



## ACRPC Monthly Newsletter **March 2025**



[ACRPC Website](#)

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## Act 181 & Future Land Use Planning

Dear friends and members:

I am writing to share how ACRPC intends to amend the **Addison County Regional Plan** to meet the requirements of Act 181, which became law on July 1, 2024. In brief, Act 181 reformed Act 250 by amending its jurisdictional thresholds. It divides Vermont into three tiers, with the first tier having two layers, 1A and 1B. It increases the threshold for when housing projects will need Act 250 permits in cities and villages that secure either new Tier 1A or 1B status. The Act intends to make developing housing easier in Tier 1A or 1B areas because it enables housing developers to avoid the time and expense of the Act 250 process (All local and other state permit processes remain in effect). Conversely, it decreases the jurisdictional threshold in the yet to be defined Tier 3 areas for forest blocks and wildlife habitat areas. More development will need to go through the full Act 250 process in Tier 3 areas. Act 250 jurisdiction stays largely the same in Tier 2 areas (The majority of the Addison Region).

Regional Plans constitute an important component of this new process because the **Future Land Use Planning Areas**, as redefined by regional planning commissions, will depict the areas eligible for treatment under each of the Tiers. ACRPC has just started the work it needs to do to amend its Future Land Use Planning Areas. On February 20th we held an information kickoff meeting to explain the purpose of Act 181 and to explain how ACRPC would work with its member municipalities and the public to fulfill its obligations under the Act. Thank you to everyone who joined in person or virtually. For those who could not make the meeting, please visit the [ACRPC website](#) to view a recording of the presentation and discussion.

**Our next phase of work starts now.** Our primary focus for this work will be joining the planning commissions of each of our member municipalities in their local, open meetings to share our methodology for creating the Regional Plan and soliciting the opinions of each planning commission and of citizens of each of our member municipalities. Our goal will be to reach consensus with each community on the contents of ACRPC's Future Land Use Planning Area Map that ACRPC must create as part of the Act 181 process.

We will be reaching out to all municipalities in the next few months to set up our discussions about **Future land Use mapping**. ACRPC serves 21 communities and will have meetings with each of you. We have devoted the time of five different employees to this effort. However, creating maps for each community will take time. We hope we will have spoken with every community by the end of the spring and will be reaching out to all shortly to schedule meetings. Our goal will be to develop a fully vetted regional draft map by the summer. We look forward to working with each community to accomplish this goal.

In the meantime, please reach out to the staff member assigned to your community with any questions on this topic.

**Adam Lougee**  
*Executive Director*

[Adam Lougee](#)

Bristol, Monkton, Middlebury Starksboro, Orwell

[Katie Raycroft-Meyer](#)

Addison, Bridport, Ferrisburgh, New Haven, Lincoln, Salisbury

[Danelle Birong](#)

Panton, Shoreham, Vergennes, Waltham, Weybridge

[Rebecca Elder](#)

Cornwall, Goshen, Leicester, Ripton, Whiting

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



### GET READY FOR NEW FEMA MAPS

#### **New Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Preliminary Review Meetings**

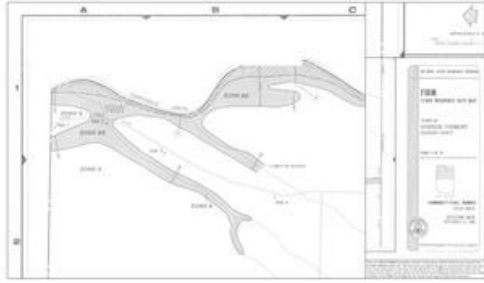
Your town may have received notification from the VT Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), US Geological Survey (USGS), or USGS contractor (T and M Associates) recently about updates to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs). ACRPC is working to clarify the process of updating FIRMs and to define the roles of the municipality and the RPC.

**Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs)** are the maps used to designate the 100-year floodplain that are regulated by each of your municipalities as required for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) enrollment. These maps have been in development by FEMA and their contractor, off and on, for over 5 years. The email from T and M Associates should have included a link to download the map panels for your municipality. Download and locally save those map panels if you have not done so already.

In **Step 5**, each municipality will have an opportunity to attend a **County-wide Work Map Meeting**. Our Addison County-wide Work Map Meeting appears to be combined with Franklin and Orleans Counties.

The meeting will occur on **Tuesday, March 18 from 9-10 AM**. We do not know if this meeting is in-person, hybrid, or remote. ACRPC will send out information as soon as we hear from DEC or USGS. Please have someone from your municipality attend the meeting. RPC staff will also attend.

[This website](#) outlines the steps of updating and locally adopting a new FIRM. We are now at Step 5: FEMA's Presentation of New Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).



Municipalities are also able to meet one-on-one with USGS to discuss the maps in Step 5. USGS will offer these meetings in one-hour blocks on **March 20 and March 26 between 8 AM and 4 PM.**

ACRPC will share information about how to sign up for these meetings once information is provided by DEC or USGS.

> Please let ACRPC staff planner Andrew L'Roe ([alroe@acrpc.org](mailto:alroe@acrpc.org)) know if you would like us to attend a one-on-one meeting involving your municipality.

## Nominate Your Tree Hero!

Each year the **Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program and Council** sponsors the **Vermont Tree Steward Awards** as a way to recognize our state's urban and community forestry champions.

Nominations are now being accepted for 4 categories: Leader, Unsung Hero, Volunteer Group/Community, and the Hamilton Award for tree wardens. **Deadline for nominations is March 28, 2025.**



[Submit a nomination!](#)

## 2025 Local Emergency Management Plans

**Local Emergency Management Plans (LEMPs)** are important resources for responding to a disaster and keeping contact information and resource lists updated and at hand. Having a current plan is also required for municipalities to receive federal preparedness funds and increased state reimbursement through the **Emergency Relief and Assistance Fund**.

**Annual LEMP adoption will be due for update and Select Board signature after Town Meeting Day and before JUNE 1st.** This year, VEM Regional Coordinator Harry Schoppmann will be reaching out to municipal officials about updating and adopting LEMPs.

Each municipality has an appointed Emergency Management Director (EMD), who has direct responsibility for the organization, administration, and coordination of local emergency management. Some municipalities have an appointed Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) to support their work.

If you are interested in learning more about this position in your city or town, please reach out to Andrew L'Roe at ACRPC ([alroe@acrpc.org](mailto:alroe@acrpc.org))

## GRANT & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### The Community Tree Fund

The Community Tree Fund is a collaboration

Through this collaboration, VT UCF can provide

with the Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO). This partnership is dedicated to supporting Vermont's communities by **addressing the need for more flexible funding for small-scale tree planting projects.**

resources for projects under \$5,000, which are often restricted by traditional grant structures.

**Applications are due April 18, 2025.**

[Community Tree Fund Info](#)

## FY2026 Community Project Funding (CPF)

CPF is an appropriations process designed to provide direct federal investment in a range of projects in a Congressional district. The program is called Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) in the Senate and is often referred to as "earmarks." It is one-time funding that cannot be used to support programming and is not available to for-profit organizations.

At this time, House Republicans have not laid out their process for how they will approach CPF this year--or if the program will be offered at all.

The information we are collecting with the form will help us prepare for a process that may require a quick turnaround. We will reach back out once we have information from House leadership about process timelines and eligibility guidance.

We believe that if there is a CPF process this year, the appropriations guidelines will likely be similar to last year's. **Please review the FY2025 guidelines and the eligible accounts before filling out the form.** If your project does not appear to be eligible under the 2025 guidelines and you would be interested in reviewing the 2026 guidelines when they are available, please let us know by indicating that in the form on Question 7.

**Please complete this form by end of day March 12, 2025.** Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions.

[CPF information form](#)

## TRANSPORTATION NEWS

### VERGENNES Alternative Truck Route Open House

*Final public presentation of results from the Vergennes PEL Study: The evaluation of alternatives to reduce truck traffic in Downtown Vergennes*

**Wednesday, April 2, 2025 | 3-7 PM**  
American Legion  
Armory Lane, Vergennes

The format of the presentation will be an **Open House**. Attendees can explore the options recommended for advancement at their own pace. Study team members will be available to answer questions.

[The Vergennes Planning and Environmental Linkages \(PEL\) Study](#) has been a three-year evaluation of transportation alternatives that could reduce the impact of large truck traffic on **Vermont's Route 22A** as it passes through Vergennes.

The study considered the economic vitality, environment, and quality of life of proposed alternatives on the northern Addison County communities of Vergennes, Ferrisburgh, Panton, Waltham, Addison, New Haven, and Weybridge. The products, analyses and decisions developed during the PEL study can be incorporated into subsequent permitting documents, saving time later if VTrans chooses to advance the project.

PEL projects are relatively new to Vermont. The Vergennes PEL study is the second such study. The first, the Burlington Railyard Enterprise Project, was completed in 2020.

V E R G E N N E S

**Planning & Environment  
Linkages (PEL) Study**

# LINCOLN York Hill Bridge over New Haven River

*A Local Concerns Meeting for the York Hill Bridge in Lincoln (Bridge 46)*

**Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 6:30 PM**  
(During the regular Selectboard meeting)  
62 Quaker Street, Lincoln

*The meeting will be held by the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) and the Town of Lincoln.*

The intent of the meeting is to gather input from stakeholders, including Town Officials, local residents and businesses, emergency services, and other interested parties. VTrans will discuss the existing conditions of the bridge, site constraints, and options that should be considered in the scoping report. The project is currently in its early stage.

Direct questions, comments, or concerns to VTrans Project Manager Laura Stone  
[Email Laura Stone](#) or call (802) 917-4996

## ACRPC Hiring Summer Field Tech



ACRPC Field  
Tech info

**Do you know a college student or young adult interested in working with ACRPC this summer?** We are **recruiting for a field technician** for a 10-week period between May and August of 2025 (Specific timing depends on the availability of the candidate hired).

This position's main duties are field data collection and supporting computer work related to transportation infrastructure and clean water, focusing on the following projects/initiatives:

- Field work to conduct municipal culvert inventories using GPS/GIS
- Field work to conduct Road Erosion Inventories
- Set-up & perform speed studies, traffic counts, and pedestrian counts
- Post processing of inventory and count data
- Additional projects may be assigned, as necessary

## Natural Resources

### Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Conference

When? May 29, 2025

Where? Vermont State University Randolph Campus

[VT U&CF Website](#)

## VLCT Trainings & Webinars

Build a Better Project  
Training Series from  
VLCT

### Future dates and topics:

Tuesday, April 8, 2025 –  
Assessing Project Feasibility

Tuesday, June 10, 2025 –  
Framing Your Case through  
Storytelling

Tuesday, August 12, 2025 –  
Developing Project Schedules

Tuesday, October 14, 2025 –  
Building a Budget

Tuesday, December 16, 2025 –  
Recovering from Setbacks

[VLCT info & registration](#)



## Workplace Matters: Building an Onboarding Program that Works

March's topic is **ONBOARDING**  
3/13/25 12-1pm

Join Julie McKenzie and Jill Muhr for a session on how to transform new hires into thriving, long-term contributors. Learn about and discuss creating an onboarding program – no matter the size of your organization – that drives engagement, accelerates productivity, and builds connections from the very first day. Julie and Jill will cover strategies to structure an effective program, foster early engagement and team cohesion, and overcome common onboarding challenges.

### Presenters

[Julie McKenzie](#), Assistant General Counsel, PACIF Labor and Employment, VLCT

[Jill Muhr](#), Senior Human Resources Consultant, VLCT Risk Management Services

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ask us a question?

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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 ADA accessible.

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