



ACRPC

update March 2009

ACRPC Energy Committee Program: Generating Electricity with Photovoltaics

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

Our renewable energy future is dependent on advances in photovoltaic technology. Find out about current research and how solar systems can provide us with affordable, renewable, clean, dependable energy, and help us move toward energy independence. For more information, contact Elizabeth Golden at 388-3141 or egolden@sover.net.

Addison County's Green Energy Expo Saturday, March 21, 9:00-4:30 Middlebury Union High School

This exciting event builds on the success of the 2008 Green Energy Expo as well as prior Addison County Home and Garden Shows by 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!

Event highlights:

- Meet dozens of local companies exhibiting their products and services for "green" building, renewable energy and efficiency.
- Learn from others in a relaxed setting how you can reduce energy consumption, generate renewable power at home, on the farm and at your business, be more energy self-sufficient and save money.
- Enjoy delicious local food.
- Lots of door prizes!

Admission \$2 adults/\$1 children/\$5 families

Keynote Speaker: 1-2 pm

Hear Pete Johnson of Pete's Greens speak on the topic of "Pete's Greens and the Hardwick Area Local Food Revolution."

Workshops to include (and many more!):

- Thinking About Living Off the Grid?
- Area Experts On The Use Of Renewable Energy (Including Solar, Wind, Small Hydro, And Biofuels/Biomass)
- Children's Programs: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle
- Affordable Green Building & Weatherization
- Better Woodlot Management
- Creating a Basement Root Cellar
- Relocalization of Food and Energy

For more information, go to www.greenenergyexpo.biz

Help spread the word!

Download this year's beautiful 8.5 x 11" flyer!

http://www.greenenergyexpo.biz/pdfs/Expo_Flyer_vF.pdf

Commission Calendar

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|-------|-----|----------------------------------|--|
| March | 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 | 7-9 | ACSWMD |
| | 21 | 9 am- 4:30 | Green Energy Expo @ MUHS |
| | 23 | 7 am | Legislative Breakfast, Vergennes Legion |
| | 24 | 7:00 | Natural Resources |
| April | 25 | 6:30 | Executive Board |
| | 26 | 7:00 | Energy Program: Photovoltaics |
| | 30 | 7 am | Legislative Breakfast, Bristol Legion |
| | 3 | 12:00 | Energy Committee |
| | 6 | 7 am | Legislative Breakfast, Orwell Fire House |
| | 8 | 7:30 | Full Commission |
| | 9 | 7-9 | ACSWMD |
| | 13 | 7 am | Legislative Breakfast, Bridport Grange Hall |
| | 15 | 7:00 | TAC |
| | 22 | 6:30 | Executive Board |
| 23 | 7-9 | Renewable Energy for Agriculture | |

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

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.

News & Events

Charting a Course to Green Energy in Vermont Bringing Together Energy Activists and Mapping Technology Professionals

May 4, 2009

**Davis Student Center at the University of Vermont
Burlington, VT**

The Vermont Spatial Data Partnership (VSDP – supported by VCGI) is planning an exciting conference. The conference will bring together mapping technology professionals and green energy activists to learn more about existing energy/mapping projects as well as to explore how mapping technology can help municipalities, nonprofits, businesses, and the state as a whole implement the use of green energy.

Examples of some of the topics that will be presented include:

- Local Solutions to Global Energy Challenges – Steve Letendre and John Van Hoesen
- Green Mountain College VT Renewable Energy Atlas – Mike Brouillette, VCGI
- IT meets ET: The Marriage of Broadband and Renewable Energy – Steve Sharp, VCGI
- Montana Energy: Montana's Energy Project and Resource Showcase (an interactive mapping web site) – John Waterman, GCS Research
- Food Waste to Biogas in Central Vermont - David Healy, Stone Environmental, Inc.
- How Much Do We Know About the Biomass Resource in Vermont? - Robert Turner, R. J. Turner Company

Please contact Leslie Pelch if you would like to participate at lesliep@vcgi.org.

Four Seasons Harvest Monday, March 23 Hlsley Library, Middlebury

Join the ACORN Localvores for a free program on techniques for a Four Season Harvest. Doug Mack and Linda Harmon from Mary's Restaurant/Inn at Baldwin Creek will provide lots of useful information. Learn how you can use hoop houses and cold frames to enjoy fresh greens almost all winter long! Event begins with a potluck. 6:30-8:30 p.m.

The Compelling Case for Natural Gas Vehicles Wednesday, May 27

Dudley H. Davis Center, UVM

Stephe Yborra, Director of Market Analysis, Education & Communications of the Clean Vehicle Education Foundation, a recognized expert in Natural Gas Vehicle markets and technologies, as well as other NGV equipment and services representatives and current NGV fleet operators, will speak on a wide range of NGV technology and application topics. This is a comprehensive one-day workshop, from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Registration is \$45 (\$55 after May 5) which covers course materials, continental breakfast, lunch and refreshment breaks.

For more information, go to www.cleanvehicle.org or contact Karen Glitman at 802-656-8868 or karen.glitman@uvm.edu.

Coverts Cooperator Training Classes June 5-7, Coutts-Moriarty Camp, Derby, VT September 11-13, Kehoe Conservation Camp, Hydeville, VT

Nominations are being accepted for participants to trainings which provide an opportunity for landowners to learn sound forest stewardship and wildlife management. Cooperators become foot soldiers in the spread of a strong forest management ethic. If you or someone you know is interested please forward their contact information to Lisa at PO Box 81, Middlebury, VT, 05753 or lisa@vtcoverts.org

Concerns for Conservation Funding

Governor Douglas's 2009 budget proposes to eliminate conservation funding entirely. Conservation partners from around Vermont have pulled together to encourage the legislature to continue making investments in conservation so that land protection can continue. Conservation funding has the potential to save family farms, protect recreation and sensitive natural areas, creates agriculture and forestry related jobs, and stimulates the economy. To learn more about this effort go to VLT's website: www.vlt.org. From there you can make up your mind on the issue.

Spring 2009 Annual Town Officers' Education Conferences May 6th

Holiday Inn & Conference Center, Rutland

For selectboard members; planning, zoning, and development review board members; conservation commissioners; regional planners; library trustees; listers; town clerks and treasurers; and other municipal staff and volunteers.

Pre-registration is required. Register online at <http://regonline.com/2009toec> Forms can be obtained by calling Mary Peabody at 802-223-2389 x13. Registration fee is \$60.00 (lunch included).

Conference doors open at 8:00 am. Opening session is at 8:45 am. Workshop Sessions are 9:45 am-3:30 pm.

Here is a sample of the workshops being offered:

- The Environmental Court
- Sustainable Development for Small Towns & Communities Act 115 Changes
- Land Conservation: Impacts and Opportunities at the Municipal Level
- Introduction to Community Preparedness
- Tools for Reducing Municipal Building and Facility Energy Costs
- The Highly Effective Selectboard
- Municipal Law Basics:
- What Every Local Official Should Know About the Law
- Vermont Enhanced 911 Board Update
- & Municipal Roles & Responsibilities

News & Events

Transportation and the Federal Stimulus Bill

In February, the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (more commonly known as the “Stimulus Bill”) was approved by Congress and signed into law by President Obama. As part of this package, Vermont is eligible to receive up to \$125.8 million dollars for transportation-related infrastructure. In order to receive the funding, certain requirements must be met.

In regard to roadway infrastructure, the first criterion is that the project must be part of the Federal Highway Aid Network. This includes infrastructure on the interstate highway system, principal arterial routes (such as US 7 and VT 116), and major collector routes. Major collector routes are those roads that provide motor vehicle access between arterial routes. This would include Class I sections of road as well as those Class II sections which are designated as major collectors. Local bridges not on the network that are over 20’ in length are also eligible for funding.

The second criterion is that the State must be able to obligate \$44 million to projects within 120 days from the signing of the Act (we’ll call these phase I projects), and the balance within one year (phase II projects). Obligation of funds can only come when a project is “shovel ready”, that is basically thru its design and permitting processes, and ready for construction. There is one exception to this rule. A small amount of the funding (approximately \$500,000) may be used on local roads off of the federal aid system where the population is less than 5,000 people. The details of this are currently being worked out by VTrans and the Federal Highway Administration.

The funding is not limited to road and bridge construction. First, the Bill requires that 3% of the total funding must be spent on enhancement-type projects. These would include such things as bike shoulders, sidewalks, and streetscape improvements. Second, rail improvements and funds for Amtrak service have been allocated. VTrans has roughly \$45 million worth of work along Vermont’s western rail corridor, and they are in the process of identifying projects that will meet the funding requirements and deadlines. Third, the Bill includes \$1.1 billion in airport grants, and another \$200 million for facilities and equipment. Fourth, the Bill makes provisions for investment in public (bus) transportation. Vermont will receive roughly \$5.6 million in funds dedicated to public transit. This money will likely be used to reduce the back-log of capital bus purchases and replace roughly 30 of its older and less efficient busses with modern, environmentally (and fuel efficient) vehicles. Additional funds may be allocated to other transit-related projects, but these funds will compete with other transportation infrastructure needs...such as road, culvert, and bridge replacements.

One significant condition in the stimulus bill regards what is called “maintenance of effort”. These exact conditions are still being worked out with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), but here are the conditions that we know at this time: (1) The state must give priority to projects that can be started and completed quickly, (2) \$44 million must be obligated within 120 days of apportionment, (3) The remaining funds must be obligated within 1 year, (4) American-made iron, steel, and manufactured goods are given purchase preference, (5) transportation projects must be completed within a 3-year time frame, and finally (6) federal participation rate may be less than 100% at the state’s discretion. This final condition is significant, because at this time it looks like Vermont statutes currently require local and state participation.

Unless the Vermont legislature legislates exceptions to the matching rules, it appears that there will be a local match required. One important condition with this funding is that states are expected to maintain all of its current transportation programs. The stimulus money is not intended to be used to replace funding for projects that have already had state resources allocated or otherwise reduce current state financial commitments. Instead, it is intended to provide additional funding for projects that would not otherwise be undertaken due to budget limitations.

With all of this in mind, The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has been working with The Vermont League of Cities and Towns, the Regional Planning Commissions, and the local municipalities statewide to identify projects that are potential candidates for funding. As of this time, over 400 project proposals have been received from the towns, and these are currently being evaluated for eligibility as outlined in the criteria above. According to VTrans staff, in addition to the funding directed toward Statewide projects, the funding directed toward municipal projects should be sufficient to complete roughly thirty local projects.

As of this writing, six Addison County towns have submitted project proposals: Orwell (1 proposal), Monkton (2 proposals), Bristol (1 proposal), Lincoln (4 proposals), Middlebury (1 proposal), and Panton (1 proposal). These projects include bridge repairs and/or replacements, salt shed construction, intersection improvements, road reconstruction, roadway bike access improvements, and funding for a regional transit facility. All of these proposals are currently being evaluated for eligibility and final selection will be made in the coming weeks. As information becomes available, we will provide updates on the selection status, and give more project detail for those projects selected.

For further information, contact Richard Kehne at 802-388-3141 or e-mail him at rkehne@sover.net.

Grants

National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

The National Park Service (NPS) manages some of our nation's most historic sites, scenic resources, and critical natural areas. NPS also provides assistance to locally-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects through the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program. RTCA staff help applicants conserve rivers, preserve natural areas, and develop trails and greenways. They help on a variety of natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects including multi-use trails, single-purpose trails, greenways, water trails (also called blueways), river corridor conservation, land protection, and park planning.

RTCA staff help with partnership-building to achieve community-set goals, organizational development, assessing resources, developing concept plans, public education and participation, and identifying potential sources of funding. The project applicant may be a state or local agency, tribe, non-profit organization, or citizens' group. Please make applications brief (generally no more than 3 pages, see attached application form).

Applications are evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. The project has specific, partner-defined goals and tangible conservation or outdoor recreation results expected in the near future.
2. The project protects or improves important natural resources or enhances outdoor recreation opportunities.
3. Roles and contributions of project partners are substantive and well-defined.
4. There is evidence of broad community support for the project.
5. The anticipated role for RTCA is clearly stated and is appropriate.

In evaluating applications, preference will be given to projects that provide physical connections among resources; include both natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation; partner with an NPS area; partner with a health organization; connect communities to NPS areas; and/or engage youth.

Projects should include significant community involvement and outreach, and should also include the commitment, cooperation, and cost-sharing of all partners. Because partnerships are key to the success of community-based projects, we strongly encourage the inclusion of support letters with your application.

Applications are due by August 1st for assistance beginning the following fiscal year (October 1st through September 30th). Assistance is for one year, and may be renewed for a second year upon request. Project selection is generally announced in early November after passage of the federal budget. Please return your completed application to the Program Leader for the region in which your project is located. Contact information is available under "Contact Us" on our website. You may also contact Charlie Stockman, NPS RTCA Program Manager at 202-354-6900.

For further information about RTCA and the work we are doing around the country with nearly 300 communities, please visit our national web site at <http://www.nps.gov/rtca>. Applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their project with RTCA staff before sending in an application. It can be helpful to schedule an advance field visit by our staff to best understand how RTCA can be of assistance.

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 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. Apply now as funding may run out before the May 15, 2009 deadline.

Emergency Manager of the Year Nominations Sought

Vermont Emergency Management is seeking nominations for the Northeast States Emergency Consortium 2008 Emergency Manager of the Year Award for Vermont. The program will honor a Vermonter who has made outstanding contributions in the field of emergency management during calendar year 2008. Recipients will also be selected from each of the other 7 NESEC states. The program is committed to recognizing individuals who have exhibited the highest standard of excellence, dedication, and accomplishment in the field of emergency management. NESEC is interested in nominees whose efforts in disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, or recovery have resulted in or will result in savings of life, injury, or property in time of disaster or emergency. Last year's recipient in Vermont was Cambridge Emergency Management Director David Severance.

The award will be presented to individuals who have:

1. Made an outstanding contribution to emergency management in 2008, and
2. Have managed, created or facilitated significant programs or projects within their area of responsibility that resulted in, or has the potential to result in, savings of life, injury or property from the impact of disasters or emergencies.

Nominations are encouraged from all levels of emergency management including local, state, tribal and federal government, as well as non-profit organizations, businesses, private citizens and volunteers. It serves as an excellent opportunity to recognize someone in the community who has given of themselves for the safety of others.

The deadline for nominations is April 1, 2009. Nomination forms can be found on the Vermont Emergency Management web site at www.vemvt.com/. For more information, please contact Mark Bosma, Public Information Officer at Vermont Emergency Management at (800) 347-0488.