



Current Activities

May 2009 Bennington County Regional Commission

111 South Street Suite 203, Bennington, Vermont 05201 (802) 442-0713

Website

New and Improved

The BCRC website located at www.bcrcvt.com has been completely redesigned and now includes many new features.

Plans & Zoning Bylaws

Town Plan Updates

The BCRC has recently assisted the Towns of Dorset, Sandgate, Sunderland, and Woodford with updates to their Town Plans.

Emergency Management

Fluvial Erosion Hazards

Of all the natural hazards experienced in Vermont, flooding is the most frequent, damaging, and costly. Over the last 50 years, flood related damages have cost Vermonters an average of \$14 million per year. While some of these flood losses are due to inundation, most flood losses in Vermont are caused by fluvial erosion. Fluvial erosion is caused by rivers and streams that are experiencing stream channel instability. Fluvial erosion can range from gradual bank erosion to catastrophic changes in river channel location and dimension during flood events.

FEH Planning

In 2008, the BCRC received a grant through the Vermont Department of Emergency Management to perform fluvial related pre-disaster mitigation planning projects. Some of these funds were used by BCRC to perform a Phase 1 Geomorphic Assessment of the Hoosic River in Pownal. Consultants were hired to perform Phase 2 Geomorphic Assessments of the Hoosic River and The Roaring and Fayville Branches in Arlington and Sunderland. The data collected through these studies has enabled the BCRC and the Vermont River Management Program to compile draft Fluvial Erosion Hazard (FEH) Zones for the Hoosic River, the Batten Kill and its major tributaries. We are now in the midst of an FEH public outreach and education campaign and several workshops have been scheduled in Pownal, Arlington, Sunderland and Rupert. Contact Jim Henderson for more information about Fluvial Erosion Hazards or the science of geomorphology at 442-0456 or jhenderson@bcrcvt.org.

Hazard Mitigation Planning

The BCRC is in the process of assisting municipalities with updates to the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, which includes municipal annexes. Current plans were adopted by municipalities and FEMA in 2005 and will expire in 2010. Having an approved Hazard Mitigation Plan enables municipalities to be eligible for PDM-c and other grants. Contact Lissa Stark for more info at 442-0438 or lstark@bcrcvt.org.

Emergency Planning

The BCRC provides technical support and assistance to the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). The LEPC meets bi-monthly and is currently involved in Commodities Points of Distribution Planning, issuing ID badges to first responders, and emergency response exercising.



Regional Coordination

The BCRC has assumed additional responsibility for regional collaboration in emergency management. Contact Lissa at 442-0438 or lstark@bcrcvt.org.

Solid Waste & Compost

Compost Bin Sale

The BCRC is offering Kitchen Compost Collector Bins for a reduced price of \$10 each. A limited supply of bins is still available at the BCRC office. Call ahead to ensure availability - 442-0713.



Solid Waste Plans

The 8-Town Solid Waste Implementation Plan was adopted in 2008 to meet a solid waste planning requirement set forth by the VT Agency of Natural Resources. The 8 towns are: Arlington, Dorset, Manchester, Pownal, Rupert, Sandgate, Shaftsbury, and Sunderland. The BCRC is currently assisting the Town of Stamford with the final draft of their SWIP.

Website

A website has been developed for the 8 Towns in the SWIP. The website includes information on recycling, transfer station hours and policies, hazardous waste, reuse options, and much more. Visit www.bcrsolidwaste.com for more information.

Household Hazardous Waste

The BCRC will continue to manage the Household Hazardous Waste collection events for the Towns of Arlington, Dorset, Manches-

ter, Rupert, Sandgate, and Sunderland. 2009 events will be held on Saturday, May 16 and Saturday, October 17. Both events will be held in Arlington from 8AM until Noon. For more information, visit www.bcrsolidwaste.com.

Transportation

Enhancement Grants

Transportation Enhancement Grants have been received by the Town of Shaftsbury for Cleveland Ave sidewalk improvements, North Bennington for intersection improvements, and Old Bennington for Monument Ave pedestrian improvements.

Public Transit

Services and Grants

The BCRC is working with the Green Mountain Community Network and its partner agencies on the annual application for funding to the Vermont Agency of Transportation. Funding is utilized by the regional public transit provider to provide fixed route, demand-response, and other transportation services throughout Bennington County. Visit www.greenmtncn.org for current schedules.

On-going activities include regular correspondence with VTrans and GMCN

regarding public transit issues, short range transit planning, GMCN support, and transit facility planning.

Municipal Grants

Municipal Planning Grants

Bennington and Sandgate have received municipal planning grants for town plan updates. Municipalities with approved plans are eligible to apply.

Energy Grants

The BCRC is assisting the Town of Woodford in securing a grant for energy efficiency building improvements to the Town Office.



Western Corridor

Management Plan

A multimodal Western Corridor Transportation Management Plan is currently a subject receiving great attention in western Vermont.

The Regional Planning Commissions and the Vermont Agency of Transportation have recognized this need for some time now, and have been working accordingly. The reasoning behind this study is to ascertain what the needs of the rail and highway infrastructure in western Vermont will be over the next 20 years, as well as how to best combat them.

The main focus is the US Route 7 corridor, as well as the rail that parallels the highway. Planning for these improvements will benefit both infrastructure and operations and, in the long run, heighten economic development opportunities along the corridor.



The connectivity that is provided by the facilities of US Route 7 is of paramount importance to the state, as well as the Bennington County region. The corridor is just less than 200 miles in length, stretching from Canada to Massachusetts, and close to 40 of these miles are in the Bennington County region.



For detailed info, visit www.vtwesterncorridor.org.

The BCRC encourages you to take advantage of two ways to involve yourself in the development of the Western Corridor Transportation Management Plan. A short survey has been constructed to ascertain public sentiment of the Western Corridor. The survey is available online at www.vtwesterncorridor.org.

A public meeting will be held June 3rd at 7:00 pm in Manchester Village

(Equinox Hotel, Bennington Room). Please take part in this exciting study. The outcome has large implications for the future of the US 7 corridor and western Vermont.

Energy Planning

Regional Energy Plan

The BCRC's energy committee has been meeting monthly for over a year, encouraging and promoting energy conservation, and most recently, researching and drafting a comprehensive regional energy plan.

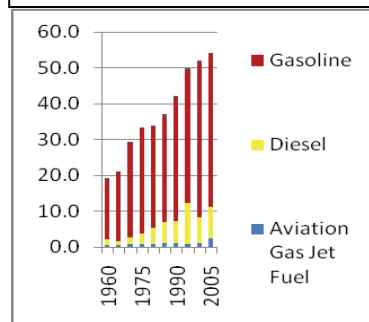
The last energy plan for Bennington County was prepared in 1982, and given last year's run-up in energy prices and the current emphasis on conservation and renewable energy resources at the state and federal levels, an update is urgently needed.

The new energy plan will include an Introduction that provides a broad overview of the nature of energy and objectives for our region, a section – Energy Today – that describes current energy use and issues, and a comprehensive discussion of Energy Tomorrow, addressing the fact that our energy options will be much more limited in the future.

The plan observes that our

society has flourished over the past 100 years on a profligate diet of nonrenewable fossil fuels. The plan states that reducing total energy use and developing local renewable energy sources will take time, and that transition needs to begin now.

Transportation fuel use in VT 1960 - 2005 (in trillions btu)



A final draft of the plan is expected within the next two months. The energy committee meets monthly. Contact Jim Sullivan at jsullivan@bcrcvt.org.



Calendar of Events

- **5/14 - 10:00AM** Regional Public Transit Advisory Committee Mtg, BCRC.
- **5/21 - 5:00PM** BCRC Commission Mtg at West Mountain Inn, Arlington.
- **6/2 - 8AM-4PM** Disaster Workshop for Road Crews, Howe Ctr, Rutland.
- **6/3 - 7:00PM** Western Corridor Mtg, Equinox Hotel, Manchester.
- **6/9 - 12:00Noon** Transportation Advisory Committee Mtg, Arlington Town Office.