

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission

FEB 3 2017

Municipal Energy Survey Instructions

The Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission is developing a comprehensive regional energy plan, and needs your input! This plan will identify goals and policies that can be implemented on a regional level to meet the State of Vermont's Comprehensive Energy Plan Goals. The CVRPC is working with its member municipalities to identify techniques to achieve these goals including the siting of renewable resources, rolling out building energy efficiency programs, coordinating transportation with land use planning, and protecting locally significant resources from adverse impacts of renewable energy development.

CVRPC is requesting the each Selectboard, Planning Commission, Energy Committee and Conservation Commission in the Central Vermont Region complete a survey which asks questions about energy mapping constraints and locating preferred sites for renewable energy development.

I have sent the Chair of each commission/committee an email with a link to the survey, an addendum document with definitions of constraint layers, links to the draft Energy Constraint Maps and these instructions. If your Chair did not receive that email, please contact me immediately, my contact information is at the end of these instructions.

The electronic survey is the same as the paper copy which should have been mailed to your municipal office. If possible, please use the paper copy to complete the survey with your committee/commission members but then **fill out the survey online** so that answers can be received electronically. If your entity is unable to fill out the answers online, please mail or scan the response to me.

We ask that your entity complete the survey and return responses either electronically or by mail, by **March 6, 2017**. If you are unable to complete the survey in that timeframe, please contact me.

Thank you very much for taking the time to think about energy use in your community. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments!

Marian Wolz
Assistant Planner
wolz@cvreion.com
(802) 229 0389

Central Vermont Regional Planning
Commission
c/o Marian Wolz
29 Main Street, Suite 4
Montpelier, VT 05602



Central Vermont Municipal Energy Survey

Introduction

The CVRPC asks that you complete the following survey as a group to provide a consensus opinion on renewable energy in your community. CVRPC is requesting one survey submission per Planning Commission / Selectboard / Energy Committee / Conservation Commission and that responses reflect the opinion of that entity.

If your municipal entity chooses to fill this survey out on the paper copy provided, please have someone fill in the responses online afterwards with the link provided in the email sent to the Chair. If your municipal entity is unable to fill in the responses online, please scan and email or send your responses to Marian Wolz, wolz@cvregion.com, address below.

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission
c/o Marian Wolz
29 Main Street, Suite 4
Montpelier, VT 05602

Responses will be used to inform the development of CVRPC's Regional Energy Plan and also to help to ensure municipal interests and opinions are acknowledged during our process. Some of these questions are meant to prompt discussion and the municipality, will not be held strictly to the responses written for this survey. However, care should be taken when responding to reflect the local issues in your municipality.

Please see the attached addendum which outlines the background for the Regional Energy Planning process and defines the mapping constraints discussed in this survey. Please refer to those constraint definitions as needed as you complete this survey. If you are already familiar with the Regional Energy Plan process and background, please disregard the first section of the addendum document.

* 1. What municipality does your body represent?

* 2. What body is responding to this survey?



Mapping

This section of the survey is in regards to the regional energy resource and constraint mapping. Please see the map links that were included in the email to your Chair, along with the energy planning glossary of constraint layers addendum document also included in the email. This addendum document describes the constraint layers identified on the maps and notes the significance of known and possible constraints.

* 3. Review the Regional Constraints Map. These constraint layers include those areas currently under review by CVRPC's Energy Committee and Board of Commissioners for consideration as possible Regional Constraints.

Does your municipal body agree or disagree that these layers should be included as possible Regional Constraints? Please indicate support for adding the constraint layer by selection the box next to the layer below.

If your municipal body thinks that certain layers should not be included as possible Regional Constraints, or should be changed, leave the box next to the constraint unchecked and provided a description of why/suggested changes in the comment box below.

- Elevations Above 2500 Feet
- Lake Shore Protection Buffers (250 Feet)
- Slopes Greater Than 25%
- Municipal Protected Lands (State fee lands and private conservation lands)

Please provide justification for why a layer(s) should not be included or what changes need to be made to layer(s), below.

* 4. Review all three constraint maps (known, possible and regional). Are there any land use types or areas that your municipal body feels should be included as a regional constraint layer. If so, please list below along with if your municipal body feels they should be **KNOWN** or **POSSIBLE** constraints¹. Please see the addendum document for details on the significance of known and possible constraints. Also, please provide justification² for any land types or areas you list.

(1) If locations are constrained for the development of renewable energy due to the desire to protect a locally designated resources (whether a natural resource or community-identified resource, like a view), then the land use policies applicable to other forms of development must be similarly restrictive.

*(2) Any regionally or locally identified constraints identified **must be supported through data or studies** and must be consistent with the regional and local plans.*

- None. This municipal body feels the constraint layers identified on the known, possible and regional constraint maps accurately protect the resources of the Central Vermont region. This body does not have further constraints to add.
- Yes. This municipal body feels there are land types or areas that should be protected from development at a regional level that are not currently included on the maps. Constraint layer(s), whether they should be known or possible constraints and justification (why this constraint layer should be added and data or study that supports it) are listed in the comment box below.

Additional regional constraint layers:

* 5. Review the Known and Possible Constraint maps, are there any **POSSIBLE** constraint layers that should be elevated to **KNOWN** constraints? If so, why? (Please review the included memo for detailed descriptions of the known and possible constraints.)

- Agricultural Soils
- FEMA Special Flood Hazard Areas
- Protected Lands
- Deer Wintering Areas
- Vermont Conservation Design Forest Blocks (Connectivity, Interior, Physical Landscape Diversity)
- Hydric Soils
- Act 250 Ag Mitigation Parcels
- None, this municipal body feels that the possible constraints shown on the map should remain as possible constraints.

If your municipal body feels any of the possible constraints should be elevated to known please include justification for that selection here.



Preferred Locations

While the constraint layers discussed in the questions above are meant to identify areas that are unsuitable for siting of renewable energy projects or particular categories or sizes of those resources, CVRPC is also identifying locations that are *preferred* for siting a renewable resource generation site.

By locally or regionally identifying preferred locations for development, communities in the Central Vermont region that identify preferred, potential, and unsuitable sites will provide a green/yellow/red signal to developers regarding the challenges of developing on particular sites.

The State has identified the following preferred locations;

- rooftops (and other structures),
- parking lots,
- previously developed sites,
- brownfields,
- gravel pits,
- quarries and
- Superfund sites.

Regions and municipalities have the ability to identify additional potentially preferred locations. Including sites that are or will be identified in municipal plans as preferred is an important aspect of the Energy Planning process as "a specific location in a duly adopted municipal plan" is one way for a net metering project to qualify as being on a preferred site. The Public Service Board's net metering rule, which went into effect in January, establishes a financial incentive for 15-500 kW generators to be located on preferred sites.

The questions that follow aim to begin the discussion of identifying preferred locations for renewable resource developments in the Central Vermont Region.

6. Listed below are suggestions for preferred sites that can be identified in the Central Vermont Regional Energy Plan. Please consider these land types/sites and check those that your municipal body feels would be appropriate to identify as a preferred location for renewable energy development.

Additionally, when considering these land types/sites, consider the size and scale of renewable development that would be appropriate, the type of renewable resource development, economic feasibility of developing that resource in that location and access to transmission and distribution infrastructure.

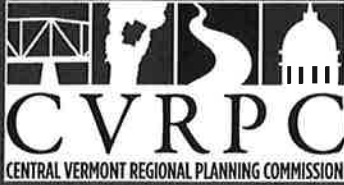
- Unranked and not currently farmed agricultural soils
- Unused land near already developed infrastructure
- Locations suitable for large-scale biomass district heat or thermal-led cogeneration
- Potential locations for biogas heating and digesters
- Industrial Parks
- Decommissioned Landfills
- Class III Wetlands - Wetlands that are typically difficult to identify without a soil test. Development can occur on these wetlands but must abide by local regulations and federal laws.

If your municipality has specific sites in your community that you feel would be appropriate for some scale of renewable energy development, or specific sites that meet the descriptions below, please list those sites in the comment box.

* 7. The cost of transmission and distribution of electric generation increases as the generation facility moves further away from the energy user. It costs on average, \$1,000,000/mile to build new transmission lines (Transmission & Distribution Infrastructure, Harris Williams & Co., 2010). Location of generation in proximity to the transmission lines that connect to distribution substation and lines can affect the cost of energy for consumers. Considering this, please indicate below preferences for preferred locations for renewable energy generation facilities in relation to existing transmission lines.

- Renewable energy generation facilities should be sited within a 1/4 mile of existing transmission lines.
- Renewable energy generation facilities should be sited within a 1/2 mile of existing transmission lines.
- Renewable energy generation facilities should be sited within 1 mile of existing transmission lines.
- Renewable energy generation facilities should be sited 1 mile or more from exiting transmission lines.
- Existing transmission lines should not be a factor when siting renewable energy generation facilities.

Please include additional comments here:



Engagement

* 8. What is the best way to engage members of your community on energy related planning? Do you have suggestions for mediums, forums or other engagement strategies? Please select the **two most effective methods** and include additional suggestions in the comment box.

- Email
- Online mapping platform
- Front Porch Forum
- Public evening meetings
- Paper materials available at the town office

Please list additional engagement methods below.