

Addison County
Regional Planning Commission



ACRPC's Monthly Newsletter

March 2024



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ACRPC UPDATE



Preparing for Vermont's Total Solar Eclipse

On **April 8th** at 2:14 p.m., a partial solar eclipse will begin, and at 3:26 p.m., a total eclipse will last about 2 minutes in northern Addison County. The partial eclipse will continue until 4:37 p.m.

Follow the link below to find resources for planning your day, safely viewing the eclipse, or preparing for crowds.

[Learn More](#)

Vermont Sugarbush Forest Management Survey

A research team from the University of Vermont's Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources needs your input for a research study on forest management in sugarbushes in Vermont. The team hopes to capture different perspectives on the costs and benefits of sugarbush forest management approaches.

Specifically, they aim to understand:
Which forest management practices you use.
Your management objectives and values, and.
Characteristics of your sugarbush and sugaring operation.

How to participate:
This study involves participation in one survey, which should take about 15-20 minutes to complete. To participate in the survey, please visit the link below! If you complete the survey and provide contact information, you will be entered into a raffle for 1 of 10 gift cards valued at \$250.

Questions? Reach out to Daniel Pratson at Daniel.Pratson@uvm.edu

[Take The Survey](#)



Vermont Master Naturalist - Middlebury Area: Application for 2024-2025 Cohort

The Vermont Master Naturalist Program is now accepting applications for a 2024-2025 cohort in the Middlebury Area!

Vermont Master Naturalist (VMN) starts with a team of ~15 people passionate about natural history and willing to share knowledge of a related discipline. Staff and local experts then tell the story of the area's unique natural history in 5 field days, with each day building on the others. Topics may include geology, glacial history, wildlife ecology, human settlement history, botany, natural communities, and more, all emphasizing "reading" the landscape of the Champlain Valley and lower slopes of the Green Mountains. Participants then give back to the community by identifying and completing projects that fill community needs, often working in tandem with conservation commissions, land trusts, river conservancies, schools, and diverse other groups. The program costs \$600, with financial aid opportunities through VSAC and a limited VMN Scholarship Fund.

With questions, please contact monica.erhart@gmail.com.

[Learn More](#)

[Apply Here](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Important Reminders about Local ARPA Funds

- It's that time again! The next required reporting for local ARPA funds is due by **April 30, 2024** for All ARPA expenditures from April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024. Even if your municipality reported last year that all ARPA Funds were obligated and/or expended, you still must complete and submit the 2024 Project and Expenditure report.
- Now is also the time to think about obligating your local ARPA Funds if they haven't already been obligated. **ALL LOCAL ARPA FUNDS MUST BE OBLIGATED BY DECEMBER 31, 2024.** This means placing an order for goods or services or entering into a contract, subaward, or similar transaction that requires payment. If your town is using ARPA funds to pay staff salaries or other internal costs, this needs to be documented with a resolution by the Selectboard.

Check out [VLCT's ARPA Webpage](#) for more info and guidance.



March TAC Meeting Looks at Middlebury Area Projects

On **March 20th at 6:30pm** the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Addison County Regional Planning Commission will meet and hear from VTrans Project Manager Taylor Sisson.

Taylor oversees a number of impending projects in the Addison County area including the Exchange St. roundabout, scope refinement for US7/Monroe/Charles Ave intersections in Middlebury, and a VT125 Safety Improvement Scoping Project in Cornwall and Middlebury.

TAC meetings are open to the public, and participation may be either virtual, via Google Meet, or in person at the ACRPC office.

[Join Virtually](#)

GRANT & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Community

Better Places Grants

Is your community thinking about expanding parks and green spaces, enhancing a lively main street, initiating public art projects, or establishing community gardens? If yes, consider applying for a Better Places Grant, supported by the VT Department of Housing & Community Development, VT Department of Health, and VT Community Foundation. This statewide grant program welcomes project submissions on a **rolling basis**.

[Learn More](#)

Rural Industry and Development Program

The Rural Industry and Development Program (RIDP) provides \$5,000,000 in grant funding to regional and local development corporations in areas that can accommodate business growth to increase the amount of move-in ready industrial space.

RIDP is designed to respond to a lack of available industrial space in areas that can accommodate business growth. RIDP provides grant funding through local development corporations to support business relocation and expansion efforts. Eligible uses include the purchase, demolition, building and/or renovation of property for industrial use.

Energy

Electrify Your Fleet Program

The VTrans has launched their Electrify Your Fleet program, offering organizations the opportunity to apply for up to twenty \$2,500 incentives. The Electrify Your Fleet program aims to transition from fossil-fueled transportation, addressing carbon emissions and promoting cleaner options. Priority is given to historically underserved communities. Eligible vehicles include electric, hybrid, bicycles, motorcycles, and snowmobiles. Participants must hold the vehicles for 24 months and demonstrate emission reduction. Learn more here and apply here!

Due: Jun 2024

[Learn More](#)

Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program (WRAP)

The Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program (WRAP) may be able to help you. WRAP is intended to assist both homeowners and renters in Vermont in pursuing home weatherization projects by allowing them to pay for the costs over time through a low-interest monthly charge on their utility bill.

WRAP assists with projects like insulation and air sealing as well as heat pumps,

Applications for the first round of funding will be accepted until **March 15, 2024**.

[Learn More](#)

electric water heaters and advanced wood heating systems.

[Learn More](#)

Emergency Management

Flood Resilient Communities Fund (FRCF)

This is a voluntary program that will prioritize projects in communities and/or for homeowners with greatest economic need and projects that mitigate repetitive loss among low-income and marginalized portions of the population. **Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis.** Priority will be given to buyout projects following the July 2023 flooding in Vermont.

[Learn More](#)

Questions about Updating Your Local Hazard Mitigation Plan?

Local Hazard Mitigation Plans (LHMPs) form the foundation for a municipality's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, restoration, and repeated damage. Having an approved and current LHMP is often the final step for gaining a 12.5% state ERAF reimbursement rate (in addition to 75% of cost reimbursement from FEMA) as well as qualifying for many VEM and FEMA-funded hazard mitigation grants.

The state of Vermont annually applies for funding from the FEMA BRIC program and reaches out to Municipalities with soon-to-expire LHMP's. If the Municipality accepts the funding (it requires a 25% match of cash or time), they can hire a consultant that facilitates the creation or update of the LHMP and submits it to the state and FEMA for approval. LHMP's are valid for 5-years after FEMA approval.

[Learn More](#)

Transportation

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program

The SS4A program funds regional, local, and Tribal initiatives through grants to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. Over \$3 billion is still available for future funding rounds. The SS4A program provides funding for two types of grants: **Planning and Demonstration Grants** and **Implementation Grants**.

Natural Resources

Northern Border Regional Commission: Catalyst Program

The Catalyst Program is designed to stimulate economic growth and inspire partnerships that improve rural economic vitality across the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) four state region (NY, VT, NH, ME).

NBRC encourages projects that take a creative approach to addressing an

Planning and Demonstration Grants provide Federal funds to develop, complete, or supplement an Action Plan. The goal of an Action Plan is to develop a holistic, well-defined strategy to prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries in a locality, Tribal area, or region. Planning and Demonstration Grants also fund supplemental planning activities in support of an Action Plan and demonstration activities in support of an Action Plan.

Implementation Grants provide Federal funds to implement projects and strategies identified in an Action Plan to address a roadway safety problem. Eligible projects and strategies can be infrastructural, behavioral, and/or operational activities. Implementation Grants may also include supplemental planning and demonstration activities to inform an existing Action Plan, and project-level planning, design, and development activities. Applicants must have an eligible comprehensive safety action plan (referred to as an “Action Plan”) to apply for an Implementation Grant.

The FY 2024 NOFO has multiple deadlines, depending on the grant type:

April 4, 2024, 5 p.m. (EDT): Deadline #1 for Planning and Demonstration Grants.

May 16, 2024, 5 p.m. (EDT): Sole deadline for Implementation Grants. Deadline #2 for Planning and Demonstration Grants.

August 29, 2024, 5 p.m. (EDT): Deadline #3 for Planning and Demonstration Grants. NOFO closes.

[Learn More](#)

economic need or opportunity in the region, alleviate economic distress, and contribute to economic growth. Successful projects support a broad range of economic development initiatives such as, but not limited to, projects that modernize and expand access to public water and wastewater services, revitalize transportation infrastructure, establish workforce development programs and facilities, grow the outdoor recreation economy, and provide access to new childcare and healthcare facilities.

Pre-Application (Required) Due on **March 15th**

Application (By Invitation) Due on **May 3rd**

[Learn More](#)

Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions Tiny Grant Program

The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) is excited to announce the 2024 Tiny Grant Program Request for Proposals. Grant applications are due **April 5, 2024** and range from \$250-\$600. Applicants must be Vermont Conservation Commissions or local committees/groups that are working towards becoming a Conservation Commission and are paid members of AVCC.

[Learn More](#)

Want to get in touch or ask us a question?

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(802).388.3141

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