each year? What can be done to preserve these icons of our history and landscape? The goal of the Vermont Barn Census is to carry out, for the first time, a statewide census of Vermont's barns that will lay the foundation for further efforts to preserve them.

The project will recruit volunteers in all of Vermont's 251 towns to identify barns and other agricultural outbuildings in their communities. The Barn Census will occur mainly over several highly publicized weekends in the summer and fall of 2008 and spring and fall of 2009. Students from elementary to high school will be welcomed to participate. Volunteers will take a photo and some notes about barn features, history, use and condition in the field, and then submit the data over the web.

The first Barn Census weekend will be August 2-3, 2008. Sign up for the Barn Census e-mail list and check back on our website in July for further information on how to participate. Contact Mike Plummer via email at [Mike.Plummer@state.vt.us](mailto:Mike.Plummer@state.vt.us) or at (802) 828-1220.

## Middlebury College Wins Campus Planning Award

The Middlebury College Campus Master Plan has won "one of the top-tier awards in the BSA's (Boston Society of Architects) campus planning awards program this year," according to BSA Executive Director Richard Fitzgerald. The BSA gives its annual awards at Build Boston, the tradeshow that typically happens in November. Congratulations to the College's Master Planning Committee.

## Lake Champlain Basin Program Grants

The Lake Champlain Basin Program has announced funding for several local grant programs in 2008. Applications for the Champlain Valley National Heritage Partnership (CVNHP) grants will be available soon (\$100,000 total funds). The LCBP will also boost Quadricentennial programs by offering \$50,000 in special "Quad" grants later this summer.

In August, the LCBP will release a request for proposals for its familiar local implementation grants program, which supports projects by local watershed groups and other organizations. A total of up to \$140,000 will be available for these programs. A mini-grant program to help farmers implement water quality improvement projects also will be available (up to \$35,000 total).

All RFPs and grant announcements will be posted on the grant page of the LCBP website at <http://www.lcbp.org/>

## Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA)

The deadline for the next round of assistance from the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is August 1st. Through this program, The National Park Service helps partners plan successful locally-led outdoor recreation and natural resource conservation projects.

Rivers & Trails does not give grants or loans. The program supplies staff with extensive experience in community-based conservation to work with a local group on a project. In the last few years, Rivers & Trails has helped over 300 local community projects each year.

Staff assistance includes help in building partnerships to achieve community-set goals, assessing resources, developing concept plans, engaging public participation, and identifying potential sources of funding. Project partners may be non-profit organizations, community groups, tribes or tribal governments, and local, State, or federal government agencies. Assistance is for one year and may be renewed for a second year if warranted.

Rivers & Trails staff are available to discuss project ideas or conservation challenge to determine if there might be a good match between your group's needs and Rivers & Trail's ability to help. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss project ideas with RTCA staff before submitting an application. Visit [www.nps.gov/rzca](http://www.nps.gov/rzca) for more information.