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SUBMITTED VIA EMAIL

January 5, 2026
GZA File No. 15.0167396.00

Brad Furlon
Monroe Water District
3C School Street
Monroe, MA 01350

Re: Summary of Findings Report
2025 Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Plan

Dear Mr. Furlon:

GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. (GZA) is pleased to present this Summary of Findings Report for the Town of Monroe Community Resilience Building Workshop prepared through the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. This report presents the results of the workshop held on July 11 and August 1, 2025 and the Public Listening Session held on November 13, 2025. The attached report is subject to the Limitations provided in Appendix A of the report.

Please reach out to Rosalie Starvish by Phone: 860-550-2777; or by email: rosalie.starvish@gza.com, should you have any questions or comments.

Very truly yours,

GZA GEOENVIRONMENTAL, INC.

Rosalie T. Starvish, P.E., CFM, CPMSM
Senior Project Manager

Kevin Williams, AICP
Consultant / Reviewer

Stephen Lecco, AICP, CEP, PWS
Principal-in-Charge

Attachments: Town of Monroe Community Resilience Building Workshop – Summary of Findings Report



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TOWN OF MONROE COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BUILDING WORKSHOP SUMMARY OF FINDINGS REPORT

July 11 and August 1, 2025
File No. 15.0167396.00



PREPARED FOR:

Monroe Water District
3C School Street
Monroe, MA 01350

GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Per Executive Order 569, on July 11 and August 1, 2025, the Town of Monroe facilitated a Community Resilience Building (CRB) Workshop using the Nature Conservancy's CRB guidance. In preparation for the CRB Workshop, the Core Team, with assistance from GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. (GZA), invited local stakeholders to attend the CRB Workshop. These stakeholders included local and regional representatives. The Workshop's central objectives were to:

- Define the top local natural and climate change-related hazards of concern,
- Identify hazard vulnerabilities,
- Identify existing Town capabilities,
- Develop and prioritize actions for the community, and
- Identify opportunities to collaboratively advance actions to increase resilience.

The following is a brief summary of the CRB Workshop results with an emphasis on the top hazards, specific areas of concern and top priorities for climate adaptation actions.

Top Natural and Climate Related Hazards

1. High Winds
2. Winter Storms
3. Flooding
4. Extreme Heat/Drought/Wildfires

Vulnerabilities & Strengths – Infrastructure

Infrastructural Vulnerabilities

- Lack of Emergency Shelter in Town
- Dirt Roads / Steep Roads
- Power Supply
- Town Hall
- Town Garages

Infrastructural Strengths

- Water Supply
- Wastewater Plant
- Power Supply
- Town Hall
- Town Garages



Vulnerabilities & Strengths – Societal

Societal Vulnerabilities

- Lack of Communication
- Lack of Local Police
- Lack of Cellular Service
- Medical Desert
- Lack of Transportation
- Accessibility of Town Hall
- Lack of School in Town
- Lack of Volunteers / Staff

Societal Strengths

- Florida Council on Aging / Senior Center
- Franklin Regional Council of Governments Services
- Meals on Wheels
- Monroe Historical Society

Vulnerabilities & Strengths – Environmental

Environmental Vulnerabilities

- High Elevations
- Ledge and Boulder Geology
- Beaver Dams

Environmental Strengths

- Higher Elevations
- State Forest
- Deerfield River
- Old Growth Forest
- Wildlife
- Ledge and Boulder Geology
- Kingsley Hill Road
- Beaver Dams



Identified Climate Adaptation Action Priorities

High Priority Actions

- Design and construct a municipal center to serve as an emergency shelter for the community and to address the need for garages to protect and maintain town equipment (Short Term).
- Install an alarm system to alert those near the Yankee Rowe Nuclear Power Station spent fuel storage location and downstream of the Harriman Dam in the event of nuclear and hydropower dam disasters (Short Term).
- Conduct a feasibility study with the goal of identifying strategies to improve rural resilience, communication systems, and cellular service in the Town of Monroe (Short Term).
- Improve the land use associated with the remaining Ramage Paper Mill building to address a public safety hazard located within an area at risk of future flooding (Short Term).
- Install new dry hydrant along Main Road to service northeastern Monroe in the event of fire emergencies (Short Term).

Medium Priority Actions

- Conduct a town-wide dirt roads assessment to better understand the condition and vulnerabilities of Monroe's unpaved roads to aid in decision-making and the development of resilience priorities (Ongoing).
- Conduct a power resilience study to investigate the possibility of improving the redundancy of Monroe's power supply during outages (Long Term).
- Conduct a town-wide inventory and assessment of culverts to aid in the identification and prioritization of culverts that are vulnerable to climate change (Ongoing).

Low Priority Actions

- Conduct a town-wide inventory and assessment of beaver dams to identify areas where dams increase the risk of flooding to aid in decision-making regarding the management of adjacent infrastructure and beaver activity (Ongoing).
- Conduct an inventory of old growth forest and/or Trees of Distinction to support forest protection and forest management decisions (Ongoing).

Top Priority Actions

- Design and construct a municipal center to serve as an emergency shelter for the community and to address the need for garages to protect and maintain town equipment (Short Term).
- Install an alarm system to alert those near the Yankee Rowe Nuclear Power Station spent fuel storage location and downstream of the Harriman Dam in the event of nuclear and hydropower dam disasters (Short Term).
- Conduct a feasibility study with the goal of identifying strategies to improve rural resilience, communication systems, and cellular service in the Town of Monroe (Short Term).
- Improve the land use associated with the remaining Ramage Paper Mill building to address a public safety hazard located within an area at risk of future flooding (Short Term).



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1.0 OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Town of Monroe is one of 278 municipalities (see **Figure 1**) in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that is proactively increasing resiliency to natural hazards and climate change at the local level through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. Natural disasters can cause loss of life and extensive damage to properties and infrastructure, affecting the local, state, and national economic, social, and environmental well-being. Weather-related natural disasters are likely impacted by climate change and are expected to be further exacerbated by future changes in climate.

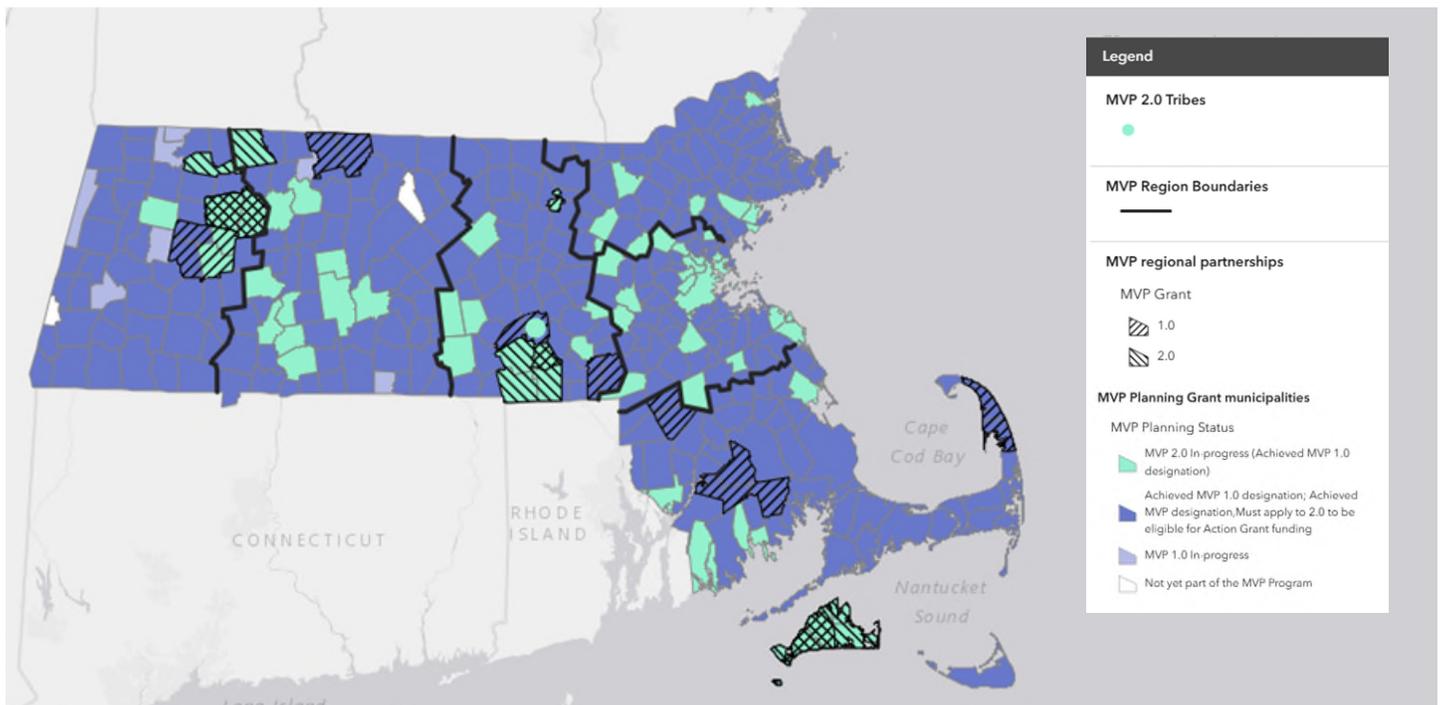


Figure 1. Map of MVP Designated Communities, FY2025 Planning Grant Communities and Locations of MVP Action Grant Projects

Over the last decade Monroe has experienced impacts from weather-related natural hazards such as high winds, “nor’easters”, severe winter weather, and seasonal flood events. The Town has been actively identifying the Town’s vulnerabilities from natural hazards through the development of the Town’s FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan, dated February 15, 2021 (2021 HMP). The impacts from hurricanes Sandy and Irene in New England have increased the urgency for municipalities to increase resiliency to address extreme weather and climate change vulnerability. In 2018, the Commonwealth experienced significant impacts from multiple nor’easters that resulted in property damage and utility disruption including power outages. During July of 2023, towns in western Massachusetts and Vermont experienced record-breaking heavy rains from a slow-moving system, which led to flash flooding and significant damage. While this storm system was not a tropical storm or hurricane, in some areas it produced more severe impacts than what resulted from Tropical Storm Irene. New England, including Massachusetts, is expected to experience increased frequency and intensity of rain events and increased temperatures, which will increase the Town’s natural hazard vulnerability. In consideration of these factors, the Town is taking the necessary steps to build on the results of the Town’s 2021 HMP to develop climate adaptation and resilience priorities as outlined in this Community Resilience Building (CRB) Summary of Findings Report.



As of January 2025, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) has funded MVP planning grants for 349 out of a total of 351 communities (see **Figure 1**). The purpose of the grant is to provide financial assistance to communities to create a comprehensive, baseline climate change vulnerability assessment and to develop prioritized actions for dealing with climate-related and natural hazards using a field-tested approach, known as the CRB Workshop. In early 2025, GZA was engaged by the Town to support implementation of a CRB Workshop, funded by an MVP planning grant.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BUILDING WORKSHOP

The CRB Workshop guide includes a six-step approach (see [Community Resilience Building Guide](#) for more details) to conduct a vulnerability assessment and develop prioritized actions consistent with EEA requirements to become a designated “MVP Community.” Receiving MVP designation will enable the Town of Monroe to apply for future MVP Action grants and will increase its standing for future funding opportunities from the Commonwealth. The Monroe CRB Summary of Findings Report is the Town’s completion of the six-step CRB process.

On July 11 and August 1, 2025, the Town completed the CRB Workshop at the Monroe Town Hall at 3C School Street. The central objectives of the CRB Workshop were to:

- Define the top local natural and climate change-related hazards of concern,
- Identify hazard vulnerabilities,
- Identify existing Town capabilities,
- Develop and prioritize actions for the community, and
- Identify opportunities to collaboratively advance actions to increase resilience.

This report summarizes the findings of the CRB Workshop, identifies top natural and climate change related hazards and vulnerabilities, strengths and assets, and provides recommendations to improve resilience for the Town of Monroe.

1.2 CORE PROJECT TEAM

The Town’s Core Project Team for the MVP Planning Grant included the following individuals:

- Carla Davis – MVP Team Leader, Selectboard
- Brad Furlon, Monroe Water District
- Purna Rao, RCAP Solutions
- Jim Bua, Monroe Resident
- Lucy Passardi, Monroe Resident
- Betsy Bizarro, Monroe Resident
- Christine Strickland, Monroe Resident
- Lisa Hayden, Woodlands Partnership
- Matthew Cole, Great River Hydro, LLC
- Jessica Atwood, Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)

The Core Project Team, along with technical assistance from State-Certified MVP Provider Rosalie Starvish of GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc (GZA) and assisted by Susanna Sousa, planned and facilitated the two-day workshop (totaling eight hours). GZA was responsible for preparing the CRB workshop materials, leading presentations, and facilitating group exercises. Members from the Town’s Core Team and workshop participants were responsible for facilitating and documenting key information during the group exercises.



1.3 WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Stakeholders were invited to the two-day workshop from various Town departments, including the Monroe Water District, Monroe Sewer District, Monroe Highway Department, Fire Department, Historic Commission, Emergency Management, Selectboard, Board of Health, Planning Board, Assessor's Office, and Conservation Commission. Representatives from Great River Hydro, LLC, RCAP Solutions, Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), and the Woodlands Partnership were also invited. As Monroe is a very small town with a population of approximately 114, residents of the Town were invited via email and posting a flier at the town kiosk.

Seven (7) stakeholders participated in the July 11 portion of the workshop and ten (10) participated in the August 1 portion of the workshop. These stakeholders included individuals from the Selectboard, the Monroe Water District, RCAP Solutions, the Woodlands Partnership, Great River Hydro, LLC, FRCOG, and Monroe residents.



Photo 1: The workshop presentation and risk matrix.

1.4 CRB WORKSHOP PROCESS

The CRB workshop was held in two half-day sessions on July 11 and August 1, 2025. The first workshop started with a welcome by GZA who presented an overview of natural hazards and vulnerabilities followed by Emma Sass, the MVP Regional Coordinator for the Berkshires and Hilltowns, who presented an overview of the MVP program.

The presentation and workshop handouts (see **Appendix B**) included the following:

- MVP Program Overview
- CRB Workshop Process Instructions
- Risk Matrix Overview
- Overview of Natural Hazards and Climate Change

After the presentations, GZA led a group discussion to prioritize the top four hazards for the Town of Monroe. The hazards were prioritized based on a group consensus. The exercise was followed by a session during which stakeholders completed the risk matrix as a group to identify specific Town vulnerabilities and strengths.

The second workshop focused on the identification and prioritization of actions to reduce vulnerability and enhance the Town's resilience and adaptation capabilities. **Appendix C** includes the completed risk matrix that presents the results from the exercise. The workshop concluded with a prioritization of actions.

2.0 TOP NATURAL AND CLIMATE-RELATED HAZARDS

The Core Team presented hazards for consideration based on those identified from the Town's 2021 HMP and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts 2018 State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan (2018 SHMCAP).

Natural Hazards reviewed included:

- Severe winter weather hazards (ice, snow, blizzards, extreme cold)
- Severe storms (thunderstorms, high winds, hurricanes, nor'easters, tornadoes)



- Flooding (urban drainage, riverine, inland, dam failures, ground failures, sea level rise)
- Fire (wildfire, urban fire)
- Geologic hazards (earthquakes, landslides)
- Primary climate change interactions (including changes in precipitation, sea level rise, rising temperatures, and extreme weather)

Appendix B includes the hazards overview from the workshop presentation and handouts provided to the workshop participants.

Following the hazards overview the workshop participants discussed and identified the top natural hazards and climate change interactions for the Town of Monroe that included the following:

- High Winds
- Winter Storms
- Flooding
- Extreme Heat / Fire / Drought

The four hazards that were prioritized as the top hazards to be included on the CRB matrix were **high winds, winter storms, flooding, and extreme heat/fire/drought**.

3.0 CURRENT CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES PRESENTED BY NATURAL HAZARDS

To assist the workshop participants in identifying vulnerabilities and areas of concern, the Core Team and GZA prepared a base map for the group to evaluate during the exercise. Critical assets included in the 2021 HMP, areas previously identified as having experienced flooding, and natural resources including open space and parks were presented on the base map. Critical assets from the 2021 HMP included public safety facilities (i.e. public works department, fire, etc.), lifeline systems (i.e. public water supply, transmission lines, sewer lines, etc.), wetlands and streams, and dam inundation zones (**Appendix B**). Based on a review of the base map and additional information, participants identified key areas of concern and challenges posed by hazards in Monroe.

The group identified **high winds** and **winter storms** as the greatest concerns to the community due to the potential impacts on public safety, communication, transportation, and power outages, particularly for vulnerable populations. Stakeholders noted that the occurrence of un-forecasted, damaging windstorms in both summer/spring and winter/fall has increased over the last five years. These wind events do not necessarily occur with winter storms or nor'easters but appear to be isolated events potentially part of a microclimate created by local topography.

Stakeholders also expressed concerns about the impacts that **flooding** poses to roadways vulnerable to erosion or washouts, which may impact accessibility of certain areas of Town or homes. Stakeholders noted that while Monroe has not experienced severe flooding recently, it is anticipated to worsen as extreme precipitation events increase.

Stakeholders expressed concern for the current level of preparedness for future **extreme heat events, droughts, and wildfires**. Although Monroe's average temperatures are generally lower than those of neighboring towns due to the extensive forested areas and higher elevations, stakeholders were aware that the number of days that will exceed 90 degrees will increase for the Town and region in the future which will lead to the need for the Town to develop a more comprehensive preparedness approach to addressing **extreme heat events, drought, and wildfires**, particularly for vulnerable populations or residents with shallow private wells.

Further details on the specific areas of concern and challenges identified by the stakeholders in relation to infrastructure, societal features and environmental resources are outlined in Section 4 of this report.

4.0 SPECIFIC CATEGORIES OF CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES

The following significant categories of concern and challenges were identified by stakeholders during the group discussion relative to Monroe’s infrastructure, and societal and environmental features.

4.1 INFRASTRUCTURAL

- Stakeholders expressed concern that there is no Emergency Shelter in Monroe and residents must travel to either Florida or Charlemont for shelter. These shelters are not accessible for those who need to navigate the steep, winding, forested roads leading out of Monroe in winter and who need to transport multiple large pets, as pets are required to be in crates for the shelters (or may not be allowed).
- Stakeholders expressed concern about the dirt roads in Monroe that are vulnerable to flood hazards that cause erosion, are difficult to access during mud-season, and require Town resources to maintain the roads, culverts, and stormwater ditches.
- The Stakeholders expressed concern about the steep roads in Monroe as they are difficult to safely access in the winter due to snow, ice, and downed trees, particularly Kingsley Hill Road, which is the second highest grade road in the State at 20.7% and connects upper Monroe to downtown Monroe and Town facilities. However, the road is closed for five months during winter for public safety, and alternate routes to Town facilities (such as Shippee Road in Vermont) are longer and difficult to access in winter conditions.



Photo 2: The Monroe Town Hall, shared with Great River Hydro, LLC operations located at the bottom of Kingsley Hill Road.



Photo 3: A view looking upward at Kingsley Hill Road from where it connects to River Road.

- Stakeholders expressed concern that while the Town Hall is equipped with a back-up generator for use during power outages, the generator is owned and maintained by Great River Hydro, LLC who is currently leasing a portion of the building. The Town Hall has heat but does not have air conditioning and has limited accessibility for those with disabilities.
- Stakeholders expressed concern that power outages frequently occur with winter storms and wind events and at times last for multiple days. The power infrastructure is not always accessible to utility company response teams who may not be equipped for deep snow and ice.
- Stakeholders expressed concern about the accessibility of the town garage located on Kingsley Hill Road which is currently not resilient in winter conditions due to the closure of Kingsley Road in winter, the lack of facilities in the garage, and lack of shelter for the Town fire truck and other equipment necessary for public works responses.



- Stakeholders expressed concern about the remaining Ramage Paper Mill building. The property was condemned in 2015 and currently poses a public safety hazard at a recreational access point to the Deerfield River, and negatively impacts the surrounding environment as bricks are known to fall into the river. During Tropical Storm Irene in 2011, it is understood that floodwaters went through the bottom floor of the building.

4.2 SOCIETAL

- Stakeholders were concerned about the lack of effective Town-wide communication regarding road closures, community resources, volunteer opportunities, and events.
- Stakeholders were concerned about the lack of local police and ambulances in Monroe. The Town is reliant on State Police and on the ambulance from North Adams, both of which can result in delayed emergency care. In winter, road closures are communicated with the ambulance department but are not always disseminated to all the drivers or their GPS units, which can result in additional delays.
- Stakeholders were concerned that the lack of cellular service in Town poses a safety hazard during power outages, particularly for vulnerable or isolated populations.
- Stakeholders were concerned about the lack of reliable transportation options and the distance to amenities from Monroe, particularly gas and groceries.
- Stakeholders expressed concern about the lack of a school in Monroe and the resulting limitations this places on community cohesiveness. There are approximately 15 children living in Monroe who attend school in neighboring towns or regional schools.
- Stakeholders were concerned about the lack of volunteers for Town Departments and initiatives. Many members of Monroe's departments and boards are volunteers who fulfill multiple roles. Stakeholders mentioned that it has been difficult to engage the younger generations, particularly young families, potentially because they spend much of their time working, commuting into and out of Town, and driving children to activities into and out of Town.

4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL

- Stakeholders expressed concern about the higher elevations in Monroe which means that certain areas receive snow, ice, and high winds when surrounding areas do not.
- Stakeholders mentioned the challenges associated with the geology of Monroe which results in a lot of properties with ledge, boulders, and shallow bedrock. This can make it difficult to build or dig on many properties, including replacing shallow wells with deep, drilled wells.
- Stakeholders expressed concern about the beaver dams in Monroe. While they are currently not located in areas which result in flooding of residential properties or other infrastructure, they have the potential to create dams in areas which may lead to increased flood hazards. Currently, beaver dams are known to be in the holding ponds along the Deerfield River and along North Road.

5.0 CURRENT STRENGTHS AND ASSETS IN THE TOWN OF MONROE

Based on the results of the small group discussions in evaluating community assets and hazards, the workshop participants identified many infrastructural, societal and environmental strengths in Monroe.

5.1 INFRASTRUCTURAL

- Stakeholders noted that a water supply well has been drilled which will be the new primary public water supply source for Monroe, and the public water supply from Phelps Brook will become a backup supply. The redundancy of having a backup public water supply source contributes to Monroe's resiliency. Furthermore, the new primary groundwater source will likely have better water quality than a surface water source.



- Stakeholders mentioned that the Town has two power supply sources. Though these sources are not interconnected, it means that some areas of Town may lose power while others have power and may be able to provide resources or assistance during localized outages.
- Stakeholders identified the Wastewater Plant as an asset because it is self-sufficient and has full facilities.
- Stakeholders identified the two Town garages as assets; one located next to the Town Hall and the other located further up on Kingsley Hill Road.
- Stakeholders noted that they were not aware of any Town facilities located in areas with a history of prior flooding.

5.2 SOCIETAL

- Stakeholders mentioned that there is a strong sense of community in Monroe with regards to neighborhood networks and residents checking on each other during inclement weather events.
- Stakeholders identified the connection with the Florida Council on Aging and Florida Senior Center as strengths of the Town.
- Stakeholders identified the services provided by non-profits including a community nurse through FRCOG and resources provided by Meals on Wheels as strengths, though they are sometimes difficult to access.
- Stakeholders mentioned that the Monroe Historical Society provides a newsletter that is engaging and accessible with relevant information.
- Stakeholders mentioned the library as an asset as it provides educational resources, though can be difficult to access due to its location near the other Town buildings at the base of Kingsley Hill Road and limited hours.

5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL

- Stakeholders mentioned higher elevations as a strength because Monroe sees cooler temperatures than neighboring towns throughout the year providing resiliency against extreme heat.
- Stakeholders noted that the Deerfield River is a strength of the Town due to the recreational and scenic resources it provides.
- Stakeholders mentioned the wildlife of Monroe as a resource which enriches outdoor recreational experiences for both visitors and residents and supports the hunting industry.
- Stakeholders discussed the large areas of undeveloped, forested lands as an asset to the entire Commonwealth, serving as a refuge for wildlife that may prefer less developed areas.
- Stakeholders identified the geology of Monroe as a strength which poses challenges for building and development, which may function to protect environmental resources and the rural character of Monroe.
- Stakeholders noted that Kingsley Hill Road is a famous attraction for athletes training for sports such as marathons and bike races due to its 20.7% grade, the second steepest in the State.
- Stakeholders mentioned beaver dams as a strength of Monroe, as their dams may hold back floodwaters from downstream stormwater infrastructure, depending on their locations.

6.0 PRIORITY ACTIONS TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE

During the final group exercise the stakeholders developed actions to bolster the existing strengths and to improve/mitigate the vulnerabilities of Monroe. GZA prepared and provided participants with example MVP projects with similar priorities as Monroe, and distributed copies of the Prioritized Action Plan from the 2021 HMP. Throughout the workshop stakeholders from the group discussed their recommended priority actions. Eight (8) total Priority Actions to natural and climate-related hazards were identified, consisting of three (3) High Priority Actions, three (3) Medium Priority Actions, and two (2) Low Priority Actions which included:



6.1 PRIORITY ACTIONS

Action	Type	Lead Department	Support
HIGH PRIORITY ACTIONS			
Design and construct a municipal center to serve as an emergency shelter for the community and to address the need for garages to protect and maintain town equipment.	Infrastructural	Planning	Consulting Firms
Conduct a feasibility study with the goal of identifying strategies to improve rural resilience, communication systems, and cellular service in the Town of Monroe.	Societal	Planning	Consulting Firms
Improve the land use associated with the remaining Ramage Paper Mill building to address a public safety hazard located within an area that has experienced flooding and is at risk of future flooding.	Environmental	Planning	Engineering, Consulting Firms
MEDIUM PRIORITY ACTIONS			
Conduct a town-wide dirt roads assessment to better understand the condition and vulnerabilities of Monroe's unpaved roads which will aid in decision-making and the development of resilience priorities.	Infrastructural	Highway Department	FRCOG, Engineering, Consulting Firms
Conduct a power resilience study to investigate the possibility of improving the redundancy of Monroe's power supply during outages.	Infrastructural	Planning	Engineering, Consulting Firms, Utility Companies
Conduct a town-wide inventory and assessment of culverts to aid in the identification and prioritization of culverts that are vulnerable to climate change.	Infrastructural	Highway Department	FRCOG, Engineering, Consulting Firms
LOW PRIORITY ACTIONS			
Conduct a town-wide inventory and assessment of beaver dams to identify areas where dams increase the risk of flooding to aid in decision-making regarding the management of beaver activity and adjacent infrastructure.	Environmental	Conservation Commission	Consulting Firms
Conduct an inventory of old growth forest and/or Trees of Distinction to support forest protection and forest management decisions.	Environmental	Planning	Conservation Commission, Consulting Firms

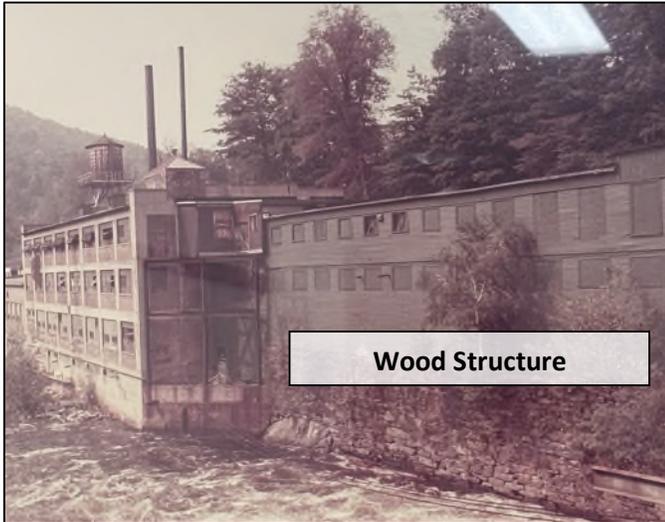


Photo 5: A historic photograph of the Ramage Paper Mill wood structure that was removed in 2017.



Photo 5: The location of the former Ramage Paper Mill wood structure was converted to the Monroe Bridge Overlook park in 2019.

The priority actions were voted on by the stakeholders using sticky-dot voting to determine the Town’s top priorities for actions to improve resiliency in Monroe, as listed below. Changes to the Top Priority Actions incorporated based on feedback received during the public review period are denoted with an asterisk.

Action	Type	Lead Department	Support
TOP PRIORITY ACTIONS			
Design and construct a municipal center to serve as an emergency shelter for the community and to address the need for garages to protect and maintain town equipment.	Infrastructural	Planning	Consulting Firms
Install an alarm system to alert those near the Yankee Rowe Nuclear Power Station spent fuel storage location and downstream of the Harriman Dam in the event of nuclear and hydropower dam disasters. *	Infrastructural	Planning	Engineering, Consulting Firms
Conduct a feasibility study with the goal of identifying strategies to improve rural resilience, communication systems, and cellular service in the Town of Monroe.	Societal	Planning	Consulting Firms
Improve the land use associated with the remaining Ramage Paper Mill building to address a public safety hazard located within an area at risk of future flooding.	Environmental	Planning	Engineering, Consulting Firms



7.0 PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION

Monroe hosted an online public listening session on November 19, 2025 from 6:00PM to 7:00PM. The public listening session was recorded and hosted on a website with a link to the recorded presentation, slideshow, and a copy of the Draft Summary of Findings Report (Draft Report). The Town advertised the public listening session website by posting a flier at the Town’s kiosk, and via the Town’s email distribution list. At the listening session the Town and GZA provided the public with the chance to learn about the CRB Workshop with an overview of the Draft Report including the priority actions that resulted from the workshop. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions and provide written feedback in response to the details provided in both the presentation and responses to questions during the second half of the session. **Appendix D** includes the details of the listening session presentation, public comments and the list of attendees.

At the end of the public listening session the Town made the Draft Summary of Findings Report available for public comment. Feedback was provided by the Core Team but there were no comments from the general public. Many comments provided in response to both the public listening session and Draft Report highlighted and supported priorities outlined in both the presentation and Draft Report. Based on the additional feedback presented in **Appendix D**, the table presented in section 7.2 outlines additional community priorities for inclusion in this Final Report.

7.1 SUMMARY OF INPUT RECEIVED DURING PUBLIC REVIEW

During the public review period, additional input was received from Andrea Donlon of FRCOG after meeting with the Monroe Fire Chief, Bruce Lescarbeau. The Monroe Fire Department (MFD) consists of 12 members, is volunteer-based, and regularly trains with the Town of Florida, MA, the Town of Readsboro, VT, and the Town of Whitingham, VT. The drinking water reservoir on Kingsley Hill Road provides adequate capacity for the seven fire hydrants in the center of Monroe and the capacity of the reservoir has not been observed to be substantially impacted by droughts. Two of the seven fire hydrants need repair/attention. While several dry hydrants are located outside the center of Monroe, the fire chief identified a location along Main Road where it would be beneficial to install a new dry hydrant to service northeastern Monroe.

The lack of an alarm/siren system for emergencies at the nearby Yankee Rowe Nuclear Power Station spent fuel storage facility in the Town of Rowe, MA or the upstream Harriman Dam in the Town of Whitingham, VT was mentioned as a vulnerability for Monroe. It was noted that Readsboro, VT has a siren system with four alarm types. The lack of cell service was mentioned, though the MFD are equipped with mobile radios and COMIR pagers and can communicate as needed. It was noted that Monroe does not currently experience many brush fires, and residents wanting to have an outdoor fire are required to obtain a burn permit. Other climate concerns include the high winds that Monroe experiences which resulted in power outages for multiple days in February 2025. Communications from power companies indicated that power would be restored imminently, resulting in members of vulnerable populations, including the elderly, staying in their homes and then requiring help getting to warming shelters when power had not yet been restored.

7.2 PUBLIC COMMENT PRIORITY ACTIONS

Action	Type
Install new dry hydrant along Main Road to service northeastern Monroe in the event of fire emergencies.	High
Install an alarm system to alert those near the Yankee Rowe Nuclear Power Station spent fuel storage location and downstream of the Harriman Dam in the event of nuclear and hydropower dam disasters.	High



8.0 CITATION

Town of Monroe (2025) Community Resilience Building Workshop Summary of Findings Report, GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. and Town of Monroe, Massachusetts.

9.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was made possible through funding from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs’ Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Grant Program. The Town wants to thank RCAP Solutions, Inc. for working with the Town in applying for and securing the MVP Planning Grant and for their continued involvement in the MVP process. The Town wants to thank EEA for their leadership and funds to support this effort. The Town would like to extend a special thanks to the MVP Berkshire & Hilltowns Regional MVP Coordinator, Emma Sass, for participating in both the workshops and public listening session.

Thank you to the Town of Monroe community members and leaders for their commitment and dedication to this process, the Core Team Members included.

10.0 WORKSHOP STAKEHOLDERS

Attendees of the CRB Workshop are listed in the following table:

Attendee Name	Department / Group	Workshop 1 on 7/11/2025	Workshop 2 on 8/1/25
Carla Davis	Resident / Selectboard	✓	✓
Brad Furlon	Monroe Water District	✓	
Purna Rao	RCAP Solutions	✓	✓
Jim Bua	Resident	✓	✓
Lucy Passardi	Resident	✓	✓
Betsy Bizarro	Resident	✓	✓
Christine Strickland	Resident	✓	✓
Lisa Hayden	Woodlands Partnership		✓
Matthew Cole	Great River Hydro, LLC		✓
Jessica Atwood	FRCOG		✓



Appendix A

Limitations



USE OF REPORT

1. GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. (GZA) has prepared this report on behalf of, and for the exclusive use of the Town of Monroe ("Client") for the stated purpose(s) and location(s) identified in the report. Use of this report, in whole or in part, at other locations, or for other purposes, may lead to inappropriate conclusions; and we do not accept any responsibility for the consequences of such use(s). Further, reliance by any party not identified in the agreement, for any use, without our prior written permission, shall be at that party's risk, and without any liability to GZA.

STANDARD OF CARE

2. GZA's findings and conclusions are based on the work conducted as part of the Scope of Services set forth in the Report and/or proposal, and reflect our professional judgment. These findings and conclusions must be considered not as scientific or engineering certainties, but rather as our professional opinions concerning the data gathered and observations made during the course of our work. Conditions other than described in this report may be found at the subject location(s).
3. GZA's services were performed using the degree of skill and care ordinarily exercised by qualified professionals performing the same type of services, at the same time, under similar conditions, at the same or a similar property. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made.

LIMITS TO OBSERVATIONS

4. Natural resource characteristics are inherently variable. Biological community composition and diversity can be affected by seasonal, annual or anthropogenic influences. In addition, soil conditions are reflective of subsurface geologic materials, the composition and distribution of which vary spatially.
5. The observations described in this report were made on the dates referenced and under the conditions stated therein. Conditions observed and reported by GZA reflect the conditions that could be reasonably observed based upon the visual observations of surface conditions and/or a limited observation of subsurface conditions at the specific time of observation. Such conditions are subject to environmental and circumstantial alteration and may not reflect conditions observable at another time.
6. The conclusions and recommendations contained in this report are based upon the data obtained from a limited number of surveys performed during the course of our work on the site, as described in the Report. There may be variations between these surveys and other past or future surveys due to inherent environmental and circumstantial variability.

RELIANCE ON INFORMATION FROM OTHERS

7. Preparation of this Report may have relied upon information made available by Federal, state and local authorities; and/or work products prepared by other professionals as specified in the report. Unless specifically stated, GZA did not attempt to independently verify the accuracy or completeness of that information.

COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS AND CODES

8. GZA's services were performed to render an opinion on the presence and/or condition of natural resources as described in the Report. Standards used to identify or assess these resources as well as regulatory jurisdiction, if any, are stated in the Report. Standards for identification of jurisdictional resources and regulatory control over them may vary between governmental agencies at Federal, state and local levels and are subject to change over time which may affect the conclusions and findings of this report.



NEW INFORMATION

9. In the event that the Client or others authorized to use this report obtain information on environmental regulatory compliance issues at the site not contained in this report, such information shall be brought to GZA's attention forthwith. GZA will evaluate such information and, on the basis of this work, may modify the conclusions stated in this report.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

10. GZA recommends that we be retained to provide further investigation, if necessary, which would allow GZA to (1) observe compliance with the concepts and recommendations contained herein; (2) evaluate whether the manner of implementation creates a potential new finding; and (3) evaluate whether the manner of implementation affects or changes the conditions on which our opinions were made.



Appendix B

Workshop Presentations, Handouts, Notes, Attendance

Community Resilience Building



Town of Monroe, Massachusetts Community Resilience Building Workshop

July 11, 2025, 10 AM- 2 PM

Monroe Town Hall, 3 C School Street, Monroe, MA 01350

~ Sign-in Sheet ~

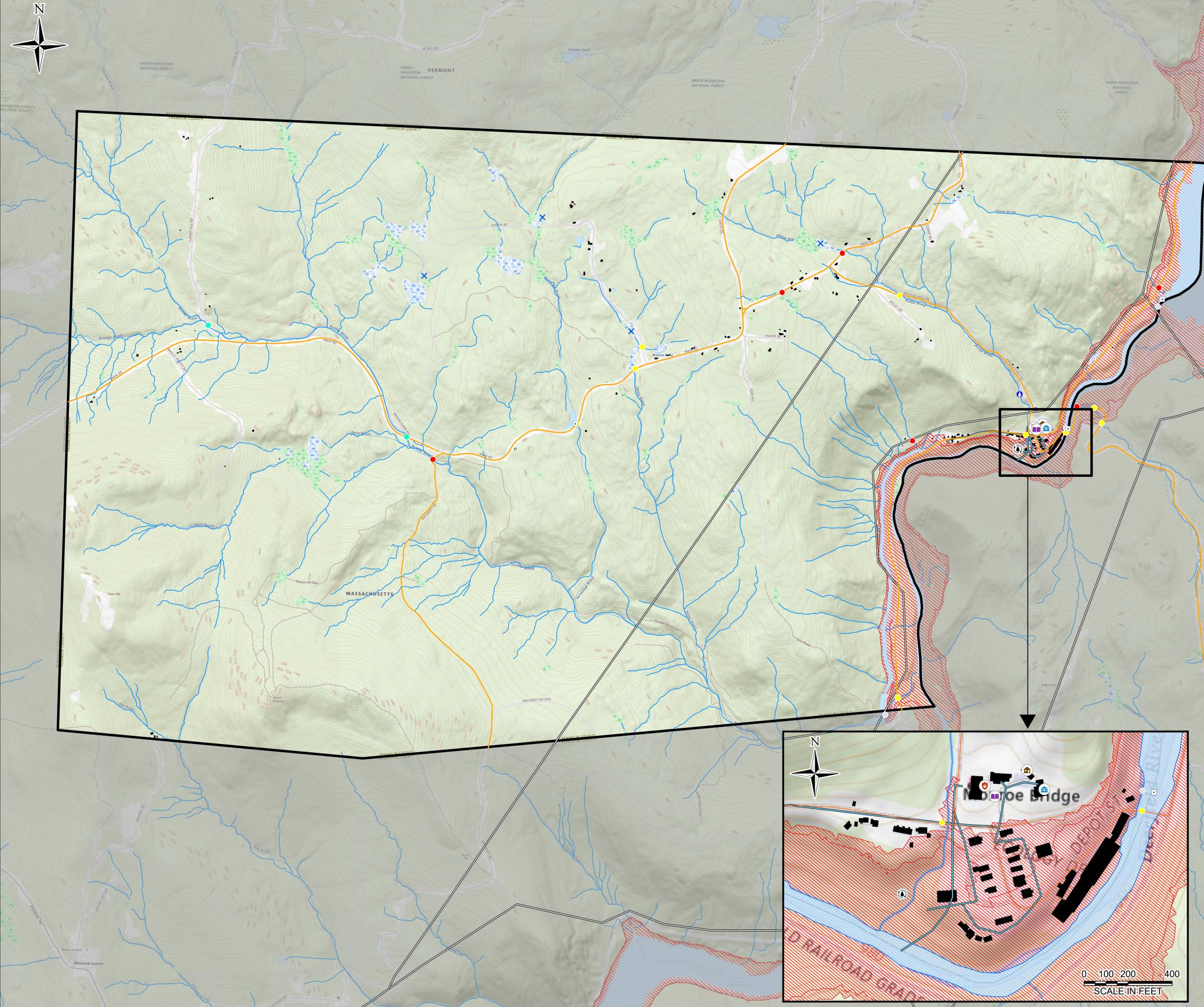
Name (Please print)	Department/Group	Email Address
TIM BUA		Sharon.E.HAHA@gmail.com
Luay Passardi		
Emma Sass	MVP	emma.m.sass@mass.gov
Betsy Bizarro	MVP	betsy23bed@gmail.com
Christine Strickland		allaboutbwp@gmail.com
Carla Davis	Resident/Selectboard	ci7173@verizon.net
Purna Rao	R CAP Solutions	pra0@rcapsolutions.org

Community Resilience Building



Name (Please print)	Department/Group	Email Address
Brad Furlow	Monroe Water Dist	mwd.operator23@gmail.com

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROCESS TO STRENGTHEN
OUR COMMUNITY'S RESILIENCE!**



LEGEND

- EVACUATION ROUTE
- ▨ HARRIMAN DAM INUNDATION ZONE
- × LOCALIZED FLOODING
- DAM
- 🏠 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
- 🚒 FIRE STATION
- 📖 LIBRARY
- 💧 PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY
- 🚰 SEWER LINE
- 🏢 BUILDING
- 🏛️ TOWN HALL
- TRANSMISSION LINE
- DEP WETLANDS LINEAR FEATURES**
- HYDROLOGIC CONNECTION
- DEP WETLAND AREAS**
- 🌿 MARSH/BOG
- 🌳 WOODED MARSH
- 🌊 OPEN WATER
- 🌊 RESERVOIR (WITH PWSID)
- ▭ TOWN BOUNDARY

CROSSINGS (INCLUDES CULVERTS)

RISK OF FAILURE

- HIGH
- MEDIUM
- LOW
- NO DATA

- NOTES:
1. BASE MAP SOURCE: USGS NATIONAL MAP USGS THE NATIONAL MAP: NATIONAL BOUNDARIES DATASET, 3DEP ELEVATION PROGRAM, GEOGRAPHIC NAMES INFORMATION SYSTEM, NATIONAL HYDROGRAPHY DATASET, NATIONAL LAND COVER DATABASE, NATIONAL STRUCTURES DATASET, AND NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION DATASET; USGS GLOBAL ECOSYSTEMS; U.S. CENSUS BUREAU TIGER/LINE DATA; USFS ROAD DATA; NATURAL EARTH DATA; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE HIU; NOAA NATIONAL CENTERS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION. DATA REFRESHED FEBRUARY, 2025. WORLD TERRAIN BASE SOURCES: ESRI, TOMTOM, GARMIN, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OPENSTREETMAP CONTRIBUTORS, AND THE GIS USER COMMUNITY WORLD HILLSHADE SOURCES: ESRI, MAXAR, AIRBUS DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N ROBINSON, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, GEODATASTYRELSSEN, RIJWSWATERSTAAT, GSA, GEOLAND, FEMA, INTERMAP, AND THE GIS USER COMMUNITY
 2. MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION WETLANDS DATA OBTAINED FROM MASSGIS.
 3. INFRASTRUCTURE, EVACUATION ROUTES, DAM INUNDATION AREA, LOCAL FLOODING AREA, AND CROSSINGS OBTAINED FROM FRANKLING REGIONAL COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS (FRCOG).
 4. CROSSINGS DATA WITHIN THE DEERFIELD WATERSHED ONLY.

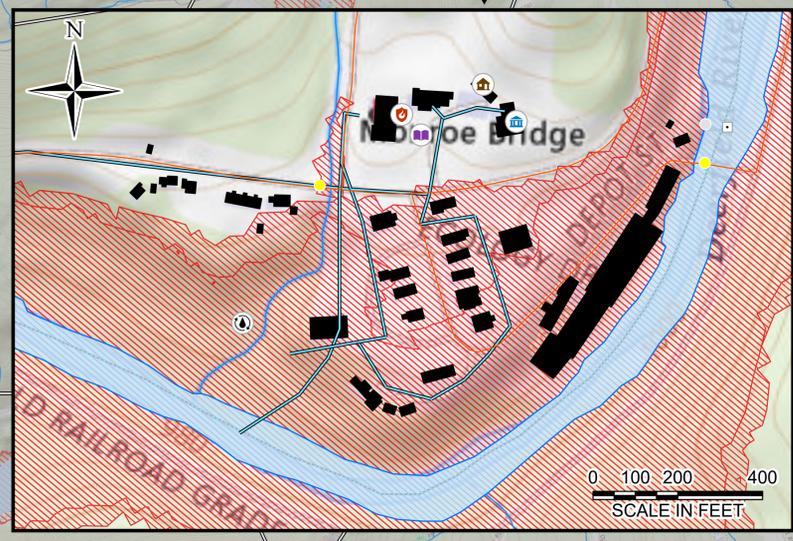


UNLESS SPECIFICALLY STATED BY WRITTEN AGREEMENT, THIS DRAWING IS THE SOLE PROPERTY OF GZA GEOENVIRONMENTAL, INC. (GZA). THE INFORMATION SHOWN ON THE DRAWING IS SOLELY FOR THE USE BY GZA'S CLIENT OR THE CLIENT'S DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE SPECIFIC PROJECT AND LOCATION IDENTIFIED ON THE DRAWING. THE DRAWING SHALL NOT BE TRANSFERRED, REUSED, COPIED, OR ALTERED IN ANY MANNER FOR USE AT ANY OTHER LOCATION OR FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE WITHOUT THE PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT OF GZA. ANY TRANSFER, REUSE, OR MODIFICATION TO THE DRAWING BY THE CLIENT OR OTHERS, WITHOUT THE PRIOR WRITTEN EXPRESS CONSENT OF GZA, WILL BE AT THE USER'S SOLE RISK AND WITHOUT ANY RISK OR LIABILITY TO GZA.

**MONROE MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS (MVP) PLAN
MONROE, MA**

**TOWN OF MONROE
CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE / VULNERABILITIES**

PREPARED BY: GeoEnvironmental, Inc. Engineers and Scientists www.gza.com		PREPARED FOR: MONROE WATER DISTRICT 3C SCHOOL STREET MONROE, MA 01350	
PROJ MGR: RFS	DESIGNED BY: SGS	REVIEWED BY: SLL	CHECKED BY: KW
DATE: 06/12/2025	PROJECT NO: 15.0167396.00	DRAWN BY: SGS	SCALE: 1 in = 1,000 ft
			REVISION NO:
			FIGURE 1



Hazards

Ice Storms

Wind Stormy

Microburst?

cold. (winter)

- trees down
- electric / phone down
- no water (wells)
- no heat

Snow Storms (~31") -

- couldn't plow
- came fast overnight

High winds → geographic effects. (microclimate)
↳ tree falls anytime of year
- higher elevations

Water Supply

- public - new artesian well
- quality - old pipes, need finding
- need to flush

Private wells

- sulfates (one resident)
- not really drought concerns.

Heat not a concern now ~ wildfires are rare

8-10° cooler ~ Avg than N. Adams.

2 sources - But NOT interconnected

Power - Village or from Berkshire County side

Flooding - Irene - not really any issues

- Some roads not passable

- North Rd
- Browns Pond
- Beaver Dams
- Erosion - roads washout

Shelter

(no public shelter)

- one in Florida (no pets unless crates)
- ended up being in Charlemont

→ contacts for help

→ no police dept.

- State police

- rely on ^{checking} Shelburne Falls

- no roads → no EMS

- ambulance from N. Adams

- communication when roads closed

- GPS - not best routes?

- no cell service / internet (need wifi calling)

- have corded phones at home

desert - transportation medical

communications

Spectrum is coming (cable / internet)

Kingsley Hill - one of steepest in MA 20.7%

→ working on a notif. system

- ARPA finding
- emails for town + website

Many dirt roads



Town of Monroe, Massachusetts
Community Resilience Building Workshop

August 1, 2025, 10 AM- 2 PM

Monroe Town Office, 3C School Street, Monroe, MA 01350

~ Sign-in Sheet ~

Name (Please print)	Department/Group	Email Address
Christine Strickland	resident	allaboutbwp@gmail.com
Betsy Bizarro	Resident	betsy23bee@gmail.com
Jim Bura	Resident	Sharon.E.HAHA@gmail.com
Lisa Hayden	Agents woodlands Partnership	lhayden@newenglandforestry.org
Emma Sass	MVP	emma.m.sass@mass.gov
MATTHEW Cole	GRH	mcole@greatriverhydro.com
Purna Rao	RCAPSolutions	prao@rcapsolutions.org
Jessica Atwood	FRLOG	jatwood@frlog.org

Community Resilience Building



Name (Please print)	Department/Group	Email Address
Lucy Passardi	Resident	h20monroe@gmail.com
Carla Davis	Resident Selectboard	cj7173@verizon.net

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS PROCESS TO STRENGTHEN
OUR COMMUNITY'S RESILIENCE!**

Table 4-3: 2020 Monroe Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan

Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2020 Priority	Current Status
Critical Facilities & Infrastructure	Complete the upgrades to the municipal wastewater treatment system – secure funding to upgrade/repair the pump station.	All Hazards	Selectboard	High	USDA, DEP	Year 3	S, I, E	High	New Action Item
Critical Facilities & Infrastructure	Secure funding to complete Phase 2 repairs on Kingsley Hill Road to reduce flooding hazards and threats to sewer lines and public drinking water supply and protect an important evacuation route.	All Hazards	Highway Superintendent Selectboard	High	MassWorks, HMGP	Year 2	S, I, E	High	New Action Item
Critical Facilities & Infrastructure	Hire a consultant to conduct a Rural Roads Assessment and update with information from the MassDOT culvert study to identify stormwater management issues on paved and gravel roads, and prioritize projects/locations for repairs and replacements. Include drainage and culverts that do not cross a perennial stream. Include training for DPW.	Flood Related Hazards	Town, FRCOG	Low-Medium	604b, DLTA, Community Compact	Year 3	S, I, E	Medium	New Action Item
Critical Facilities & Infrastructure Natural Systems Protection	Map river corridors using fluvial geomorphological assessment methods and identify priority infrastructure protection and habitat restoration in the mapped river corridors.	Flood Related Hazards	Town, FRCOG	Low-Medium	604b, 319, FEMA/MEM A PDM grants, DLTA	Year 4	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 Medium	Related Action Items from the 2014 plan were consolidated, updated with information from two recent regional climate change and watershed based plans completed by FRCOG in 2017 and 2019 and carried over to the 2020 plan.
Local Plans & Regulations	Develop a River Corridor Management Plan that includes updates to local land use regulations, including a River Corridor Protection Overlay District.	Flood Related Hazards	Town, FRCOG	Low-Medium	319, FEMA/MEM A PDM grants, DLTA	Year 5	S, I, E	Low	New Action Item
Local Plans & Regulations	Develop a formal system for departments to record costs and property damages from natural hazard events – such as a spreadsheet based database. Identify key person to manage the data and to disseminate it to appropriate town officials. Provide businesses and residents information on how to report property damages.	All Hazards	Emergency Management Director, Highway Superintendent	Low	Town	Year 2	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 Low	This Action Item was updated and carried over from 2014 plan. No progress to date due to lack of funding and staff capacity.
Local Plans & Regulations	Identify storage options (different location; climate-controlled, flood-proof safe, etc.) to ensure the preservation of vital records and documents stored in the Monroe Town Offices in the event of a potential failure of the Harriman Dam and	Dam Failure	Town Clerk, Historic Commission	Low	Town	Year 2	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 Medium	This Action Item was updated and carried over from 2014 plan. No progress to date due to lack

Table 4-3: 2020 Monroe Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan

Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2020 Priority	Current Status
	identify appropriate communication strategies to facilitate an orderly and timely removal of the vital records and documents.								of funding and staff capacity.
Critical Facilities & Infrastructure	Identify locations of existing beaver activity and dams that create the potential for flooding and implement controlled breaching of dams, where appropriate, to limit the potential for accidental breaches.	Dam Failure	Highway Department, Emergency Management Director	Low	Town	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 Medium	This Action Item was updated and carried over from 2014 plan. The Highway Department staff monitor beaver activity on an ongoing basis.
Public Education & Outreach	Implement forest management practices that produce more stable, successional forested landscapes and which reduce the risk of damage from severe winter storms/ice storms, fire hazards, and landslides.	Multiple Hazards	MA DCR, Assessors, private landowners	Low	DCR, private landowners	Year 2	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 Low	MA DCR is updating requirements for forest management plans that include climate resiliency best management practices. The town could share this information with private landowners once available.
Local Plans & Regulations	To reduce the risk of flooding and damage to infrastructure and natural resources from uncontrolled stormwater runoff, review and update relevant sections of the town's zoning and subdivision regulations to require or encourage the use of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) for stormwater management for new development and redevelopment projects. Identify other opportunities to update the regulations to include provisions that address wind related hazards, dam failure, wildfire risks, landslides, etc.	Multiple Hazards	Planning Board	Low	Town, DLTA	Year 3	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 Medium	Related Action Items have been consolidated and carried over from the 2014 plan and updated. Not started due to lack of funding and staffing capacity.
Local Plans & Regulations	Adopt a Floodplain District Overlay Zoning Bylaw using the new state Model Floodplain District Bylaw (just released in September 2020) to ensure continued compliance with the NFIP and reduce the risk of flooding and damage to infrastructure and natural resources.	Floods, Ice Jams	Planning Board	Low	DLTA	Year 2	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 High	Updated and carried over from the 2014 plan. Not started due to lack of funding and staffing capacity.

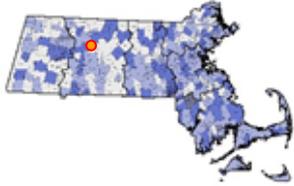
Table 4-3: 2020 Monroe Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan

Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2020 Priority	Current Status
Public Education & Outreach	Educate homeowners about general fire safety when issuing burn permits. Increase efforts to educate landowners in high risk areas about the danger of forest fire and what they can do to prevent it.	Wildfires	Fire Chief	Low	Town	Year 5	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 Low	Updated and carried over from the 2014 plan. This is an ongoing activity.
Local Plans & Regulations	Maintain contact with officials at the former Rowe Yankee Atomic Nuclear Electric Company's nuclear power plant located just across the border in Rowe (in the inundation area for the Harriman Dam), which still houses Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installations (ISFSI) which store spent fuel rods, and conduct regular drills to prepare for a release of hazardous materials from the site.	Manmade Hazards	Emergency Management Director, Fire Department	Low-Medium	Rowe Yankee	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S, I, E	2014 High 2020 Medium	Updated and carried over from the 2014 plan. This is an ongoing activity. A drill was conducted in 2018. Rowe Yankee is working with Shelburne Control on maintaining and improving communications with towns.
Local Plans & Regulations	Develop a preliminary project proposal and cost estimate for the implementation of a reverse notification system in Town, such as Reverse 911 or Code Red. Consider restoration of the Fire Whistle at Town Offices.	Multiple Hazards	Emergency Management Director	Medium	Town, DLTA	Year 5	S, I	2014 High 2020 Medium	Updated and carried over from the 2014 plan. Not started due to lack of funding and staffing capacity.
Local Plans & Regulations	Participate in regularly scheduled evacuation drills for a failure at Harriman Dam, including improving communications with Town officials and public awareness and outreach. Establish an agreement with Great River Hydro, LLC setting up a protocol for communication with the Town in an emergency when water is to be released from dams upstream on the Deerfield River that may impact the Town.	Dam Failures	Emergency Management Director	Low-Medium	REPC, Great River Hydro, WRHSAC Town	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S, I, E	2014 Medium 2020 Medium	Related Action Items from the 2014 Plan have been consolidated and updated for the 2020 Plan. Work on this task is ongoing.
Critical Facilities & Infrastructure	Monitor the Deerfield River for potential ice buildup and ice jams.	Ice Jams	Emergency Management Director, Fire Department	Low	Town	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S, I, E	2014 Low 2020 Low	Updated and carried over from the 2014 plan. This work is ongoing.

Table 4-3: 2020 Monroe Hazard Mitigation Prioritized Action Plan

Action Type	Action Description	Hazards Addressed	Responsible Department / Board	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source	Estimated Timeframe	Benefits: Society (S) Infrastructure (I) Environment (E)	2014 Priority 2020 Priority	Current Status
Public Education & Outreach	Distribute information to residents on how to deal with or prevent diseases associated with increasing average temperatures (e.g., tick and mosquito borne diseases).	Vector-borne diseases Extreme temperatures	Board of Health	Low	Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S	Medium	New Action Item. Informational pamphlets and signage could be available at Town Offices and Library.
Public Education & Outreach Local Plans & Regulations	Participate in a mosquito control district with neighboring towns to reduce hazards and protect public health.	Vector-borne diseases Extreme temperatures	Board of Health	Low-Medium	State DPH Mohawk Area Public Health Coalition, Neighboring towns, Town	Year 0-1, to be reviewed annually and implemented in subsequent years (Years 2-5), as appropriate	S	Medium	New Action Item.

Pelham



MVP Grant: \$137,250

Match Amount: \$45,753

Total Project Cost: \$183,003

Project Priorities :

Resilient Roadways: Town-wide Survey & Assessment

- Assess and incorporate nature-based solutions toward removing vulnerabilities such as failing culverts and the potential threat of roads washing out
- Create a prioritized culvert and roadway asset management plan, with associated cost estimates, will be developed.

Resilient Communications

- Develop new directory of all residents who have opted in to adding their email addresses and phone numbers to the existing street listing
- Robust outreach campaign - including door to door canvassing - to enroll as many Pelham residents as possible in the existing Reverse- 911 system
- Compile a narrative of Pelham milestones as shared by longtime residents

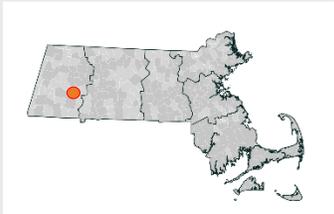


Community Resilience Building workshop identifying culverts as top concern

Evaluating & Planning for Resilient Rural Dirt Roads



Chester, Blandford & Middlefield FY23-FY24



Learn More:

- [MVP Dirt Roads Data & Public Comments Viewer](#)

AWARD

\$317,550

MATCH

\$35,600

PROJECT TYPE

Planning, Assessments, Capacity Building, and Regulatory Updates

**CORE PRINCIPLES
DEMONSTRATED**

Building community capacity for climate resilience;
Achieving broad and multiple community benefits.

DESCRIPTION

- Complete an analysis and priority ranking of dirt road infrastructure that is informed by a suite of key considerations, including existing conditions, vulnerabilities to the risks associated with greater extremes for the region, and criticality of route to local populations.
- Build an on-line, interactive mapping tool that Blandford, Chester, and Middlefield officials can use to view dirt road considerations and inform decision making around investments for greater resilience.
- Integrate nature-based solutions through three important project elements, including a library of 5 to 7 typical BMP fixes for dirt roads, recommendations for beaver activity, and in preliminary design for upgrading priority stream crossings (up to two in each town)



H-M-L priority for action over the Short or Long term (and Ongoing)
 V = Vulnerability S = Strength

Top Priority Hazards (tornado, floods, wildfire, hurricanes, earthquake, drought, sea level rise, heat wave, etc.)

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	High Winds	Winter Storms	Flooding	Extreme Heat, Drought, & Wildfire	Priority		Time	
								H - M - L	Short Long Ongoing		
Infrastructural											
Shelter (lack of)	Florida or Charlemont		V								
Dirt roads / Steep roads	Town-wide, Gore Rd, North Rd, Willey Rd, Turner Hill	Town	V			Erosion, mud season, town maintenance, cleaning ditches					
Water supply (New drilled well, Phelps Brook will be backup)		Town	S				Private wells - future concern?				
Power supply (Two sources, not interconnected)	Town-wide	National Grid	S / V	Power out 2-3 days due to winds from local geographic effect	Outside utilities not prepared for winter conditions						
Town hall (Need new DPW/Fire building)	3C School Street	Town	S / V		Has heat, G.R.H. owns a generator and maintains it, hard to access if certain roads are out or icy, no A/C						
Wastewater plant		Town	S								
Town garages (2)	Next to Town Hall, and on Hill	Town	S / V	Fire truck and other Town equipment stored on hill is exposed to elements, not easily accessible in winter							
Societal											
Communications	Town-wide		V								
Police (no local, rely on state)	Town-wide		V								
Medical care (ambulance from North Adams)	Town-wide		V	Doesn't always use the best route, results in delayed response times - communication and GPS routes							
Cell service / Internet / GPS	Town-wide		V	Need wi-fi calling							
Transportation (lack of) (Distance to amenities)	Town-wide		V								
Accessibility (Town Hall not handicap accessible)	Site Specific	Town	V								
Florida Council on Aging / Senior center	Town-wide	Non-profit / Town of Florida	S								
FRCOG Services, Meals on Wheels	Town-wide	FRCOG / Non-profit	S								
Historical Society (newsletter)	Town-wide	Town	S								
No school in Monroe (about 15 kids)	Town-wide		V								
Lack of Volunteers / Staff	Town-wide		V								
Environmental											
Higher elevations	Town-wide		S / V		8-10 degrees cooler than North Adams						
2,800 acres of State land/forest - Appalachian Trail	Town-wide	State	S	Downed trees			Cooling				
Deerfield River (access at bridge)	East side of Town	Town (Monroe side of bridge)	S								
Old growth forest / Trees of Distinction	Town-wide	State	S								
Wildlife (moose, bears)	Town-wide		S								
Geology (ledge / boulders, hard to build)	Town-wide		S / V				Some shallow private wells				
Kingsley Hill Road (training for athletes)	Kingsley Hill Road	Town	S								
Beaver dams (in river holding ponds)	Holding ponds, North Road		S / V				Can flood roadways / Can also hold back water from culverts				



Appendix C
Stakeholder Risk Matrices

U = Priority for action over the short or long term (and ongoing)
 V = Vulnerability S = Strength

Top Priority Hazards (tornado, floods, wildfire, hurricanes, earthquake, drought, sea level rise, heat wave, etc.)

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	High winds (geographic - microclimate; tornado; nor'easter)	Winter Storms	Flooding	Heat (+drought/wildfire)	Priority		Time	
								U	M	L	Short
Infrastructural											
Shelter (Lack of)			V								
Dirt roads / Steep roads	Core Road (town-wide)		V								
Water Supply	Public - new drilled well - still hole Phelps Brook - current - will be come backup.	Water District (Separate entity)	S			"Mud Slain" erosion town maintenance Clean ditches					
Power Supply	town wide	NGrid	S/V	power out Feb ~ 2-3 days due to geographic effect winds		outside utilities not prepared for conditions.					
Town Hall	Need new DPW/Fire Building upstairs tenants - Great River Hwy - improved AC - mini split.	Town	S/V			Has heat G.R.H owns a generator	Hard to access if certain roads cut				no A/C
Wastewater Plant	Self sufficient w/ electricity + communication	Town	S								
Town Garage - Fire truck, town equipment			V/S								
	↳ 2 separate - 1 is next to Town Hall 1 is up on the hill										
Societal											
TRASH PICKUP			S								
Communications			V								
Police (no local, rely on state)			V								
Medical Care - access			V								
Cell Service / Internet / GPS			V								
Transportation (Lack of)	- Distance from amenities - grocery, etc.		V								
Accessibility	Town Hall is not handicap accessible		V								
Florida Council on Aging / Senior Center			S								
FRGOB Services	Community nurse		S								
Meals on Wheels	Historical Society has a newsletter		S								
No School in Monroe (only ~15? Kids)			V								
Environmental											
Higher Elevations			V								
2800 acres of State land - Forest - Appalachian trail		State	S								
Deerfield River - access at bridge											
Old Growth Forest / trees of distinction											
Wildlife - moose, bears											
Geology - ledge / boulders - hard to build.											
Kingsley Hill Rd - training for biking + marathons											
Beaver dams - in river holding ponds	off of North Rd - 7 contiguous both eastern + western side of road		V/S								

Life Path Survey - Greenfield - Franklin County
 - for elderly



H = High priority for action over the Short or Long term (and Ongoing)
 V = Vulnerability S = Strength

Top Priority Hazards (tornado, floods, wildfire, hurricanes, earthquake, drought, sea level rise, heat wave, etc.)

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	High Winds	Winter Storms	Flooding	Extreme Heat, Drought, & Wildfire	Priority	
								H - M - L	Short Long Ongoing
Infrastructural									
Shelter (lack of)			V	●●●●●●●●	Municipal Center serve as shelter, address garages; and acquired already top of hill	how to handle pets at shelter		H	S
Dirt roads / Steep roads	Town-wide	Town	V	●	and season address problem areas	Dirt roads assessment		M	O
Water supply (New drilled well, Phelps Brook will be backup)		Town	S			●●	Some houses have private wells New well may need treatment.		
Power supply	Town-wide	National Grid	S/V	●●	Power Resilience Study - Redundancy power losses → then back to building.	Microgrid study		M	L
Town hall (Need new DPW/Fire building)	3C School Street	Town	S/V	●●					
Wastewater plant		Town	S						
Town garages (2)	Next to Town Hall, and on Hill	Town	S/V						
Culverts - a few challenging culverts						●●	Collect inventory/assessment. Improvements.	M	O
Societal									
GENERAL RURAL RESILIENCE STUDY / EDUCATION									
Communications	Town-wide		V	●●	Feasibility Study to improve communication systems (cell service)	Top of Hill already have repeater		H	S
Police (no local, rely on state)	Town-wide		V				improve emergency services response time, etc		
Medical care	Town-wide		V		Look at Regional Partnerships → strengthening services, better communication.		Rural water supply for fire.		
Cell service / Internet / GPS	Town-wide		V						
Transportation (lack of) (Distance to amenities)	Town-wide		V						
Accessibility (Town Hall not handicap accessible)	Site Specific	Town	V						
Florida Council on Aging / Senior center	Town-wide	Non-profit / Town of Florida	S						
FRCOG Services, Meals on Wheels	Town-wide	FRCOG / Non-profit	S						
Historical Society (newsletter) + Block parties	Town-wide	Town	S						
No school in Monroe (about 15 kids)	Town-wide		V						
Lack of Volunteers / Staff	Town-wide		V		Community Events.				
Environmental									
Higher elevations	Town-wide		S/V						
2,800 acres of State land/forest - Appalachian Trail	Town-wide	State	S				Inventory of Opt Growth / trees of distinction	L	O
Deerfield River (access at bridge)	East side of Town	Town (Monroe side of bridge)	S			●●●	Address remaining mill-flooding potential → improve land use	H	S
Old growth forest / Trees of Distinction	Town-wide	State	S						
Wildlife (moose, bears)	Town-wide		S						
Geology (ledge / boulders, hard to build)	Town-wide		S/V						
Kingsley Hill Road (training for athletes)	Kingsley Hill Road	Town	S						
Beaver dams (In river holding ponds)	Holding ponds, North Road		S/V				Beaver Dam Inventory/assessment	L	O

H = High priority for action over the Short or Long term (and Ongoing)
 V = Vulnerability S = Strength

Top Priority Hazards (tornado, floods, wildfire, hurricanes, earthquake, drought, sea level rise, heat wave, etc.)

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	Top Priority Hazards				Priority	Time
				High Winds	Winter Storms	Flooding	Extreme Heat, Drought, & Wildfire	H - M - L	Short Long Ongoing
Infrastructural									
Shelter (lack of)	Florida or Charlemont		V	New Municipal Center: would serve as shelter; address need for garages; land acquired already at top of hill; consider how to handle pets at shelter				H	S
Dirt roads / Steep roads	Town-wide, Gore Rd, North Rd, Willey Rd, Turner Hill	Town	V		Dirt Roads Assessment: address problem areas, especially during mud season			M	O
Water supply (New drilled well, Phelps Brook will be backup)		Town	S				Some have shallow private wells. New well may need treatment.		
Power supply (Two sources, not interconnected)	Town-wide	National Grid	S / V	Power Resilience Study/ Microgrid study: provide redundancy to minimize power losses, ties back to new building				M	L
Town hall (Need new DPW/Fire building)	3C School Street	Town	S / V						
Wastewater plant		Town	S						
Town garages (2)	Next to Town Hall, and on Hill	Town	S / V						
Culverts	There are a few challenging culverts	Town	V			Culvert inventory/assessment improvements	M	O	
Societal									
GENERAL RURAL RESILIENCE STUDY/EDUCATION									
Communications	Town-wide		V	Feasibility study to improve communication systems (cell service)	Top of hill already has "repeater"			H	S
Police (no local, rely on state)	Town-wide		V				Improve emergency services response time, fire		
Medical care (ambulance from North Adams)	Town-wide		V	Look at regional partnerships - strengthening services, better communication					
Cell service / Internet / GPS	Town-wide		V						
Transportation (lack of) (Distance to amenities)	Town-wide		V						
Accessibility (Town Hall not handicap accessible)	Site Specific	Town	V						
Florida Council on Aging / Senior center	Town-wide	Non-profit / Town of Florida	S						
FRCOG Services, Meals on Wheels	Town-wide	FRCOG / Non-profit	S						
Historical Society (newsletter)	Town-wide	Town	S						
No school in Monroe (about 15 kids)	Town-wide		V						
Lack of Volunteers / Staff	Town-wide		V	Community events					
Environmental									
Higher elevations	Town-wide		S / V						
2,800 acres of State land/forest - Appalachian Trail	Town-wide	State	S						
Deerfield River (access at bridge)	East side of Town	Town (Monroe side of bridge)	S			Address remaining mill-flooding potential. Improve land use.	H	S	
Old growth forest / Trees of Distinction	Town-wide	State	S			Inventory of old growth/trees of distinction	L	O	
Wildlife (moose, bears)	Town-wide		S						
Geology (ledge / boulders, hard to build)	Town-wide		S / V						
Kingsley Hill Road (training for athletes)	Kingsley Hill Road	Town	S						
Beaver dams (in river holding ponds)	Holding ponds, North Road		S / V			Beaver dam/inventory/assessment	L	O	



Appendix D

Listening Session Presentation, Comments, Attendance

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Public Listening Session Town of Monroe, Massachusetts November 19, 2025

Known for Excellence. Built on Trust.



Photo Credit: Town of Monroe Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021)

Rosalie Starvish, P.E., CFM, CPMSM
Susanna Sousa, AWB[®], CE
GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.

Public Listening Session Agenda

- MVP Program Overview
- Summary of Findings Report
 - Core Team
 - Project Timeline
 - Stakeholders
 - Hazards
 - Strengths and Vulnerabilities
 - Priority Actions
- Next Steps
- Public Comments and Questions

MVP Program Overview



Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program



Emma Sass

MVP Regional Coordinator – Berkshires & Hilltowns

MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

The Climate is Changing

By end of century:

RISING TEMPERATURES



- 10.8°F increase in avg annual temp.
- Up to 64 fewer days/year with min. temperatures < 32° F
- Up to 64 more > 90°F days/year

CHANGES IN PRECIPITATION



- 18% increase in consecutive dry days
- 57% increase in days with > 1 in. rainfall
- 7.3 inches additional annual rainfall

SEA-LEVEL RISE



- 4- to 10.5-feet along the MA coast

EXTREME WEATHER



- Increase in frequency and magnitude



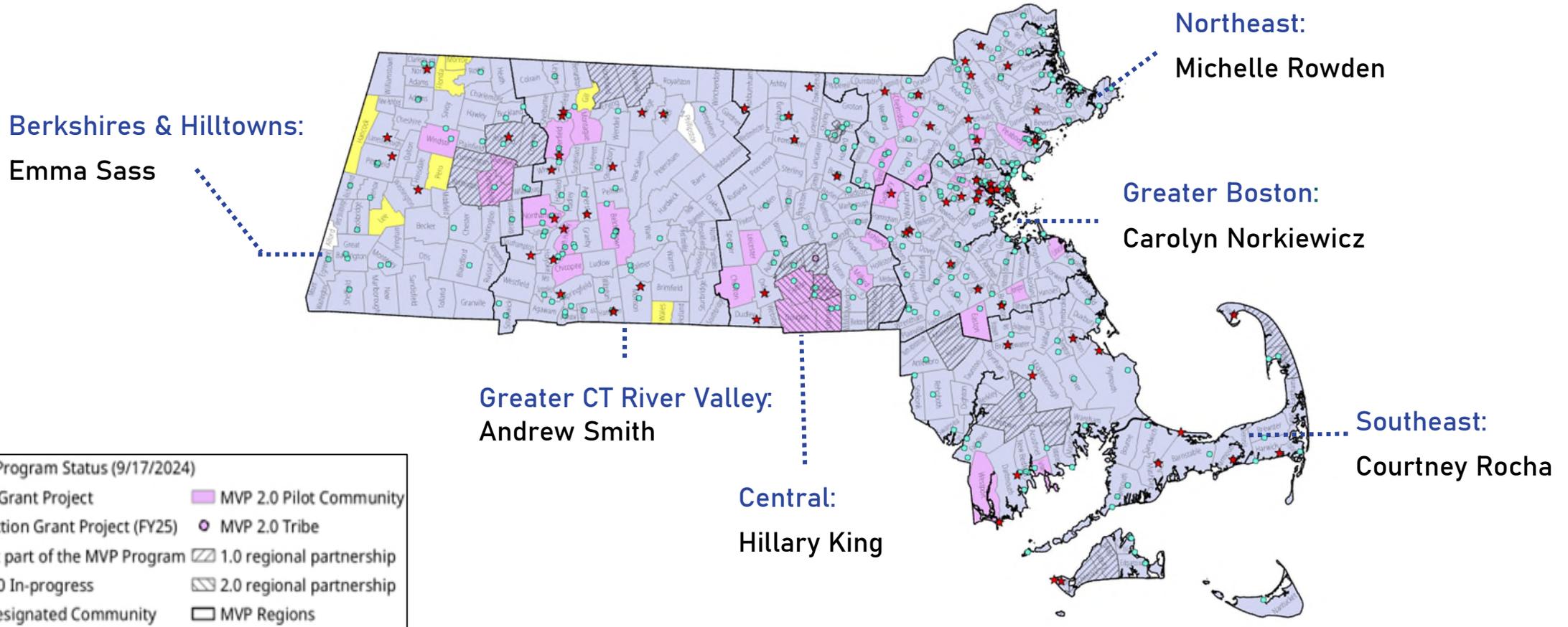
Climate resilience is the ability of a community to address the needs of its built, social and natural environment to anticipate, cope with, and rebound stronger from events and trends related to climate change hazards.

Resilient communities don't just recover—they *continuously build capacity* to reduce the impacts of future climate events.



Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program

A state and local partnership to build resilience to climate change by building capacity to respond to climate effects at the local level and pilot innovative adaptation practice.



MVP Principles

A community-led, accessible process that

- Employs local knowledge and buy-in
- Utilizes partnerships and leverages existing efforts
- Is based in best available climate projections and data
- Incorporates principles of nature-based solutions
- Demonstrates pilot potential and is proactive
- Reaches and responds to risks faced by EJ communities and vulnerable populations



MVP Process/ Grant Types

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
BUILDING WORKSHOP(S)

Define and characterize hazards using latest science and data

Identify existing and future community vulnerabilities and strengths

Develop and prioritize community adaptation actions

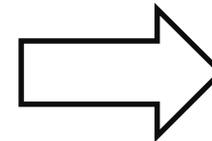
Determine overall priority actions

Receive MVP designation

MVP
Planning
Grant

MVP Action Grant

Implement priority adaptation actions identified through planning process



MVP Action Grants: Project Types

- Community outreach and education
- Local bylaws, ordinances, plans, and other management measures
- Culvert assessment, redesign, and upsizing/removal
- Nature-based flood protection, drought mitigation, and water quality improvement
- Ecological restoration and habitat management to increase resiliency
- Land acquisition for resilience
- Affordable housing resilience strategies
- Energy resilience



MVP Action Grants

Action Grant Projects

FY 18: 37

FY 19: 36

FY 20: 53

FY 21: 41

FY 22: 66

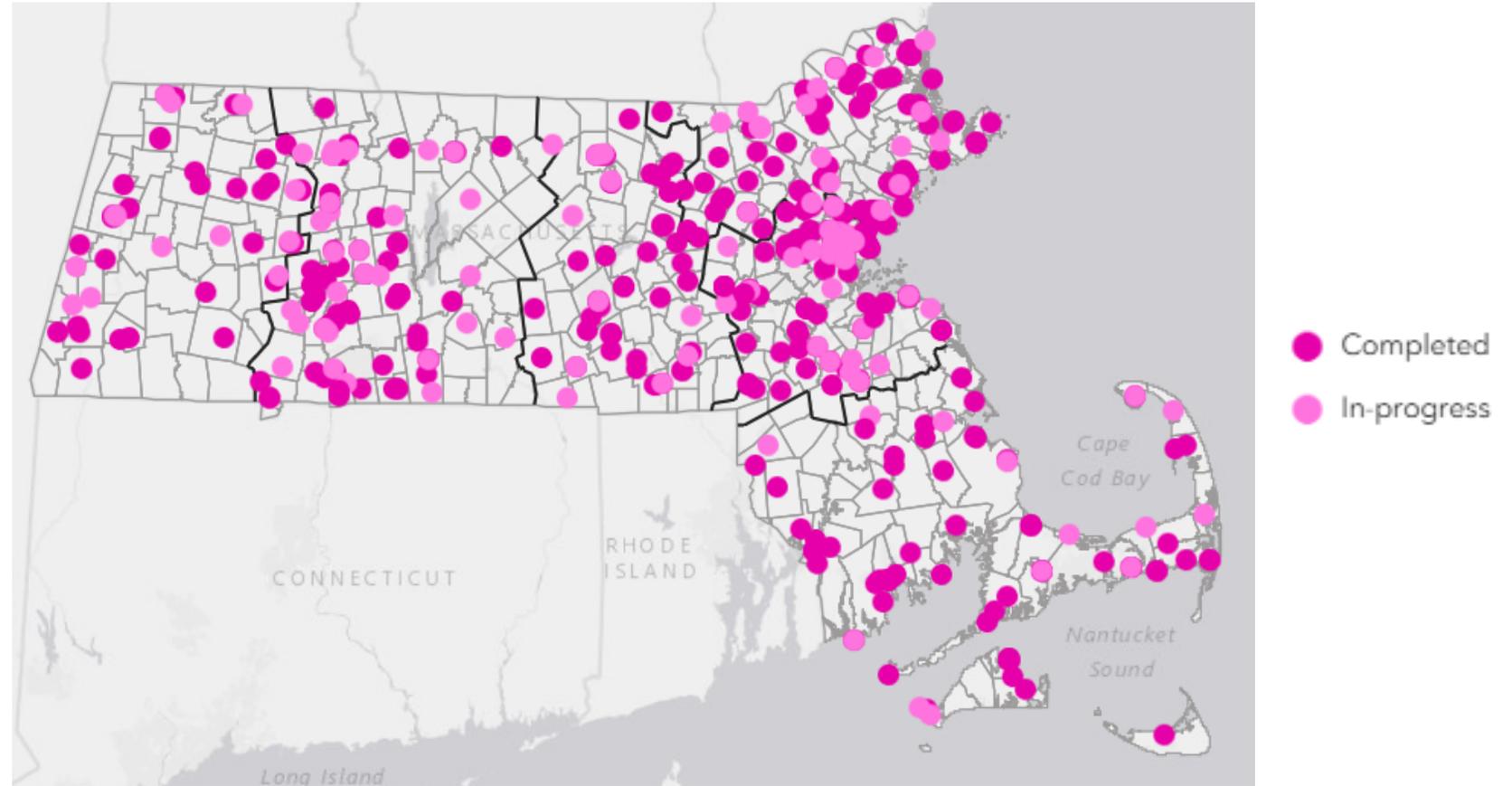
FY 23: 73

FY 24: 79

FY 25: 71

FY 26: 54

Total Action Grant
awards to date: \$171M





emma.m.sass@mass.gov

(857) 283-7597

<https://resilient.mass.gov/mvp>



Summary of Findings Report

Monroe MVP Core Team

Core Team Members:

- Carla Davis – MVP Team Leader, Selectboard
- Brad Furlon, Monroe Water District
- Purna Rao, RCAP Solutions
- Jim Bua, Monroe Resident
- Lucy Passardi, Monroe Resident
- Betsy Bizarro, Monroe Resident
- Christine Strickland, Monroe Resident
- Lisa Hayden, Woodlands Partnership
- Matthew Cole, Great River Hydro, LLC
- Jessica Atwood, Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG)

Project Timeline



CRB Workshop Overview

Objectives:

- 1. Define top hazards.** Understand connections between ongoing issues, hazards, and local planning and actions in your Community.
- 2. Identify and map vulnerabilities and strengths** to develop infrastructure, societal and environmental risk profiles for your Community.
- 3. Develop and prioritize actions** that reduce vulnerabilities and reinforce strengths for your community - local organizations, academic institutions, businesses, private citizens, neighborhoods, and community groups.
- 4. Identify opportunities** to advance actions that further reduce the impact of hazards and increase resilience in your Community.

Monroe Natural Hazard Priority Level Ratings

Top Hazards – Hazard Mitigation Plan Approved February 19, 2021

- **Severe Winter Weather** – Very High Probability & Critical Impact
- **Flooding** - High Probability & Critical Impact
- **Dam Failure** – Very Low Probability & Catastrophic Impact
- **Tornadoes** – Moderate Probability & Limited Impact
- **Hurricanes/Tropical Storms** – High Probability & Critical Impact
- **Extreme Temperatures** – Very High Frequency & Minor Impact

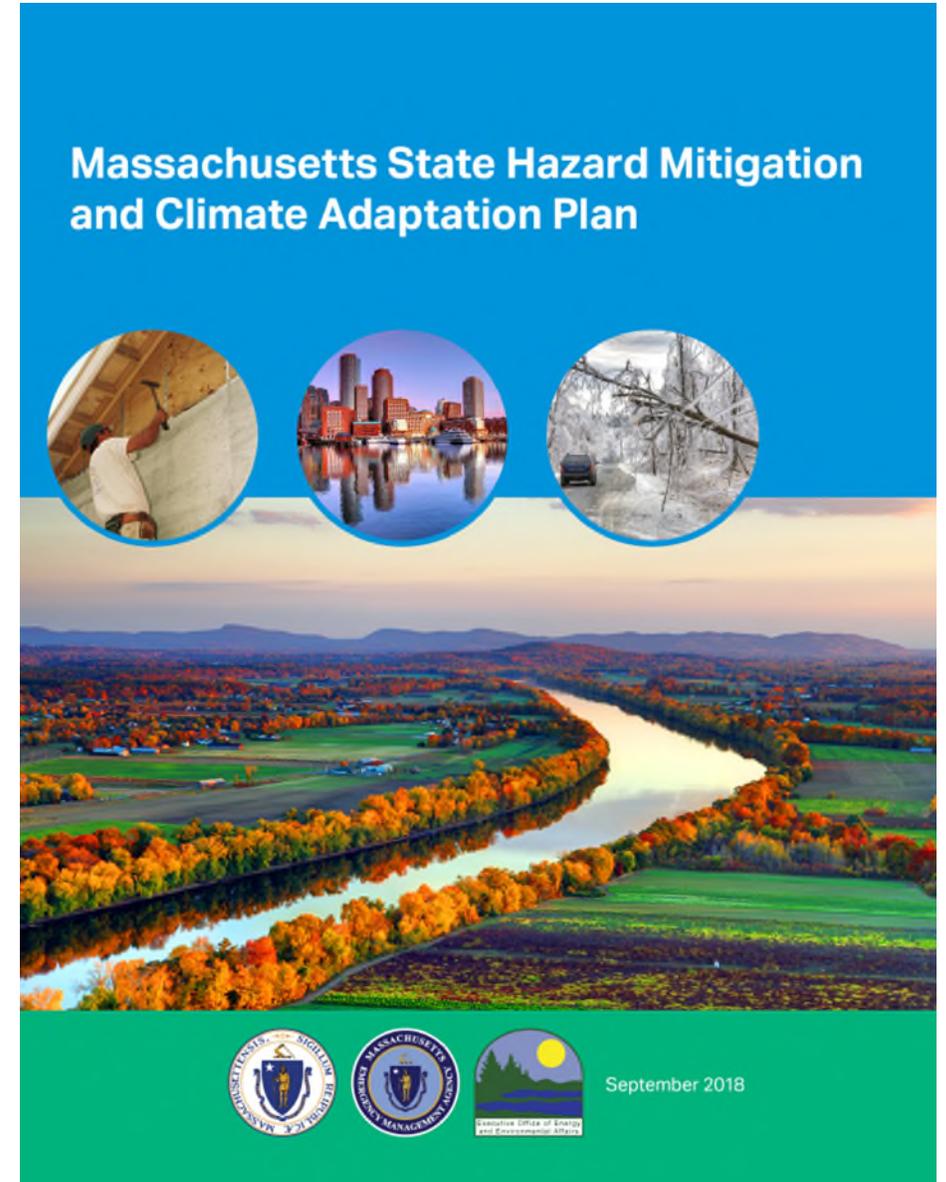
Table 4-2: Hazard Priority Level Rating		
Natural Hazard	Overall Hazard Vulnerability Rating	Priority Level
Severe Winter Storms	High	High
Flooding	High	High
Tornadoes	Low	Medium
Dam Failure	Low	High
Hurricanes / Tropical Storms	High	Medium
Severe Thunderstorms / Wind / Microbursts	Low	Low
Extreme Temperatures	Low	Medium
Earthquakes	Low	Low
Landslides	Low	Low
Drought	Low	Low
Wildfires	Medium	Low
Invasive Species	High	Low

Town of Monroe Hazard Mitigation Plan (2021) Table 4-2

Massachusetts 2018 Hazards Rankings

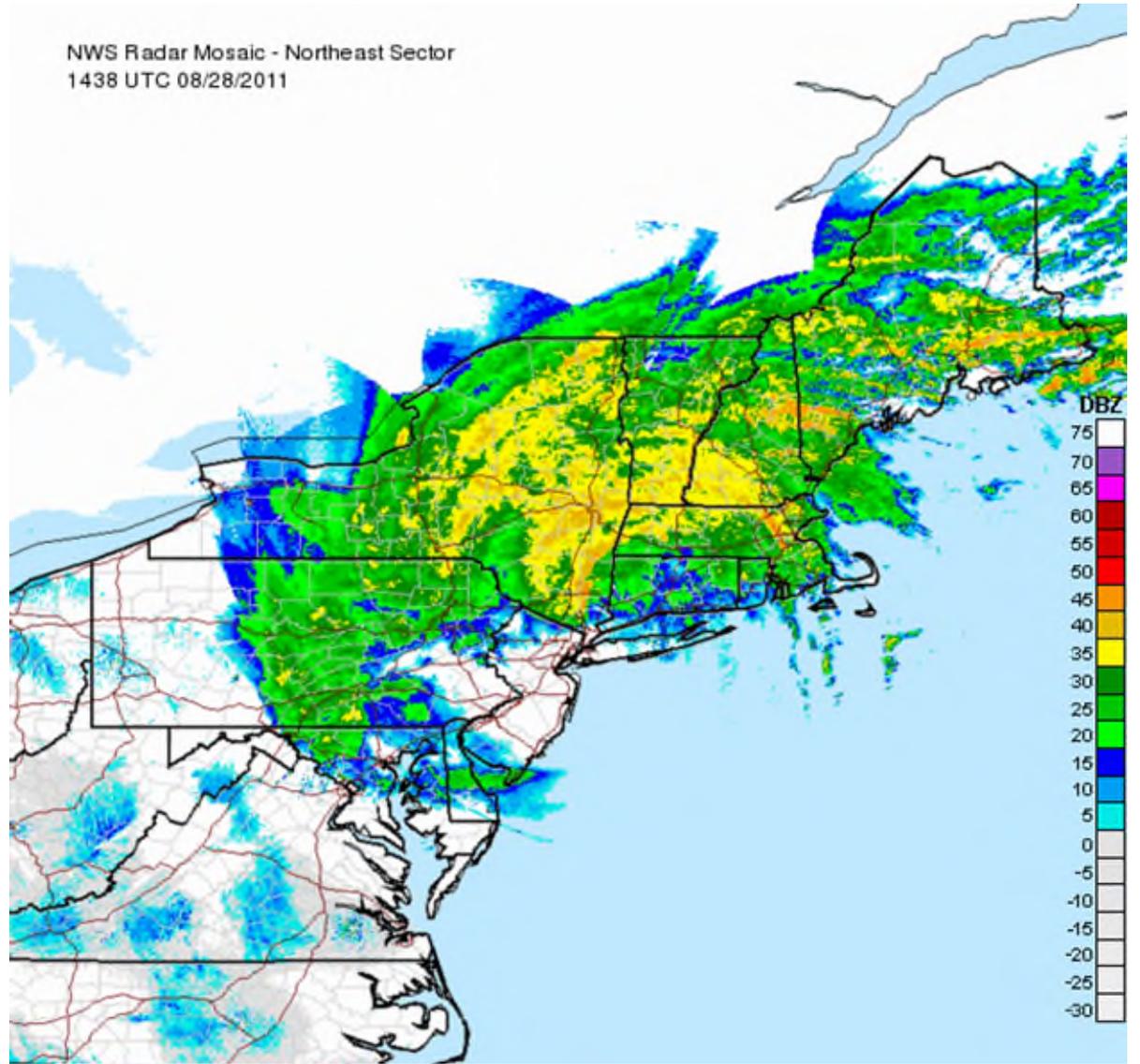
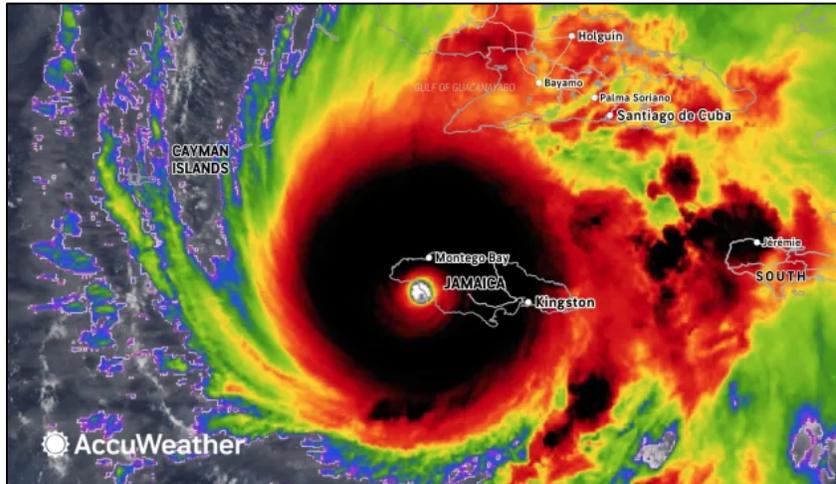
Top 5 Hazards 2018 State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan

- Extreme Precipitation
- Hurricanes/Tropical Storms
- Nor'easters
- Ice Storms
- Severe Winter Storm



Climate Change

- Hot Temperatures +
- Precipitation Intensity +
- Heavy Precipitation Frequency +
- Flooding and Erosion +
- Snowfall -



Irene; By NWS - <http://weatherinnyc.blogspot.hk/2011/08/aug-27-hurricane-irene-updates.html>, Public Domain,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=68686636>

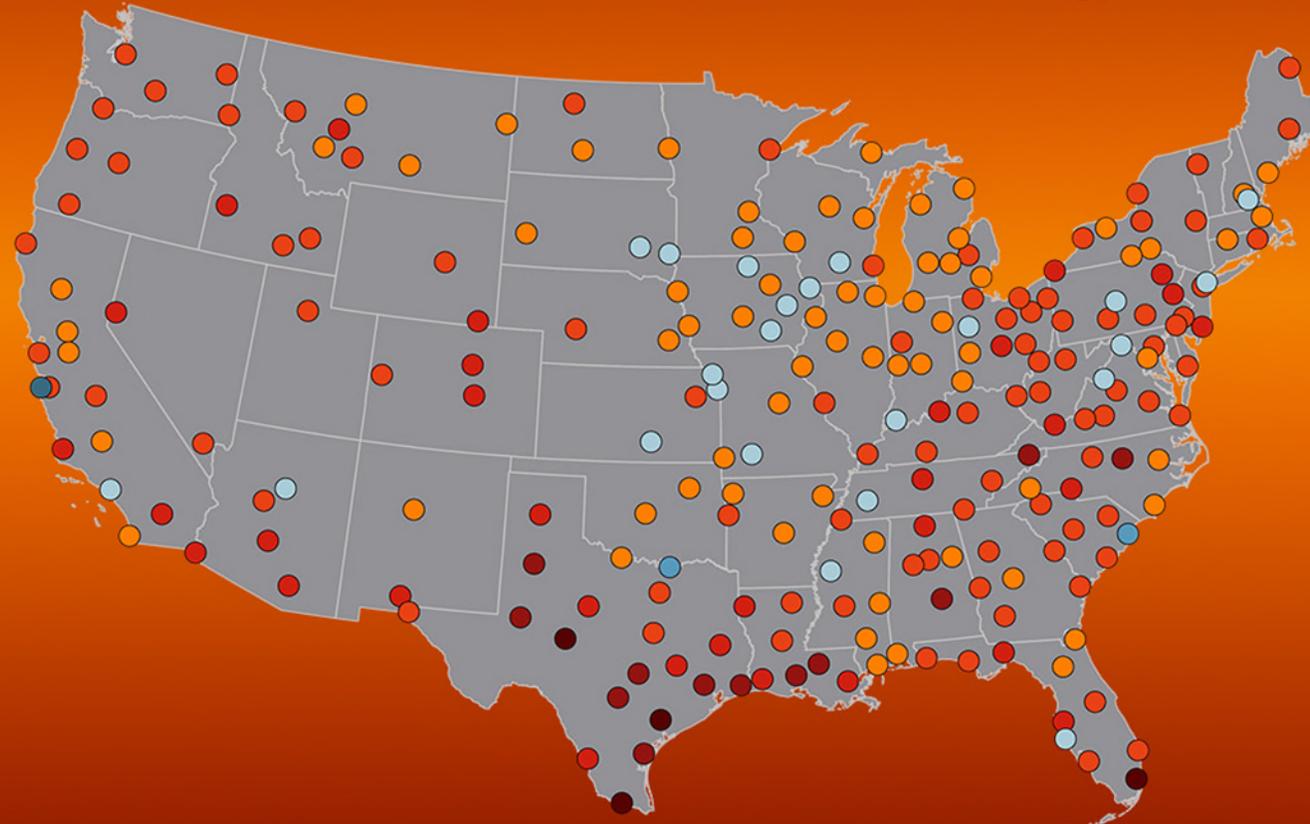
Heat



**Average/Extreme
Temperatures**

MORE EXTREMELY HOT DAYS

Change in extremely hot days, 1970-2023

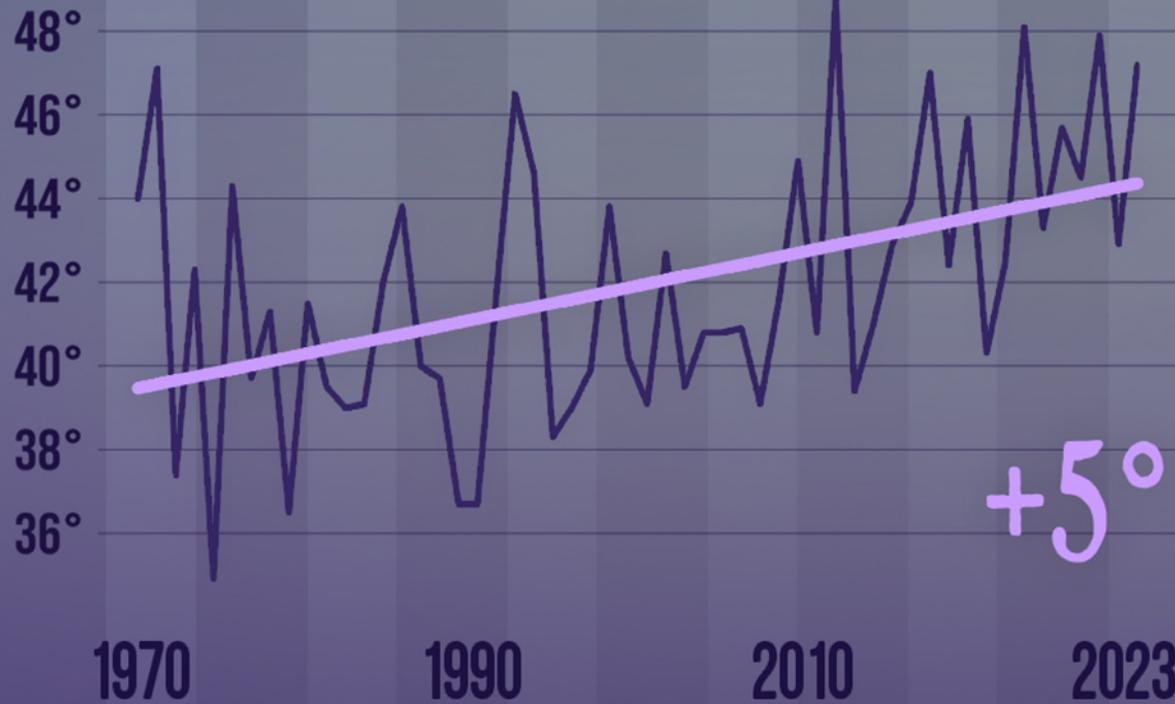


Change in annual days above the local 95th percentile of average summer maximum temperatures, 1970-2023.
Source: RCC-ACIS.org

CLIMATE  CENTRAL

SPRINGFIELD, MA HALLOWEEN EXTREMES

& WARMING OCTOBER NIGHTS



WARMEST

82° 1946

COOLEST

21° 2020

RAINIEST

1.7" 1939

SNOWIEST

TRACE 1925

Average annual minimum October temperature (°F), 1970-2023. Extremes: local period of record.
Source: RCC-ACIS.org

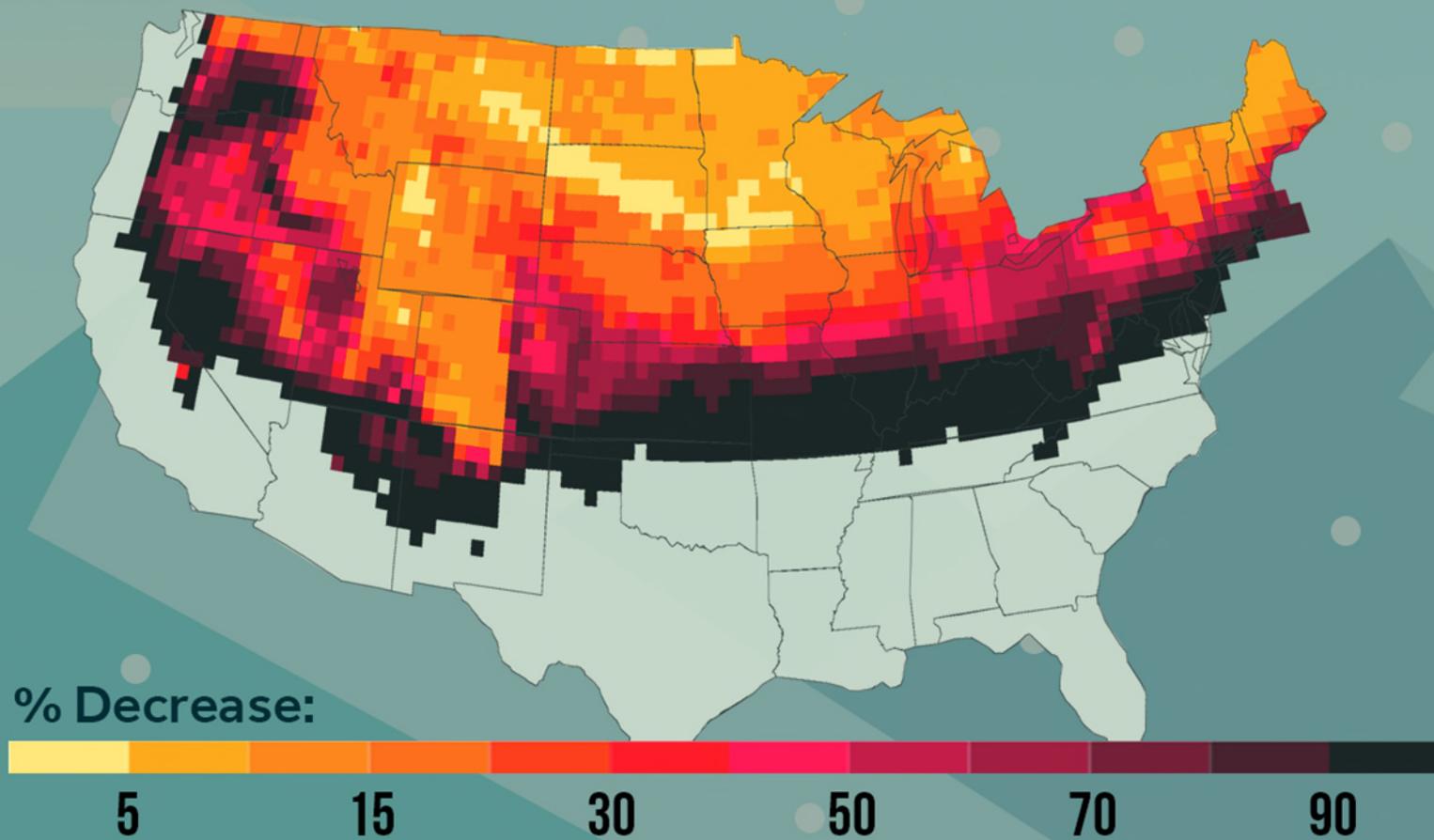
CLIMATE  CENTRAL

Winter Hazards



FEWER FREEZING DAYS

Projected decrease in days below 32°F



Projections for 2041-2070
Source: University of Massachusetts / Rawlins et al. 2016

Wind



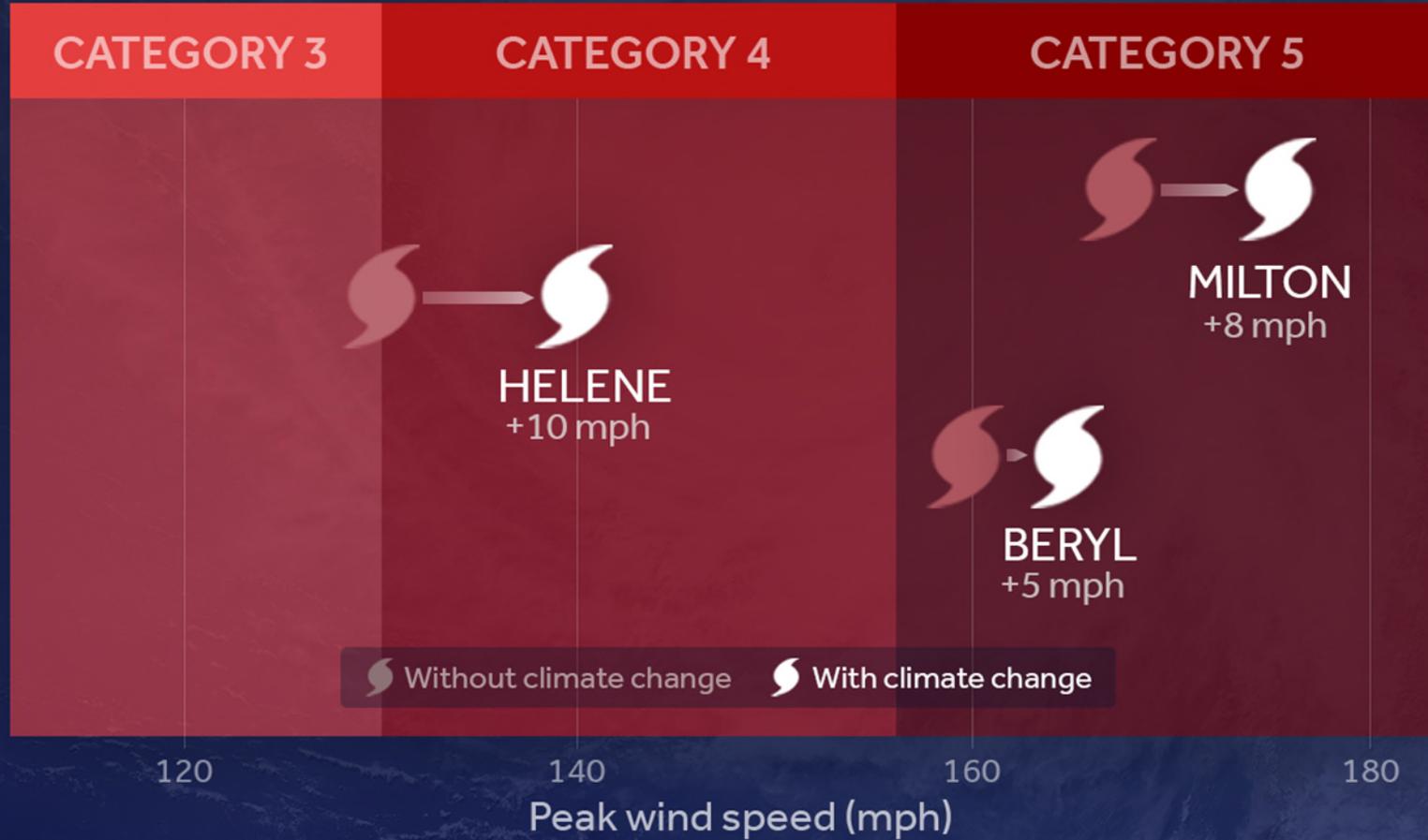
Hurricanes/Tropical Storms



Severe Winter Storm

WARMER WATER, STRONGER STORMS

Notable 2024 U.S. landfalling hurricanes strengthened by climate change

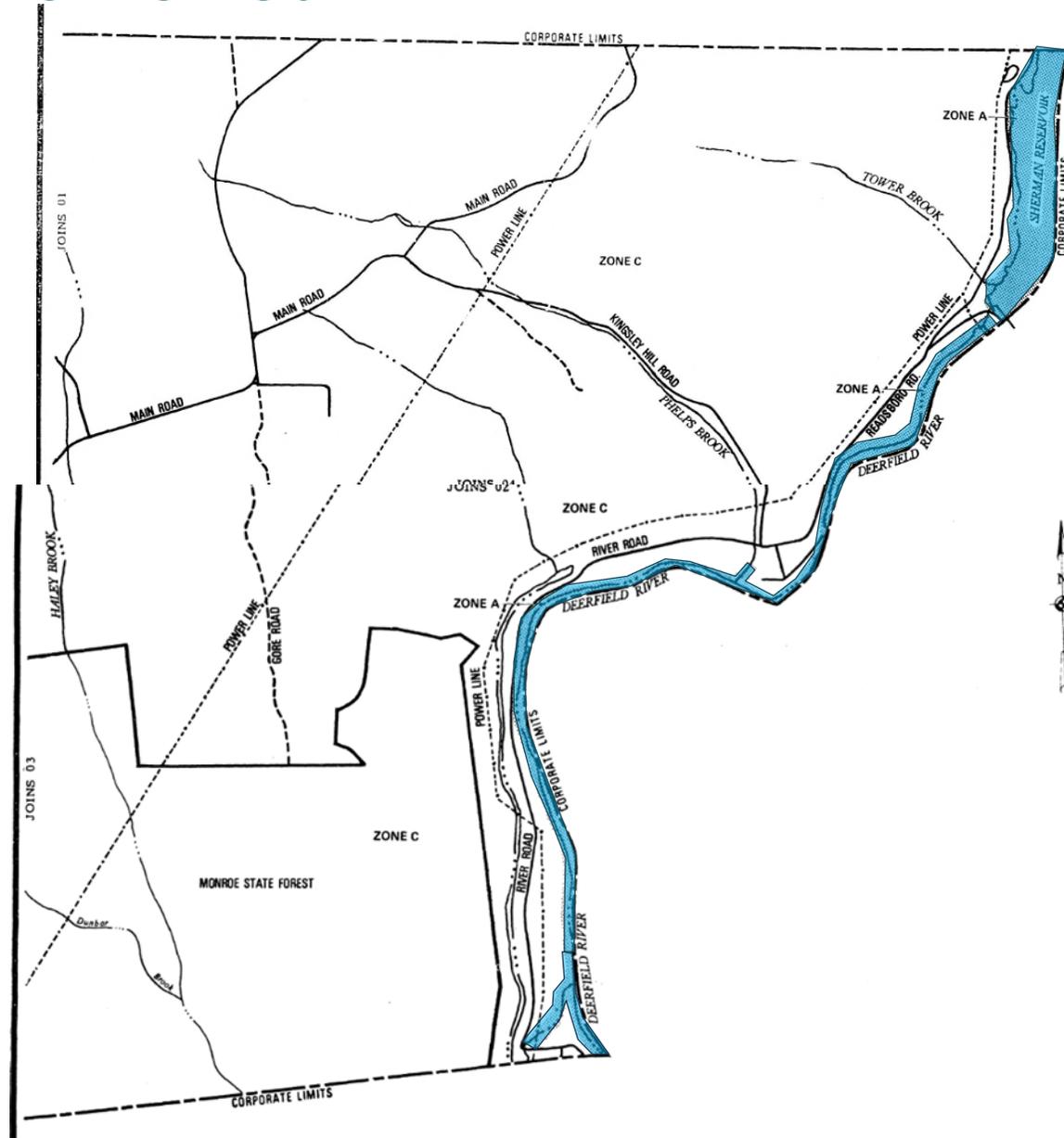


Calculated at the time and location of each storm's peak intensity prior to landfall
Using Climate Shift Index: Ocean data for average sea surface temperatures.
Using Climate Shift Index: Tropical Cyclones for wind speeds (mph) added by climate change.

Flood



FEMA Flood Hazard Zones



federal emergency management agency
TOWN OF MONROE, MA
 FRANKLIN COUNTY
 FLOOD INSURANCE
 COMMUNITY #

APPROXIMATE SCALE
 0 1000 2000 3000 FEET
 FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP
 EFFECTIVE DATE
 COMMUNITY NUMBER 250361
 DECEMBER 4, 191

city management agency
TOWN OF MONROE, MA
 FRANKLIN COUNTY

Highest Ranked Hazards

Highest Ranked Hazards

High Winds



Winter Storms



Hurricanes/Tropical Storms



Severe Winter Storm

Flooding



Inland Flooding

Extreme Heat / Fire / Drought



Average/Extreme
Temperatures

Vulnerabilities and Strengths

Vulnerabilities & Strengths – Infrastructure

Infrastructure Vulnerabilities

- No Emergency Shelter in Monroe
- Dirt Roads
- Steep Roads
- Town Hall
- Power Outages
- Kingsley Hill Road Town Garage
- Ramage Paper Mill

Infrastructure Strengths

- Water Supply Well
- Power Supply Sources
- Wastewater Plant
- Town Garages



Vulnerabilities & Strengths – Societal

Societal Vulnerabilities

- Communication
- Lack of Local Police / Ambulance
- Lack of Cellular Service
- Lack of Transportation Options, Distance to Amenities
- Lack of a School
- Lack of Volunteers

Societal Strengths

- Sense of Community
- Florida Council on Aging, Florida Senior Center
- FRCOG Community Nurse, Meals on Wheels
- Monroe Historical Society Newsletter
- Library



Vulnerabilities & Strengths – Environmental

Environmental Vulnerabilities

- High Elevations
- Geology – Ledge, Shallow Bedrock
- Beaver Dams

Environmental Strengths

- High Elevations
- Deerfield River
- Wildlife
- Forest
- Geology – Ledge, Shallow Bedrock
- Kingsley Hill Road
- Beaver Dams



Priority Actions

Priority Actions

- 8 Total Priority Actions
 - 3 High Priority Actions
 - 3 Medium Priority Actions
 - 2 Low Priority Actions

High Priority Actions

- ***Design and construct a municipal center to serve as an emergency shelter for the community and to address the need for garages to protect and maintain town equipment*** (Short Term)
- ***Conduct a feasibility study with the goal of identifying strategies to improve rural resilience, communication systems, and cellular service in the Town of Monroe*** (Short Term)
- ***Improve the land use associated with the remaining Ramage Paper Mill building to address a public safety hazard located within an area that has experienced flooding and is at risk of future flooding –***
(Short Term)

Medium Priority Actions

- **Conduct a town-wide dirt roads assessment to better understand the condition and vulnerabilities of Monroe's unpaved roads which will aid in decision-making and the development of resilience priorities** (Ongoing)
- **Conduct a power resilience study to investigate the possibility of improving the redundancy of Monroe's power supply during outages** (Long Term)
- **Conduct a town-wide inventory and assessment of culverts to aid in the identification and prioritization of culverts that are vulnerable to climate change** (Ongoing)

Low Priority Actions

- **Conduct a town-wide inventory and assessment of beaver dams to identify areas where dams increase the risk of flooding to aid in decision-making regarding the management of beaver activity and adjacent infrastructure** (Ongoing)
- **Conduct an inventory of old growth forest and/or Trees of Distinction to support forest protection and forest management decisions** (Ongoing)

Top Priority Actions

- 1. Design and construct a municipal center to serve as an emergency shelter for the community and to address the need for garages to protect and maintain town equipment (Short Term)**
- 2. Conduct a feasibility study with the goal of identifying strategies to improve rural resilience, communication systems, and cellular service in the Town of Monroe (Short Term)**
- 3. Improve the land use associated with the remaining Ramage Paper Mill building to address a public safety hazard located within an area that has experienced flooding and is at risk of future flooding – (Short Term)**

Next Steps

Next Steps

1. Draft Summary of Findings Report
2. Submit your ideas and comments to Carla Davis cj7173@verizon.net by December 5, 2025.
3. Provide Report to EEA for review
4. Receive Designation as an MVP Community
5. Prepare to Apply for MVP Action Grants in January 2026!

Questions and Answers

Public Listening Session Attendance

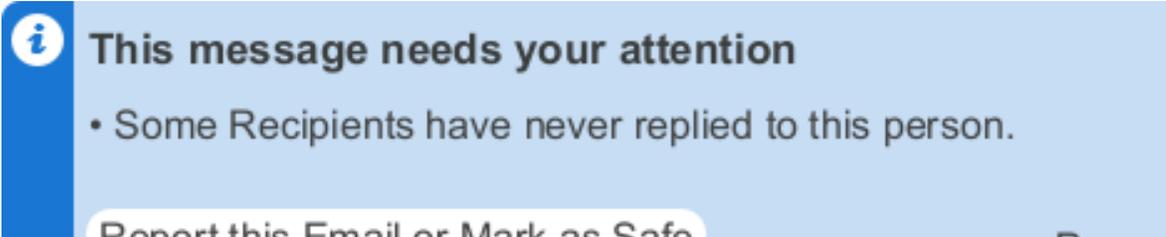
- Carla Davis, Resident and Selectboard
- Betsy Bizarro, Resident
- Lucy Passardi, Resident
- Emma Sass, MVP

Public Listening Session Comments

- During the public listening session, the concern of tickborne illnesses and zoonotic diseases was brought up and if there are any studies that can be done to look at trends or prevalence in Monroe or in the region. It was suggested that the Massachusetts Department of Health or University of Massachusetts may have information or long-term studies that focus on these topics.
- A question was raised regarding the potential for contaminated or hazardous materials to be present associated with the Ramage Paper Mill Building that may affect public and/or environmental health. It was noted that the EPA Brownfields program was involved in the removal of the wood structure portion of the building regarding hazardous materials associated with the wood structure. If a future feasibility study is to be conducted associated with the priority action focused on improving the land use associated with the Ramage Paper Mill Building, additional sampling would need to be conducted to determine if hazardous materials are present.

Susanna Sousa

From: Andrea Donlon <adonlon@frcog.org>
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2025 4:13 PM
To: Rosalie Starvish
Cc: Susanna Sousa
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Monroe MVP info from fire chief



Hi Rosalie,

On Tuesday, I met with Bruce Lescarbeau, who is the fire chief in Monroe. He's also the highway superintendent in Readsboro VT, and lives in VT just over the line, but grew up in Monroe.

Here is what I found out. Feel free to use any of this info in your MVP report if it's relevant.

The Monroe fire department is all-volunteer department, including the role of chief. There are 12 members on the force. He volunteers as chief, and gets paid \$125 twice a year for the role. He has a budget of \$78,000/year for the fire department.

Monroe FD regularly does drills and training with Florida MA, Readsboro VT, and Whitingham VT. They do tanker shuttle drills to prepare for fires where water needs to be shuttled to the site. The Readsboro Dept. is particularly good at drafting water out of any water source (drawing suction to fill tanks in fire trucks).

There are 7 fire hydrants in the center of town, which are fed by the drinking water reservoir up on Kingsley Hill Road. The water pipes for hydrants (8 inch pipes) are separate from drinking water pipes (4 inch pipes); in other words, the fire fighting water does not go through water treatment and the pressure is always good. The system has excellent pressure and the reservoir capacity is about 100,000 gallons, so they have an adequate amount of water for most fires. He hasn't noticed it particularly vulnerable to droughts. He thinks the center of town is pretty well covered, but one of the hydrants doesn't have the "steamer" connection (the larger center connection on a hydrant) and they'd like money to replace that. There is also a leaking riser on one hydrant in town.

There are several dry hydrants around town outside of the center of town. One is located at the canal associated with Deerfield Dam No. 5 (owned and operated by Great River Hydro) – this is an excellent water source that will never dry up.

He identified one place that he's like to install a new dry hydrant – it's located in a pond/wetland complex on Main Road (Phelps Brook), a little to the north of where Kingsley Hill Road comes in. Link to a Google map of location:

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/4CNr8jMTCAQ9ctp36>

A hydrant here would cover the northeast part of town outside of the center of town.

Other concerns he mentioned is that there is spent fuel from Yankee Rowe nearby and they are downstream of Harriman Reservoir (Great River Hydro), yet there is no alarm/siren system in the event of an emergency at either one of

these locations. He would like an alarm to be able to alert people. Apparently, Readsboro has an siren system with 4 different types of alarm signals that mean different things.

There no/very little cell service in town. He uses a mobile radio in his car, and the fire trucks are equipped with that, they use a COMIR pager, so the emergency management personnel are okay, but regular people have minimal ways of staying in touch. The fire trucks can communicate well to anyone in Franklin County, Berkshire County, and VT.

I have info on their fire trucks – let me know if you need that.

As far as brush fires, he says they don't have many. He attributes that to being in charge of burn permits – someone wanting to do an outdoor burn needs to call him and he checks on everything. He drives around and looks out for unpermitted burning.

Other climate concerns include concern over high winds, which took out power last year (February 2025) for many days. See article here: <https://recorder.com/2025/02/18/warming-centers-pop-up-amid-prolonged-power-outages-in-western-franklin-county-59497005/>. The power company kept saying they would be fixing it in a few hours, so many elderly residents stayed put, thinking it would go on imminently. They ended up getting very cold and he needed to help some of them get to shelters.

I showed him page iii of Executive Summary of the 10/1/2025 draft Summary of Findings report you sent me. I pointed to the high priority actions to see if he had any thoughts. The need for an alarm system for nuclear and hydropower dam disasters could be added to the second bullet. He agrees the Ramage Paper Mill is a huge liability for the town. [And based on my conversation with him, it might be good to add as a medium or high priority the need for that new dry hydrant location.]

Andrea

Andrea Donlon (she/her)

Senior Land Use & Natural Resources Planner

Franklin Regional Council of Governments

12 Olive Street, Suite 2

Greenfield MA 01301

Office phone: 413-774-3167 x127

Cell phone: 413-325-4426

Email: adonlon@frcog.org



www.frcog.org | [Find us on Facebook](#) | X (Twitter): [@FranklinCOG](https://twitter.com/FranklinCOG)

From: Rosalie Starvish <rosalie.starvish@gza.com>

Sent: Thursday, December 11, 2025 7:32 PM

To: Andrea Donlon <adonlon@frcog.org>

Cc: Susanna Sousa <Susanna.Sousa@gza.com>

Subject: RE: Monroe MVP draft or done?

Hi Andrea,

Did anything come of your meeting with the fire chief that we should incorporate into the plan?

Thanks,

Rosalie Starvish, M.S., P.E., CFM, CPMSM
Senior Project Manager / Water Resources Engineer
GZA | 1350 Main Street, Suite 1400 | Springfield, MA 01103
o: 413-726-2119 (direct) | c: 860-550-2777 | rosalie.starvish@gza.com | www.gza.com

From: Andrea Donlon <adonlon@frcog.org>
Sent: Friday, December 5, 2025 9:11 AM
To: Rosalie Starvish <rosalie.starvish@gza.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Monroe MVP draft or done?

Hi Rosalie,

Is the Monroe MVP plan complete, and if so, can you send me a copy? If it's just in draft form, do you have a draft version of the CRB risk matrix that you can send me?

I am meeting with the fire chief in Monroe on Monday and want to review if anything has come up related to fire fighting and water use.

Thanks, Andrea

Andrea Donlon (she/her)
Senior Land Use & Natural Resources Planner
Franklin Regional Council of Governments
12 Olive Street, Suite 2
Greenfield MA 01301
Office phone: 413-774-3167 x127
Cell phone: 413-325-4426
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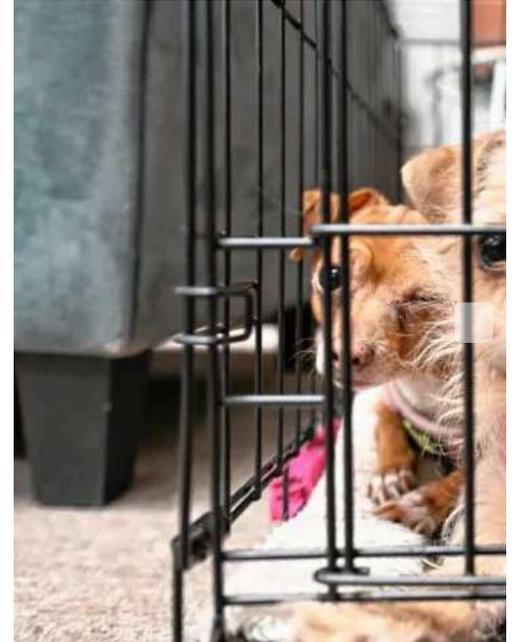
Warming centers pop up amid prolonged power outage in western Franklin County



by **Madison Schofield** Staff Writer
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State Rep. Natalie Blais and Kristen Elechko, western Massachusetts director for the Governor's Office, coordinate with officials in the National Grid Mobile Command Center parked in the Berkshire East Mountain Resort parking lot in Charlemont on Tuesday.



Loretta Dionne brought her dogs Sassy and Lady with her to stay

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With a large-scale power outage continuing to impact Hawley, Charlemont, Heath, Monroe and Rowe on Tuesday, multiple communities opened up warming centers for residents and Hawley declared a state of emergency.

According to the National Grid outage map, many residents have been without electricity since 10 p.m. on Sunday as high winds downed trees and power lines, while also posing a safety hazard for crews looking to restore power. As of Tuesday afternoon, nearly 1,500 households were still without power.

“The primary concern is for everyone’s health and safety,” said state Rep. Natalie Blais, who spent time at the National Grid Mobile Command Center that was set up in Berkshire East Mountain Resort’s parking lot on Tuesday afternoon to coordinate repair crews. “There’s a real concern for welfare; we’re going on three days with no power.”

In response, warming centers were set up across the region. Generators kept the power and heat on for residents to stay warm at the Hawley Town Office, Charlemont Town Hall, Charlemont Federated Church, Heath’s Jacobs Road Municipal Center, Trinity Church in Shelburne Falls and Rowe Town Hall. Blais said an American Red Cross disaster relief unit was at the Charlemont church providing warm lunches and drinks.

“Right now, the Town Offices are open and people can come to warm up and get snacks, drinks and socks,” Brandon Root, Hawley’s emergency management director, said Tuesday morning. “We plan to put crews together for door-to-door wellness checks this afternoon.”

Residents said they were happy to have a chance to get out of the cold for a bit.

“We are warm, and we are dry, and the toilet flushes,” said Loretta Dionne, who was staying warm at Rowe Town Hall on Tuesday, alongside her dogs, Sassy and Lady.

Root said he had spoken with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency and National Grid, and until the high winds stop, National Grid crews would be unable to safely make repairs and restore power.

“We’re just waiting for the wind to die down. National Grid crews can’t go up in the bucket trucks to make repairs with it being so windy,” Root explained.

As of Tuesday afternoon, **National Grid estimated** power would be restored to the nearly 1,500 households by 8 p.m., according to the outage map. Another cluster of households in Charlemont showed an estimated restoration time of 11:45 p.m.

“Line crews are doing everything they can in these frigid temps,” Blais said, expressing her gratitude to the workers. “But National Grid should have been on it sooner.”

Blais added that while she was disappointed with how long the power has been out, she also appreciates how residents are working together to stay warm during this time.

“There are people going door to door checking on their neighbors,” Blais said.

Root said there have been no reported emergencies due to the power outage, though there are households without water that are requesting deliveries of potable water.

“We’re just trying our best,” Root said.

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