

# SWRPC

## Commission Highlights

September 2013

Vol. 19 - No. 9

### **Fall Commission Meeting**

The Planning Commission's 2013 Fall Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, **October 15<sup>th</sup>** at The Inn at East Hill in Troy, NH. Our featured speaker will be Dr. Cameron Wake who is a research professor in climatology at the Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans and Space at the University of New Hampshire. Dr. Wake's presentation is titled *Climate Change in Southern New Hampshire: Past, Present and Future*. For additional information or to register, please contact Becky Baldwin or Nancy Cavanaugh of Commission staff.

### **Natural Resource Survey Deadline Extended**

This is a reminder requesting that our towns complete the Natural Resource Survey that was distributed to the chairperson of each conservation commission or town office. The Planning Commission is collecting data to be used in the development of the Southwest Region Environmental Plan which is a component of the Monadnock Region Future initiative. The survey covers a wide range of environmental topics and will be a valuable source of information in preparing the Plan. It is important that feedback be provided by each community in order to gain a better understanding of the top environmental priorities and concerns. The return date has been extended to **October 18, 2013** and can be done on-line or sent to us by mail or email. If your community did not receive a survey, please contact Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.

### **Draft Broadband Plan Available for Public Review**

The Planning Commission has made available a draft of the Southwest Region Broadband Plan for public review and comment. This draft Plan, which can be accessed at [www.swrpc.org/broadbandplan](http://www.swrpc.org/broadbandplan), outlines proposed goals, objectives and strategies for addressing the needs for and challenges to broadband availability and adoption in the region. Commission staff developed this draft Plan with assistance from the Southwest Broadband Stakeholder Group (SWBSG) as part of its work on the New Hampshire Broadband Mapping and Planning Program. A public forum was held on September 25, 2013 to review the components of the draft Plan and to respond to questions and comments from the public in attendance. The Planning Commission will be accepting public input on the draft Plan until the end of the 2013 calendar year. For additional information, please contact Tara Germond or Steve Waleryszak of Commission staff.

### **Park and Ride "Toolkit" Test Drive Scheduled in Peterborough**

Recently Planning Commission staff, in conjunction with Central and Strafford regional planning commissions, and a NH DOT steering committee produced a draft "how-to" guide for municipalities and organizations with an interest in developing park and ride lots. The project was undertaken because there is no process in place for evaluating or developing candidate park and ride lots in the State. As part of its scope of work, the three Planning Commissions have been asked by NH DOT to "test drive" the draft Park and Ride Toolkit before making it publicly available. A Peterborough-based task force has agreed to test out the Toolkit. The "toolkit" is intended to provide guidance to municipalities through the various phases of a park and ride lot including needs assessment, design, evaluation, monitoring and maintenance. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of Commission staff.

### **Hazard Mitigation Update**

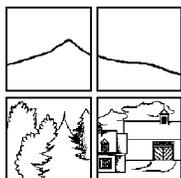
The Planning Commission recently began working with the Town of Greenfield in updating their Hazard Mitigation Plan. The first meeting took place on September 24, 2013 and the next meeting is scheduled for October 29, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the Greenfield Public Library. These meetings are open to the public. The Commission also assisted the towns of Marlow, Nelson, New Ipswich, Rindge and Stoddard with updates, which were recently granted final approval from FEMA. For additional information, please contact Lisa Murphy of Commission staff.

## Transportation Data Collection Fieldwork

The month of September represented an active period in the collection of data in support of several transportation planning activities. Staff conducted fieldwork as follows:

- Completed traffic counts for the 2013 season at 138 locations as specified by the NH Department of Transportation.
- Collected bicycle traffic counts at 18 locations throughout the Region along rail trails and local bike paths to better understand usage of the trail network.
- Deployed traffic counters at the town lines in several communities throughout the Region to gather data on day time populations and traffic flows.
- Researched turning movements in Chesterfield and Walpole for Road Safety Audit applications.
- Conducted visual surveys to determine how many people are commuting alone, as well as the number of commercial vehicles traveling through our communities.

For additional information, please contact Steve Waleryszak of Commission staff.



## Topic-based Focus Groups

In support of the update of the regional plan for the Southwest Region, the Planning Commission is conducting a series of focus group discussions as follows:

- economic development - October 4<sup>th</sup>
- water infrastructure - October 15<sup>th</sup>
- natural resources - October 22<sup>nd</sup>
- transportation - October 28<sup>th</sup>
- health - November 15<sup>th</sup>
- housing - November 21<sup>st</sup>
- energy - November (to be determined)

For additional information, please contact Tara Germond of Commission staff.

**Southwest Region Planning Commission**

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