

Building Resilient Communities in the Upper Valley through Research, Information Sharing, and Education

Relevance

Many communities in New Hampshire and Vermont are experiencing the effects of a changing climate. **Most of these communities are small with limited professional municipal staff.** At least a third of communities in the Northeast are concerned about climate change impacts, but **are unsure what steps to take or lack capacity** (Clean Air-Cool Planet, 2011).

Clean Air – Cool Planet. *A Northeast-Focused Needs Assessment*. 2011. <http://cleanair-coolplanet.org/northeast-needs-assessment/>



Slayton Hill Rd Lebanon, NH
July 2013

Response

The **Upper Valley Adaptation Workgroup (UVAW)** is a bi-state, multi-stakeholder working group of leaders and partner organizations. Started in December of 2011, the workgroup meets regularly focusing on building climate resilient communities in the Upper Valley Region of Vermont and New Hampshire.

Upper Valley Adaptation Workgroup Partners

Municipal Regional State Medical Academic Non-Profit Business



Our Working Definition of Climate Resiliency

Climate Resiliency is the ability of a community to anticipate, prepare for, respond to and recover from climate impacts in a way that minimizes significant disruption to our lives and compromise of shared resources. This includes our health, safety, built environments, food availability, natural resources, wildlife and financial strength.

Public Forums

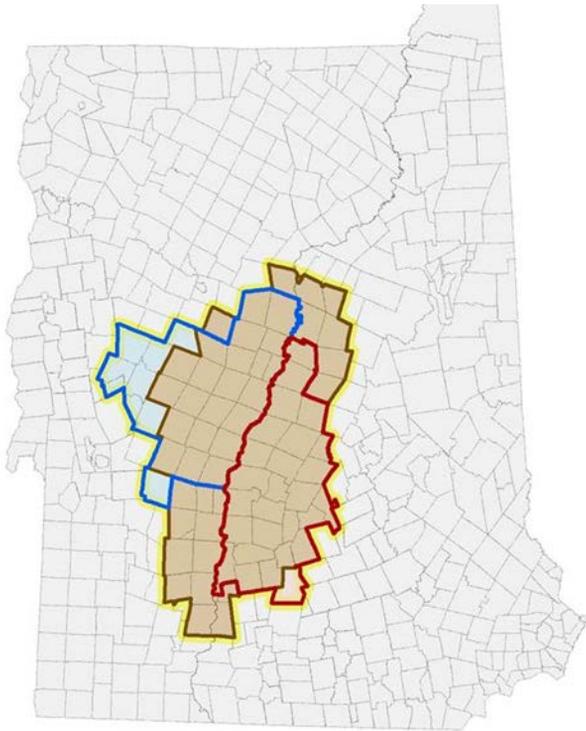
UVAW hosts public educational Forums focusing on resiliency and preparedness. Using local data from the Southern NH Climate Assessment, communities can begin to assess their vulnerabilities and prepare for future Impacts. Forum topics have included:

- Impacts to the built environment
- Public health threats and response
- Community response and recovery
- Business and non-profit continuity planning
- Heat impacts on elders



NH Geologic Survey staff demonstrate flooding Impacts at a UVAW public forum

The Upper Valley Region



The **Two Rivers Ottauquechee Commission (TROC)** in VT, the **Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC)** in NH, and **Vital Communities (VC)** all work in the Upper Valley Region. The focus area of each of these groups is outlined here. The red is the UVLSRPC; blue is TROC, brown is VC, and yellow is UVAW. Working collaboratively on this issue is important and necessary.

This Region was hit hard by Tropical Storm Irene in 2011 and by subsequent flooding. Community leaders have expressed interest in learning more about:

- Community efforts through case studies
- How to work better with FEMA
- How to engage community members
- Health Impacts
- Economic Impacts and Opportunities

Learn more about us at: <http://uvaw.uvlsrpc.org/>

The Importance of Local Data

Climate Solutions New England, led by Dr. Cameron Wake, produced a report that focuses on climatic changes we have already observed in this region as well as future projections of climate change and what we need to plan for. In 2014 they released a report that focuses specifically on health impacts.

UVAW utilizes these reports to convene local and regional stakeholders and provide a forum for community conversations and actions to increase resiliency in the Upper Valley.

<http://www.climatesolutionsne.org/>

