

# Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan



**Prepared for:**

Town of Athens

Located in Windham County, Vermont

**Prepared by:**

Windham Regional Commission  
139 Main Street, Suite 505, Brattleboro, VT 05301  
(802) 257-4547

Adopted July 16, 2015

# Table of Contents

.....	Pg
INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE .....	1
WINDHAM REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY .....	1
ATHENS GEOGRAPHY & TOWN PROFILE.....	2
Existing Land Use Map .....	4
 PLANNING PROCESS	
Documentation of the Planning Process .....	5
Public Involvement and Input from Neighboring Towns .....	7
 RISK ASSESSMENT	
Methodology.....	8
Vulnerability Analysis Table .....	9
Identifying and Profiling Hazards.....	10
Flooding and Fluvial Erosion .....	10
Severe Winter Storm / Ice Storm.....	14
High Winds .....	17
Power Failure .....	18
 ASSESSING VULNERABILITY	
Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) .....	19
Vulnerable Structures and Areas of Athens .....	19
Special Flood Hazard Area / River Corridor Mapping .....	20
Repetitive Loss Properties .....	23
Community Facilities in Athens .....	23
Market Values of Structures in Athens .....	24
Development Trends .....	25
Proposed Land Use Map.....	26
 MITIGATION STRATEGY	
Local Hazard Mitigation Goals .....	27
Relevant Town Plan Policies that Support Mitigation .....	27
Progress Between 2011 and 2014 .....	28
Ongoing Efforts .....	28
Identification of Mitigation Actions .....	29
Mitigation Actions Table .....	30
Implementation of Mitigation Actions / Capabilities .....	31
Existing Planning Mechanisms.....	31
 PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCESS	
Monitoring and Updating the Plan – Yearly Review .....	33
Plan Maintenance – 5 Year Update and Evaluation Process.....	33
Post-Disaster Review/Update Procedure.....	34
Continued Public Participation .....	35
 APPENDIX.....	36
Adoption Certificate .....	37

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

**This Hazard Mitigation Plan is NEW, and has never been approved by FEMA or adopted by the Town of Athens.** This is a single jurisdiction plan covering the Town of Athens, Vermont.

The purpose of this plan is to assist the Town of Athens in identifying all of the natural hazards facing the town and to identify new and continuing strategies to reduce risk from identified hazards.

Hazard mitigation is any sustained action that reduces or eliminates risk over the long term to people and property from natural and human-caused hazards and their effects. Based on the results of previous Project Impact efforts, FEMA and state agencies have come to recognize that it is less expensive to prevent damage from disasters than to repeatedly repair damage after a disaster has struck. This plan recognizes that communities also have opportunities to identify mitigation strategies and measures during all of the other phases of Emergency Management – preparedness, response and recovery. Hazards cannot be eliminated, but it is possible to determine what the hazards are, where the hazards are most severe and identify what local actions that can be taken to reduce the severity of hazard related damage.

Hazard mitigation strategies and measures alter the hazard by: eliminating or reducing the frequency of occurrence; averting the hazard by redirecting the impact by means of a structure or land treatment; adapting to the hazard by modifying structures or standards; or avoiding the hazard by stopping or limiting development. Mitigation could include projects such as:

- Flood-proofing structures
- Tying down propane/fuel tanks in flood-prone areas
- Elevating furnaces and water heaters
- Identifying and modifying high traffic incident locations and routes
- Ensuring adequate water supply
- Elevating structures or utilities above flood levels
- Identifying and upgrading undersized culverts
- Proactive land use planning for floodplains and other flood-prone areas
- Proper road maintenance and construction
- Ensuring critical facilities are safely located
- Establish and enforce appropriate building codes
- Public information

## WINDHAM REGION GEOGRAPHY

Situated in Vermont's southeastern corner, the Windham Region consists of 23 towns in Windham County, the neighboring towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, and Winhall in Bennington County, and Weston in Windsor County. The region is bordered by Massachusetts to the south and New Hampshire to the east. At over 920 square miles (590,000 acres), the region accounts for roughly 9.6% of the State's total land area. The Windham Region has several distinctive identities, largely defined by the diverse natural environment.



The Region's topography is relatively flat or gently rolling land in the Connecticut River valley in the east, while the western part of the region is characterized by the Green Mountain ridges and peaks with narrow stream valleys. Stratton Mountain is the highest point in the region at 3,936 feet. The lowest point is along the Connecticut River in Vernon, at 200 feet.

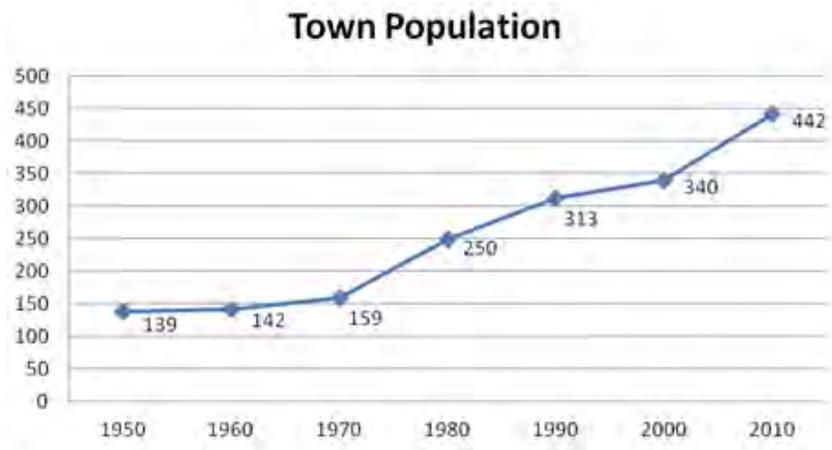
In addition to the Connecticut, other major rivers of the region are the Deerfield, Green, North, Saxtons, West, and Williams, all tributaries of the Connecticut. There are two major flood control reservoirs on the West River, Ball Mountain and Townshend, and two major storage reservoirs for hydropower generation on the Deerfield River, Somerset and Harriman.

## ATHENS GEOGRAPHY & TOWN PROFILE

Athens is a rural Town of 8,384 acres or 13.1 square miles in northeastern Windham County. It almost feels set apart from the surrounding area because of its terrain and the dirt roads one takes to get to there. Athens is bordered to the north by the towns of Grafton and Rockingham, Townshend to the West, Brookline to the South, and Rockingham and Westminster to the East. The only major vehicular travel corridor through Town is Route 35, which is a Class 2 Town Highway that is both paved and unpaved in certain sections through town. Brookline is the major north/south roadway through Athens; It is unpaved and runs along Bull Creek.



Athens population as of 2010 was 442 persons, which was a 30% increase from the 2000 population of 340. The population graphs below show the trend in population. Athens has been growing at a steady rate since 1970.



Population Trends in Surrounding Towns	Town	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2010
	Athens	313	340	442	9%	30%
Brookline	403	467	530	16%	14%	
Grafton	602	649	679	8%	5%	
Rockingham	5,484	5,309	5,282	-3%	-0.5%	
Townshend	1,019	1,149	1,232	13%	7%	
Westminster	3,026	3,210	3,178	6%	-1%	

The physical characteristics of Athens are dominated by steep slopes on the east and west borders of the town. Bull Creek forms the major valley in Athens, surrounded by rural agricultural land and dispersed homes. Along the border with Westminster is a steep ridgeline that is protected and maintained as part of

the Windmill Ridge Nature Reserve and Trail by the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association.<sup>1</sup> The highest elevation points in Athens are, a hill at an elevation of about 1,820 ft. adjacent to Herring Hill Rd., and an area over 1,700 feet in elevation just south of Lily Pond.

There are no large rivers in town, however, some of the brooks and creeks in Athens have been associated with severe flash flood events. Bull Creek, a predominant feature in Athens, is a FEMA defined Special Flood Hazard Area "A Zone". Land use in Athens is characterized by large rural undeveloped areas, especially in the western section of town where there are no roads. Most residences directly abut Route 35 and there is small compact development along Ober Hill Rd. Woodlands is predominant in Athens and cover a vast acreage of land. These forestlands provide the scenic backdrop for the town and provide wood products, game for hunting, maple products and recreation. Most forestland is private, non-industrial ownership.

As of the fall of 2014, there is no appreciably large scale residential or commercial developments slated for construction. Athens currently does not have zoning or subdivision regulations. They are finalizing completion of a Town Plan now and it is expected to be adopted in March 2015. Land use regulation in Athens would only fall under applicable State laws and Act 250. A current land use map is shown on the following page.

### Emergency Services in Athens

Athens has a town Emergency Committee formed in 2007 whose responsibilities are:

- To open and run an emergency shelter at the Athens Community Church, should circumstances warrant, and should the Red Cross not be able to run the shelter; and
- To conduct a post storm assessment of and response to citizens throughout the town.

The seven member Committee meets semi-annually to remain active, but is only activated in the event of a natural, weather-related emergency. They then work in cooperation with other town and regional officials and services. It is NOT a 911-type service, and does not have responsibility beyond weather-related emergencies.

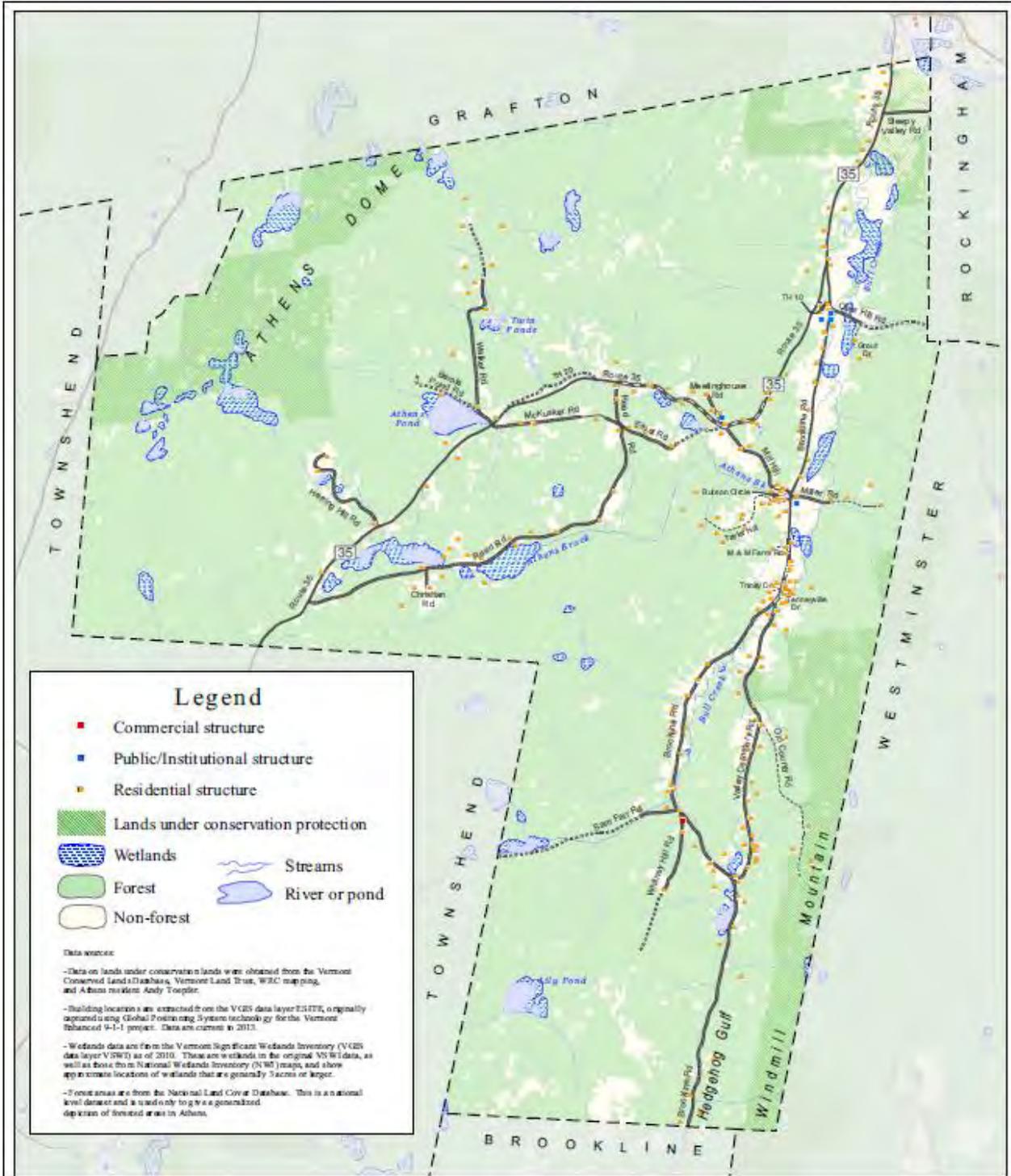
Fire protection for Athens is provided by the Saxtons River Fire Department, a volunteer department containing 20 active members available 7 days a week 24hrs a day for the community needs. Saxtons River covers the Village of Saxtons River along with Athens, VT. Athens belongs to the Southwestern New Hampshire District Fire Mutual Aid System. Athens has a fire pond at the junction of Walker Road and Rte 35, as well as at the junction of Brookline and Valley Cemetery Roads.

Athens contracts with Golden Cross Ambulance from Westminster. The Town has no health care facilities and relies on services in adjacent towns which include Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital, Springfield Hospital and Rockingham Medical Group and Urgent Care which is under the jurisdiction of the Springfield Hospital.

Police protection is provided by the Vermont State Police, and a limited contract with the Windham County Sheriff's Department, and from the one elected part-time constable in Athens.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.windmillhillpinnacle.org/>



# Existing Land Use Town of Athens, Vermont

January 2014



**DRAFT**

Map by Windham Regional Commission, Swanton, VT.  
January 2014; C:\townofathens\map\TP\_ines-com.mxd

## PLANNING PROCESS

Town residents who took part in the planning process for developing the Single Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan for Athens tend to be affiliated with more than one association for the town. In rural areas of Vermont, it is typical that people who are most interested in the safety, health and welfare of their community will preside on more than one board, and for example, hold the role of Fire Chief, or school teacher, or be a small business owner, in addition to owning personal property in the town. Therefore, although the meeting may not have as many in attendance, as in a more populated community, those present at the meetings are representing not only a variety of roles, but many roles that would be held by multiple individuals in a more populated town or city.

### Documentation of the Planning Process

**This Single Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan is NEW, and has never been approved by FEMA or adopted by the Town of Athens.**

Athens began the process of developing this plan in the fall of 2011, initially it was to be an annex when they were updating it from a draft annex plan to a single jurisdiction plan. There were two public meetings held in 2011.

In response to the flooding in Athens caused by Tropical Storm Irene in August 2011, WRC staff received an inquiry from the Athens Emergency Committee regarding hazard planning for the town. WRC staff responded to this inquiry by conducting an initial meeting with the town on October 19, 2011 at their town offices to provide information on: FEMA hazard plans; grants that become available once the plan is approved and adopted; and initial information on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The town was introduced via email to contacts at Vermont's DEC River Management section as follow up to the inquiry on the NFIP. Also at this first meeting with the Emergency Committee, WRC staff commenced the Risk and Vulnerability Assessment of the hazard mitigation plan. The team met again with WRC staff on November 14 to continue with a discussion on Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategies/Action Items for the town. That was the basis for developing this plan.

Although Athens suffered major damage from Tropical Storm Irene, other towns in the Windham region suffered more significant damage and had properties with buyouts. This required prioritization of developing hazard mitigation plans, which pushed Athens back. A draft plan was never completed and submitted for FEMA review during that time.



Picture taken at the September 24, 2014 Athens Hazard Mitigation Planning Meeting

The Town commenced the planning process again in the fall of 2014 when the draft that was started in 2011 was picked back up, reformulated into a single jurisdiction plan, and updated. The Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee reconvened and met with Alyssa Sabetto, Emergency Planner for the Windham Regional Commission. This meeting was open to the public. It lasted for several hours and involved:

- a detailed review of the draft document with discussion of more recent hazard events,
- progress made in mitigation efforts that were noted several years ago,
- development of new hazard mitigation projects,
- review of mapping of the town to note where hazard events are causing repeated or large scale damage, and
- general overview of the draft for relevancy and updating purposes.

There were numerous changes that came out of that meeting. Alyssa Sabetto updated the draft per that meeting. She also reviewed the draft Town Plan that is currently being updated and incorporated information from the plan into this document. She presented the updated draft for review again by Committee members via email and hard copy was provided to the town office. Minor corrections were the only comments back from the Committee.<sup>2</sup> These were made and the draft plan was then put out for public comment, distributed to adjacent towns for comment and finalized for submittal to FEMA. It was advertised for public comment in the Athenian, flyers put up around town, and a hard copy was available at the Town Office. It was decided that because the major decisions had been made at two previous public meetings, it was unnecessary to hold a third public meeting devoted to the hazard mitigation plan.

The draft plan was preliminarily approved by FEMA on June 18, 2015. The adoption resolution is shown in Appendix 1.

The following people were involved throughout the multi-year mitigation planning process<sup>3</sup>

<b>Participants (2011)</b>	<b>Affiliations</b>	<b>Home</b>
Michael J. Bates	Selectman	Athens
Donald Capponcelli	Assistant EMD	Athens
Sherry Maher	Emergency Committee	Athens
Sandi Capponcelli	Lister, Assistant Town Clerk, Town Health Officer, Emergency Committee	Athens
Lynn Morgan	Emergency Committee	Athens
Tim Stevenson	Emergency Committee	Athens
Thomas Taylor	Road Foreman, Selectman	Athens
Gordon Pugh	RACES	Athens
Charles Chase Jr.	Resident	Athens
Dinah Reed	Windham Regional Commission, Assistant Planner	Brattleboro

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 9

<sup>3</sup> See Appendices 3, 4 and 7 for sign in sheets. Appendix 8 has September 24, 2014 meeting agenda.

Participants (2014)	Affiliations	Home
Tim Stevenson	Town Plan Committee Recycling Committee Emergency Committee	Athens
Dennis Mirante	Selectboard	Athens
Beverly Hutchins	Emergency Committee	Athens
Lou Syppel	Emergency Committee Town Plan Committee Lister	Athens
Donald Capponcelli	Emergency Committee Assistant to the EMD Chairman of the Cemetery Committee School board member	Athens
Sandi Caponcelli	Emergency Committee Town Plan Committee Lister Assistant Town Clerk	Athens
David Bemis	Selectboard Chair	Athens
Thomas Taylor	Selectboard	Athens
Alyssa Sabetto	Windham Regional Commission, Planner	Brattleboro

## Public Involvement and Input from Neighboring Towns

There are a number of stakeholders that are a part of mitigation planning. These include the Town residents, adjacent towns, and emergency management and town personnel, among others. In putting this plan together, there was a public outreach effort to get input from these stakeholders that may not have been directly involved in meetings. Making the Athens Pre-disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan available for public comment included the following efforts:

- ❖ Between 2012 and mid 2014, the Athens Draft Plan was posted on the Windham Regional Commission website for public review and comment. No comments were received during this time.
- ❖ Public meetings held at the Athens Town office on October 19 and November 14, 2011 and September 24, 2014.
- ❖ The draft plan was posted on Athen's unofficial town Facebook page in 2011-12.
- ❖ Hard copies of the hazard plan were made available at the Town Office and flyers were posted of this availability for review and comment in November 2014.
- ❖ Announcements of where to review plan and make comment provided in the November 2011 and November 2014 issues of the town newsletter *The Athenian*. These articles are in Appendix 5 and Appendix 11.
- ❖ The September 24, 2014 meeting was advertised in the *Brattleboro Reformer*. This advertisement is shown in Appendix 6.
- ❖ In late October 2014, the Town of Athens extended an invitation by email to neighboring towns to provide a means and opportunity to review and comment on the Athens Single Jurisdiction Hazard Mitigation Plan. There were three responses from the adjacent towns of Grafton, Rockingham, and Brookline. None of the responses called for any changes to the draft.<sup>4</sup> Inter-town communication is nonetheless important and this will repeat for future revisions of this Plan.

<sup>4</sup> These emails are contained in Appendix 10.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

The risk assessment portion of a Hazard Mitigation Plan contributes to the decision-making process for allocating available resources to mitigation projects. 44 CFR Part 201.6(c)(2) of FEMA's mitigation planning regulations requires local municipalities to provide sufficient hazard and risk information from which to identify and prioritize appropriate mitigation actions to reduce losses from identified hazards.

### Methodology

A **vulnerability analysis** for each community begins with an inventory of possible hazards and an assessment of the risk that they pose. These are the questions to be answered. What hazards can affect your community? How bad can it get? How likely are they to occur? What will be affected by these hazards? How will these hazards affect you? The magnitude or **potential impact** (Severity and extent of damage and disruption) can be classed as follows:

**Potential Impact:** Severity and extent of damage and disruption

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 1 = Negligible | Isolated occurrences of minor property damage, minor disruption of critical facilities and infrastructure, and potential for minor injuries        |
| 2 = Minor      | Isolated occurrences of moderate to severe property damage, brief disruption of critical facilities and infrastructure, and potential for injuries |
| 3 = Moderate   | Severe property damage on a neighborhood scale, temporary shutdown of critical facilities, and/or injuries or fatalities                           |
| 4 = Major      | Severe property damage on a town-wide or regional scale, shutdown of critical facilities, and/or multiple injuries or fatalities                   |

The **frequency** of occurrence (Probability) is classified as shown:

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1 = Unlikely      | <1% probability of occurrence in the next 100 years (less than 1 occurrence in 100 years)                           |
| 2 = Occasionally  | 1–10% probability of occurrence per year, or at least 1 chance in next 100 years (1 to 10 occurrences in 100 years) |
| 3 = Likely        | >10% but <100% probability per year (at least 1 chance in next 10 years)  |
| 4 = Highly Likely | 100% probable in a year (an annual occurrence)  |

The **warning time** is the amount of time generally given to alert people to the hazard. It is measured as follows:

- |                        |
|------------------------|
| 1 = More than 12 hours |
| 2 = 6–12 hours         |
| 3 = 3–6 hours          |
| 4 = None–Minimal       |

The **potential impact, frequency of occurrence, and warning time** for each hazard was discussed at the September 24, 2014 Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting. There was also a review of what was developed in 2011, however the below table, which the Committee developed at the most recent meeting was more detailed and current. The Committee discussed each potential hazard in detail and ranked each element for each hazard. The numbers were combined to give each hazard a hazard score. This score was used to determine which hazards the plan would address.

While all hazards were considered by the Committee for inclusion in this plan, it is not feasible to study each in depth. For hazards that are not profiled in this plan, the reader is directed to the Vermont State Hazard Mitigation Plan. The rationale for not addressing all of the hazards is that they are unlikely to occur in Athens, or the town cannot mitigate for them. This plan will only focus on the hazards that Athens has chosen to mitigate for, which are Flooding/Fluvial Erosion, Severe Winter Weather and High Winds. Though the below table shows Highway accidents, structure fires, power failure, hazardous material spill, and wildfire rank high, Athens—due to their size and limited resources—doesn't feel that they are able to mitigate these hazards, so the reader is referred to the State All Hazards Mitigation Plan.

Earthquakes, school safety, hail storm, air crash, landslide/mudslide/rockslide, terrorism, tornados/microbursts, drought, invasive species/ infestation, radiological incident, water supply contamination, dam failure, railroad accident, ice jams, extreme heat, tsunami, and volcano are all hazards that ranked low in the below table because they are not likely to occur in Athens. That is why this plan will not cover those hazards. This plan will focus on Flooding/Fluvial Erosion, Severe Winter Weather and High Winds only because they are likely to occur. Hurricanes will be addressed within both flooding and high winds. Ice jams are addressed in the section on Severe Winter Weather.

### Vulnerability Analysis Table

This table was completed at the September 24, 2014 Hazard Mitigation Committee meeting at the Athens Town office.

Possible Hazard	Frequency of Occurrence	Warning Time	Potential Impact	Score	Most vulnerable facilities and populations
Flood / Flash flood	3	4	3	10	Roads, Bridges, Culverts, Residences
Highway Accidents	4	4	2	10	Accidents do happen, however there are no specific locations with repeated problems.
Structure Fire	3	4	2	9	Residences, Businesses
Power Failure	4	4	1	9	Entire Town
Hazardous material spill	2	4	2	8	Residences
Winter & Ice Storm	4	1	3	8	Residences, Businesses, Utilities
Hurricane	3	1	4	8	Town-wide
Wildfire	1	4	2	7	Woodland areas
High Wind	3	2	2	7	Roads, Bridges, Culverts, Utilities, Residences, Businesses
Earthquake	1	4	2	7	Town-wide
School Safety Issues	2	4	1	7	Athens Elementary is only school building; students go to Grafton for school.
Hail Storm	3	2	2	7	Entire Town
Air crash	1	4	1	6	Entire Town
Landslide / Mudslide / Rockslide	2	3	1	6	Roads
Terrorism	1	4	1	6	School, Public places
Tornado/Microburst	1	2	2	5	Not likely, but flat areas more vulnerable
Drought	2	1	2	5	Private wells, Farms, Businesses
Invasive Species / Infestation	2	1	2	5	Emerald Ash Borer hasn't arrived yet; Woolly Adelgid is nearby; Japanese knotweed and purple loostripe are along roadways.
Radiological Incident	1	1	2	4	Athens is not in 10 mile EPZ.
Water Supply Contamination	1	1	1	3	No public water supply.
Dam Failure	1	1	1	3	Beaver dams exist throughout; there is a large one along Brookline Road

Railroad Accidents	1	1	1	3	No railroads
Ice Jams	1	1	1	3	Bull Creek, though no history
Extreme Heat	1	1	1	3	Entire town
Tsunami (Vermont is landlocked)	1	1	1	3	N/A
Volcano (Vermont has no active volcanoes)	1	1	1	3	N/A

### Identifying and Profiling Hazards

The following hazards include a narrative explaining Description of the Hazard generally and in relation to the Town, Impact, Extent(magnitude or severity), Probability, and discussion of Past Occurrences of all natural hazards that affect the planning area.

#### **Flooding/Fluvial Erosion**

##### *Description and Geographic Area of Hazard*

Flooding is the most widespread and destructive hazard in the United States. Flooding has also been the most common and costly hazard to affect Athens. Flooding can occur anytime of the year as a result of heavy rains, thunderstorms, tropical storms, hurricanes or Nor'easters. Most of the heavy rains in Vermont occur in the spring and early fall months, May, June, August and September. Flooding can result from the overflow of major rivers and their smaller tributaries, or inadequate local drainage. Historically, floods have been a factor in over 80 percent of all federally declared disasters. People living in close proximity to bodies of water such as rivers, lakes, and streams are at greater risk from flooding than those not living in the floodplain. There is a 26 percent chance of experiencing a flood during the life of a 30-year mortgage compared to a 4 percent chance of a fire. Athens does not currently have a floodplain ordinance, though they do have mapped Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHAs). SFHAs are subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance flood (100-year flood). Maps of these areas can be found in the vault at the Town Office or online at the FEMA Map Service Center.<sup>5</sup>

##### *Impact*

Most of the destruction from flooding in Athens is due to fluvial erosion rather than inundation, which is the type of flooding targeted through the NFIP. Fluvial erosion is the destruction of river banks caused by the movement of rivers and streams. This can range from gradual bank erosion to catastrophic changes in river channel location and dimension during flood events. This occurs when the stream has more energy than is needed to transport its sediment load, due to channel alterations or runoff events that increase water speed in the channel. Fluvial erosion hazard mapping is expected to be released by the state in late 2014. This mapping will assist municipalities in developing bylaws and effective mitigation strategies to regulate development within fluvial erosion hazard zones.

Flash floods typically occur in high elevation drainage areas as a result of summer thunderstorm activity. Damage from flash floods is difficult to predict since flash flood areas are not mapped at this time. Infrastructure and structures along higher elevation streams and drainage areas are most susceptible to damage from flash flooding. Drainage ditches and culverts are the biggest concern for local flash flooding events. Bull Creek has been the location of major flash flooding in the past due to rising water. Ober Hill Road, Mill Hill Road, lower portion of Brookline Road, and Miller Road are all susceptible to flooding by Bull Creek.

Herring Hill Road, a steep road with a duck pond at the top is a high point in Athens. Just 1.5 inches of rain will block up culverts on that road making it necessary for the Road Foreman to check the situation every time it rains. This situation has been mitigated by culvert upgrades in 2013. The junction of Reed

<sup>5</sup> <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>

Road and Route 35 on the east end got a box culvert upgrade in 2009. Culverts were upgraded on Ernst Road in 2010.

Extent

The extent of a flood event can vary from a minor event due to a typical rain event or could be a major event as a result of rapid snow melt in spring, rain on frozen ground, or as a result of a tropical depression or storm.

The highest recorded measurement at the nearest stream gauge to Athens on the Saxtons River was 19.58 feet, which was measured both during TS Irene on August 28, 2011. The second highest recorded height was an unknown date in September 1938 and that height was 17.90 feet.<sup>6</sup>

Extent for thunderstorms/heavy rain events: The table below shows the top 10 rain events at the Windham County National Weather Service Cooperative station at Ball Mountain Lake (in the Town of Jamaica). Most stations take their observations in the morning (7 and 8am are the most common times), so the precipitation would have fallen between 7am on the previous date to 7 am on the date listed in the table below. To give context to the below data, for a 1-day period a 50-year event is 3.96-6.15 inches, a 100-year event is 4.40-7.49 inches, a 200-year event is 4.89-9.11 inches, and a 500-year event is 5.63-11.84 inches. If we base on lower confidence limits, the below listed # 1 event that occurred in 1973 is a 500-year event and TS Irene, which is #2 in the table is a 200-year event. It is important to remember that precipitation levels vary throughout the region.

Maximum 1-Day Total Precipitation <sup>7</sup> for BALL MTN LAKE		
Rank	Value (inches)	EndingDate
1	5.6	1973-06-30
2	4.9	2011-08-29
3	4.36	1999-09-17
4	3.97	2005-10-09
5	3.32	1987-06-23
6	3.3	1975-08-08
7	3.21	2003-08-02
8	3.14	1988-04-29
9	3.07	2010-10-01
10	3.02	2000-12-18
Period of record: 1969-05-01 to 2015-04-02		

Extent for fluvial erosion: The biggest area of fluvial erosion in Athens is on private land, not affecting a right of way, on a property along Brookline Road south of town along Bull Creek. The town isn't doing anything about this because it isn't affecting town infrastructure and is on private land. This is less than one acre in size. This area is shown in more detail on the Flood Hazard/River Corridor mapping in this plan.

The worst area that is causing issues for the town is the culvert on Oberhill Road at the intersection of Brookline Road, by the town garage. Heavy rains takes all the gravel right off the road and down into the brook. This is caused by a little side stream off Athens Brook. Fortunately, Athens was just awarded a grant to fix this issue. This is less than one acre in size.

<sup>6</sup> USGS Stream gauge 01154000 SAXTONS RIVER AT SAXTONS RIVER, VT  
<http://waterwatch.usgs.gov/index.php>.

<sup>7</sup> Data provided by the NOAA, Northeast Regional Climate Center at Cornell University. <http://www.nrcc.cornell.edu/>.  
Courtesy of Jessica Spaccio, Climatologist. 4/3/2015.

Athens Brook is also creating a couple of issues on Brookline Road. Bull Creek, which runs, along Brookline Road, puts much of the road in a fluvial erosion risk area. Fortunately the major areas of concern for town roads have been rip-rapped following TS Irene and since then the town hasn't been having trouble with them. This isn't to say that they won't cause trouble again. Fluvial erosion is a problem that isn't easily "cured". The areas they have rip-rapped are the hill across from Miller Hill Road, the area behind the church off Oberhill Road, and a small section on Route 35 right below Reed Road. TS Irene badly damaged all these areas. The rip-rap will protect the right of ways in these areas, though other nearby areas could see damage in future storms.

Probability

The Emergency Committee has determined that flood events, rain storms and fluvial erosion are all highly likely to occur in Athens, particularly during the spring snow melt season, any given year.

Past Occurrences

Since 1996, when National Climatic Data Center detailed records start, there have been 35 flood events in Windham County, Vermont.

July 14, 2014 - As a strong area of low pressure moved across upstate New York on Monday, July 28th, repeated rounds of thunderstorms occurred during the afternoon and evening hours. This led to flash flooding across northern Windham County, as small streams and creeks rapidly overspread their banks. In addition, the Williams River reached flood stage due to the rapid surge in water. Although the worst of the flooding remained north of Windham County in Windsor County, many residents reported this flooding to be the worst seen in the area since Tropical Storm Irene in 2011. Heavy rain from thunderstorms led to flash flooding in Windham. The access road to the Tater Hill Golf Course was washed out as a result of the flooding.

September 12, 2013 - A series of cold front moved towards the region on Thursday, September 12th. Despite some periods of cloudiness, a warm and humid air mass ahead of the approaching boundaries allowed for moderate amounts of instability to be in place. Along and ahead of the boundaries, several lines of showers and thunderstorms developed and moved across the region during the afternoon and early evening hours. In addition to a large amount of cloud to ground lightning, a few of the thunderstorms became severe, with damaging wind gusts. Several trees were downed across the region. Some areas that received repeated showers and thunderstorms experienced flash flooding as well, with roads washed out and/or closed as a result. The hardest hit areas were within the town of Brattleboro. Two to four inches of rain in a short period of time was reported in the areas that experienced flash flooding.

September 1, 2013 - A moist and humid air mass was in place across the region on Sunday, September 1st. A surface frontal boundary was situated across eastern New York into southern New England during the morning hours. During the day, the frontal boundary slowly lifted northward. With enough instability in place due to daytime heating, some showers and thunderstorms developed along this frontal boundary. The showers and thunderstorms tracked over the same locations during the afternoon hours across southern Vermont. As a result of the persistent heavy rain, flash flooding occurred in downtown Wilmington. A mudslide also occurred due to the heavy rainfall. By the evening hours, the showers and thunderstorms were located north of the region and beginning to weaken, and the threat for flash flooding ended.

Aug. 28, 2011 – Tropical Storm Irene – The Federally Declared Disaster DR-4022, Tropical Storm Irene, tracked northeast across eastern New York and western New England during Sunday, August 28th, producing widespread flooding, and damaging winds across the region, including Athens. Areas of particular damage in Athens included Walker Road, Reed Road, the Simoneau property behind the town office, and Route 35 which is the main road in Athens. See Appendix 2 for damage photos. Rainfall amounts generally averaged 4 to 8 inches. Much of the rain which fell occurred within a 12 hour period, beginning early Sunday morning, and ending Sunday evening. Sections of Rt. 35 were washed out. A culvert let go on Brookline Road requiring the old stone culvert to be replaced with a new culvert. About 500 feet of Herring Hill Road washed out. Ernst Road and the top of Reed Road washed out. Emergency

work was done on all roads. Athens claimed \$145,886 in damage, FEMA gave \$131,297.80 and the remaining \$14,588 was split between state and local matches. This reflects a federal order from President Obama to raise the federal match share to 90% from 75% for TS Irene relief, therefore lowering the state and local shares by 7.5% each.

May 20, 2011 - Showers and thunderstorms developed in a moist and unstable airmass across the region. Storms across a portion of Windham County resulted in flash flooding in the Saxtons River area. A wash out was reported on Bemis Hill Road at Westminster Road south of Saxtons River.

On June 28, 2006, 3.5-4 inches of rain fell in 45 minutes with the concentration location in the area of upper Route 35. Ponds, ditches, streams swelled, beaver ponds broke out and the gush of water passed through the culvert at Reed Road and down to Brookline Road. Associated flood relief costs were \$234,764.93. Beaver dams were taken out due to rain.

June 29, 2005 – On June 29, a backdoor cold front lay east to west through the St Lawrence Valley at daybreak. A weak upper level short wave trough was moving eastward across the Great Lakes. The front drifted a little further south during the day, but stalled over central New England. This boundary and the approaching upper level short wave combined to trigger thunderstorms in the humid and conditionally unstable air mass that covered southern Vermont. Thunderstorms containing heavy rain produced flash flooding in the Athens area of Windham County. Athens Brook and Bull Creek overflowed their banks. Flash flooding washed out Cemetery Road.

There have been several other Presidentially Declared Disasters in recent years for Windham County including severe thunderstorms and associated flooding. Windham County, including the Town of Athens, experienced nearly constant rain and thunderstorms from the period of July 21 through August 18, 2003. FEMA Declaration DR – 1488 was associated with this event. Many roads were washed out and culverts needed replacing. The following year, another severe period of flooding and thunderstorms, which lasted from the period of August 12- September 12, 2004 engendered Presidential Disaster Declaration DR – 1559. These two events triggered funding from the FEMA Public Assistance Program to flow into Windham County which helped towns pay for work related to cleanup and emergency services work.

In the spring of 1987 there was rapid meltdown of snow over frozen ground with 3" of rain flooding the west end of Reed Road.

During 1976, flooding occurred throughout New England as result of Hurricane Belle, causing millions of dollars in damage.

In 1973 there was an extreme rainfall event from June 28-30 that affected all areas of Vermont except the northwest section. Rainfall amounts as much as 6 inches in 24 hours in some locations. This was the largest rain event since the 1927 flood. Highway damage was extensive in the south-central, southeastern, and northeastern areas of the State. The town of Ludlow on the Black River was seriously damaged. Three persons were killed in the 1973 flood, and damage was estimated at \$64 million. Sizable crop loss was reported, and damage to State highways was estimated to be \$10 million. The entire State was declared a disaster area.<sup>8</sup>

The Vermont Flood of 1927 was the deadliest natural disaster in the history of the State; eighty-four people were killed with over \$28 million in property damage. The Spring Floods of 1938, which had an effect on all of New England, caused \$113 million in damage, killed 24 people and made 77,000 people homeless. During this flood alone, the main street of Hooksett, New Hampshire was 18 to 20 feet underwater.

Sources used

---

<sup>8</sup> USGS "Vermont Floods and Droughts" information page <http://md.water.usgs.gov/publications/wsp-2375/vt/>. Accessed 4/3/15.

Local town knowledge and town records, National Climatic Data Center storm events database, FEMA's Presidential Disaster Declarations search page

### **Severe Winter Storm / Ice Storm**

#### *Description and Geographic Area of Hazard*

The Region has a long history of severe winter storms and blizzards and usually experiences at least one or two Nor'easters each year with varying degrees of severity. There have been 209 winter/ice storms in Windham County since 1996.<sup>9</sup> A typical event begins as a low-pressure system that moves up the Atlantic Coast, into the Canadian Maritimes, dumping heavy snow across parts of Vermont. Snowfall accumulations are generally three to six inches in the valleys and 6 to 12 inches in the mountains. Winter storms and ice storms can cause power lines to fail, damage trees and impede access to homes and businesses. Athens has not received any financial assistance from the State or FEMA for recovery from severe winter weather.

Heavy wet snows of early fall and late spring, as well as ice storms, often result in loss of electric power, leaving people without adequate heating capability. The other threat from winter storms is downed trees, resulting in power failures and impassable roads or driveways. An ice storm crossed the region in December of 2008 causing widespread downed trees and power outages in Windham County. The total cost of damages across the region surpassed the one million dollar threshold triggering a Presidential Disaster Declaration DR-1816. Damage across the region consisted of roads being blocked for shorts periods of time due to downed trees and utility lines. Thousands lost power for varying lengths of time and several shelters were opened in Windham County. Compared to neighboring southern New Hampshire communities, Athens and Windham County fared relatively well from the damage inflicted by the ice storm.

#### *Impact*

Damage from heavy snow and ice storms can vary depending upon wind speeds, snow or ice accumulation, storm duration, and structural conditions (such heavy snow and ice accumulation on large, flat roofed structures). The assessed value of all property in Athens is \$38,813,000. Assuming a range of town-wide damage of 1% to 5%, a heavy snow or ice storm could result in \$388,130 to \$1,940,650 of total damage.

There are no mapped ice jams in Athens.<sup>10</sup>

#### *Extent*

The severity or magnitude of winter storm to occur in southeast Vermont can range from moderate to very severe. The southeastern region of VT typically receives over 60 inches of snowfall per year, and most Vermonters are prepared to handle large amounts of snowfall. Athens experiences significant snow storms every year but according to the town they are manageable. During the major snowfall of winter 2010-2011, where the region received well over 100 inches of snow, the biggest problem was that snow never melted off during the season, only accumulated, making it difficult to find space to store the mounds of snow. But in the season of 2010-2011, the problem arose with finding locations to deposit huge quantities of snow during the season because there wasn't the typical mid-season melt off. Snow amounts are not necessarily a problem for Vermonters, but heavy, wet snow, or the event of rain on snow or frozen ground, are usually very problematic.

<sup>9</sup> National Climatic Data Center, 1996-2014 storm events database < <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>>

<sup>10</sup> CRREL Ice Jam database < [14](http://rsgisias.crrel.usace.army.mil/apex/f?p=273:9:24828581115982></a></p>
</div>
<div data-bbox=)

Seasonal Snowfall records per the Burlington, VT Weather Service:

**Seasonal  
(Jul 1<sup>st</sup> – Jun 30<sup>th</sup>)**

**Maximum                      Minimum**

Rank	Snowfall	Year(s)	Rank	Snowfall	Year(s)
1	145.4"	1970-71	1	31.8"	1912-13
2	132.0"	1886-87	2	32.0"	1904-05
3	128.4"	2010-11	3	37.7"	2011-12
4	122.4"	2000-01	4	38.3"	1928-29
5	120.2"	2007-08	5	38.7"	1926-27
6	116.9"	1992-93	6	39.6"	1979-80
7	113.5"	1887-88	7	40.4"	1988-89
8	111.6"	1965-66	8	40.7"	1948-49
9	108.9"	1971-72	9	42.5"	1990-91
10	107.2"	1993-94	10	43.0"	1903-04

Probability

The Emergency Committee in Athens deems winter storm / ice storms to be highly likely any given year. Every winter there is a weather related incident where people in town will lose power for a few days.

Past Occurrences

The Region has a long history of severe winter storms and blizzards and usually experiences at least one or two Nor'easters each year with varying degrees of severity. There have been 209 winter/ice storms in the Region since 1996.<sup>11</sup> There have been three winter storms in recent history in Windham County that were Disaster Declarations:

- Ice Storm (DR-1201) – January 6-16, 1998
- Snowstorm (EM-1358) – December 16-18, 2001
- Winter Storm (DR-1816) – December 11-18, 2008

LOCAL EVENTS

February 13, 2014 - This precipitation moved from south to north across the region for the overnight hours. In addition, lightning and thunder accompanied the precipitation in a few areas as well. The precipitation tapered off from west to east during the morning hours on February 14th, as the storm moved northeast towards eastern New England and Atlantic Canada. By the time snow ended, 8 to 21 inches of snow was reported in southern Vermont.

December 27, 2012 - Snow, heavy at times, fell across much of southern Vermont from the evening of the 26th into the day on the 27th. Total storm snowfall amounts varied greatly from just a few inches in downsloped valley areas to 27 inches in the Green Mountains. In addition, southeast winds were strong and gusty, especially across the high terrain. Woodford gusted to 43 mph and Bennington Airport gusted to 46 mph. This storm resulted in very slow travel during the holiday season, especially on the evening of the 26th and morning on the 27th.

February 29, 2012 - A complex multi-part long duration (24 to 36 hour) storm blanketed southern Vermont with 8 to 16 inches of snow and sleet Wednesday, February 29th and Thursday, March 1st with lower amounts of 4 to 8 inches across southeastern Bennington County.

Feb. 25, 2011 - A storm system produced a widespread swath of heavy wet snow across southern Vermont during the day Friday. Snowfall rates of 1 to 2 inches per hour occurred, beginning during the early morning hours, and persisting until late afternoon. Snowfall amounts of 12 to 17 inches occurred

<sup>11</sup> National Climatic Data Center, 1996-2014 storm events database < <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/stormevents/>>

across much of southern Vermont. The heavy wet snow created treacherous travel conditions for both the morning and evening commutes on Friday, and also led to numerous school and business closings.

Jan. 19, 2011 - Snow and sleet accumulations across southern Vermont varied from 3 to 9 inches, with ice accumulations of up to a half of an inch.

Jan. 12, 2011 - Heavy snow fell across southern Vermont with snowfall accumulations ranging from 14 inches up to 3 feet. A mesoscale snowband set up across the western New England, including southern Vermont, Wednesday morning resulting in snowfall rates of 3 to 6 inches an hour.

January-February 2010 - The snow fall during this time was severe, averaging over 100 inches throughout the region, to include the Town of Athens. There were a number of large storms during this timeframe. No reported dollar amount of damage.

December 11, 2008 - A significant mix of snow, sleet and freezing rain occurred from Thursday afternoon into early Friday afternoon. Snow and sleet amounts of 1 to 3 inches fell, along with ice accretion of one half to three quarters of an inch from freezing rain, leading to widespread downed trees, tree limbs and power lines. The hardest hit areas included Bellows Falls and Brattleboro. In Bellows Falls, one tree reportedly fell through the roof of a house. Athens was out of power for 5-6 days, but some towns experienced outages for several weeks.

November 22, 1997 - A low pressure system south of Long Island on November 22, 1997 produced heavy wet snow across southern Vermont. Snowfall averaged 4 to 8 inches in Bennington and Windham Counties. The heavy wet snow downed trees and power lines, which produced scattered power outages. The power outages were most widespread in Windham County.

March 2, 2007 - A significant mixture of snow, sleet and freezing rain began early Friday morning, and ended Friday evening. Snowfall accumulations of 6 to 10 inches fell during this storm, with 10 inches reported at Athens, and 6 inches at Brattleboro. In addition, ice accretions of up to one half inch occurred from freezing rain, mainly within sheltered valley locales.

March 31, 1997 - This system produced rain across Bennington and Windham Counties during the morning hours of March 31. The rain changed to heavy wet snow by early afternoon. Snowfall amounts were highly elevation dependent. Some specific snowfall totals included: 12 inches at Shaftsbury and 13 inches at Peru in Bennington County and 23 inches at West Wardsboro and 12 inches at Grafton in Windham County. The wet snow brought down many trees and power lines causing widespread power outages and road closures. Some areas remained without power for several days. Route 9, between Bennington and Brattleboro was closed for much of the night. \$750,000 of damage in Windham County.

Nov. 26, 1996 - On November 26, a low pressure system brought a combination of snow and freezing rain to southern Vermont. Over Bennington and Windham Counties, snow and heavy freezing rain downed trees and power lines and caused numerous accidents. Across southern Vermont approximately 10,000 customers lost power.

Jan. 2, 1996 - A major winter storm developed over the Gulf coast states on January 2nd and tracked northeast along the eastern seaboard during January 3rd. Heavy snow fell across southern Vermont with the average snowfall ranging from 10 to 12 inches.

#### Sources used

Local town knowledge and records, National Climatic Data Center, CRREL Ice Jam Database, FEMA's Presidential Disaster Declarations search page, Burlington, VT Weather Service historic weather events page

**High Winds**

*Description and Impact*

High wind events are highly likely in Athens, with potential for limited damage. The most likely local threats for high winds are from nor'easters, severe thunderstorms, hurricanes, downbursts, tornados, or wind shear. Trees downed by high winds can block roads, and down power and communications lines. Mobile home parks and houses on ridge lines are at greater risk from wind damage. Highly susceptible locations for damage in Athens include Tenney's Trailer Park and other single manufactured homes. There are 47 manufactured homes in Athens.<sup>12</sup> Most high winds events in Athens have resulted in minor damage from downed trees and power lines. There hasn't been public assistance for any wind damages in Athens.

Windstorms are high-wind events that are sufficient enough to cause damage to property and can occur at anytime during a year. These include high winds in conjunction with a thunderstorm and high winds that sweep through the Region after the passage of a weather front.

Snow drifting occurs regularly across Rt. 35 as a result of strong NW winds. Specifically near Wild Shepherd Farm and Athens Pond in the northeast corner of Athens, the drifting narrows the roadway causing people to get stuck because they don't see the drifted snow in time. There are certain areas, near the Reed Road intersection, and on both ends of Reed Road and McKusker Road that are particularly susceptible to this problem.

*Extent*

In 1938 winds from Hurricane Igor were recorded at 100 mph and in recent years winds have been recorded at 60 mph in the Southeast region of Vermont, to include the Town of Athens. The Town anticipates high wind events in this realm of magnitude to occur any given year.

Extent/magnitudes of Hurricanes are ranked using the Saffir-Simpson Scale in the Western Hemisphere, as follows: CAT1=74-95 mph winds, CAT2=96-110 mph winds, CAT3=111-130 mph winds, CAT4=131-155 mph winds, Tropical Storm=39-73 mph winds, Tropical Depression=0-38 mph winds.

Tornado magnitude is measured by the Enhanced Fujita (EF) Scale which is rates strength based on damage caused, EF-0: 65 to 85 mph, EF-1: 86 to 110 mph, EF-2: 111 to 135 mph, EF-3: 136 to 165 mph, EF-4: 166 to 200 mph, EF-5: Over 200 mph.

*Probability*

The Emergency Committee for the Town of Athens has stated that high wind events are highly likely in any given year.

*Past Occurrences*

There have been 86 events in Windham County since 1996 that are notated by the National Climatic Data Center as being High Wind, Strong Wind or Thunderstorm Wind events. There are no recorded tornadoes since 1996 to impact Athens according to the National Climatic Data Center, although there have been four recorded tornados in Windham County.

October 29, 2012 - Strong and gusty winds in association with Hurricane Sandy caused damage to trees and power lines across the region. Although not quite as widespread as areas across southeastern New York and New Jersey, power outages occurred throughout the region. Most of the outages in Vermont were primarily in the western part of the state. Wind gusts of 40 to 60 mph were common from the afternoon of the 29th until the early morning hours of the 30th. The highest wind gust in southern Vermont occurred in Woodford, where a wind gust to 58 mph was reported. Route 9 was closed to traffic due to power lines down in the road near the Molly Stark Motel just west of Brattleboro. Two trees were reported down on Interstate 91 in southern Vermont.

---

<sup>12</sup> According to the 2014 Athens Grand List

Aug. 28, 2011 - Tropical Storm Irene tracked north northeast across eastern New York and western New England during Sunday, August 28th, producing widespread flooding, and damaging winds across the region. Strong winds occurred across southern Vermont, with frequent wind gusts of approximately 30 mph in Grafton. The strongest winds occurred from the north to northeast during the morning hours, then from the west to northwest during Sunday evening. The combination of strong winds, and extremely saturated soil led to numerous downed trees and power lines across the region. This also resulted in widespread long duration power outages.

Mar. 10, 2002 - The pressure gradient between deep low pressure over Ontario, and high pressure off the southeast coast, produced a strong southerly flow across southern Vermont on the evening of March 9. Then, a strong cold front moved across the region shortly after midnight, early on March 10th. A line of showers and embedded thunderstorms accompanied the front. Strong winds ahead of and along the front produced some damage across Windham County. Law enforcement personnel reported a large number of trees and power lines down throughout the county.

Nov. 27, 1997 - The passage of a cold front produced strong winds across southern Vermont during the early morning hours of November 27. Winds gusting to 40-50 miles an hour downed trees and power lines in Bennington and Windham Counties. Approximately 1,500 customers lost power for a six to eight hour period.

Jan 19, 1996 - An intense area of low pressure located over the Mid-Atlantic Region on Friday morning January 19th produced damaging winds across southern Vermont. This storm was associated with a strong southerly flow which resulted in scattered reports of downed trees, limbs and power lines.

Feb. 24, 1996 - A rapidly deepening low pressure system moved from southern New Jersey northeast to northern Maine by the morning of February 25. This system brought damaging winds to southern Vermont including Bennington and Windham counties, which downed many trees across the area and produced scattered power outages.

Jul 20, 1996 - An unusually intense low pressure system tracked across the northern Great Lakes to Quebec, Canada during July 19 and 20. The system generated strong northwest winds, which downed trees and power lines over parts of Windham County in southern Vermont.

July 1995 - High wind-shear occurred in town, which resulted in numerous road obstructions, tree destruction, and damage to town highway #2.

July 14, 1988 - Tornado in Windham County (exact location not known). Travelled 10 yards. Caused \$250,000 in damages.

July 5, 1957 – Tornado in Windham County (exact location not known). Travelled 33 yards. Caused \$2,500 in damages.

Sept. 21, 1938 - A hurricane Igor hit the region of Southeast Vermont to include the Town of Grafton, paralyzing it for weeks. As it was coming, packing winds over 100 miles an hour, authorities were unaware of the magnitude so no evacuation procedures were instituted and very few precautions were taken. As a result over 600 people lost their lives and tens of thousands were left homeless. Wind, rain and flash flooding wiped out trees, church steeples and buildings, leaving behind nearly \$400 million in damage.

Sources used

Local town knowledge and records, National Climatic Data Center

**Power Failure**

Power failure is a common condition associated with high winds and can occur anywhere in town. Power failures are typically the result of power lines damaged by high winds or heavy snow/ice storms. During ice storms, locations in town at a higher elevation are most susceptible to power failures. Route 35,

Brookline Road and Reed Road are areas of town where it would be common for power line failures to occur and cause power disruptions to residential dwellings. Power failures may also result from disruptions in the New England or National Power grid, as indicated by the widespread power outages in 2003. Dead or dying trees in close proximity to power lines pose a particular threat for power failure.

## ASSESSING VULNERABILITY

### Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

The Town of Athens is not a participant in the National Flood Insurance Program. The Town is in the process of developing a floodplain ordinance and hopes to join the NFIP in the near future.

The Flood Hazard Summary Sheets says there are seven structures in the SFHA and it is unknown if they have flood insurance.<sup>13</sup> Properties within SFHAs as defined by FEMA, that have a mortgage, are required to purchase flood insurance. Because Athens does not participate in the NFIP, residents do not have access to discount flood insurance through the program so they must buy insurance privately.

### Vulnerable Structures and Areas of Athens

According the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee specific buildings and areas in town that are considered critical by the Town of Athens, and/or are in risk areas are:

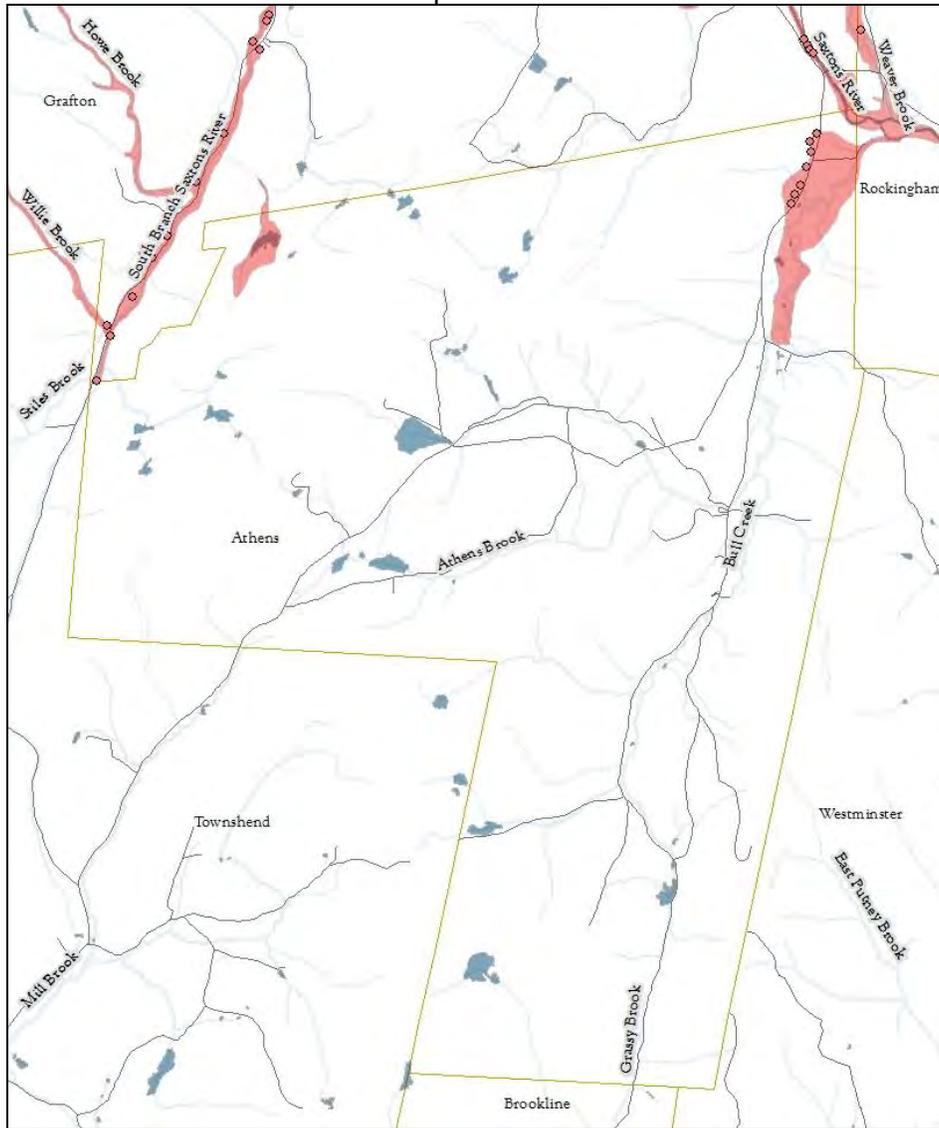
- All of Brookline Road is susceptible to flash flooding. This road is the main road where the Town Offices, Community Christian Church (designated emergency shelter) and Town Garage are located.
- Taylor Excavating on Mill Hill Road
- Athens School – used as the Town Meeting site
- VTel switching station
- VEM, RACES radio site on Valley Cemetery Road

The dots on the map on the following page are the structures within the SFHA (which is the red shaded area). All affected structures are located in the northeast corner of Athens along Route 35.

---

<sup>13</sup> Floodready Vermont, Flood Hazard Summary Report for Winhall, Aug 2014 <  
[http://floodready.vermont.gov/assessment/community\\_reports#Flood%20Hazard%20Summary%20Report](http://floodready.vermont.gov/assessment/community_reports#Flood%20Hazard%20Summary%20Report)>

### Structures in the Special Flood Hazard Area



### Special Flood Hazard Area/River Corridor Mapping

The following maps were created using the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources 'Natural Resources Atlas' which is an online mapping tool<sup>14</sup>. These maps are snips showing all of the special flood hazard areas (SFHAs) that FEMA has designated in Athens. The SFHAs are shown in orange shading, and the floodways are red shaded with black hatching. The floodplains shown in these maps are based on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) maps available through the FEMA Map Service Center.<sup>15</sup> The map effective date for the latest FIRMS for Windham County is 9/28/2007. The white shaded area shown on the maps is the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) defined River Corridor. This area is subject to fluvial erosion. ANR does not map River Corridors for watersheds less than two square miles, so for those streams that don't have mapped River Corridors, the River Corridor is the area measured within 50 feet of top of bank.

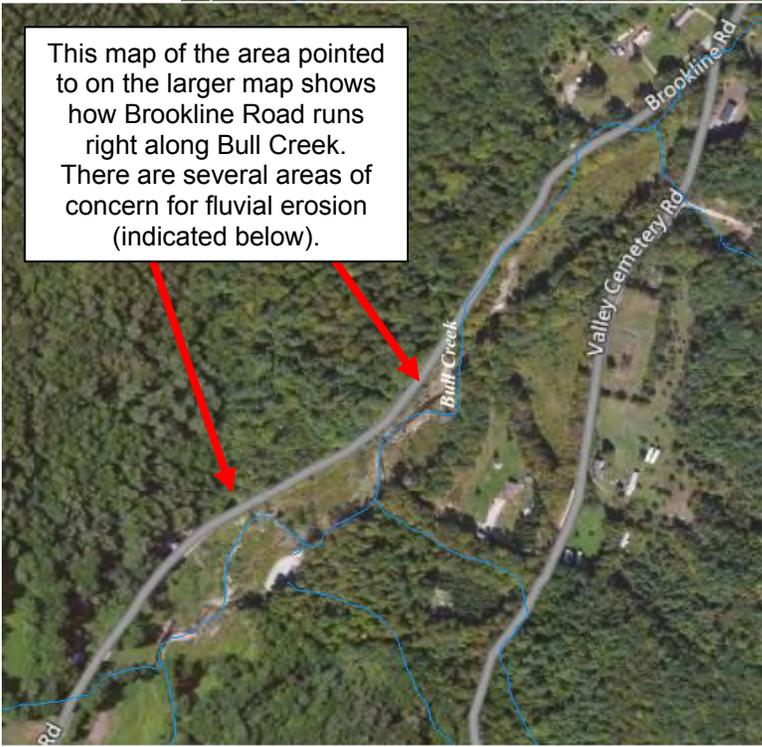
<sup>14</sup> <http://anrmaps.vermont.gov/websites/anra/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/search?AddressQuery=wndham%2C%20vermont.>

Natural Resources Atlas Map showing Streams, SFHAs, and River Corridors in the Town of Athens

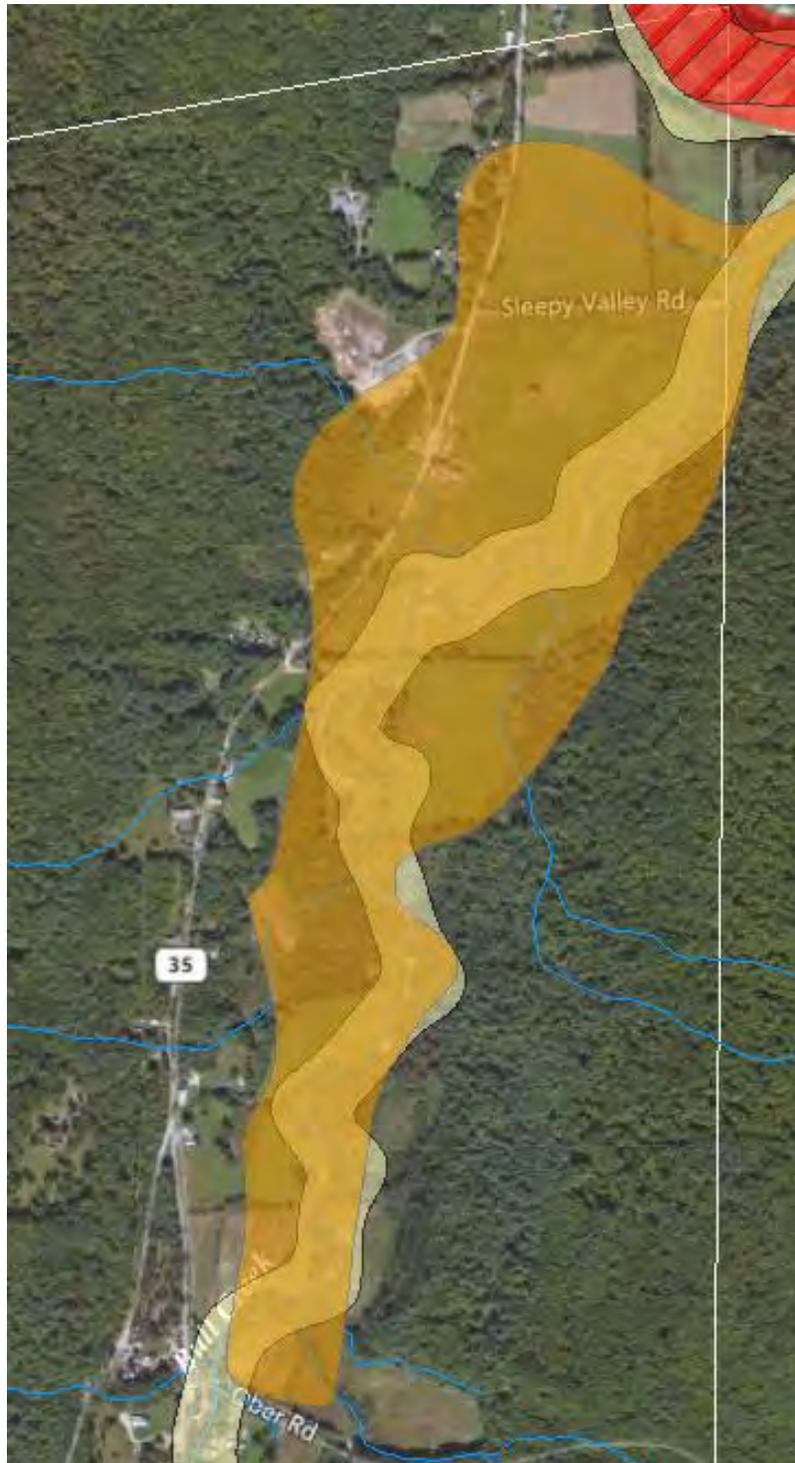


This map of the area pointed to on the larger map shows how Brookline Road runs right along Bull Creek. There are several areas of concern for fluvial erosion (indicated below).



There is a small area along the Saxtons River in the northeastern corner of Athens that is considered floodway. All other special flood hazard areas (SFHAs) in Athens are A zones, the lowest level flood hazard area that FEMA recognizes. The Athens flood hazard area goes from the Ober Hill Road Bridge, crossing Bull Creek; follows the Creek area north, crossing Rte 35; then north again to the Grafton-Athens line, and east along the Rockingham line, to the junction of the Athens-Grafton town line. The River Corridor follows Bull Creek south and goes off for a short way on Athens Brook.

The SFHA shown in the below map is located in the northeastern corner of Athens. The red hatched area along the Saxtons River is a floodway. The orange shaded area is the A zone SFHA in Athens. The white shaded area is the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources defined River Corridor running along Bull Creek.



The area shown the below map is an A zone in the northwestern corner of Athens. This area is a secluded area around a small pond in the woods.



### Repetitive Loss Properties

Athens is not a member of the NFIP and therefore does not have repetitive loss properties.

### Community Facilities in Athens

**Athens Town Office:** Located at 25 Brookline Rd., Athens, VT. This Town facility houses the offices of the Athens Town clerk, Athens Select board, Planning Commission, Town Listers, Town Treasurer, and 911 Coordinator. And provides meeting space for voted, appointed or volunteer committees or commissions who conduct business pertaining to the Town.

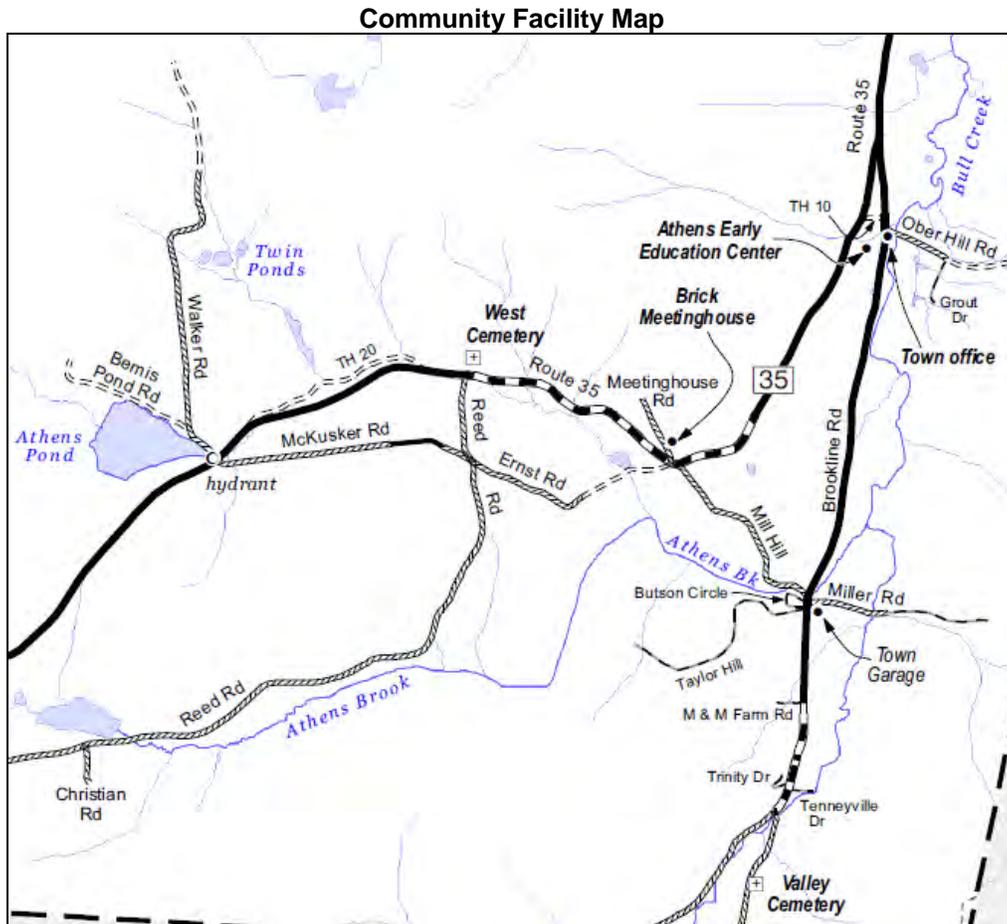
**Athens Town Garage:** Located at 121 Brookline Rd. houses the Town's road maintenance equipment and supplies and is headquarters for the Athens Road Department.

**Athens Cemeteries:** Two Cemeteries are located in the Town of Athens, the Valley Cemetery at 19 Valley Cemetery Road and the West Cemetery at the east junction of Reed Road and 258 Rte. 35.

**Athens School:** located on 28 Brookline Road, it is the property of the Athens School Board, and presently educates pre-school children from both Grafton and Athens.

**Athens Brick Meeting House:** located at 2 Meetinghouse Road. Currently, there has been a concert, a historical representation of Daisy Turner, a pig roast, and several flea markets to raise money for the renovation and rehabilitation of the Meeting House.

No Town facilities are located in the SFHA.



### Market Values of Structures in Athens

These figures are based on 2014 dollars<sup>16</sup>:

- Total Residential value (158 homes) \$31,320,300
- Seasonal homes value (7 homes) \$859,800
- Mobile homes (landed) (31 homes) \$3,063,300
- Mobile homes (unlanded) (14 homes) \$156,600
  
- Total Utilities \$763,900

<sup>16</sup> Figures are from the 2014 Athens Grand List

- Total Commercial value \$18,500
- Miscellaneous \$2,336,500
  
- Total Grand List for the Town of Athens \$38,976,740
- Common level of Appraisal 114.56%

## Development Trends

Athens does not see a lot of growth, development or change. It retains a rural character and hopes to stay that way. The growth that Athens has seen in recent years is in the number of manufactured (mobile) homes being brought into Town. There are about two moving in per year, some of which are locating in some vulnerable areas such as Tenney's Trailer Park on Tenneyville Drive. This area is adjacent to Bull Creek and though it isn't in a mapped floodplain, this area does get flooded when the Creek gets high. Because of the location of the trailer park, between Brookline Road and Bull Creek, there is a very limited area to expand, so new lots are being put in locations that the Town feels are too close to the Creek. Permits are being given for these lots, however.

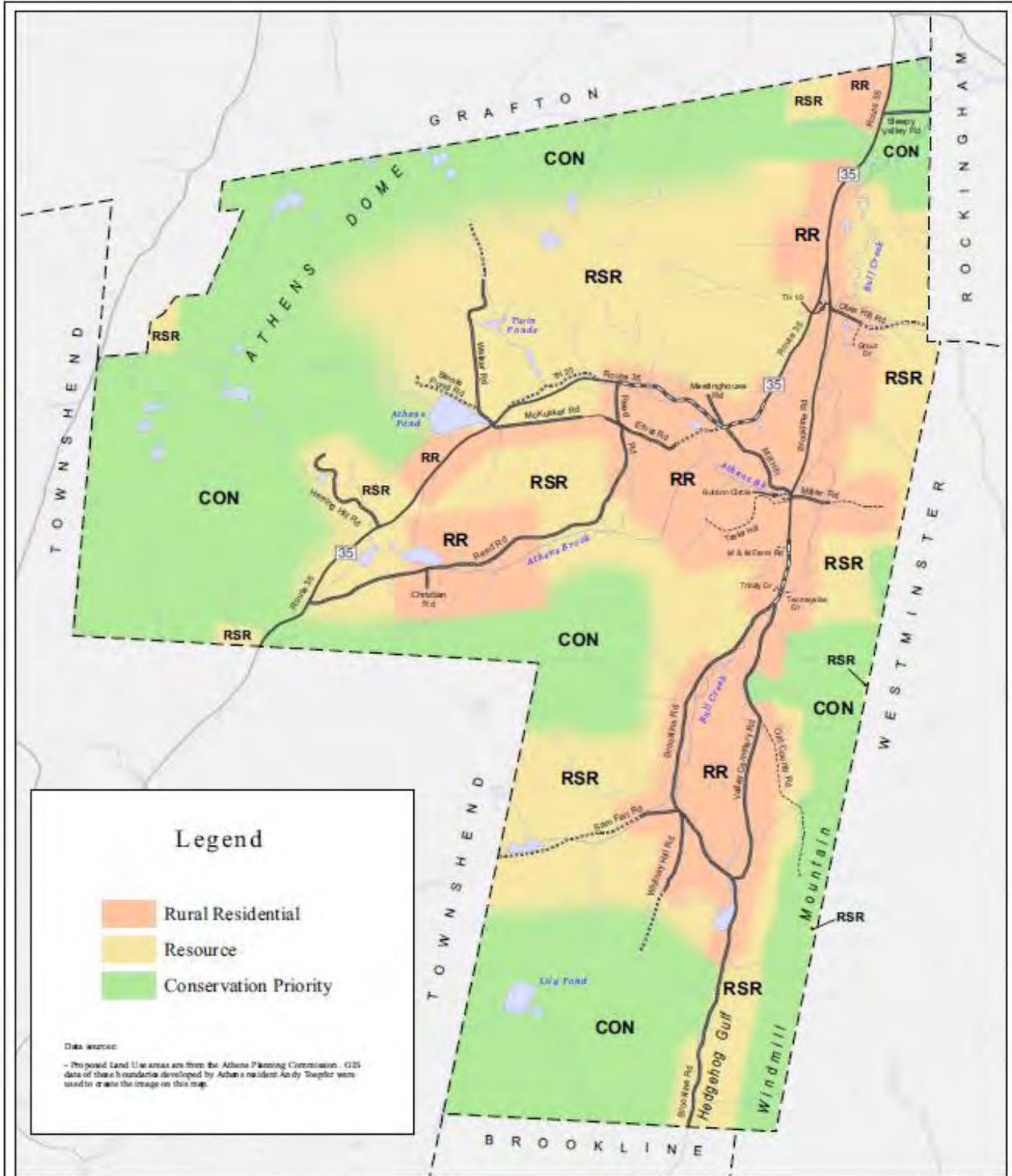
The last stick built home built in Athens was in 2008. Though there isn't a lot of new development or building in town, there are a growing number of permanent residents in Athens because it remains a relatively affordable area in the region. Former temporary residences are becoming year-round homes, and there is a trend towards full time living in Athens and away from second homes. This trend may lead to more development in the future and as much as possible Athens should ensure that any new development does not occur in high hazard locations.

Athens does not have zoning, floodplain regulations, or a current Town Plan. These would help to prevent development in vulnerable areas. Athens is in the process of developing a Town Plan and also wishes to enact floodplain regulations, which will include a fluvial erosion bylaw. As it stands currently, Athens only control on development is if a septic system is being proposed, or an alteration, a permit is applied for through wastewater management at the state level; In this way they can use denial of a septic permit to restrict development. Floodplain and fluvial erosion regulations will add a prevention of high risk development in special flood hazard areas and the newly mapped fluvial erosion corridor.<sup>17</sup>

The map on the following page is their proposed land use map from the current draft Town Plan. As the map shows, Athens does not have commercial development. The proposed land use map shows that the town wishes to remain much as they are today, which leaves some room for development in vulnerable areas, such as along Bull Creek.

---

<sup>17</sup> River Corridor mapping has been released as of 12/8/14 and remains in draft form. It is available for view on VT's floodready.vermont.gov site and is mapped in the Natural Resources Atlas <http://floodready.vermont.gov/node/730>



# Proposed Land Use Town of Athens, Vermont

January 2014



**DRAFT**

Map by Windham Regional Commission, Swanton, VT.  
 January 2014. C:\towns\Athens\map\TP\_town-com.mxd

## MITIGATION STRATEGY

### Local Hazard Mitigation Goals

The Hazard Mitigation Goals as outlined below were agreed up by consensus among the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee during meetings for the development of this plan.

#### General Goals:

- Reduce the loss of life and injury resulting from all hazards.
- Reduce the impact of hazards on the town’s water bodies, natural resources, and historic resources.
- Reduce the economic impacts from hazard events.
  - Minimize disruption to the road network and maintain access,
  - Mitigate financial losses incurred by municipal, residential, industrial, agricultural and commercial establishments due to disasters,
  - Ensure that community infrastructure is not significantly damaged by a hazard event.
  - Being proactive in implementing any needed mitigation projects for public infrastructure such as roads, bridges, culverts, municipal buildings, etc.
- Encourage hazard mitigation planning to be incorporated into other community planning projects, such as new the Town Plan and Town Local Emergency Operation Plan.
- Ensure that members of the general public continue to be part of the hazard mitigation planning process.

### Relevant Town Policies that Support Mitigation

Though the Athens Town Plan is still in draft form, it was considered in the development of this plan because it reflects the goals and ideas of Athens. The below was taken directly from the draft town plan:

#### Town Plan Objectives

1. To accommodate the changing needs of the Town through a continuous planning program that is sensitive to the limited financial ability of the Town residents, and encourages public participation.
2. To encourage Athens' growth in a manner which helps to assure that the basic needs of the health, safety, welfare, education and housing of the Town's residents are met and maintained at satisfactory levels within the financial means of the Town.
5. To support the availability of safe and affordable housing for all residents.

#### Health & Safety Recommendations

1. In addition to the two dry hydrants located at Athens Pond Rte. 35 at Walker Road and Brookline Road, necessary common fire protection features such as fire ponds and/or dry or charged hydrants should be installed where practical by developers and sub dividers to ensure the safety of the public.
2. Regional hospitals, clinics, rescue services and other health facilities exist throughout the region. The Town should continue to support the rescue and health services which directly serve Athens residents, businesses and visitors including, but not limited to, The Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA), the Townshend Food Shelf, the Bellows Falls Area Senior Center, Health Care and Rehabilitation Services, Inc., Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice of VT and NH, Grafton Cares and Senior Solutions.

## Progress between 2011 and 2014

Though there was no hazard mitigation plan in place, Athens was busy doing things to make their town a safer place to live and visit.

1. The ledge on Herring Hill Road was blasted so the town could upsize a culvert that had a repetitive flood problem. The Road Foreman used to have to check on the road in this area every time it rained because of flooding.
2. Culverts were placed in Ernst Road to create a diversion of water movement and prevent repetitive flooding problems in this area. This project required written permission of the landowner.
3. The town established an Emergency Committee who provides education documents and outreach to citizens warning them of the hazards of winter, how to prepare for major snow or ice events, and runs the emergency shelter, among other things. The Emergency Committee makes sure the shelter is equipped with cots, blankets, MRE's etc.
4. A repeater has been installed for the town radio system which benefits the town and the emergency committee. The town now has a State Authorized Radio System in contact with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) that is 45.58 megahertz. The Emergency Committee also now has radios to maintain contact during emergencies.
5. Dry hydrants have been installed at Oaks Pond and Athens Pond.
6. Culverts were upgraded along Route 35 before the recent paving in 2014.

HAZARD	MITIGATION ACTION	WHO (LEADERSHIP)	HOW (FUNDING SOURCE)	STATUS
Flood	Blasting of ledge on Herring Hill Road so the town can upsize a culvert that has a repetitive flood problem.	Road Foreman	Highway grant, or HMGP	Completed
Flood	Culverts on Ernst Road -placed to create a diversion of water movement to prevent repetitive flooding problems.	Road Foreman	Highway grant, or HMGP	Completed
Fire	Install dry hydrants at Oaks Pond and Athens Pond.	Town Officials	Town	Completed
All Hazards	Obtain a State Authorized Radio System to stay in contact with Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) that is 45.58 mhtz.	RACES	Volunteer	Obtained

## Ongoing Efforts

1. The town established an Emergency Committee who provides education documents and outreach to citizens warning them of the hazards of winter, how to prepare for major snow or ice events, and runs the emergency shelter, among other things. The Emergency Committee makes sure the shelter is equipped with cots, blankets, MRE's etc.
2. Green Mountain Power, in conjunction with the Town of Athens, does an annual tree assessment. During this time dead trees that would potentially take out power lines or cause other accidents on roadways are removed.

3. Each year the Emergency Committee conducts a town wide survey to gauge at-risk populations and find out who can volunteer services, equipment, housing, or cooking for others, if necessary.
4. Athens has established a neighborhood liaison who watches out for neighbors and is responsible for reporting back to the Emergency Committee in the case of bad weather event.

### Identification of Mitigation Actions

The participants in the Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan effort identified the following hazard mitigation activities based on an evaluation of hazard event vulnerability not addressed by existing hazard mitigation initiatives and the feasibility of new activities. As a part of the ongoing plan process, these were updated in 2014 by the Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee to reflect progress and new ideas.

Mitigation actions are listed in priority order, with the most critical needs listed at the top of the list. The following criteria were used in establishing project priorities. The ranking of these criteria is largely based on the best available information and best judgment as many projects are not fully scoped out at this time.

- Does the action reduce damage?
- Does the action contribute to community objectives?
- Does the action meet existing regulations?
- Does the action protect historic structures or structures critical to town operations?
- Can the action be implemented quickly?
- Is the action socially acceptable?
- Is the action technically feasible?
- Is the action administratively possible?
- Is the action politically acceptable?
- Is the action legal?
- Does the action offer reasonable benefits compared to its cost of implementation?
- Is the action environmentally sound?

### Cost-Benefit Analysis

At the time of applying for FEMA’s PDM-C, FMA or HMGP grant programs, each project listed below will undergo full benefit-cost analysis (BCA) methodology, version 5.1 or higher to maximize savings. Athens will take every opportunity to utilize 406 mitigation funds.

As part of public involvement discussions and meetings for developing this plan, there was a rough cost/benefit analysis done for each action listed in the table. The below cost and benefits tables address the priorities for the mitigation strategies that are stated in the Mitigation Actions Table. This was how the mitigation actions were assessed by the Planning Committee. Priority was assessed somewhat independently of cost/benefit and was based more on the perceived need of each action and availability of funding, versus what the action costs and benefits.

#### Cost Estimates

High	= >\$100,000
Medium	= \$25,000 – 100,000
Low	= < \$25,000

#### Benefit Estimates

High	Public Safety
Medium	Infrastructure/ Functionality
Low	Aesthetics/ General Maintenance

Implementation of the mitigation actions is summarized in the below table, as far as who, when and how they will be carried out.

<b>Mitigation Actions Table</b>							
<b>HAZARD</b>	<b>MITIGATION ACTION</b>	<b>WHO (Leadership)</b>	<b>WHEN (Timeframe)</b>	<b>HOW (Funding)</b>	<b>COST / BENEFIT</b>	<b>Priority / Mitigation or Preparedness</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Flood	Develop flood hazard bylaw and join NFIP to enable residents to have access to discount flood insurance and to get higher ERAF match.	Selectboard / WRC	Begin Summer 2015; Finish and aim to apply to NFIP end of 2015	Dues to WRC will pay for technical assistance to accomplish this	Low/High	High / Mitigation	Will begin upon adoption of Town Plan or LHMP
Flood	Two culvert upgrades on Walker Road	Selectboard and Road Foreman	Begin Summer 2015; finish Fall 2015	Federal and State grant	High/Medium	High / Mitigation	CDBG DR grant came through March 2015; work to begin Summer 2015
Flood	Culvert upgrade on Brookline Road at the intersection on Oberhill Road	Selectboard and Road Foreman	Begin Summer 2015; finish Fall 2015	Federal and State grant	High/Medium	High / Mitigation	CDBG DR grant came through March 2015; work to begin Summer 2015
Flood	Culvert upgrade on Brookline Road in the area of Hedgehog	Selectboard and Road Foreman	Begin Spring 2016/17; finish Fall 2016/17	State grant	High/Medium	High / Mitigation	Seeking grant funding
Flood / Winter Storm	Develop culvert inventory / update from 2003 and share data with WRC.	Road Foreman / WRC	Complete field work Summer 2015, Data work finish winter 2015/2016	Town General Fund and WRC dues	Low / High	Medium / Mitigation	Currently working on this
Winter Storm / Ice Storm	Emergency Committee will maintain the emergency shelter	Emergency Committee	1 time per year, unless shelter is open	Volunteers from the Emergency Committee and Town General Fund	Low/Med	High / Preparedness	Committee is active
High Winds	GMP tree inventory of dead trees that would potentially take out power lines.	GMP and Road Foreman	1 time per year, usually Fall	GMP (Green Mountain Power)	Low/High	Medium / Preparedness and Mitigation	Completed for 2014
Fire	Install dry hydrant on Reed Road	Town Officials	Mid 2016, begin and end	Town General Fund	Low/High	High / Preparedness and Mitigation	Permits have been applied for
All Hazards	Town-wide survey to discover who needs to be checked on during disasters and those who can help with equipment or time during disasters	Emergency Committee	Every 2 years	Volunteers from the Emergency Committee and Town General Fund	Low/High	High / Mitigation	Last survey was done in 2012
Flood / Winter Storm /	Distribute Emergency Preparedness booklets from DEMHS	Emergency Committee	1 time per year distribution	Volunteers from the Emergency Committee and	Low/High	Low / Mitigation	Continuous and available currently

High Winds	to residents at Town Meeting and make available at the town office.		and always available at the Town Office	Town General Fund			
All Hazards	Publish biannual article in the Athenian addressing disaster prevention through awareness of residents.	Emergency Committee	2 times per year, Spring and Fall	Volunteers from the Emergency Committee and Town General Fund	Low/High	Low / Mitigation	Published 2 times per year, last article was Nov 2014

### Implementation of Mitigation Actions/Capabilities

Athens is a small rural community located off the beaten path. There are no full-time Town staff and most town functions are done by volunteers. There is a part-time Road Foreman, an Assistant EMD, and a part time Town Clerk. Relative to its size, Athens stands out for having an active Emergency Committee which runs the emergency shelter and participates in the LEPC 6, among other things.

Capabilities are limited in the town by its size, staff, and limited revenue base. At this time, the culvert upgrades are the only infrastructure mitigation projects that Athens has identified. The Road Foreman, along with the Windham Regional Commission Transportation Planner, have identified these needs, and funding has been applied for these upgrades. This does not mean that after another hazard event or during a yearly plan review, more infrastructure upgrade needs will not be identified. Athens may seek 406 mitigation or HMGP funds for infrastructure projects identified in the future.

Because they are small and there is not a lot of new growth, existing capabilities are able to handle the issues faced by the town relatively easily. Increased growth would cause strain on the volunteer based town structure.

Roles, responsibilities and timeframes for each action were defined through Town involvement and are laid out in the mitigation actions table. The Emergency Committee, who championed this plan, along with the Road Foreman and the Selectboard are the primary entities responsible for carrying out the actions.

### Existing Planning Mechanisms

The following policies, programs and activities related to hazard mitigation are currently in place and/or being implemented in the Town of Athens. The Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee analyzed these programs and plans for their effectiveness and noted improvements needed. Athens uses all of the tools listed below to help plan for current and future activities with the town. For example: the Local Emergency Operation Plan has a contact list that is used for response purposes in the case of a hazard event, and is updated every year after Town Meeting. Town Road and Bridge Standards are followed by the town and Athens plans to update their culvert inventory. In the development of this plan, the latest draft Town Plan was used.

As Athens goes through the update process for the planning mechanisms outlined in the table below, they will look to the Hazard Mitigation Plan’s Table of Actions and Risk and Vulnerability Assessments to help guide land use district decisions, and guide goals and policies for those districts. At the Town Meeting every March, policies and action items in the Town Plan are reviewed and integrated into hazard mitigation as needed. The Local Emergency Operations Plan contact list is updated after Town Meeting each year, including updates to vulnerable geographic locations, as well as locations of vulnerable populations. Updates to each of the planning mechanisms outlined in the table below are handled by the identified by the responsible party identified in the table. There is no timeframe for updating the below referenced plans and regulations to better incorporate hazard mitigation, however, as each document is updated the hazard mitigation plan will be reviewed for incorporation. The goals of this hazard mitigation

plan will be incorporated in the upcoming town plan update to ensure that emergency preparedness and mitigation planning efforts are included as much as possible in the Town Plan, with particular attention to including the projects in the Mitigation Actions Table. This will assist with ensuring that this plan is utilized and project follow-through occurs.

Currently, Athens is in the midst of updating their town plan, which will include a new flood resiliency element and an Emergency Management section, as noted in the below table. The hazard mitigation plan will be considered and incorporated as seen appropriate. Athens does not have a zoning ordinance. They are developing a floodplain ordinance, which will also include a Fluvial Erosion Hazard bylaw. The LEOP is updated yearly and was updated last in 2014. Athens is actively involved in the local LEPC and will continue to be so. Other mitigation/emergency planning related documents and their status are outlined in the below table:

<b>Existing Planning Mechanisms</b>			
<b>Type of Existing Protection</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Effectiveness / Enforcement / Hazard that is addressed</b>	<b>Gaps in Existing Protection / Improvements Needed</b>
Town Plan	This document is still in draft form but is expected to be adopted in 2015.	There are numerous policies that support mitigation.	There is no Emergency Management section of the plan. This should be added before adoption or at the first update.
Town Local Emergency Operation Plan	Municipal procedures for emergency response	Sheltering; Incident Command; Hazard Annexes included	Town LEOP completed and adopted each year by the Selectboard
LEPC 6 Hazardous Materials Plan	Procedures for hazmat emergency response at regional level	LEPC 6 has the plan	Continued involvement with the LEPC
Mutual Aid – Emergency Services	Agreement for regional coordinated emergency services	Athens contracts with Saxtons River Fire Department which includes KMA coverage.	None identified
Mutual Aid – Public Works	Agreement for regional coordinated emergency highway maintenance services	No Mutual Aid Agreement signed	Not Applicable
Culvert and Bridge Inventory	Maintenance check list	Town Bridge and Culvert Inventory was updated in 2012 and is currently being worked on.	No major gaps identified
Road Standards	Design and construction standards for roads and drainage systems	Adopted State of Vermont Codes and Standards for Roads	No major gaps identified
Sewage Regulations	Regulates on-site sewage systems	State Regulations apply	None Identified
Wetland protection – VT Wetland Rules	Protected by 1990 Vermont Wetland Rules	Protection of environment, water resources, wildlife, biota	None Identified

## PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCESS

### Monitoring and Updating the Plan – Yearly Review

Once the plan is approved and adopted, the Emergency Committee in Athens, along with interested and appointed volunteers, in Athens will continue to work with the Windham Regional Commission to monitor, evaluate, and update the plan throughout the next 5 year cycle. The plan will be reviewed annually at an April Selectboard meeting along with the review of the town's Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP). This meeting will allow town officials and the public to discuss the town's progress in implementing mitigation actions and determine if the town is interested in applying for grant funding for projects that can help mitigate future hazardous events; e.g. bridge and culvert replacements, road replacements and grading, as well as buying out any repetitive loss structures that may be in the Special Flood Hazard Area, and revise the plan as needed. Windham Regional Commission's emergency planner will assist the Athens Emergency Committee with this review, as requested. Progress on actions will be kept track using a table that WRC will provide to the Emergency Committee to update. There will be no changes to the plan, unless deemed necessary by the Town. If so, the post disaster review procedure will be followed.

### Plan Maintenance – 5 Year Update and Evaluation Process

The Hazard Mitigation Plan is dynamic. To ensure that the plan remains current and relevant, it is important that it undergo a major update periodically as required in 44 CFR § 201.6(c)(4)(i). This update process will be thorough and occur every five years. This update will include a thorough evaluation of the plan and incorporate any new requirements that FEMA has for Hazard Mitigation Plans. Participants outlined below will work with the Emergency Planner at the Windham Regional Commission (WRC) in accordance with the following procedure:

1. The Chair of the Athens Emergency Committee and the Athens Selectboard will convene a meeting of the hazard mitigation planning committee. The town's Emergency Committee Chair will chair the committee, and other members should include local officials such as Selectboard members, road commissioner, town plan participants, EMD and Assistant EMD, etc. The Emergency Committee Chair will work with the Windham Regional Commission Emergency Planner and be the point person for the Town.
2. The WRC Emergency Planner will guide the Committee through the update process. This update process will include several advertised public meetings. At these meetings the Committee will use the existing plan and update as appropriately guided by the WRC Emergency Planner to address:
  - Update of hazard events and data gathered since the last plan update.
  - Changes in community and government processes, which are hazard-related and have occurred since the last review.
  - Changes in community growth and development trends.
  - Progress in implementation of plan initiatives and projects.
  - Incorporation of new mitigation initiatives and projects.
  - Effectiveness of previously implemented initiatives and projects.
  - Evaluation of the plan for its effectiveness at achieving its stated purpose and goals.
  - Evaluation of unanticipated challenges or opportunities that may have occurred between the date of adoption and the date of the report.
  - Evaluation of hazard-related public policies, initiatives and projects.
  - How mitigation strategy has been incorporated into other planning mechanisms

- Review and discussion of the effectiveness of public and private sector coordination and cooperation.
3. From the information gathered at these meetings, and other interactions the Emergency Planner has with the Town, along with data collected independently during research for the update, the WRC Emergency Planner will prepare the updated draft in conformance with the latest FEMA Region 1 *Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Review Crosswalk* document.
  4. The Selectboard will review the draft report. Consensus will be reached on changes to the draft. Emphasis in plan updates will be put on critically looking at how the plan can become more effective at achieving its stated purpose and goals.
  5. Changes will be incorporated into the Plan by the WRC Emergency Planner.
  6. The Selectboard will notify the public that the draft is available for public comment and review. The Town will advertise and make available the draft plan for provide comments both electronically and in hard copy. The draft plan will simultaneously be distributed to adjacent towns for review and comment.
  7. Public and adjacent town comments will be incorporated by the WRC Emergency Planner. The final draft will be provided to the Emergency Committee for final review and comment, with review comments provided to the Committee and incorporated into the plan.
  8. WRC Emergency Planner will finalize the plan with any remaining comments from the Emergency Committee and submit electronically to DEMHS and FEMA.
  9. The Plan will be reviewed by the DEMHS State Hazard Mitigation Officer (SHMO) and FEMA Region 1.
  10. SHMO and FEMA comments will be addressed in the plan by the WRC Emergency Planner.
  11. The plan will be resubmitted as needed until the plan is approved pending adoption. Once the plan is approved by FEMA, it will be ready for adoption.
  12. The Selectboard will adopt the plan and distribute to interested parties.
  13. The final adopted plan will be submitted by the WRC Emergency Planner to DEMHS and FEMA.
  14. FEMA will issue final approval of the adopted plan and the five year clock will begin again.

### Post-Disaster Review/Update Procedure

Should a declared disaster occur, a special review will occur amongst the Selectboard, the Emergency Committee, the WRC Emergency Planner, and those involved in the five year update process described above. This review will occur in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Within six months of a declared emergency event, the town will initiate a post disaster review and assessment. Members of the State Hazard Mitigation Committee will be notified that the assessment process has commenced.
2. This post disaster review and assessment will document the facts of the event and assess whether existing Hazard Mitigation projects effectively lowered community vulnerability/damages. New mitigation projects will be discussed, as needed.

3. A draft After Action Report of the review and assessment will be distributed to the hazard mitigation committee.
4. A meeting of the committee will be convened by the Selectboard to make a determination of whether the plan needs to be amended. If the committee determines that NO modification of the plan is needed, then the report is distributed to local communities.
5. If the committee determines that modification of the plan IS needed, then the committee drafts an amended plan based on the recommendations and forwards to the Selectboard for public input.
6. The Selectboard adopts the amended plan after receiving approval-pending-adoption notification from FEMA.

### Continued Public Participation

Maintenance of this plan and implementation of the mitigation strategy will require the continued participation of local citizens, agencies, and other organizations. To keep the public aware of and involved in local hazard mitigation efforts, the town will take the following measures:

- Provide hazard mitigation information at Town Meeting
- Post the hazard mitigation plan on the town website
- Selectboard will review past hazard mitigation committee members and consider whether new members should be added. Representatives of local businesses, nonprofits, academia, etc. should especially be considered.
- Notify the public of committee meetings through town bulletin board, website, *The Athenian* newsletter, newspaper, Facebook, Front Porch Forum, etc.

## APPENDIX

1. Resolution for Adoption
2. Irene damage photos from Sandi Caponcelli
3. Sign-in Sheet for October 19, 2011 Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting
4. Sign-in Sheet for November 14, 2011 Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting
5. December 2011 Public Notice in the town newsletter *The Athenian* advertising availability of Athens Hazard Plan for review and public comment
6. Newspaper advertisement for September 24, 2014 meeting
7. Sign-in Sheet for September 24, 2014 Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting
8. September 24, 2014 Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting agenda
9. October 27, 2014 Email sent from Alyssa to Hazard Mitigation Committee and responses
10. October 31, 2014 Email sent to adjacent towns for comment on the draft plan and responses
11. November 2014 Public Notice in the town newsletter *The Athenian* advertising availability of Athens Hazard Plan for review and public comment

## PREREQUISITES

Adoption by the Local Governing Body

### Certificate of Adoption Town of Athens, VT Selectboard

#### **A Resolution Adopting the *Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan*, for the Town of Athens, VT**

WHEREAS, the Town of Athens, VT has worked with the Windham Regional Commission to identify natural hazards, analyze past and potential future damages due to natural disasters, and identify strategies for mitigating future damages; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan analyzes natural hazards and assesses risks within the community; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Athens, VT Hazard Mitigation Plan recommends the implementation of action(s) specific to the community to mitigate against damage from natural hazard events; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Athens, VT authorizes responsible agencies to execute their responsibilities to implement this plan for the purposes of long term risk reduction and increased community resiliency and;

WHEREAS, the Town of Athens, VT will follow the Plan Maintenance Process outlined in this plan to assure that the plan stays up to date and compliant; and

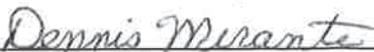
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Athens, VT adopts this *Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan* as well as future revisions and maintenance required by 44 CFR 201.6 and FEMA for a period of five (5) years from the date of this resolution.

Duly adopted this 16 day of July 2015  
date month, year

Selectboard Members







ATTEST

  
Town Clerk

Irene damage photos from Sandi Caponcelli



Along Brookline Road Bull Creek undercut an old small horse barn that at one time sat far enough away from the creek as not to be worried about. But this area along the Creek eroded in recent years bringing the Creek closer to the structure. TS Irene eroded the area even more and caused the building to collapse. It was probably a good 20' drop from its original location.



This area is also along Brookline Road and Bull Creek. TS Irene carried debris down from upstream areas and created these large debris jams. There was a great deal of pile up on the sides of the banks in this area right after the storm. This was above where the little barn went down, which is shown on the previous page.

Sign-in Sheet for October 19, 2011 Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting

ATHENS – PRE-DISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN MEETING

October 19, 2011

Location: Town Offices

SIGN IN SHEET

Name	Affiliations – Please list all	Town where you live	Phone	email
MICHAEL J. STAVES	SECRETARY	ATHENS	869-2298	mbsa.tex@vermont.ecs.net
DAVID CARONKECI	ASSISTANT EMB	ATHENS	869-2590	dcapone@marlboro.edu
Sherry Maher	Emergency Committee	Athens	869-2441	samaher@vermont.net
Sandi Appardelli	Lister Assst. Town Clerk THO Emer. Com	Athens	869-2590	vtpltdly@bol.net.il.com
Jaym Morgan	Emergency Committee	Athens	869-2327	jelo.morgan@xobacco.com
TIM STANUSON	Emergency Committee	Athens	869-2144	txeal@vermont.net
THOMAS TAYLOR	SECRETARY	Athens	869-2451	9 Mill Hill

Sign-in Sheet for November 14, 2011 Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting

ATHENS – PRE-DISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN MEETING  
 November 14, 2011  
 Location: Town Offices

SIGN IN SHEET

Name	Affiliations – Please list all	Town where you live	email
<i>Michelle O'Leary</i>		<i>Athens</i>	<i>2-CHASE71@YAHOO.COM</i>
<i>Daniel L. Fontanelle</i>		<i>ATHENS</i>	<i>DCAFFRON@MAILBOXLTD.U</i>
<i>Michael J. Burt</i>		<i>ATHENS</i>	<i>mbates@vermontel.net</i>
<i>Sherry Mauer</i>		<i>Athens</i>	<i>ssmaher@vermontel.net</i>
<i>TINA STEVENSON</i>		<i>ATHENS</i>	<i>berca@10mmpl.net</i>
<i>Gordon Ruyt w2006</i>		<i>Athens</i>	<i>ripxcct@aol.com</i>
<i>Saudi Capponcelli</i>		<i>Athens</i>	<i>vtplntdy@10mmpl.com</i>

December 2011 Public Notice in the town newsletter *The Athenian* advertising availability of Athens Hazard Plan for review and public comment.

# The Athenian

Volume 2, Number 4

December, 2011

## Teaming Up for Flood Relief

**W**indham Foundation has established the Grafton and Athens Relief Fund for flood victims. The Foundation is teaming up with Grafton Cares and SEVCA to distribute \$50,000 to residents of Athens and Grafton (Grafton Cares) and the surrounding areas (SEVCA) who suffered hardships due to the floods from Irene.

This fund was primarily established through donations from members of the Windham Foundation board of trustees, and was supplemented by members of the Grafton community and guests of the Grafton Inn. While the area has made significant recovery, some families are still in need of working through damage on their homes and land.

"As a major employer in this area, we felt it was necessary to do what we could to give back to the community," said Bob Allen, Windham Foundation President. "Many of the people affected are employees, friends and family. The donors of these funds, our trustees primarily, understand the close-knit community that comes with living in Vermont. They, along with others who made donations, wanted to step up to do their part. And by teaming up with Grafton Cares and SEVCA to administer the funds, we know the funds raised will go in the right hands to those who truly need the assistance."

The residents of Grafton and Athens who are in need of assistance as a result of the flood should contact Grafton Cares at 869-2674 (Dennis & Karen Hunt) or SEVCA at 802-722-4575.

### National Flood Insurance Program—To Join Or Not To Join, That Is the Question

At the last Select Board meeting in November, Chris Toney from FEMA spoke about the National Flood Insurance Program that is available to all Vermont towns. Most Vermont communities (over 200) participate in the program

and it provides access to flood insurance no matter where people live in town. At the upcoming Town Meeting in March, we will need to decide whether or not join this program. In order to participate, the town needs to adopt flood hazard regulations that meet or exceed the requirements of the NFIP, pass a resolution to join, and complete an application.

**What are the benefits?** (1) Once participating in the NFIP, residents can purchase federally-backed flood insurance to property owners and renters. (2) Homes can be insured against flood damage for up to \$250,000 and the contents for up to \$100,000. (3) Renters can insure contents up to \$100,000. (4) Some policies can cost as little as \$80 per year for homes in a low to moderate flood risk zone. (5) Flood insurance has been very difficult to get for some. (6) Communities may qualify for cost-share from the state in assistance after disasters.

**What are the negatives?** adopt and enforce flood regulations that meet or exceed requirements of the Program. must meet floodplain management can include building codes, and sanitary regulations. floodplain map. If you live in a Hazard Area and receive federal loan assistance you would be required to purchase flood insurance.

We expect this to be an ongoing discussion at the March meeting. *The Athenian* will keep you informed. information becomes available access to a computer, you can find information about flood insurance at [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov) or toll free. You can call our FEMA representative

2 Volume 2, Number 4

December, 2011

Toney, directly at 571-643-1525 to get your questions answered.

The Athens Emergency Committee continues to work through a hazard mitigation plan required for NFIP application and future access to FEMA assistance in the event of a disaster. The draft plan is available for public review and comment at the Town Office and on-line here: <http://windhamregional.org/all-hazards>.

If you are interested in getting involved, check in with the Emergency Committee – Don Capponcelli – 869-2590, or Tim Stevenson 802-2141 to find out about the next committee meeting at the Town Office.

### Questions and More Questions

At the Athens Select Board Meeting on November 17, Michael Bates informed the Athens Brick Meeting House Committee that their designation as a committee is incorrect. Apparently, by law, committee members are appointed by the Board, not elected. Additionally, Committees do not have control of funds. This mistaken identity goes back to at least 1968 when the Board created the Committee which has been operational ever since. It may even go back to the 1920's when the town first established a committee to care for the Brick Meeting House. It is expected that this will be resolved at Town Meeting in March by electing - or re-electing the current Committee members to their properly labeled positions.

In addition to questions of the "Committee's" identity, the question of the building's ownership still needs to be resolved. A reliable opinion has it that the building and land are not technically owned by the town, but by the heirs of Samuel Bailey who originally donated the land for the purpose of the Meeting House. Whether or not any of Samuel Bailey's descendants have any interest in actually owning and caring for the building is another question, as is whether or not a reasonable path can be found to solve this conundrum. Stay tuned!

### River Singers Holiday Concert in Grafton

This is something you will not want to miss. The River Singers are a 100 member women's singing group and well known in Windham

County for their holiday concerts. This year they will be performing at the White Church in Grafton on Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30pm and on Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. The group is led by Mary Cay Brass and the selections will be Songs of Joy, Health, Love & Peace from Rwanda, Macedonia, Georgia, Israel, the British Isles, gospel & more. There is a suggested donation of \$14/\$10 for seniors & students. The donations will go to Grafton Cares to be used for flood relief.

What a great way to start the holiday season!

### Athens Dome Trails Are Open

The new hiking trails by the Windham Hill Pinnacle Association, in conjunction with the Vermont Land Trust are now cleared and marked with colored disks. The parking areas are ready for use, and the trailhead kiosks have been installed. What began as a vision several years ago has become a real on the ground trail system and nature reserve right here in our midst. Further trail improvements to be made in the coming years include a footbridge across Ledge Road Brook, a few boardwalk sections across wet areas, some trail benching here and there, view clearing and a lean-to shelter at the Lake property summit, a small utility shed with porch (so hikers can get out of the rain) at the Ledge Road parking area, and a trail designed and constructed at the soapstone quarry. A map of this new gem in our midst can be found here: [www.windmillhillpinnacle.org/images/athensnew\\_s.pdf](http://www.windmillhillpinnacle.org/images/athensnew_s.pdf). Take a morning or afternoon hike or maybe snowshoe the new trails! Learn more about the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association and the Athens Dome Trails at [www.windmillhillpinnacle.org](http://www.windmillhillpinnacle.org) or contact Camilla Roberts at [whpa@sover.net](mailto:whpa@sover.net).

### COMMUNITY INFORMATION

**Board of Selectmen Meetings:** Every third Thursday of the month at the Town Hall, 7:30

**Grafton Cares Lunch** – every Wednesday @ 12 in the Chapel Building in Grafton

**CONTACT US** at [theathenianvt@gmail.com](mailto:theathenianvt@gmail.com).

**NEXT ATHENS COMMUNITY SUPPER:**

Friday, January 6, 2012, 6:00 in church basement

Newspaper advertisement for September 24, 2014 meeting

Monday, September 22, 2014

Page 12 Brattleboro Reformer **W I N D H A M N O T**

---

## **AROUND WINDHAM COUNTY**

**In Athens...**

**EMERGENCY COMMITTEE:** The Athens Emergency Committee, as well as members of the Athens Selectboard, will meet with Alyssa Sabetto of the Windham Regional Commission on Wednesday, Sept. 24, at 6:30 p.m. at the Athens Town Office on Brookline Road.

The meeting is hear an update on the Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan. The public is welcome to attend. For information, contact Tim Stevenson at 802-869-2141 or [bereal@vermontel.net](mailto:bereal@vermontel.net).

Sign-in Sheet for September 24, 2014 Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting

Athens, VT - HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN MEETING  
 September 24, 2014  
 Location: Athens Town Office

**SIGN IN SHEET**

Name / Email	Affiliations – Please list all	Town where you live
Tim Stevenson bereal@vermontel.net	Town Plan Committee Re-cycling Committee Emergency Committee	Athens
DENNIS MIRANTE dmirantesre@yahoo.com	SELECT BOARD	ATHENS
Beverly Hutchins	Emergency Committee	athens
Jan Suppel	Emergency Comm Town Plan Comm, Lister	Athens
DONALD CAPPONCELLI dcappon@marlboro.edu	EMER. COMMITTEE ASSISTANT TO THE EMD CHAIRMAN - CEMETERY commission (SCHOOL BOARD)	Athens
Sandi Cappocelli vtplutdy@hotmail.com	Emer Comm, Town Plan Comm, Lister, Asst. Town Clerk	Athens
David Bemis david.bemis@state.vt.us	Athens selectman	Athens
Thomas Taylor	Athens selectman	ATHENS
Town Office - townofathens@hotmail.com		

## September 24, 2014 Town of Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan meeting agenda

### Hazard Mitigation Plan – Update & Plan Development Athens Town Office – September 24, 2014

#### **Agenda**

##### **1. Introduce the Hazard Mitigation Plan**

- a) Purpose
- b) Process
- c) Review of what's been done to date

##### **2. Hazard Identification**

- a) Review and update hazards ranking table
- b) Are the key threats still what we want to focus on? Flash Flood, Winter Storm/Ice Storm, and High Wind
- c) Discuss events that have happened that aren't included in the plan
- d) Impacts that aren't already addressed in the plan
- e) Mapping of vulnerable areas

##### **3. Mitigation Actions**

- a) Review Mitigation Actions table developed by Athens in 2011
- b) Discuss Existing Hazard Mitigation Projects, Programs & Activities
- c) Update Mitigation Actions Table

##### **4. Other Updates**

- a) Review of other elements of the draft plan and questions that weren't discussed

##### **5. Next Steps**

## October 27, 2014 Email sent from Alyssa to Hazard Mitigation Committee and responses

**From:** [Alyssa Sabetto](#)  
**Sent:** Monday, October 27, 2014 5:11 PM  
**To:** 'Tim'; [dmirantesr@yahoo.com](mailto:dmirantesr@yahoo.com); 'Donald Capponcelli'; 'Sandi Capponcelli'; [david.bemis@state.vt.us](mailto:david.bemis@state.vt.us); [townofathens@hotmail.com](mailto:townofathens@hotmail.com)  
**Subject:** Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan - Comments due to me by 10/31/14

Hello Athens,

Attached is the revised and updated hazard mitigation plan for Athens. **Please have your comments on this draft plan back to me by this Friday 10/31.** If you wish to give me a call to talk about the plan or specific comments, please do so! I welcome all of your comments and now is the time to get them to me.

Next steps after I incorporate any changes from you is to have you make the plan available at the town office for public comment by residents/others, and to send the plan via email to adjacent towns for comment.

Tim – Will you please prepare something for public advertisement that the plan will be available for public comment at the Town office and wherever else you may want to have it available. I'd suggest advertising it's availability for comment on Athens Facebook page, with an article in the Athenian (if you have an upcoming issue), a flyer at the town office, and maybe a short post in the Reformer. It's your choice, but the bare minimum should be a flyer and Facebook. We'll have it available for comment by the public and adjacent towns for two weeks. I'll get you the exact dates as soon as I have them, but definitely early next week, so please plan on advertising it to be available for public comment from November 5-19.

After the comment period, I'll finalize and send the draft to the state and FEMA. I'll copy the town on this transmittal, for your records.

Any questions, just ask. I do have to stick very clearly to these deadlines because of grant funding availability.

Thanks,  
Alyssa

### Committee Responses:

**From:** Tim Stevenson [mailto:[bereal@vermontel.net](mailto:bereal@vermontel.net)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 30, 2014 12:53 PM  
**To:** Alyssa Sabetto; [dmirantesr@yahoo.com](mailto:dmirantesr@yahoo.com); 'Donald Capponcelli'; 'Sandi Capponcelli'; [david.bemis@state.vt.us](mailto:david.bemis@state.vt.us); [townofathens@hotmail.com](mailto:townofathens@hotmail.com)  
**Subject:** Re: Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan - Comments due to me by 10/31/14

Alyssa, I'm fine with the draft plan, it seems cover what we talked about at the meeting, no suggested changes to make.

Tim

Tim Stevenson  
Founding Director  
Post Oil Solutions  
802.869.2141  
[www.postoilsolutions.org](http://www.postoilsolutions.org)

**From:** Sandi Capponcelli [mailto:[vtplntdy@hotmail.com](mailto:vtplntdy@hotmail.com)]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 30, 2014 4:09 PM  
**To:** Alyssa Sabetto  
**Subject:** RE: Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan - Comments due to me by 10/31/14

It all looks good to me.  
Sandi

**From:** Dennis Mirante [mailto:[dmirantesr@yahoo.com](mailto:dmirantesr@yahoo.com)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 29, 2014 5:32 PM  
**To:** Alyssa Sabetto  
**Subject:** Fw: Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan - Comments due to me by 10/31/14

Alyssa, during a cursory review of the Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan I noticed that on page 9, Steven Taylor should be Thomas Taylor and on page 29, under Routine Plan Maintenance paragraph 1, Windhall Select Board should be Athens Select Board.

## October 31,2014 Email sent to adjacent towns for comment on the draft plan and responses

**From:** Alyssa Sabetto [mailto:asabetto@windhamregional.org]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 31, 2014 12:21 PM  
**To:** 'grafton@vermontel.net'; 'ericstev@vermontel.net'; 'greenmountainsam@vermontel.net'; 'skip.lisle@yahoo.com'; 'daldrich@rockbf.org'; 'manager@rockbf.org'; 'morano@sover.net'; 'Alan LaCombe'; 'kbennett@rockbf.org'; 'tsmacphee@comcast.net'; 'elhoward@rockbf.org'; 'rlake@rockbf.org'; 'manager@westminstervt.org'; 'dwoodward@westminstervt.org'; 'normwright@aol.com'; 'Administrative Assistant'; 'ncjstoddard@comcast.net'; 'wjewell@westminstervt.org'; 'Jmedeiros1234@comcast.net'; 'brook763@comcast.net'; 'slindy@sover.net'; 'guytanza@earthlink.net'; 'brookline.selectboard@comcast.net'; 'kbourne24@comcast.net'; 'tnclk@svcable.net'; 'Craig Hunt'; 'bhorn@sover.net'; 'cknowles@svcable.net'; 'David Dezendorf'; 'kathy.hege@shepherdsflock.com'; 'plan@townshendvt.net'; 'artmonette@svcable.net'  
**Cc:** 'dmirantesr@yahoo.com'; 'Donald Capponcelli'; 'Sandi Capponcelli'; 'david.bemis@state.vt.us'; 'townofathens@hotmail.com'; 'Tim Stevenson'; 'Alyssa Sabetto'  
**Subject:** Athens Hazard Mitigation plan - draft for your review and comment

Hello towns adjacent to Athens,

Attached please find a draft of the Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan. I have recently worked on finalizing and updating this draft plan with the help of the Athens Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee. It is now being sent to you for your review and comment, per FEMA requirements. **Please review and provide comment back to me by November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014.** My contact information is shown below.

I would appreciate you letting me know that you have reviewed the draft, even if you do not have comment.

I appreciate your time and assistance in this matter. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you,

**Alyssa Sabetto**  
Planner  
Windham Regional Commission  
139 Main Street, Suite 505  
Brattleboro, VT 05301  
Phone: (802) 257-4547 ext 109  
Fax: (802) 254-6383  
[windhamregional.org](http://windhamregional.org) | [WRC facebook](#)

### Rockingham Response:

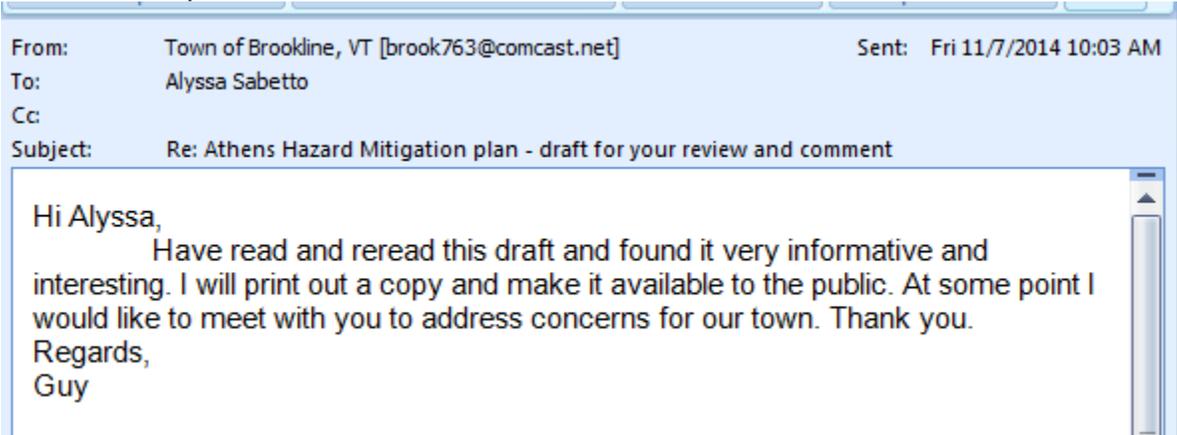
**From:** Ellen Howard [mailto:elhoward@rockbf.org]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 31, 2014 2:23 PM  
**To:** Alyssa Sabetto  
**Cc:** Town Manager; Jane Morano Purdy (jane@marquiseandmorano.com); Alan LaCombe; tsmacphee@comcast.net; Ron Lake  
**Subject:** RE: Athens Hazard Mitigation plan - draft for your review and comment

Alyssa –

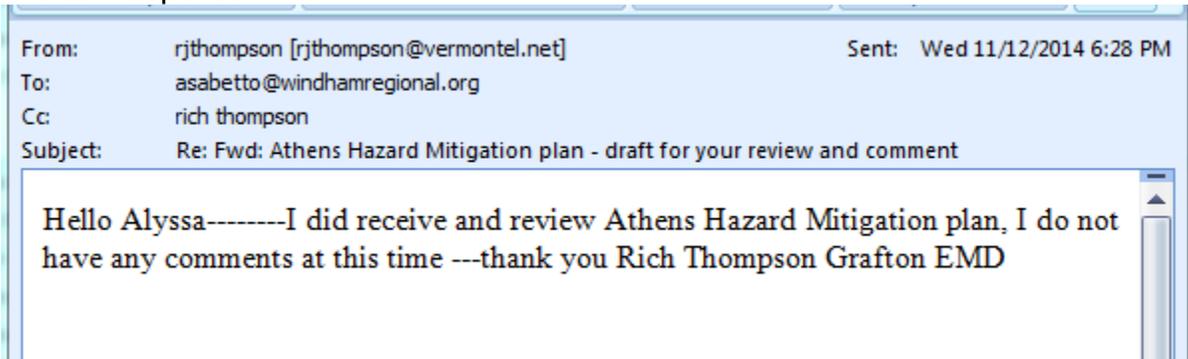
I have reviewed and have no comments.

Ellen Howard  
Planning-Zoning Administrator  
Town of Rockingham VT

Brookline response:



Grafton response:



November 2014 Public Notice in the town newsletter *The Athenian* advertising availability of Athens Hazard Plan for review and public comment.

# The Athenian

Volume 5, Number 3

November/2014

## Let's Talk Turkey

It's that time of year again. Where did the summer bidders. Two of those purchased by the Town have go? It seems like yesterday we were watching the already been redeemed and a third property is anticipated summer harvest ready in days of sunshine. How so temperatures, cold winds, and With Thanksgiving fast and turkey in a number of ways town, upcoming meetings, involved. So read on...

### Volunteers Report

Cookie Hopkins report followed the October Commission and successfully. A total of the continued renovation of 224 tickets were sold. A excited winners. Even accomplished with the redo. The TOV Committee use the money from the redo and all involved with this project.

### Local Elections

Five Justices of the town voting during this week Sippel (76), Eleanor Bern Stephen Fine (57) and Rita had 29 write in votes. Be sure for their service to the town.

### Information On

*Beth Ann Agostini Reports* property owners that failed representing \$77,348.44, due November 1st, that number a total delinquent amount. Expectations are high that they reduced when delinquent tax attorneys of the inclusion upcoming tax auction.

Last February, a tax auction properties were sold. Since redeemed their properties represented the balance with taxes due for 6 property is not on the delinquent purchased 4 properties at auction.

options we have in order to comply with the next phase of the Universal Recycling Law going into effect July 1, 2015.

There was a lively discussion among ARG members, our Road Crew and Triple T Trucking about how Athens should approach the new law. All agreed that a centrally placed dumpster staffed by a person paid to monitor the collection of trash was not a good plan for Athens. It was felt that this would be more expensive and would lead to illegal dumping of trash due to the limited hours of operation. The preferred plan would involve continuing with a weekly trash pickup as we have now, though residents would need to use specially labeled bags specific for trash pick-up in Athens.

Requiring residents to purchase bags specially labeled for Athens pick-up, would further encourage folks to do as much recycling as possible since the bi-weekly recycling pickup would continue. Thus, the more you recycle the fewer special trash bags you would need, leading to less cost for each household.

The Recycling Group will now be developing a suggested proposal for the Select Board to consider as the deadline draws nearer. A variety of details will need to be worked out such as the size, cost and design of the bags, and where they would be sold. The Select Board also needs to adopt a Town Ordinance that will spell out enforcement and penalties for failure to comply with the new unit-based pricing system for trash removal.

Here are some things you can do in anticipation of the next phase of the recycling law going into effect next July 1st. Look for future articles in *The Athenian*, come to the monthly Select Board Meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00, contact committee members with your thoughts and ideas. They are Dennis and Karen Hunt, Dennis Mirante, Hitary Cooke, Sherry Maher, Tim Stevenson, Tina White, Kate Bova, Janet Hoffmann. With all of us working together we can make this work.

### Flickering Lights?

*Dennis Mirante Reports:* During the last few weeks several town residents have expressed their concerns and frustrations regarding the frequent power outages and interruptions that occur here in Athens. These outages and interruptions not only are a nuisance, they also could potentially damage appliances and sensitive electronic equipment. The few residents that have called GMP were told that because of the low number of complaints they have received they did not believe that there was a problem. Therefore, as a first step I would encourage everyone to call GMP at 800-451-2877 and complain whenever they experience an outage or interruption.

### Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan

The draft of the Athens Hazard Mitigation Plan is now available for the public to read at the Athens Town Office. This is an update from the plan written in 2011 by the

Athens Emergency Shelter Committee and members of the Select Board with assistance from the Windham Regional Commission.

The Plan will be available until the the end of the public comment period, Wednesday, November 19.

Anyone who has comments about the plan should contact Alyssa Sabetto at the Windham Regional Office, at 802-257-4547 ext. 109 or via email at [asabetto@windhamregional.org](mailto:asabetto@windhamregional.org).

### Annual Thanksgiving Feast

Every year the Athens/Grafton School serves a wonderful turkey dinner provided by the PTG. This year the date is Monday, November 24<sup>th</sup> starting at 11:30 a.m. All you need to do is come and enjoy! This is another great opportunity to meet your neighbors. Feel free to bring a dessert to share if you'd like. Call 843-2495 for more information.

### Turkey Drop

The Townshend Community Food Shelf is holding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Turkey Drop on Monday, Nov 10 at 9:30 am. A turkey – paper mache of course, and some fake chickens will be tossed from the church steeple. A ticket gets your name on the landing grid! Tickets are being sold on weekends at the River Bend Market, or by contacting Mike Attley at 365-4478. Turkey donations and new volunteers are also welcomed!

### Hike the Bald Hill Reserve

The Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association leads a free hike on Saturday, Nov. 8th from 2-4 pm. in the Rockingham/Westminster Bald Hill Reserve and Bellows Falls Union High School lands. Get a close up view of Twin Falls from the south side of the Saxtons River, and views of the nearby Village and distant Mount Ascutney 40 miles north. Dress warmly and bring water. Hikers will meet at 232 Covered Bridge Rd in North Westminster. To register, contact Randy Major at 802-387-5737.

### COMMUNITY INFORMATION

**Board of Selectmen Meetings:** Every third Thursday of the month at the Town Hall, 7:00

**Grafton Cares Lunch** – every Wednesday @ 12 in the Chapel Building in Grafton. All welcome.

### NEXT ATHENS COMMUNITY SUPPER:

Dec. 5, 2014, 6:00 in church basement

Do you have a story idea for *The Athenian*? Or a favorite family recipe to share?

CONTACT US at [theathenianvt@gmail.com](mailto:theathenianvt@gmail.com).

### UPCOMING RECYCLING DATES:

  NOV 17, DEC 1  