



Bennington County Regional Commission

News and Notes

March 2020

BCRC March Meeting to be held at Sunderland's Hill Farm Inn



The Hill Farm inn, located along the
Batten Kill in Sunderland

The BCRC's regular March meeting will take place at 5:30 PM on Thursday, March 19 at the Hill Farm Inn, located at

[458 Hill Farm Road in Sunderland.](#)

The meeting will begin with a presentation by Ken Couture of Green Mountain Power on how the company prepares for and responds to severe storms and damage to its electrical infrastructure. This information is a valuable component of local emergency management plans and this overview will help municipal officials understand what happens in the event of a power outage in their community.

The second part of the meeting will involve a discussion about the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI) among BCRC's commissioners. The TCI is a program that Vermont may participate in along with several other northeastern states. The TCI is a cap and invest program that would create a limit on overall emissions and then auction off "allowances" to emit carbon dioxide. The proceeds of those auctions are then divided among the states to invest in programs to decrease greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector, to help address equity concerns, and to make our transportation infrastructure more resilient. Between \$20-75 million in new revenue is anticipated being available to Vermont on an annual basis.

Vermont's participation in the TCI is not certain, however, and the purpose of this discussion will be to determine if the BCRC would like to support, or not support, participation in the program. Two public meetings have been held in recent months in our region by the state TCI team. For those who have not attended one of those meetings, details on the program can be found at: [Vermont TCI](#). Among the policy questions being considered is the question of whether the short-term costs of the program—in the form of higher transportation fuel prices for consumers—outweigh the long-term benefits that may take the form of investments in public transportation, improved infrastructure in town and village centers, electric vehicles, and support for other transportation system improvements. This discussion, and any position taken by the BCRC, is a great opportunity to offer meaningful input on a significant state policy decision. We look forward to a thoughtful discussion and decision.



**TRANSPORTATION &
CLIMATE INITIATIVE**
Of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States



US Census 2020 is Almost Here!

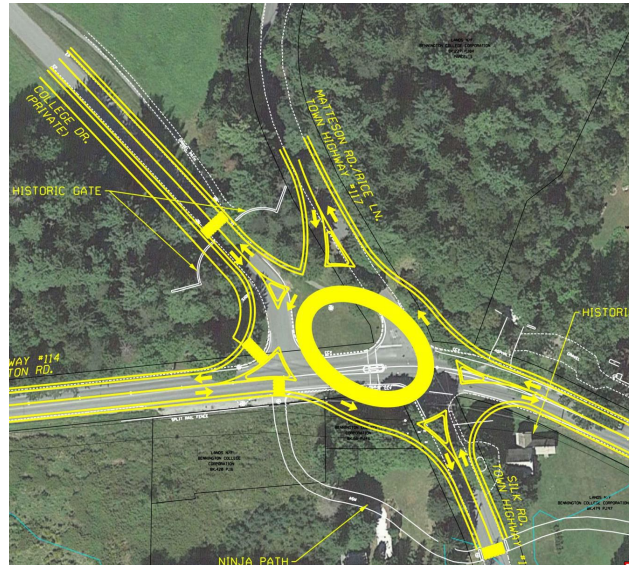
Every ten years, the U.S. Constitution requires an enumeration of all persons in the United States, commonly referred to as The Census. For the next ten years, the numbers produced in this effort will help determine how more than \$675 billion will be distributed to states and localities annually through more than 65 federal programs. These programs include special education funding, school lunch programs, meals on wheels, fuel assistance, Medicare, housing rehabilitation, community economic development and revitalization block grants, early childhood education, cooperative extension offices, and more.

This year, people will have the option of responding online, on the telephone, or with a traditional, short-form written response. Look for your invitation to respond in the mail or at your door. It is critical that *everyone* participate and that all household members be included. The 2020 Decennial Census begins in March. Make sure that *your* community counts!

For more information on the Census, you can view a video here: [US Census Video](#).

Study and Recommendation for VT 67A Intersection






The BCRC has worked with the Vermont Agency of Transportation, the Town of Bennington, and a transportation consultant to assess conditions at the VT Route 67A-Silk Road-Matteson Road-Bennington College Drive intersection. The purpose of this “scoping study” is to examine the feasibility and approximate costs of improvements to the intersection to improve safety, mobility, and access for all users of the roadway and the adjacent bike-ped facility. Historically, the intersection has experienced a high number of crashes. Vehicles exiting Silk Road experience difficulty accessing VT Route 67A due to speeding and limited sightlines. Frequent bicycle and pedestrian crossings at the location also are a concern. After reviewing multiple alternatives, a preferred design involving a roundabout is being advanced for further study and project development. For more information on this project, contact Mark Anders at the BCRC (manders@bcrcvt.org).



Existing conditions and proposed improvement at the intersection along VT 67A near Silk Road and the entrance to Bennington College.

Agency of Commerce and Community Development Announces 2020 Initiatives

The Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development will be pursuing a variety of planning and development initiatives in the coming year, including: 1) a bold Community Investment Package 2) a suite of business acceleration and recruitment tools 3) a marketing package and 4) new tools and rules that would strengthen our regional economies. The BCRC works closely with both the Department of Housing and Community Development and the Department of Economic Development to bring these programs to communities in our region.

2020 Initiatives					
Community Investment Package (H. 782)		\$1 M Vermont Housing Incentive Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">Create housing provider grants to bring unsafe, blighted and vacant rental units up to code and back online	\$350,000 Make Developing Housing in Designated Centers Easier <ul style="list-style-type: none">Best practice zoning to encourage small scale residential development\$300,000 for municipal planning assistance for inclusive housing development\$50,000 for missing middle housing developer and landlord training	\$1.4 M Increase the Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit <ul style="list-style-type: none">Set a new \$4 million annual cap, the largest increase to the Downtown and Village Center Tax Credit in history	\$250,000 'Better Places' Crowd-Granting Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish a framework to leverage funding from private foundations and individuals for 'placemaking' in designated centers
Accelerate Business Growth and Recruitment (H. 642, H. 641, H. 676)		\$1 M Capital Investment Loan Pilot Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">\$1 million appropriation for the Capital Investment Loan Pilot Program, a new convertible VEDA loan product to encourage small businesses to create jobs in VermontSets specific job and capital expenditure targets, that if met, reduce the loan	\$3 M Vermont Investment Incentive Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">Create a new incentive that encourages regionally-significant businesses to continue to invest in VermontWill allow businesses with at least 100 employees, who are also projecting \$20 million in capital expenditures or more, to apply for an "investment incentive"Reserves \$3 million for the new program	\$1 M Technology Based Economic Development <ul style="list-style-type: none">Stimulates research and development in Vermont high-tech companiesEncourages Vermont small businesses to apply for federal Small Business Innovation Research grants with a matching program	\$3.15 M Clean Grid Modernization Growth Incentive <ul style="list-style-type: none">Enact recommendations from Governor Scott's Climate Commission to grow climate businesses\$2 million seed capital fund\$250,000 clean grid optimization pilot\$400,000 in deferred revenue from tax incentives\$500,000 to facilitate a new fully-refundable R&D tax credit
Market Vermont		\$250,000 Economic Development Marketing Program <ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue and expand the ThinkVermont campaign and other worker recruitment efforts	\$500,000 Increase Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing Promotional Budget	\$250,000 Promotion of Outdoor Recreation Opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none">Promotion of fishing and hunting license sales and state park visitation	
Strengthen Regional Economies (H. 642, H. 782)		Zero General Fund Project Based Economic Development Financing (H. 642) <ul style="list-style-type: none">A new small, rural town financing mechanism that supports the creation of basic infrastructure tied to smaller economic development opportunities		Zero General Fund Enact Act 250 and Permitting Reforms <ul style="list-style-type: none">Act 194 industrial park master permitting recommendationsAct 250 exemptions for designated downtowns, villages and centers (H. 782)	
Miscellaneous		<ul style="list-style-type: none">Purchase the Main Street Redevelopment Site in Newport City to facilitate construction of a new court house and multi-use building (\$1.5 million capital bill appropriation) (Capital Bill)\$25,000 for the USS Vermont Commissioning (Budget Adjustment)Enable the Northern Border Regional Commission to utilize, and fully pay for, Vermont's benefit system to attract talent (no cost)Modernize the New Worker Relocation Grant Program to include remote workers (no cost) (S. 256)Exempt housing in federally designated Opportunity Zones from capital gains taxes when used for primary residences			

Report on Vermont Housing Costs

A study recently released by the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) and the Vermont Affordable Housing Coalition reveals that Vermont has a significant affordability gaps in the residential rental market. The average renter in Vermont earns \$13.40 an hour, which is \$9.38 less than the hourly wage needed to afford a safe, decent place to live. They can afford just \$697 a month for their housing costs, while the average statewide Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,184 a month and \$945 a month for a one-bedroom. Vermont's one-bedroom Housing Wage is \$18.18 an hour. For more information on the study's findings, go to: [Housing Cost Study](#).

Somerset Integrated Resource Project

Public Comment Period Ends March 16

The nearly 71,000 acre Somerset project area includes National Forest, state, town, and private lands located primarily in the towns of Dover, Glastenbury, Searsburg, Somerset, Stratton, Wilmington, and Woodford, but also includes small portions of Sunderland and Wardsboro within Bennington and Windham Counties, Vermont. The project proposal includes management activities on National Forest System lands to achieve multiple resource benefits as provided by direction in the 2006 Green Mountain National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan.



The Somerset project environmental assessment is the culmination of over three years of field inventory and resource analysis conducted by Forest Service staff working closely with the public throughout the process. The project proposed action is designed to move the forest landscape toward desired resource conditions within the project area. Included in the proposal are activities to improve wildlife and fish habitat, restore soil and water conditions, increase recreation and scenery viewing opportunities, and improve trail and road networks. The proposal also includes timber harvesting to provide wood products to local and regional economies, enhance forest health and diversity, and create more diverse plant and wildlife habitat.

To review and comment on the project, go to the National Forest website at:

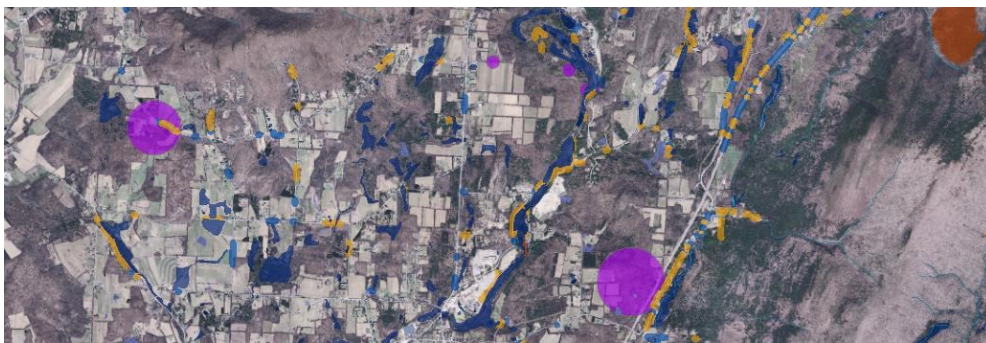
<http://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=53706>.

The documents are also available for review at the Manchester Ranger Station located in Manchester, Vermont and the Green Mountain National Forest Supervisor's Office located in Rutland, Vermont.

BioFinder Mapping Tool Update from the Agency of Natural Resources

BioFinder 3.0 includes the newest Vermont Conservation Design community & species scale elements as well as fixes to the Riparian Wildlife Connectivity component and separation of Physical Landscape Diversity to include Physical Landscape Blocks. You can learn more about BioFinder and Vermont Conservation Design on [the BioFinder website](#). The [BioFinder 3.0 Development Report](#) gets into all the technical details of what has been changed, what each component means, and how it was created. [See the New BioFinder 3.0 Map](#)

As always, Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department Community Wildlife Program staff are available to do presentations or hands-on workshops about how to use BioFinder and Vermont Conservation Design for regional or municipal commissions, conservation groups, and others. Please contact jens.hilke@vermont.gov if you're interested in learning more.



Way to go! to School

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGE

SEPTEMBER 2019–JUNE 2020



The annual **Way to Go! School Challenge** is intended to help reduce single car trips to school. All K-12 schools are invited to participate in making green travel choices (walk, bike, carpool and take the bus) an everyday habit. Everything you need to know is in this quick [Guide](#) to encourage students, staff and faculty to battle carbon pollution head-on for at least one day. Check out the upcoming monthly statewide events including:

Mar 16-20 - [Ride the Bus Week](#)
May 1-31 - [GoVT Walk/Bike Challenge](#)
May 4-8 - [Carpool Week](#)

These and other events and resources are online at <http://www.waytogovt.org>. To participate: select from the Way to Go! list of activities and have fun biking, ridesharing, walking or taking the bus, all or part of your trip. School coordinators may register their school and log any school activity thru May 15th. Sign up at <http://www.waytogovt.org> and log your activities online [here](#) to be eligible to win great prizes and awards on June 3rd. Questions: contact Deb Sachs, Net Zero Vermont, 802-238-9807 or deb@netzerovt.org.

Health Benefits of Energy Efficient Transportation Options

A [recent study](#) by the Vermont Department of Health shows that transportation and energy policies are more important to your health than you might think. The Health Department's analysis of transportation-related health benefits found that changes in how we use transportation in Vermont can not only reduce greenhouse gases, but could also prevent 2,000 early deaths and save \$1.1 billion in health care costs and lost productivity.

The transportation goals set out in the state's [Comprehensive Energy Plan](#) call for walking, biking and bus use to double by 2030. The plan also calls for an increase in carpooling and sets 2050 as the target year for 80% of the cars in Vermont to be electric powered.

"Meeting Vermont's transportation goals is a significant health-in-all-policies objective," said Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD. "When the state takes these important steps to improve transportation and address climate change, it has a ripple effect on public health through improved physical activity, better air quality, traffic safety and overall quality of life."

Electric vehicles are critical to reducing carbon dioxide emissions. The state's plans received a boost from Governor Phil Scott, who proposed new investments to increase access and incentives for electric vehicles in his two most recent budget proposals.

The greatest benefits to health, however, would come from more walking and biking. Vermonters spend nearly 500 minutes using various forms of transportation each week, but only about

50 of those minutes are spent walking or biking.

Dr. Levine said that three behaviors – lack of physical activity, poor diet and tobacco use – contribute to four chronic diseases – cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and lung disease – which result in more than 50 percent of all deaths in Vermont. “Two out of five adults in Vermont do not get enough physical activity, which increases the risk for chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, stroke and dementia. Changing the way we get around can provide important health benefits, as well as reduce the more than \$2 billion it costs to treat chronic diseases in Vermont each year,” said Dr. Levine.

The study found that about 40% of all vehicle trips in Vermont are two miles or shorter. A focus on reducing barriers to walking and biking will make it easier for people to make the healthier choice of physical activity. Even using a bus for longer trips provides for some physical activity by walking to or from a bus stop.

How our communities are designed can promote opportunities to walk, bike or bus. Those choices tend to be easier in areas where housing, jobs and other destinations are close together — connected by sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails, and supported by reliable and efficient public transit services.

In Vermont’s hilly environment, using an electric bicycle can help make trips easier, while still providing health and environmental benefits. Several Vermont utilities currently offer incentives that help make e-bikes more affordable.

The department’s analysis was calculated using the Integrated Transport and Health Impacts Model, which combines local population, health, and transportation data with peer-reviewed scientific evidence to estimate the health, safety, and environmental impacts of transportation system changes. Health impacts were based on changes in physical activity, air quality, and traffic safety.

To learn more about these findings, visit healthvermont.gov/climate-transportation.

Water Heaters and Energy Efficiency

A guide to water heaters: Get the facts on what to look for when buying a water heater. Explore the top water heater types and learn more about each type of water heater. [Click here for the Guide.](#)

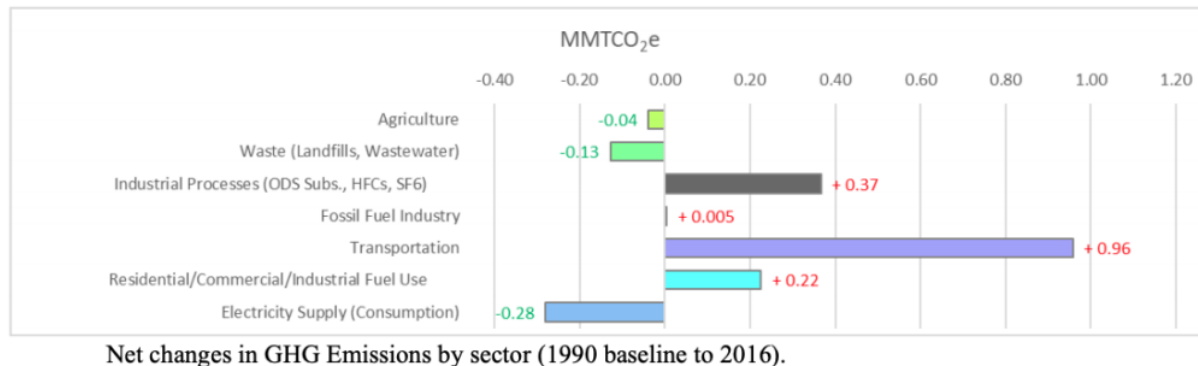


Heat Pump Water Heaters: Heat pump water heaters can cost half as much to operate as traditional electric resistance water heaters, and can save over \$1,400 over the lifetime of the unit. Not only do they heat water, heat pump water heaters also air condition and dehumidify the space around them. [Click here to learn more and to get a rebate!](#)

Limited Progress Toward Meeting State Emission Goals

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) released the [Vermont Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Forecast: Brief 1990 – 2016](#). In addition to providing updated statewide emissions data through 2016, the report also provides estimates for 2017 and 2018 and a forecast through 2026. The report shows that Vermont finally bent the curve on its GHG emissions, with a 4% year-to-year decline between 2015 and 2016. This is the first time in the last five years of reporting that Vermont's emissions posted a decline, after increasing each year from 2012 to 2015. Despite the overall emissions decline from 2015 to 2016 and future forecasts of continued declines for electricity-related emissions, Vermont is still 13% above 1990 emissions levels and not on track to achieve its emissions reduction goals. For further analysis, see [EAN's press release](#), which summarizes the report. The chart on the next page shows that while emissions from agriculture, waste, and electricity are moving in the

right direction, transportation and residential and commercial fuel use have seen net increases that have dwarfed progress in the other sectors.



BCRC Director Discusses Energy Planning on GNAT-TV

[Click](#) to view a recent interview about energy planning and related activities in the region.

Southern Vermont CEDS Project Submission

The 2019 Southern Vermont CEDS project submission window is now open. Public, private, and nonprofit organizations and individuals are encouraged to submit their projects by the March 1 deadline. Whether the projects are new in 2020 or are updates of previously-submitted projects, the appropriate submission forms are online at <https://www.sovermontzone.com/ceds>. Please contact Jonathan Cooper at jcooper@bcrcvt.org with any and all questions, and thank you for your project submissions!

The CEDS Project Review Committee, a volunteer group of civic, business, and nonprofit leaders from around the two counties, will select the most vital projects from the submissions. This year's committee has twelve representatives from around the region:

BENNINGTON COUNTY

- Gordon Black, Town of Manchester
- Kelly Clarke, Centerline Architects
- Jim Martinez, Tri State Area Federal Credit Union
- Elisabeth Marx, Vermont Community Foundation
- Shannon McLenithan, The Bank of Bennington
- James Salerno, Hale Mountain Research

WINDHAM COUNTY

- Drew Bryenton, Commonwealth Dairy
- Gary Fox, Town of Rockingham
- Ed Metcalf, Vermont Distillers
- CJ King, Grace Cottage
- Melissa Trainor, SIT
- Sharon Crossman, Town of Londonderry

Shirenomics

BCRC has returned to GNAT-TV studios in Sunderland to reboot an economic development focused show, Shirenomics. Co-hosted by BCRC's Jonathan Cooper and Matt Harrington of the Southwestern Vermont Chamber of Commerce, the show was relaunched in January with a new interview format and a customized set acquired with funding from the SoVermont program. The show's first guest was BCIC Board Member Paul Carroccio, who discussed cultural assets in the region and recent real estate investment interest in downtown Bennington via the town's Opportunity Zone designations. The show is online at <https://gnat-tv.org/shirenomics-2-0-guest-paul-carroccio/>

Southern Vermont Communications Union District

BCRC staff have been working closely with residents and elected officials across Bennington County to examine and advocate for the creation of a Communications Union District, a regional approach to persistent internet connectivity challenges across southwestern Vermont. Twelve towns within the county will vote on Town Meeting Day on whether to join the Southern Vermont CUD, which will then work to secure \$60,000 to complete a feasibility study that will help establish minimum uptake for organizational viability. CUDs were established by the state legislature to function as political subdivisions of the State of Vermont, and as such are able to access funds from institutions like the Vermont Municipal Bond Bank and the Vermont Economic Development Authority. This approach ensures that the finances of the new CUDs will not be tied to constituent municipalities, but instead will need to stand on their own two feet financially. Each town that votes to join the CUD will need to appoint one resident to represent the town on the CUD's board.

The BCRC's Jonathan Cooper, who has assisted the Task Force advocating for the Southern Vermont CUD, recently joined Shaftsbury Select Board Chair Tim Scoggins on an episode of the News Project on GNAT-TV to discuss the CUD process in greater detail. The show is online at <https://gnat-tv.org/the-news-project-in-studio-communication-union-districts-the-background/>

Events and Opportunities....

Introduction to the American Tree Farm System and the Vermont Tree Farm Program with Mary Sisock, Educator and Tree Farm committee member and Jock Irons, VT Tree Farmer from Woodford. March 4, 2020 from 6-7pm at Merck Forest and Farmland Center, Rte. 314, Rupert. Learn about good stewardship of your woods, increasing your chances of seeing wildlife, maintaining clean water, and enjoy recreating on your land.



"Joe w/Jo" @ Charlie's Coffee House—March 4 - 8:30-9:30 am, 39 Bonnet St, Manchester .

Want to meet other entrepreneurs, small business owners, and professionals in Bennington? Are you working from home and miss face-to-face connections and sharing ideas? Join us (coffee or your favorite hot beverage on us!) as The Lighting Jar brings its "Joe w/Jo" series around Bennington County to not only meet local business owners, but to also discuss topics of interest and support each other with best practices, advice and tips! Come meet the folks at Charlie's Coffee House and even say hello to Charlie!

Grant applications for Downtown Transportation Fund Grants are due March 9 - See the [2020 Downtown Transportation Fund Program Description](#) for eligibility, funding and application requirements. Any municipality with a Designated Downtown may apply for funding so long as they don't currently have two or more open DTF grants open. The maximum grant amount is \$100,000 with an additional \$100,000 available for eligible storm water projects. Grant funds may not exceed 50% of the overall project and a 50% match is required. Projects must demonstrate the ability to start the project within 18 months and complete within 30 months. Projects that have been identified, described, and well supported through a downtown area master planning process such as [Better Connections](#) or other planning process focused on the downtown, will receive additional bonus points.

The Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) are due by Friday March 13 2020 at 5:00 PM ET.

[AFG Application Guidance Materials:](#)

- Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- Cost Share Calculator
- Application Checklist
- Narrative Get Ready Guide - Narrative
- Organization Evaluation - Vehicle Acquisition
- Organization Evaluation - Operations & Safety



Community Showcase: The Lightning Jar, The Northshire Bookstore, 4869 Main St, Manchester

March 13 - Join us in the conference room when Chief Entrepreneurial Director, Joelle Greenland, AICP, presents The Lightning Jar--an entrepreneurial coworking space in Bennington and early stage business incubator that connects people to resources and assists their business dreams. Learn more at www.lightningjarvt.com.

Digital Marketing for Small Businesses - March 17, 9-10:30 am, \$20 ([RSVP HERE](#)).

Charlie's Coffee House/Upstairs Conference Room, 39 Bonnet St, Manchester.

Digital marketing expert Erin Lyons will show you the best tools and time-saving tricks to take the guesswork out of going digital. You'll leave with a DIY starter kit that will help you build a professional website and online presence in less than a week, with less than \$200. This workshop is for business owners with little to no marketing or website experience. Coffee and breakfast goodies included. You'll learn how to:

- Build a beautiful, easy-to-use, affordable website
- Get found on Google through SEO
- Set up and use an email list to cultivate customers
- Set up online payment and booking systems
- Focus on the right social media channels
- Advertise online wisely
- Find inexpensive or free resources for photography, logos, and graphic design
- Find marketing professionals if you need more help

Erin Lyons is a content strategist and marketing consultant with more than 20 years of experience updating brands and websites for clients such as Johns Hopkins, Cornell University, United Rentals, Bennington College, Stanford Health and more. She resides in Sunderland, VT. Learn more about Erin at www.erinelyons.com.

BCRC March Meeting - March 19 at the Hill Farm Inn, Sunderland. Green Mountain Power emergency response and Commission discussion of the Transportation and Climate Initiative. See page 1 for details.



Bennington County Forester Meet and Greet - Dorset Inn, Dorset, VT on April 3 from 5:00-7:00pm.

Woodlands for Wildlife is hosting a meet and greet with the new Bennington County Forester Cory Creagan. Cory has stepped into this role with a tremendous amount of experience that he is eager to share with landowners. Join us for an evening of conversation and connection around woodlands and wildlife. This meet and greet will take place at the . The event is free with snacks and a cash bar.

75th Annual Town Officers Education Conferences

APRIL 8, 2020 at the Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, Vermont and APRIL 15, 2020 at the Hilton Burlington Lake Champlain, Burlington, VT. The 2020 Town Officers

Education Conference - now in its 75th year - is a day of educational sessions that serve a rich variety of town officials and leaders. Eighteen educational sessions are planned, and there will be exhibitors on hand to answer your questions one-on-one. To register: <https://www.uvm.edu/extension/toec>.

Third Annual Placemaking Workshop – April 9th, Town Hall Theater, Middlebury .

Join AARP and their partners to learn about Creative Placemaking, a hands-on approach to improving public spaces and making them more livable. This workshop is designed to provide those new to placemaking with ideas and tools to get started as well as for placemakers who want to build upon their existing skill set and network with other placemakers.

New this year we will share best practices for Winter Placemaking with guest speaker Amanda O'Rourke from 880 Cities in Toronto. Tips and tools will be described to implement placemaking projects, and we will provide 'recipes' for practical application in small town settings from our recently completed [DIY Community Cookbook](#). You will also hear from VT communities who've successfully led pop-up demonstration projects last year. Participants of the workshop will be eligible to apply for one of three \$3,000 grants from AARP Vermont to purchase supplies, promote, and implement a demonstration project aimed at building permanent change in their community! There will be additional funding opportunities available from the VT Arts Council and Yestermorrow.

Registration is Required & Capacity is Limited: aarp.event.com/Placemaking20

Bennington Food Network Summit - Save the Date: April 24-25 at Bennington College's Center for the Advancement of Public Action. CAPA and the Bennington County Regional Commission will lead The Bennington Food Network Summit, consisting of trainings, workshops, panels and networking.

Vermont Walk/Bike Summit - Friday May 8, 2020 at Middlebury's Town Hall Theater

The Addison County Regional Planning Commission is working VTrans and a broad group of partners to host the fourth bi-annual Vermont Walk and Bike Summit.

They have enlisted a great keynote speaker, Don Kostelec of Vitruvian Planning (<http://vitruvianplanning.com/>) and are putting together four tracks of interactive programs and workshops focused on Advocacy and Funding, the Built Environment, Economic Development, and Mobile Workshops. Look for registration information soon!



New Emergency Preparedness Course coming to Southern Vermont - May 14th and 15th from 8AM-4PM each day in Londonderry at the Londonderry Volunteer Rescue Squad, located at 6068 VT Route 100 - Efforts of the Emergency Management Planners of Windham Regional Commission, Rutland Regional Planning Commission, and the BCRC, along with Vermont Emergency Management, and the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium have been successful and will bring a special emergency preparedness course to the southern Vermont region this spring.

The course: *Crisis Management for School-Based Incidents for Key Decision Makers*, is a two-day management/planning level course that covers all-hazards planning, preparedness, vulnerability assessment, threat assessment management, all-hazards response, all-hazards recovery, and scenario-based activities. This course has been developed for those in Emergency Management, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Service, Schools, Municipal Employees, Healthcare, Law Enforcement, Public Safety Communications, and others that are interested in this training.

This is the only offering of this course in Vermont, and the only current offering in the Northeast. For more information about this course, please visit the [RDPC website](#). To register for this course, visit the [Learning Management System](#) (LMS). If you have never used LMS, click [here](#) for information about how to sign up and log in. For questions about this training or issues with LMS, please contact Allison Strohl at the BCRC (astrohl@bcrcvt.org).

Annual Meeting of the Bennington County Regional Commission - May 21 at the Publyk House on Route 7A in Bennington. Our guest speaker this year will be Vermont's Secretary of the Agency of Agriculture Food and Markets, Anson Tebbetts. Look for information and an invitation in April!

Apple Tree Pruning and Maintenance Workshop in Shaftsbury, VT



Saturday April 4, 2020
Shaftsbury, Vermont

This event is sponsored by the **Bennington County Conservation District** and co-sponsored by the **Vermont Woodlands Association** and **Vermont Coverts**.

Please join Paul Morgan, owner of Morgan Mountain Organic Gardeners in Middletown Springs, VT, as he demonstrates and discusses Apple Tree pruning and maintenance. Paul is currently a certified member of Greenworks, the Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association. He has worked with gardens and trees for the last 40 years and has been working for the last 20 years here in Vermont pruning smaller stature trees and shrubs. This will be a great opportunity to get outside and learn about Apple Trees.

This will be a hands-on demonstration of how to properly prune and care for wild apple trees. Paul has been releasing and pruning apple trees for many years. Even though the apples provide an autumn benefit, the best time to prune the trees is in the early spring. The discussion will focus on identifying trees to save, and the steps to take to bring them back as healthy productive trees. There will be plenty of time for hands-on training. Bring your gloves, pruning tools and your snowshoes if necessary. All are welcome, but pre-registration and a fee of \$10 per person required. Limit of 20 participants.

8:30-9:00 Meet at the Vargo Farm, [1649 Cider Mill Rd Shaftsbury, VT](#)

9:00-12:00 Apple tree pruning demonstration, hands on training

12:00 Drive home safely

Directions to the Vargo farm: Take US 7 North or South to Shaftsbury (exit 2). Take a right on RT 7A heading north. 2.1 miles from exit 2, turn right on Airport Rd (which goes past the State Police Barracks), and in 1.7 miles, turn left onto Cider Mill Road (shortly after crossing onto dirt and over railroad tracks). About 1.5 mile north on Cider Mill, the house is on the left (yellow house with red barn).

Pre-registration is required. Fee for the workshop is \$10 per person, to be paid at the site.
To register, please email infor@vermontwoodlands.org, or call 802-747-7900 by April 1, 2020.