

WRC STAFF ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

This summary highlights staff activity during the month of JULY 2025

The lead staff person is listed in parentheses by each programmatic area heading.

Regional plan adopted! The Commission adopted the regional plan update following a multi-year process at its meeting on July 29th. The new plan goes into effect on September 2, 2025.

Brownfield Brownfields Redevelopment (*Susan Westa*)

- Brownfields Committee – Hosted a special meeting and preliminarily approved cleanup funding for the Morningside Shelter site.
- Bellows Falls Train Station – Finalizing details on cooperative agreement.
- Bellows Falls Bike Project – Finalizing details on cooperative agreement.
- Windham School Site – Had call with Cathy Fales about next steps. Approved partial funding for Phase II Assessment.
- Morningside Shelter – Working with Groundworks Project Manager to prepare for cleanup funding. Received approval from Brattleboro Savings and Loan. Developed project memo for WRC Executive Board approval.
- ACRES Training – Attended training about updates to system.

Community Development (*Susan Westa*)

- Let's Build Homes – Attended Outreach Planning Meeting.
- HomeShare Windham County – Attended program kickoff meeting at Neighborhood Connections in Londonderry.
- 4 town Flood Adaptation Project – Updated the 4 towns with a save the date for the public meetings and one page overview.
- SEVT Housing Coalition – Attended Planning Meeting.
- Southeaster VT Economic Development Strategies – Attended monthly meeting.
- Londonderry Village Wastewater Project: Matt assisted with general project coordination between the Town, Village Wastewater Committee, and Engineer on the development of design plans, property owner connection applications, and funding opportunities for the wastewater projects in the south and north villages. The projects are expected to be bid this fall and constructed in 2026.
- Matt continues to work with the consultant for the Windham Regional Cultural Plan project, Cultural Planning Group (CPG), and the towns of Brattleboro, Wilmington, and Rockingham. The consultant has completed a draft framework for the plan and three public workshops were held in the region in July. A final draft of the plan is expected to be completed by early fall.

Emergency & Resiliency Planning (*Alyssa Sabetto*)

- Weston RIVER project team met with Rebecca Ellis of Senator Welch's office to discuss Congressional Directed Spending.
- Final documents submitted for Hazard Mitigation Grant Program applications under DR 4720.
- Alyssa completed training requirements for renewal of her Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) certification.
- Completed incorporating received comments on draft Townshend Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) and sent to Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) for prioritized review.

- Updated emergency related contact lists for towns.
- Met with the Winhall Planning Commission Chair about starting their flood hazard bylaw update in conjunction with their planned zoning update.
- Attended Wardsboro Selectboard hearing about zoning updates.
- Second Stratton LHMP meeting was held and worked on drafting the plan.
- Attended Front Porch Forum webinar about use by Emergency Management Directors/town for emergency information sharing.
- Met with Gary Fox to discuss updating the Rockingham flood hazard bylaw.
- Met with Jamaica to discuss CDBG-DR, LHMP update need and upcoming Act 250 hearing.
- Alyssa completed the training requirements to become a Certified Emergency Management Director (EMD).
- Attended RPC/VEM quarterly meeting.
- Margo is working with Town of Marlboro representatives completed the Marlboro Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Draft. The draft went out for internal town review.
- Chris met with Senator Welch in Weston where he announced his introduction of a bill that would reform FEMA, with a goal of making it more effective in responding to state and local needs.
- Chris has been serving on the legislative Dam Safety Emergency Operations Planning committee.

Energy *(Mike McConnell & Anand Fedele)*

- Held discussions with Grafton, Wardsboro, Londonderry & Halifax about becoming Project Manager for MERP awards.
- Attended Select Board meetings in Wardsboro & Grafton to present Project Management proposals.
- Participated in monthly Energy Planners Meeting.
- Participated in bi weekly MERP coordination meetings
- Assisted Athens with budgeting and MERP grant coordination
- Outreach to towns to about MERP implementation and mini-grant reporting
- Data management to support MERP implementation—compiled project data from energy audits to inform region-wide project tracking and
- Contractor outreach to historic specialists and weatherization companies to support implementation
- Conducted Graft MERP Project Management site visit.
- Prepared materials to support submission of the Windham Regional Plan to the state for a determination of energy compliance.
- Began working with Rockingham on an enhanced energy plan.
- Consulted w/ Putney about the idea of an enhanced energy planning project.
- Met w/ Brattleboro Planning Department staff to discuss enhanced energy planning.
- Researched methodology to conduct forest block/forest clearing analysis as part of enhanced energy planning requirements outlined in WRC's Climate Pollution Reduction Grant agreement with the state.
- Chris has participated in a Public Utility Commission docket examining the resiliency of Vermont's electricity grid.
- Chris continues to participate on the Building Energy Code Working Group legislative committee.

GIS/Mapping *(Jeff Nugent & Lisa Donnelly)*

- Walked trails at Winston Prouty campus with a staff member, then made additional edits to a draft trail map.
- Provided information to a Windham selectboard member on culvert sizing and flood resiliency.
- Act 181/regional plan future land use: worked on boundaries for Londonderry and Weston; met with BCRC staff to review their methodology and discuss compatibility and our common border; participated in bi-monthly mapping discussion with other RPCs; updated our online work map.
- Started on edits for updated proposed zoning districts for Londonderry.
- Grants in Aid: site visits, preparation of maps and pre-construction site summaries for Halifax, Putney, Townshend.
- Created maps of forest blocks and setbacks for the Putney zoning bylaw update project.
- Created a list of bridges for the Wilmington highway superintendent.
- Completed Department of Housing and Community Development end of year reporting.
- Pulled together commuting data between Brattleboro and Hinsdale for Brattleboro Reformer reporter.
- Spent three days with the Windham road foreman and one day solo working on erosion inventory and culvert inventory field work.
- Worked on mapping features along the portion of the West River Trail upper section near Townshend Dam.
- Updated a map for the Windham Region Cultural Plan.
- Bondville village center: cleaned up photos; added photo locations to map; finalized map for town's application to the state for designation.
- Posted Title VI information on WRC website.
- Met with Wilmington Trails Committee member regarding upcoming map changes for Hoot Toot & Whistle Trail; updated TrailFinder page for Hoot Toot & Whistle trail to include trail closure information.
- Worked on a map of the Sacketts Brook watershed.
- Created an on-line dashboard for Grafton to track their road erosion inventory updates.
- Pulled together data on population density of Vermont towns for State Senator Wendy Harrison.
- Worked on finalizing Townshend's sidewalk data, and created maps of the sidewalk network for both the town's internal use, and for a grant application.
- Attended monthly Vermont Trails and Greenways Council board meeting.
- Met with website contractor to kick off the update process, and had a follow-up meeting to discuss progress.
- Finalized the updated Marlboro E911 address map.
- Created tracking dashboards for Stratton and Windham road erosion inventories
- Created a map in ArcGIS Online of traffic counts for summer count planning.
- Updated several GIS base map layers on WRC's ArcGIS Online site.
- Printed off maps of Winhall to give to the Winhall school.
- Helped a local forester with a question about downloading data from VCGI.
- Created a shapefile showing Grants In Aid and Better Roads award locations in Windham and Townshend.
- Cleaned up and updated Townshend's road map annotation.
- Conducted a traffic study at the Wilmington transfer station – collected data and created a report showing vehicle volume by day and hour.

- Set out and picked up traffic counters in Wilmington on five town highways: Mann Rd, Ray Hill Rd, Chimney Hill Rd, Haystack Rd, and Fairview Ave. Processed data and began working on summary sheets.
- Researched options for creating our bike, ped, and traffic summary sheets without Microsoft Publisher, created new templates using Libre Office Draw.
- Worked on updates to Dover's E911 map, adding new private roads, development sites, and hydrants.
- Fixed errors and filled in missing data for Wilmington culverts and short structures in VT Culverts.
- Continued sidewalk data collection work in Newfane.
- Set up pedestrian counters in Dover on the Valley Trail and Crosstown Trail.
- Updated Guilford 911 map: added new private roads, removed/moved/added new E911 addresses, made edits to address and road annotation, updated our cemetery data with E911 addresses.
- Added town long bridges in Stratton to VT Culverts.
- Compiled data on culverts and hydro-connected roads in Stratton for their Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Created a database for mapping flower barrels for the Town of Wilmington; began populating the database using data from the town and Google Streetview in preparation for field work.
- Compiled Londonderry census data for town plan update.
- Collected bike parking data in downtown Brattleboro for July.
- Continued data collection for the Road Erosion Inventory in Brookline.

Municipal Planning Assistance (*Matt Bachler & Mike McConnell*)

- Jamaica Town Plan Update: Made final updates to draft Town Plan and worked with Planning Commission on a schedule for final approval process.
- Assisted Town of Rockingham with a Neighborhood Development Area application for Bellows Falls.
- Assisted Town of Winhall with a Village Center application for Bondville.
- Met with Weston Planning Commission to discuss zoning bylaw updates and recommendations and began working on red-lined revisions.
- WRC staff met to coordinate around Town Plan update projects WRC is assisting with.
- Met with Londonderry Planning Commission to go over the process for readopting Town Plan. Provided town with updated community profile data.
- Provided Brookline with updated community data for Town Plan update.
- Provided Dover Planning Commission with a summary on what zoning bylaw changes would be needed for the town to be eligible for a Neighborhood Development Area for West Dover.
- Completed reviews of draft Athens Town Plan and Townshend Town Plan for conformance with statute requirements.
- Met with the Whitingham Planning Commission to begin the update for their Town Plan.
- Met with Westminster to kick off Town Plan update process.
- Attended Athens Town Plan Planning Commission Hearing.
- Participated in VCRD Windham Community Meetings.
- Created Draft 0.0 for Putney Bylaw Modernization Grant project.

- Putney Zoning Project – Sue and Mike attended Putney Planning Commission Meeting. Participated in project management meeting. Attended Public meeting about proposed Forest Block Overlay District.
- Attended Zoning for ADU webinar.
- Wilmington Town Plan Project – Sue reviewed current town plan and prepared for August Planning Commission Meeting.

Natural Resources & Water Quality (*Margo Ghia*)

- Prepared clean water project background for DEC Staff review for the Londonderry Barker Road Culvert.
- Attended the Connecticut River Joint Commission Annual Full Commission meeting.
- Organized a meeting with Green Mountain National Forest representatives and the Deerfield Wild & Scenic study committee.
- Prepared for and led stormwater site visits in Wilmington for water quality partners. Visited 6 sites and strategized for moving projects forward.
- Participated in the Dover Stormwater Master Plan meeting to prioritize projects for 30% designs.
- Outreach with the Wilmington Town Manager on 2 potential floodplain projects in Town.
- Participated in the monthly Regional Tactical Basin Planning meeting.
- Participated in a stormwater site visit in Guilford (with UVM, Guilford CC, Guilford PC, WCNRCD, Guilford Preservation).
- Attended the Public Input Session for the Vermont Conservation Plan.
- Took Vermont DEC Operations & Maintenance Trainings Tier 1, Part 1, Tier 1, Part 2 and Tier 2, Part 1.
- Conducted outreach to the Town of Londonderry about the Water Infrastructure Sponsorship Program.
- Connected the Town of Rockingham with the Connecticut River Conservancy for an Island Parking Lot Stormwater project.
- Chris and Margo participated in the Berkshire Wildlife Linkage Meeting.
- Jeff and Margo met with an ecological consultant for the Town of Vernon about advancing a wildlife corridor study.
- Chris is serving on the Vermont Conservation Plan Technical Advisory Committee.

Project Review (*Alyssa Sabetto*)

- Project Review Committee meeting held.
- Drafted and filed comment letter with the Public Utility Commission regarding the proposed Vernon 3.5 MW solar project.

Regional Plan Update (*Matt Bachler*)

- Held public hearings on proposed Regional Plan update on July 22nd and July 24th.
- The Full Commission met on July 29th and voted to adopt the Windham Regional Plan update. Sent notification to all towns in the region.
- Attended bi-monthly RPC roundtables about Act 181 and the Regional Plan update process.
- Continued work on draft regional land use mapping based on Act 181 standards.
- Continued working on informational flyer and other outreach materials about Act 181 and regional land use map changes for meetings with municipalities beginning in the fall of 2025.

- Responded to general inquiries from towns about Act 181 and new regional plan requirements.

Transportation (*Colin Bratton*)

- Provided Municipal Project Management services for the Spring Hill Road culvert replacement project in Londonderry.
- Met with the Newfane Salt Shed planning team. The Town is going to put out a new Request for Proposal for a design engineer to update the existing plans.
- Worked as Municipal Project Manager for the Stratton Grout Pond project. The Phase I archeological study on Grout Pond Road was completed by the University of Vermont.

Other

- Matt reviewed and commented on updated versions of the State Planning Manuals being developed by DuBois & King.
- Alyssa took over responsibility for the Bond Bank Water Supply Aid subcontract with DEC. She reviewed project materials and contacted the Westminster Aqueduct Society per their prior ask for assistance from WRC.
- VT Planners Association – Sue attended Executive Committee Meeting.
- WRC supported convenings of town officials to share their experiences and needs related to technical assistance as part of the Vermont Evaluation of Rural Technical Assistance project being led by the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, and executed by the University of Vermont. Chris represents regional planning commissions on the project's technical advisory committee.