



## **July Meeting: Thursday, July 20, 5:30pm, Bennington Project Independence**

- VT Department of Environmental Conservation  
Municipal Roads General Permit
- Regional Food Systems Study

### **The BCRC's July Meeting**

The BCRC's July meeting will cover two topics. First, **Jim Ryan, from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation Municipal Roads Program** will discuss the new General Permit, part of a state effort to reduce storm water erosion from municipal roads. Municipalities will implement a customized, multi-year plan to stabilize their road drainage systems. The plans will include activities for bringing road drainage systems up to basic maintenance standards and additional corrective measures to reduce erosion to meet water quality standards. Second, **Liz Ruffa, the Executive Director of Northshire Grows** will discuss findings from a recent USDA funded regional food systems study. The BCRC partnered with Liz and Northshire Grows, a project of Food Connects, to assess farm viability and food access issues in the greater Bennington area.

The meeting will be **Thursday, July 20<sup>th</sup> at the Bennington Project Independence** located at 614 Harwood Hill Road (VT Route 7A) in Bennington. At 5:30 PM there will be a light meal and networking. The program will begin at 6 PM and will end at approximately 7:25 PM.

## \$300,000 for Brownfield Redevelopment



Jim Henderson (center) of BCRC accepts a \$300,000 check from Secretary of Vermont Agency of Natural Resources Julie Moore (left) and Acting EPA Regional Administrator Deb Szaro (right) to further Brownfield identification efforts in Bennington County.

The BCRC Brownfields Redevelopment Program recently received a \$300,000 Brownfield Assessment grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to identify and study potentially contaminated sites in Bennington County. The program's purpose is to identify properties that are vacant or underutilized because of known or perceived contamination, to conduct environmental assessments, and to develop remediation and re-use plans that will lead to redevelopment that meets identified community objectives. \$200,000 will target sites potentially impacted by hazardous substances, while \$100,000 will target sites with potential petroleum impacts. [Read more...](#)

# Announcements

## SoVT Economic Development Summit, Stratton Mountain

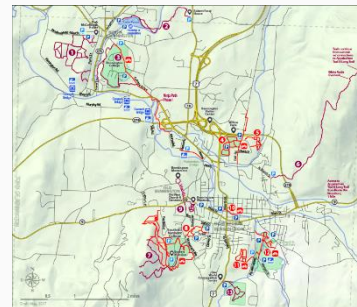


On May 24th over 130 people attended this inaugural event co-hosted by BCRC, Brattleboro Development Corporation (BDCC), Southeastern Vermont Economic Development Strategies (SeVEDS), and Bennington County Industrial Corporation (BCIC). Speakers included the honorable Governor Phil Scott, Dr. Robert Triest, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston...

[Read more...](#)

## Bennington Trail Map

Some of Bennington's best places to walk and hike are secrets known only to knowledgeable locals. Residents and out of town guests may discover the trails at Mile-Round Woods or the trail to White Rocks through a chance encounter, but information about these assets was either non-existent or scattered piecemeal on various maps and websites – until now. The BCRC and the Town of Bennington created "The Bennington Trail Map" to... [Read more...](#)



## Way 2 Go! Focuses on Transportation Alternatives for Schools



This year's Way 2 Go! Program focuses on getting K-12 schools on board to battle carbon pollution head-on. Schools will get the tools needed to motivate students, staff, and teachers to bike, walk, carpool, or ride the bus. **Any school with a participation rate over 50% will be entered to win a fully-permitted AllEarth Solar Tracker!** The program will run from September 25 through October 6, 2017. [Click here to sign up your school!](#) [Read more...](#)

## Tax Increment Financing District Legislation Approved

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Districts have been available in Vermont as a public infrastructure financing tool for many years, but the number of districts has been restricted. Legislation passed this year allows the formation of up to six additional TIF Districts. [Read more...](#)



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## Public Service Department Issues Determination of Energy Compliance for BCRC's Energy Plans

The Commissioner of the Department of Public Service has issued an affirmative determination that the Bennington County Regional Plan and the Bennington County Regional Energy Plan comply with the requirements of 24 V.S.A. § 4352 for enhanced energy planning. This determination, the first such certificate granted under Vermont's new Act 174 energy planning law, is based solely on the plans' compliance with the statutory planning requirements.

The BCRC spent over two years developing the new energy plan, technically an amendment to the comprehensive regional plan. Both documents can be downloaded at [www.bcrct.org](http://www.bcrct.org).

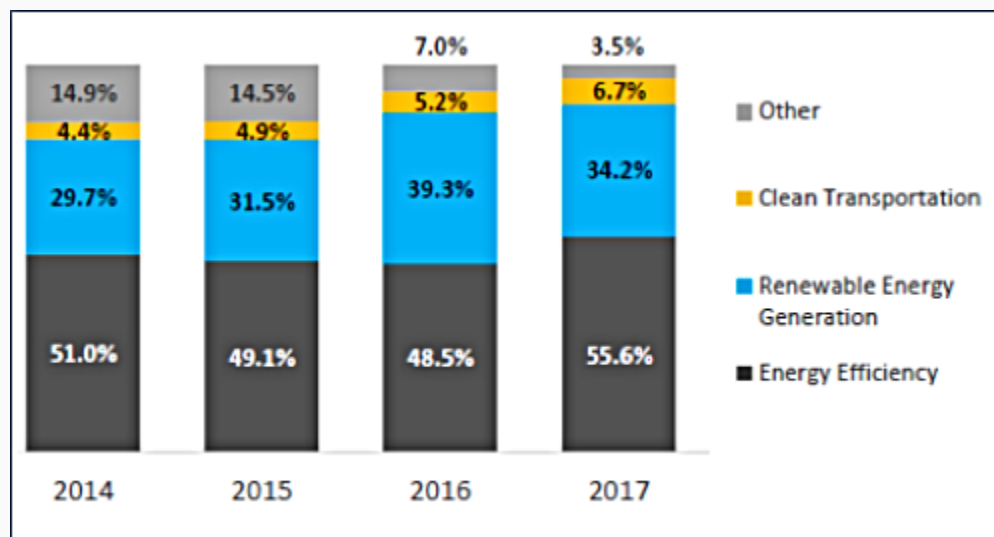
The regional energy plan is intended to provide a policy framework, and to suggest specific actions that will assist in advancing the state's energy goals; specifically, the goal of obtaining 90 percent of energy for all uses from renewable sources by 2050.

With the certification, the Regional Plan now has an elevated status in Section 248 regulatory proceedings before the Public service board, and the BCRC now has the authority to make similar determinations regarding the consistency of municipal plans with Act 174.

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## Growth in Vermont Clean Energy Businesses

A steady increase in the clean energy job market is detailed in the 2017 Clean Energy Industry Report released by the Clean Energy Development Fund (CEDF). The report states that there are over 19,000 Vermonters employed in clean energy, 12,000 of which are full time jobs. With one in every 16 workers - or about six percent of the State's workforce - now part of this economic sector, Vermont has the highest number of per capita clean energy workers of any U.S. state. Clean energy includes electrical and thermal energy efficiency, clean transportation, all forms of renewable energy, as well as work to modernize the electrical grid to be able to distribute larger amounts of renewable energy. [Read more...](#)



## Better Roads Grants

The Vermont Better Roads Grant Program recently announced grant awards for 2018. Municipalities in Bennington County will receive \$168,640 for a variety of projects to be completed by December 31, 2018. BCRC will create updated culvert and road erosion inventories in Arlington, Dorset, and Shaftsbury. The work will help the towns comply with the 2018 Municipal Road General Permit, which is required by the Vermont Clean Water Act. Road crews in Peru, Pownal and Shaftsbury will be busy completing road erosion projects through the installation of upgraded culverts and stone lined ditches. A bridge or box culvert will be installed on Rice Lane in Bennington. The Better Road Grant Program receives grant applications each spring and BCRC is ready to assist our municipalities with the application process. Contact [Jim Henderson](#) for more information.

## Events & Workshops



**July 14, 2 - 4pm - *Ecology of the Dene Walk & Talk: Forests, Wetlands, Meadows***

Join Hildene's horticulturist, education director, and Dene Farm manager and discover Hildene's lower 200 acres. Discuss the importance of messy forests and the

**August 9, 5 - 6:30pm - *Pollinator Haven***

Workshop presenters, Andrea Luchini and Diane Newton, will present and discuss native pollinators, the perils they face, and what to do to enhance their numbers in our own backyards. Following the

issue of invasive plants; explore the wetland and its ecosystem and ecological importance; and visit the bird sanctuary to learn about meadow ecology and efforts to encourage bobolinks and other pollinators. \$5 for Hildene members, \$10 for non-members. (Rain Date: Rriday, July 21, from 2 - 4:30pm) For more information or to register, contact Stephany at (802) 367-7960 or [stephanie@hildene.org](mailto:stephanie@hildene.org).

presentation, participants explore Hildene's grounds and gardens to observe native pollinators and see how the simple principles of pollinator conservation can be implemented in any landscape. Registration is required: \$5 for Hildene members, \$10 for non-members. For more information and to register, contact Stephanie at (802) 367-7960 or [stephanie@hildene.org](mailto:stephanie@hildene.org).

## Grant Opportunities

### Bicycle & Pedestrian Program

The VTrans 2017 Bicycle and Pedestrian Program is open to applications. This funding opportunity is available to improve access and safety for bicyclists and/or pedestrians through the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure projects. Projects include sidewalks, shared use paths, crossing improvements and bike lanes. In 2016, nearly \$4 million in projects were initiated under this grant program. Scoping studies, large-scale design/construction projects and small-scale, state funded projects also are accepted. **Applications are due by 1 p.m., Friday, July 14, 2017. To access the application, click [HERE](#).** For assistance applying to this program, contact [Mark Anders](#) at BCRC.

### Municipal Planning Grants

The Department of Housing and Community Development has released applications for the coming year's municipal planning grants. Up to \$20,000 will be awarded to eligible municipalities chosen through a competitive selection process. See the [FY18 MPG Program](#)

[Description](#) for details on eligibility, funding and the competitive criteria. Grant applications are due Monday, **October 2, 2017** and grants will be awarded by mid-December. \$450,000 in MPG funds will be available this year. If you are new to MPGs or need a refresher, sign up for a GoToWebinar training on using the system and preparing a competitive MPG application on Tuesday, August 8 from Noon – 12:45. Contact DHCD staff [HERE](#) for more information and to register. Space is limited. [Read more...](#)

## Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid Pilot Project

Vermont's regional planning commissions and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) are pleased to invite municipalities to sign up for the new Municipal Roads Grants-in-Aid Pilot Project. The Vermont Clean Water Initiative Program is offering approximately \$2.1 million to support municipalities implement best stormwater management practices on municipal roads and help towns get a jump start on the 2018 DEC Municipal Road Permit requirements. This program is voluntary. To participate, municipalities must sign up by July 5, 2017. For more information or help with program sign-up, please contact [Jim Henderson](#) at the BCRC



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