

October 2015 News & Notes



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Center of Randolph, Vermont with full fall colors.

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ECVEDD

The East Central Vermont Economic Development District has just been awarded a Planning and Local Technical Assistance Grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. These funds will help our District move several of the actions forward as outlined in the newly adopted CEDS. For more information about the District or about the CEDS, please go to ECVEDD.org.

TRORC News & Notes via Email

To receive TRORC News & Notes by e-mail instead of hardcopy, please write to: news@trorc.org or go to our website and sign up: trorc.org.

Renewable Energy Conference & Expo 2015

Renewable Energy 2015 (RE 2015) is Vermont's annual convention bringing together key players in the renewables sector. This year's conference, slated for October 8 & 9, highlights current energy challenges, Vermont's leadership role in the energy industry, and the steps needed to implement an integrated energy infrastructure.



RE 2015
CONFERENCE & EXPO

Nationwide and here in Vermont, the closure of coal and nuclear facilities, concerns around "fracked" gas, and instability in oil-rich regions are driving markets to implement renewable energy and efficiency-based solutions to address our increasing energy demands. RE 2015 is bringing together leaders and experts from throughout the region to address the challenges and opportunities ahead.

For more information, go to: <http://www.revconference.org>

TRORC Staffing Announcements

We are excited to announce two new staff members! Victoria Levite and Micheal Storage are new additions to the TRORC team.

Victoria Levite is a recent graduate from Westfield State University with a double Bachelor's in Regional Planning and Environmental Science with a concentration in GIS. She will be writing our newsletter, managing the website and social media, as well as taking on various projects that includes CDBG work, transportation, and many others.

Michael Storage hails as a recent graduate of the University of Vermont with a Bachelor's in Environmental Studies. He will be assisting staff with water quality projects, stormwater planning, hazard mitigation, and land use planning.

We wish our new staff all the best luck in their new jobs!

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Staff

Bob Ennis
Grant Administrator

Pete Fellows, CFM
GIS Manager

Kevin Geiger, AICP, CFM
Senior Planner

Dee Gish
Finance Manager

Peter G. Gregory, AICP
Executive Director

Victoria Levite,
Planner

Christopher Damiani,
VISTA Member

Loralee Morrow, LEED AP
BD+C
Regional Planner

Michael Storage,
Planner

Chris Sargent, AICP
Senior Planner

Rita Seto, AICP
Senior Planner

TRORC Continues Assistance in Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery Projects

Congratulations to the Town of Barnard's Mount Hunger Road Bank Stabilization and Town of Stockbridge's Taggart Hill Road Relocation recent CDBG Disaster awards by the Vermont Community Development Program. This brings another \$400,000 of disaster recovery funds that TRORC applied for totaling nearly \$1.9 million dollars of infrastructure mitigation funds to the TRORC region. Both projects are great opportunities for the Towns to implement hazard mitigation solutions and create more resilient infrastructure.

To learn more, contact Rita Seto at rseto@trorc.org.

Conte Refuge Releases Draft Conservation Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

The US Fish and Wildlife Service's Silvio Conte National Wildlife Refuge is not new, it has been around for 18 years. The Service has just finished both a draft update to its Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) meant to guide the Refuge's work for the next 15 years, as well as a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for proposed changes to the Refuge. Of interest to the TRORC Region is that the Service is proposing three new Conservation Focus Areas (CFAs) in our region in headwaters of the Ottawaquechee, White and Ompompanoosuc Rivers. The Service proposes to purchase *from willing sellers* land that is largely in forest to make up these new CFAs. The proposed lands cover 5,985 acres in Bridgewater, 10,031 acres in Stockbridge and Killington, and 15,071 acres between Vershire and West Fairlee. In the proposal, forest management would continue in all CFAs, and hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and environmental education are all uses that would receive priority on refuge lands. The Service has no money to actually make these purchases yet, and placing the potential purchases into a CFA creates no new federal requirements, but now is the time to comment on this proposal. They are seeking comments through November 16.



You can find more information at <http://www.fws.gov> or contact Michael Storage at mstorage@trorc.org.

Pete Fellows Earns GISP Certification

A GISP is a Certified Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Professional endorsed by a 3rd party (GISCI) through a peer-reviewed evaluation. GISCI offers the only industry-wide, internationally-recognized, software-agnostic Certification available to geospatial professionals around the world. A GISP has met the minimum standards for educational achievement, professional experience, and manner in which he or she contributes back to the profession, and practices in an ethical manner.



Congratulations to Pete!

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Executive Committee

William B. Emmons, III
Chairperson
Pomfret

Paul Haskell
Vice Chairperson
Sharon

Nancy Jones
Secretary
Bradford

Gerald Fredrickson
Treasurer
Barnard

Frank Roderick
Corinth

David Brandau
Royalton



East Central Vermont has Preferred

Sustainability Status (PSS) through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, which benefits all the communities in the 40-town region. HUD, and other federal entities such as EPA and DOT, awards 2 bonus points to grant applicants located in our region and that agree to further the Livability Principles.

Please contact Lorelee Morrow at lmorrow@trorc.org for more information.

Safford Commons Grand Opening

Safford Commons, the first affordable housing project in Woodstock, was officially opened Tuesday, September 22. The project has been a long time coming and is in much demand. All 28 units were filled within 10 days and a waiting list over 40 people is in place. The energy-efficient apartments are clustered in multi-colored cottage-like dwellings on the site of a former Grange Hall not far from Woodstock High School. Governor Peter Shumlin and several other Vermont dignitaries, affordable housing representatives, regional planners, neighbors, and members of the public were on site for the official ribbon cutting. Funding for the \$9.5 million project came from a variety of public and private sources. Rents range from \$600 to \$1,000 depending on income and apartment size.



Twin Pines Housing Trust (TPHT) was one of the main funders, acted as project manager for the construction of the project, and will manage the complex going forward. Andrew Winter, Executive Director of TPHT hopes to add more owner-occupied units in the future. Andrew sits on the TRORC Board.

TRORC's Website and Twitter Launch

Through the hard work of TRORC staff Lorelee Morrow and Chris Sargent, our new website has launched! The website has gone through a complete makeover to improve navigation and to make it easier to find information. Please go check out the new site: trorc.org.

Along with our new website, staff member Victoria Levite created a Twitter page to increase outreach to our communities and interested members of the public. You can access our Twitter page through the website and follow us at @TRORCVT.

Municipal Roads General Permit

Based on recent legislation adopted to protect Vermont's surface waters (Act 64), ANR is starting to develop a general permit that will be applicable to all municipal roads. Under the new general permit, municipalities will need to bring their roads and drainage systems up to standards designed to protect water quality. The regulation will go into effect before January 2018, with all municipalities required to sign up no later than 2021. The general permit will require implementation of practices designed to reduce erosion from roads and drainage systems that discharge to surface waters. The Stormwater Program is in the early stages of planning for this permit. A stakeholder process to solicit input from municipalities, especially their roads professionals, is planned for next year.

For more information, call our offices or see page two of VLCT's August 2015 newsletter.

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ECVEDD | CEDS | SEPTEMBER 2015



The new East Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was adopted September 23, 2015!

WHAT IS A CEDS?

A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is a strategy-driven, locally developed road map for economic development, with the ultimate goal being a stronger, more diverse regional and resilient economy. The new CEDS was funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, Two Rivers-Ottauquechee Regional Commission, Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission, and Springfield Regional Development Corporation.

Check out the new CEDs at ECVEDD.org or TRORC.org.



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