Environment and Natural Resources Working Group Meeting
Sept. 17, 2014 from 4-6pm, CVRPC Office

Pre-meeting, working group members were asked to review the following items:

- Draft Environment and Natural Resources Profiles: Natural Resources sub-section.

PURPOSE: To review the Environment and Natural Resources DRAFT profile, to identify further information/analysis in key areas and to continue determining key issues/trends to highlight in each section.

ATTENDEES:

- Laura Hill Eubanks, Commissioner from Northfield
- Dan Singleton , Washington County Forester
- Ed Larson, Barre Granite Association
- Collin O'Neil, Manager of Wrightsville Beach Recreation District
- Dan Currier, CVRPC Staff
- Kim McKee, CVRPC Staff
- Emily Nosse-Leirer, CVRPC Staff

SUMMARY

- **Staff recap of Water Resources & Flood Resilience Profile revisions**: Staff gave an update on Water Resources and Flood Resilience Profile Revisions, noting that: the language on wetlands has been clarified; the impervious surfaces chart was improved; and other smaller comments on dams and other issues were incorporated. Kim will send Ed the minutes from the last meeting so he can see the comments that were made. Dan created a new development conservation map that shows places with resource constraints on development (e.g. deer wintering areas, high elevation, etc.). This will help provide guidelines for future land use guidelines. There was some discussion about whether or not there should be conservation habitat overlays on the map. The group agreed that identifying all habitat areas is too much information, but that there might be merit in looking at habitat connectivity data.

- **Review of the Natural Resources Draft profile**: The working group went through the Draft Natural Resources profile and provided comments on additional information that could be incorporation and information that was confusing or misleading. Comments included:
    - The current use program is described in different ways in different places

    - The purpose of this section is to inventory the resources in the area and identify trends and other important issues
    - Many changes were made to the section based on working group comments and suggestions
    - Discussion about whether or not a scenic byway designation should lead to higher aesthetic standards along the route
    - More broadly, what are threats to scenic resources in the Region?
        - Cell towers are a hot topic—do they need to be disguised?
        - Renewable energy siting
    - Shouldn't get into too many regulatory details because a lot of aesthetics is personal and opinion-based >> maybe the creation of regulations/guidelines should be pushed to the town level instead
    - In the plan, scenic vistas still need to be discussed as a resource, and the document needs to acknowledge that discussion is continuing
    - Can other kinds of trails (snowmobile, equestrian, etc.) be added to the chart?
    - Other kinds of hunting: goose, duck, coyote, partridge, rabbit
    - What about water access, for swimming, fishing and boating?
    - Guides should be discussed as well
    - Forest Legacy Projects should be discussed
    - Many designated scenic viewpoints have been covered up by growing trees—this is a trail maintenance issue
    - Conflict between recreation and posting land
- **Identify and Discuss Key Issues/Trends:** The working group identified several potential key issues and trends, including:
    - Mountain bikers might be ruining people's logging trails
    - There are lots of disc golf courses here, and disc golf is a very fast-growing sport and a tourist attraction
    - Washington County needs to coordinate marketing for all the great recreational opportunities in the area—good for residents and good for economic development via tourists
- **Next Steps**: The next meeting will be October 22. Staff will continue working on edits based on this discussion.