



ACRPC

update March 2014

EEE Serosurvey Study Results Released

It is not yet mosquito, however the results of the Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) serosurvey is now available. In 2013, the Vermont Department of Health (VDH) tested 364 residents from the towns of Brandon, Sudbury and Whiting. No one tested positive for antibodies against the EEE virus. This is consistent with the hypothesis that infection with this virus is

uncommon. The following serves as a Q and A about the study and the results.

What is Eastern equine encephalitis?

Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE) is a rare but serious viral disease. It is spread by mosquitoes and most commonly affects people and horses. It does not spread from person to person or from mammal to mammal. Other species that can become ill include emus, alpacas, llamas and other equids. In recent years, EEE has been found in people, animals and mosquitoes in northern Rutland and southern Addison Counties.



What was the goal of the study?

The goal of the study was to learn if people in three Vermont towns were infected with Eastern equine encephalitis virus without realizing it. With most infections, some people have mild or no symptoms, but VDH does not know how common this is with EEE virus infections.

Who participated in the study?

Residents of Brandon, Whiting, or Sudbury, Vermont who were 12 years or older at the time of the study were eligible to participate. These towns were selected because evidence of EEE virus had been found in these locations in 2012. The study was done in April and May of 2013.

What was involved with participating in the study?

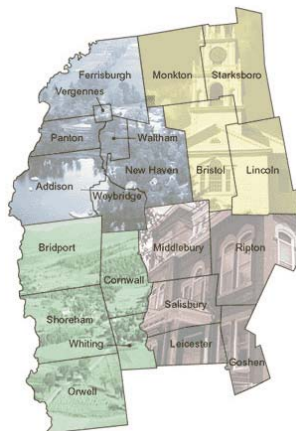
Eligible individuals were asked to complete a brief

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Commission Calendar

Mar 2014	10	3:30 p	Act 250 Committee Meeting
	12	7:30 p	Full Commission Meeting
	19	5:00 p	LEPC E-Board Meeting
	19	7:00 p	Transportation Advisory Committee
	20	6:00 p	Addison County Solid Waste District Meeting
	22	9-11 a	Addison County River Watch Collaborative ~ Training
	26	6:30 p	Executive Board Meeting

Meetings are held at ACRPC, 14 Seminary Street, Middlebury, and are open to the public.



Addison County Regional Planning Commission
14 Seminary Street
Middlebury, VT 05753

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survey and to provide a small blood sample. The blood was tested for antibodies to EEE virus at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

What were the results of the study?

In all, 364 blood samples were tested for antibodies to EEE virus. This was about eight percent of the total population of the three towns. All samples tested negative for antibodies against EEE virus. This means that there was no evidence that anyone in the study group had been bitten by an infected mosquito.

What do the results mean?

The results suggest that infection with EEE virus is uncommon. The results also suggest that EEE infections that are mild or cause no symptoms are uncommon. Because no one tested positive, VDH cannot make any conclusions about which behaviors or activities might put someone at risk for getting bitten by an infected mosquito.

It is important to keep in mind that this is one small study, and these results may not exactly describe what is happening in the community. The median age of the participants was 60 years. This is substantially higher than the median age of Vermonters, which is 42 years. Besides being older, people who chose to participate in the study may be different in other ways than people who chose not to participate. For example, people who participated in the study might not have had as much exposure to mosquitoes as typical residents of these towns.

VDH expects that infections with EEE virus in your area and in Vermont will remain rare. However, because infections may result in serious illness or death, it is important for people to prevent mosquito bites.

ACORN Offers Sustainable Living Expo

ACORN is hosting a workshop at the first-ever Sustainable Living Expo in Vermont.

The Expo is a one-day event on Saturday, 29 Mar



2014 from 9:00 am - 4:00 pm at the Middlebury Union High School.

ACORN is expecting about 1,000 visitors and are planning for 100 exhibitors and 36 workshops. The concept is based on the very successful Green Energy Expos of 2010 and 2011, which attracted a total of 1,000 people. Kathy Blume will be the keynote speaker on "Radical Sustainability: A Fierce and Spunky Revolution."

For more information, please visit the following site: <http://acornvt.org/sle2014/>

2014 Tree Steward Course Offered

The Stewardship of the Urban Landscape (SOUL) course is now being offered by the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry Program. The course prepares participants to become stewards of the forest in which they live by covering topics from tree identification, biology and planting to resource assessment, landscape design and conservation planning.

Through a series of four evening classes and two Saturday classes, participants will become part of an invaluable community forestry network. This educational opportunity is based on fifteen years of SOUL Tree Steward programs which has graduated more than 400 Vermonters!

Where: Classes will be offered simultaneously in

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multiple locations in Vermont, with an on-site instructor at the following sites: Berlin, Burlington, Middlebury, Springfield and St Johnsbury. Saturday classes will be held in Montpelier.



When: Evening sessions 5:30-8:30pm, March 19 & 26, April 2 & 9. Saturday sessions 9am-4pm, March 22 & April 26.

Cost: \$75 (Early Registration deadline: 14 Feb 2014) - \$100 (Regular). If you get sponsored by your town, you will receive a \$10 discount.

To Register: Visit <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/environment/soul/>

Questions: Contact Kate Forrer, via e-mail soul.treesteward@uvm.edu or call 1.866.860.1382.

Upcoming Grants Announced

Wastewater and Stormwater Project Funding

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) is seeking new projects to fund. Although the application deadline has passed, there will be another chance to add eligible projects to the priority funding list in March 2014. The CWSRF provides deferred planning loans, low fee construction loans, and sometimes even provides State grants for municipal wastewater and stormwater projects. For more information, contact Jonathan Ashley of Phelps Engineering: jashley@phelpseng.com.

Bridge, Culvert, and Stormwater Funding

Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) Structures Grant and Highway Grant applications are now available for Vermont towns and are due March 21,



2014. Phelps Engineering has assisted numerous towns with successful applications for funding from this VTrans fund to support culvert and bridge renovation or replacement projects and roadway improvement projects. For more information, contact Brandon Streicher of Phelps Engineering: bstreicher@phelpseng.com.

Water Funding

The State Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (DWSRF) is always looking to help small water systems with planning loans, allowing communities to plan a future improvement project and defer costs until long-term financing is obtained. Under certain circumstances, the program does not require payback for up to \$25,000 of planning as an incentive for water systems to start planning early.

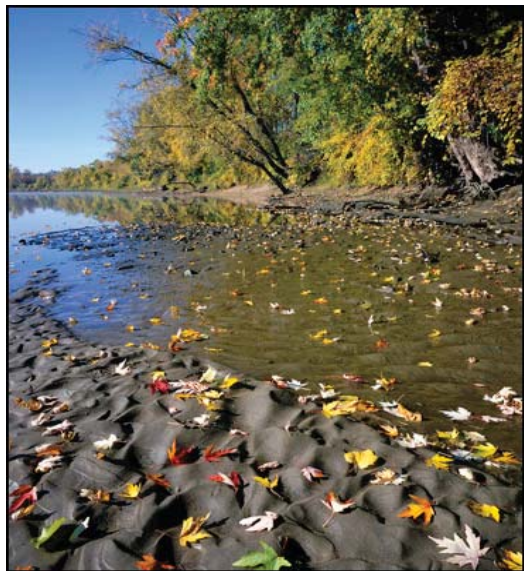
In addition, interest rates for Rural Development Utilities Service water and wastewater loans were announced in January 2014. Three different loan rates are available depending on a community's income level and the type of project being funded. For further information, contact John Kiernan of Phelps Engineering: jkiernan@phelpseng.com.

Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions ~ 2014 Tiny Grant Information

The objective of this grant program is to provide seed money and/or matching funds for specific conserva-

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tion projects at the local level. Individual grants are available from between \$250-\$600 and applications are due 15 Apr 2014, and awards will be announced 1 May 2014.



To view the full brochure detailing this years program, please visit:

<http://vtconservation.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/>
(Click on the .pdf file)

Only AVCC members whose membership dues are current are eligible. To check your status, please email Lisa Goodell at VLCT: lgoodell@vlct.org

Middlebury Railroad Overpass Bridge Replacement Project Update

The Town of Middlebury has signed a contract for the downtown Middlebury WCRS(23) Project which will replace the existing, deteriorating Main Street and Merchants Row Bridges with a tunnel, covering the existing railroad trench and reconnecting Triangle Park and the Town Green. The design will also allow for future passenger rail, improve drainage, and increase the vertical clearance of the line, allowing for more efficient double-stack rail cars.

Project with the selected Construction Manager/ General Contractor (CMGC), Kubricky Construction

Corp. (Kubricky) for Pre-Construction Phase Services. The CMGC Contractor immediately began working with the engineering design team, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) to evaluate potential construction impacts to abutting Town and private property while moving towards a final design. Issues currently being planned for include methods to minimize loss of parking, ROW, property, and traffic impacts, while maintaining access to buildings and residences along the project corridor.

A specific construction start date has yet to be finalized. The original goal was set in January 2013 to be 1 Apr 2014. Now considered an aggressive goal, the project team is working to establish a new project schedule with the CMGC's input.

Project updates will take place next several weeks. The Town has set up a project webpage to communicate progress and future project notices. Please visit <http://www.middleburybridges.org/>. You may also contact Bill Finger, Local Project Manager, at: info@middleburybridges.org.

Vergennes Community Visit Day

On March 18th all members of the Vergennes community are invited to participate in a series of forums on Vergennes Community Visit Day to be held at the Bixby Library and the Vergennes Opera House. This first event in a 3-month process of addressing important challenges before Vergennes and building priorities for action will include focus forum discussions and a free community dinner at St. Peters Church.

The Vermont Council on Rural Development will bring a 30+ person team of federal, state, business and non-profit leaders who will participate in sessions throughout the day and join community members at the free community dinner. All members of the Vergennes community are encouraged to join the discussion. Join us at the free community dinner at 5:45p at St. Peters Church. For a schedule of events, please visit: <http://www.vtrural.org/programs/community-visits/>, email: margaret@vtrural.org, or call 802.223.6091.



Vermont State Rail Plan

New Vermont State Rail Plan is underway

The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) is updating its 2006 Vermont State Rail Plan and expects the plan to be completed by the end of 2014.

The State Rail Plan will set forth goals, objectives and strategies for both passenger and freight rail. The plan will be coordinated within the context of state and federal planning requirements, with other state planning efforts and with collaborative input from the public and rail stakeholders.

An inventory of the state's existing rail system has been completed and goals and objectives have been drafted. VTrans will seek public review of both topics at public information meetings planned for late March.

The State Rail Plan identified several goals:

- Support Vermont's economy
- Upgrade the system to stay connected and competitive
- Maintain safe and efficient operations
- Seek adequate and stable funding
- Balance needs of railroad with human and natural environments
- Preserve rail corridors for future transportation use

A consultant team led by Parsons Brinckerhoff, with assistance from the firms Cambridge Systematics and Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc., is working with VTrans to conduct the rail plan update.



Public Meetings on Rail Plan March 24 & 25

March 24: Fox Room
Rutland Free Library
10 Court St.
Rutland, VT
6:30 p.m.

March 25: Community Room
Brattleboro Savings & Loan
221 Main Street
Brattleboro, VT
6:30 p.m.

Our Mission:

VTrans' railroad mission is the preservation, improvement, and promotion of rail transportation and its associated infrastructure to assure safe, reliable, cost-effective, and environmentally responsible movement of people and goods in the overall transportation system, thereby contributing to Vermont's quality of life and economic well-being.

Test Your Rail IQ

Unlike most states where railroads are privately owned, Vermont's owns about half of the state's 578 miles of rail. All of the lines are used for freight service, with two routes used for intercity passenger service as well.

Like other Northeastern states, upgrading rail to accommodate heavier and larger freight cars is a must for Vermont to remain connected to the national rail network. Old roadway overpasses and tunnels typically don't provide needed clearance for double-stacked railcars and it's very costly to upgrade these facilities.

What do you think Vermont's rail system looks like today? It's important to know when planning for the future. Test your knowledge by answering these questions below:

1. True or False: A lot more people are riding Vermont's rails.
2. True or False: The Vermonter, the train that runs between St. Albans and Washington, D.C. travels more miles in Vermont than in any other state on the route.
3. How many intercity passenger rails stations are there in Vermont?
4. Who operates Vermont's intercity passenger rail Service?
5. How many freight lines/operators are there in Vermont?
6. What rail company has the least and the most amount of track in Vermont?
7. True or False: Most of the rail freight movements are goods moving into Vermont.
8. Why does so much rail freight go through Vermont?

Quiz answers...

1. True: While ridership fluctuates from year to year, in the last 10 years there has been an overall trend of rising rail use...from a low of 57,121 passengers in 2005 to a high of 100,829 in 2013.

2. True: The train travels through eight states yet thirty percent (185 miles) of its 611-mile route is in Vermont.

3. Eleven: 2 on the Ethan Allen (Rutland and Castleton) and 9 on the Vermonter (St. Albans, Waterbury, Montpelier, Randolph, White River Junction, Windsor, Bellows Falls and Brattleboro), with 1 stop in Claremont, NH.

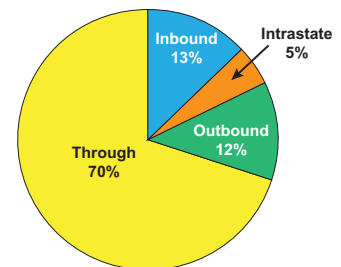
4. Amtrak: There is some seasonal train service from White River Junction and Bellows Falls by the Green Mountain Railroad, a subsidiary of the Vermont Railway.

5. Seven: PanAM, Canadian National, Clarendon & Pittsford, Montreal, Maine and Atlantic, New England Central, St. Lawrence and Atlantic, and Vermont Rail System.

6. Least: Canadian National – 3 miles, **Most:** New England Central – 191 miles. But, the Vermont Rail System, which provides service over state and privately-owned trackage has a combined mileage of 323 miles.

7. False: By far the largest movement, 70%, is just traveling through Vermont.

8. Vermont's geographic position as a gateway to Canada is a key reason. Most of Vermont's through traffic originates or terminates in Canada, Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.



For more information, or to provide input to the State Rail Plan, please contact: Costa Pappis, Vermont Agency of Transportation, costa.pappis@state.vt.us, 802-828-5790

Additional information on the Vermont State Rail Plan can be found at: www.vtransplanning.vermont.gov