



Agenda
August 27, 2026
6:00 p.m.— Pulaski County Innovation Center, Fairlawn, VA

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Approval of Minutes for June
 - B. Treasurer's Reports for June, July, and August will be distributed at the September meeting.
- III. **COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS**
 - A. Projects Signed-off by the staff
None
 - B. Regular Project Review
 - 1. [FERC Mountain Valley Pipeline Boost Project, DEQ 26-110F](#)
- IV. **PUBLIC ADDRESS**
- V. **CHAIR'S REPORT**
- VI. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
- VII. **REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**
- VIII. **OLD BUSINESS**
- IX. **NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. [Regional Commission Policies:](#)
 - a. [Bylaws Update](#)
 - b. [Letters of Support for Non-Member Organizations](#)
 - c. [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Use Policy](#)
Kevin Byrd, Executive Director
Commission Action
 - B. [Regional Economic Strategy Committee for FY27](#)
Kevin Byrd, Executive Director
Commission Action
 - C. [Regional Commission Awards for 2026](#)
Commission Action
 - D. Next Meeting: September 24th 6:00pm

All meeting materials posted on the Commission website www.nrvrc.org

The New River Valley Regional Commission provides area wide planning for the physical, social, and economic elements of the district; encourages and assists local governments in planning for their future; provides a means of coordinating federal, state, and local efforts to resolve area problems; provides a forum for review of mutual concerns; and implements services upon request of member local governments.



6580 Valley Center Drive | Suite 124 | Radford, VA 24141 | 540-639-9313

N R V R C . O R G

COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW MEMORANDUM

TO: Regional Commission Board Members

FROM: Kevin R. Byrd, Executive Director

AGENDA ITEM: III. Intergovernmental Review Process, B. Regular Projects, Item #1

CIRP Review

August 18, 2026

PROJECT: Mountain Valley Pipeline Boost Project

SUBMITTED BY: DEQ

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Department of Environmental Quality is requesting comments on an environmental assessment.

PROJECT SENT FOR REVIEW TO: Commission Board Members

Strengthening the Region through Collaboration

Counties

Floyd | Giles
Montgomery | Pulaski
City
Radford

Towns

Blacksburg | Christiansburg | Dublin
Floyd | Narrows | Pearisburg
Pembroke | Pulaski
Rich Creek

Higher Education

Virginia Tech
Radford University
New River Community College

SECTION A – PROPOSED ACTION

A.1. Introduction

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission or FERC) staff prepared this environmental assessment (EA) to analyze the environmental effects associated with Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC's (Mountain Valley) proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline Boost Project (Project). On October 23, 2025, Mountain Valley filed an application with the Commission pursuant to section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act of 1938 (NGA),¹ and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations,² seeking authorization to construct and operate certain natural gas facilities in West Virginia and Virginia, as described in section A.4. U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) topographic maps depicting the Project along with Project plans on aerial photography basemaps are provided in appendix A.

A.2. Project Purpose and Need

Mountain Valley states the purpose of the Project is to transport additional volumes of natural gas from interconnection points with Equitrans, L.P. at Mobley Run and EQM Gathering Opco, LLC at Great Hammerhead to delivery points on the Mountain Valley Mainline and Mountain Valley Southgate systems. The Project would provide about 600,000 dekatherms per day of incremental firm natural gas transportation service for the project shippers to meet growing supply and resiliency needs via existing interconnections on the Mountain Valley Mainline.³

A.3. Scope of the EA

Commission staff reviewed the application, supplemental filings, and comments received to establish the scope of this EA. As presented in table A.3-1, we⁴ first considered whether each resource is present in the area of the proposed action and alternatives. If the resource is present, we evaluated whether further detailed analysis is warranted due to potential effects; if so, that resource is carried forward for discussion in the EA. If the resource is present but would not be affected to a degree that detailed analysis is required, that resource is not carried forward and a rationale is provided. If the resource is not present or would not be affected by the proposed action, it is not carried forward for further discussion.

¹ 15 United States Code (U.S.C.) 717f(b), (c).

² Title 18 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 157 (2025).

³ Mountain Valley October 23, 2025 Application, Resource Report 1 at 1-1, FERC Accession No. 20251023-5112.

⁴ "We," "us," and "our" refer to the environmental and engineering staff of the Office of Energy Projects.

The topics identified in table A.3-1 as carried forward for further discussion are addressed in section B of this EA. Section B describes the affected environment as it currently exists, discusses the environmental consequences of the proposed Project, identifies measures proposed by Mountain Valley to reduce effects, and presents our additional recommended mitigation measures that are summarized in section D. The EA also assesses alternatives to the proposed action in section C. We recommend the Commission incorporate the measures listed in section D as mandatory environmental conditions of any Certificate it may issue to Mountain Valley for the Project.

The Commission is a federal regulatory agency and conducts a complete independent review of project proposals, including an environmental review of the proposed facilities. As the lead federal agency for the Project, we are required to comply with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). These statutes have been considered in the preparation of this EA. In addition to FERC, other federal, state, and local agencies may use this EA in approving or issuing any permits necessary for all or part of the proposed Project. Table B1 in appendix B lists the major federal and state permits, approvals, and consultations for Project activities and provides their current status. Mountain Valley would be responsible for obtaining all permits and approvals required to construct and operate the Project, regardless of whether they appear in this table.

A.4. Proposed Actions

Mountain Valley proposes to construct, modify, and operate facilities along its existing pipeline system in West Virginia and Virginia. The Project would consist of:⁵

- installing one additional natural gas turbine and auxiliary facilities to increase capacity by 23,470 horsepower (hp) at the existing Bradshaw Compressor Station (CS) in Wetzel County, West Virginia;
- relocating existing blowdown silencers and installing one additional natural gas turbine and auxiliary facilities to increase capacity by 52,500 hp and restaging of two existing natural gas turbines at the existing Harris CS in Braxton County, West Virginia;
- relocating existing blowdown silencers, installing two additional natural gas turbines and auxiliary facilities, and upgrading two existing natural gas turbines to increase capacity by 52,880 hp at the existing Stallworth CS in Fayette County, West Virginia; and
- constructing a new compressor station (Swann CS) with three natural gas turbines totaling 136,900 hp; 0.2 mile-long, 42-inch-diameter dual lay natural gas suction

⁵ Mountain Valley October 23, 2025 Application, Resource Report 1, table 1.2-1 at 1-4, FERC Accession No. 20251023-5112.

and discharge facilities; a pig launcher and receiver;⁶ a mainline valve (MLV); and auxiliary facilities in Montgomery County, Virginia.

An overview map of the Project facilities is shown in figure 1, and detailed maps are provided in appendix A.

⁶ A “pig” is a tool that the pipeline company inserts into and pushes through the pipeline for cleaning the pipeline, conducting internal inspections, or other purposes.

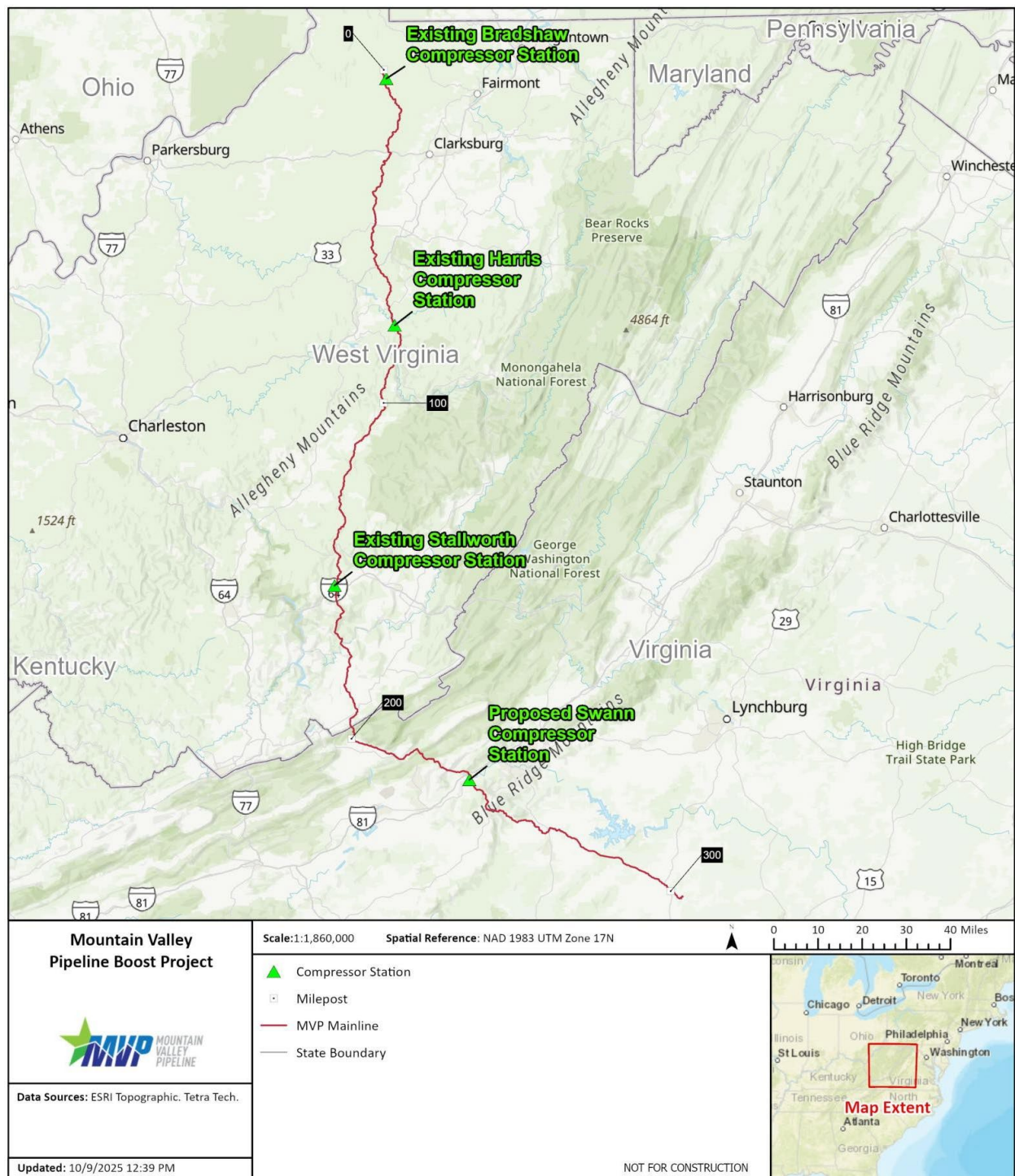


Figure 1. Project Overview Map



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N R V R C . O R G

August 21, 2026

Executive Director's Report

Economic Development:

- The AM2 Tech Hub \$40M application to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) is still under review. EDA sent a request for budget details three weeks ago which hopefully indicates continued consideration of the project.
- The AM2 Tech Hub GO Virginia project (\$4.2M) is nearing contract execution. It remains under review by VT legal.
- AM2 is holding an All Hands meeting on September 3rd in Martinsville at Patrick & Henry Community College's Manufacturing, Engineering, and Technology Complex, The MET.

Broadband:

- PemTel will be hosting Senator Warner on 8/28 in Pembroke to showcase federal investments in rural broadband deployment. The Regional Commission has assisted PemTel with grant applications and grant administration for several projects that will be highlighted next week.

Transportation:

- The NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority will meet next week to receive an update on the project and discuss building construction funds pertaining to Amtrak Design Review and the previously awarded CRISI grant.
- The final report for the Valley to Valley Trail was recently submitted to the MPO for review. It will be distributed broadly once available so everyone can become familiar with the preferred alignments of the trail to connect from the New River Trail State Park terminus in Pulaski to Green Hill Park in western Roanoke County.

Housing:

- The New River Valley Housing Fund is developing policy to allow funds to be used for property acquisition because a community has an opportunity to make a strategic real estate purchase. The acquisition would enable future capital investment for an affordable housing development project. This new policy aligns with the intent of the NRV Housing Fund to provide access to discretionary funds to address specific local needs and opportunities.

Natural Resources:

- The VA Dept of Housing and Community Development sent planning grant awards in response to Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery to the counties of Giles, Pulaski, Montgomery and the City of Radford. \$155K will be made available to each community for disaster recovery planning work. The Regional Commission will prepare a regional Disaster Recovery Plan along with chapters for each community. The local governments have until September 7th to respond to DHCD with its intended approach and the Commission is assisting with the responses.
- As of August 21st, the New River Valley is in a Drought Watch as designated by the Virginia Dept. of Environmental Quality. This is an improvement of status over the recent Drought Warning levels.

Regional:

- The VA Dept of Housing and Community Development indicated notices of awards for the Appalachian Regional Commission regional development program should be announced in the next week or two.
- The NRV Recovery Ecosystem is currently distributing One Boxes to locations across the region. One Boxes are essentially an overdose emergency kit containing one dose of naloxone, CPR breathing masks, and rubber gloves. The boxes contain a LCD screen that shows a video on how to administer the medicine. Approximately 150 boxes have been delivered and installed in restaurants, retailers, hotels, gas stations, and many other businesses. If you know of a location that would like a One Box, please contact Anna Champion (achampion@nrvc.org). We plan to issue a press release on the One Box program to help inform the public and identify more locations.
- Friends of Southwest Virginia is busy holding community meetings to inform Destination SWVA, a strategic plan update for the creative economy of southwest Virginia focused on heritage music, craft, and outdoor recreation. Four meetings were held with NRV communities this week and the last is scheduled next week in Floyd County. When the plan is finished Friends of SWVA will be invited to a Commission meeting to make a presentation on the project.

Commission:

- The Annual Awards Reception will be held on October 22nd at The Farmhouse in Christiansburg. A mobile workshop will take place 4:30-5:45 and the reception will run from 6:00-8:00. Invitations will go out soon after the meeting on Thursday following the selection of the 2026 award recipients.
- The office construction project continues to make good progress following the project schedule. We are continuing to anticipate moving locations by the end of the calendar year, provided the timeline holds up. Drywall has been installed, a first coat of paint has been applied, carpet and glass storefront for the upstairs meeting room will go in soon. On the outside, stonework was recently complete around the addition and brick is being placed this week. Windows should be on site soon. The furniture order was placed recently and we are working on internet pricing, IT networking, and audio visual details for the meeting rooms.
- The Regional Commission is currently advertising for two planning positions, one focused on community development and resiliency planning and the other on transportation and public infrastructure. If you know a good candidate, please share this link ([here](#)).
- We are looking forward to holding a Field Day lunch event for staff on September 18th at Noon at Randolph Park in Pulaski County. Board members are invited to join us as we will be recognizing staff members for their years of service to the organization.



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N R V R C . O R G

MEMORANDUM

To: NRVRC Board Members

From: Kevin Byrd, Executive Director

Date: August 20, 2026

Re: Regional Commission Policies: Bylaws Update, Letters of Support for Non-Member Organizations, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

The August agenda for the Regional Commission includes three policies for review and consideration. Each will be taken separately at the meeting; however, all three are briefly overviewed in this memo.

Bylaws Update:

The Bylaws for the Regional Commission were last updated in April 2015. This update includes members beyond the initial Charter agreement, provides clarity to Membership, allows for electronic meeting participation permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, adjusts Quorum since new members have joined, and clarifies Administration and Finance articles. The draft Bylaws were distributed to the board on August 20th which provides for the seven-day notice period prior to the board meeting. The Executive Committee reviewed a draft in July. Brian Wheeler, citizen representative on the board for Montgomery County and attorney with CowanPerry, reviewed the draft and provided edits ahead of the August Executive Committee meeting. Track changes are included so edits are visible.

Letters of Support for Non-Member Organizations:

Frequently, the Regional Commission receives requests for letters of support for grant applications from organizations that are not members of the agency. The requests commonly come from partner nonprofits performing projects that are complementary to the Regional Commission's work program. On occasion requests for letters will come in for projects that are close to a deadline, do not have budgets prepared, and/or not fully scoped. In these circumstances it would be helpful to have policy available to reference when providing a response requesting additional information, or the ability to decline providing a letter due to lack of alignment with the policy. The draft policy is based a policy recently adopted by the LENOWISCO PDC and modified for the Regional Commissions purposes.

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy:

The Regional Commission staff prepared the attached policy given the rapid increase of AI tools available in the workplace. Will Shelburne, Community Designer & Facilitation Specialist, led an internal committee to develop the draft. The full staff reviewed the draft policy and provided feedback to the committee before sharing this draft with the board. The work of the committee was informed by policies adopted by peer organizations in the Southeast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

BY-LAWS

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

ADOPTED BY THE NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
September 15, 1969 AND WERE AMENDED AT ITS REGULAR

MEETINGS OF: December 12, 1985
January 28, 1999, December 16, 1999,
June 27, 2002
September 22, 2011, April 23, 2015
August 27, 2026

TO BECOME EFFECTIVE ~~APRIL 23, 2015~~AUGUST 27, 2026

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I - AUTHORITY

SECTION 1. CHARTER AGREEMENT

The New River Valley Regional Commission was organized and exists pursuant to a Charter agreement dated September 15, 1969, by and between the Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski, and the City of Radford, and the Towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg and Pulaski, and as amended and re-adopted by the original jurisdictions as well as the Towns of [Floyd, Dublin, Pearisburg, Pembroke, Narrows, and Rich Creek, and the higher education institutions of New River Community College, Radford University, and](#) Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, ~~and Radford University,~~ all of which are in the State of Virginia, which agreement implements Chapter 42, of Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia; and, as so provided, is a public body corporate and politic with all the powers and duties granted to it by the Regional Cooperation Act.

ARTICLE II - DEFINITIONS

SECTION 1. TERMS

- (a) "Commission" means the New River Valley Regional Commission.
- (b) "Commissioner" means [a](#) representative appointed to the COMMISSION by the participating member.
- (c) "Agreement" means the Charter Agreement dated September 15, 1969, by and between the governmental subdivisions set forth above, as the same may from time to time be amended.
- (d) "~~p~~Participating ~~M~~member" means any of the governmental subdivisions or ~~other organizations~~[higher education institutions](#) being parties to the Charter Agreement.
- (e) "District" means all that area lying within the geographical boundaries of Regional ~~#4~~ as designated by the State of Virginia.
- (f) "Year" means, unless otherwise noted, a ~~one-year~~[one-year](#) period beginning July ~~14~~ and ending the following June 30 and the fiscal year of the COMMISSION shall be such year.

ARTICLE III - OFFICE LOCATION

SECTION 1. As provided for by ARTICLE I, SECTION 2 of Agreement.

ARTICLE IV - POWERS AND DUTIES

SECTION 1. As defined in ARTICLE I, SECTION 3 of Agreement.

ARTICLE V - PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

SECTION 1. The purpose of the COMMISSION as provided in ARTICLE I, SECTION 4 of the Charter Agreement shall be to “*Promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social and economic elements of the ~~R~~region~~at~~ by planning, and encouraging and assisting governmental subdivisions to plan for the future.*”

ARTICLE VI - MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1. Representatives to the COMMISSION shall be appointed and serve on the COMMISSION in accordance with the provisions of Article II of the Agreement, and for the terms as provided by ARTICLE III, SECTION 1. A commissioner appointed by a participating member that is not in Good Standing shall not be counted toward a quorum and shall not be entitled to vote until such member’s Good Standing is restored.

ARTICLE VII - OFFICERS AND DUTIES

SECTION 1. OFFICERS

The officers of the COMMISSION shall consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, and a Treasurer. The offices of Chair and Vice-Chair shall be held by representatives from different participating members.

SECTION 2. TERMS OF OFFICE

Each of the officers shall be elected at the June meeting of the COMMISSION, to serve a term of one (1) year, or unless removed before the end of the term through resignation or by the COMMISSION. At the will of the Commission, officers may serve consecutive terms. Any vacancy occurring in an office shall be filled for the unexpired term by the COMMISSION at the second regular monthly meeting following the occurrence of such vacancy. If the vacancy occurs in the office of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall serve as acting Chair pending election of a new Chair. If the vacancy occurs in the office of the Vice-Chair, the Chair shall appoint an acting Vice-Chair pending election of a new Vice-Chair. If the vacancy occurs in the office of the Treasurer, an acting officer shall be appointed by the Chair pending election of a new Treasurer.

SECTION 3. ELECTION

In accordance with these by-laws, the Nominating Committee shall consist of the Chair, Treasurer, and a COMMISSIONER elected by the COMMISSION for this purpose. The Nominating Committee shall submit the name or names of one or more persons for each office to be filled. Further nominations may be made from the floor by any representative at the meeting at which the election is held. Election of officers shall be by majority vote of those representatives present.

SECTION 4. CHAIR

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the COMMISSION at which ~~he/she is~~they are present, and shall vote as any other member. The Chair shall be responsible for the implementation of the policies established and the actions taken by the COMMISSION; shall have all of the powers and duties customarily pertaining to the office of the Chair of the Board; and shall perform such further duties as may be assigned by the COMMISSION.

SECTION 5. VICE-CHAIR

The Vice-Chair, in the absence of the Chair, or in the event the Chair is unable to perform any of the duties of this office, shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as are conferred upon the Chair. The Vice-Chair shall also perform such other duties as may from time to time be assigned by the Chair or by the COMMISSION.

SECTION 6. TREASURER

The Treasurer shall have general charge and supervision of all of the books and accounts of the COMMISSION; shall have custody of the monies and securities of the COMMISSION and keep an accurate record of the source of all monies, unless otherwise provided. The Treasurer shall sign or countersign such checks, vouchers, or other instruments as require ~~his/her~~their signature; shall make a brief financial report at each regular meeting of the COMMISSION; and an annual report as soon as practicable after the end of each fiscal year. The Treasurer shall perform all other duties incident to the office or that may be required by the COMMISSION. The Treasurer may, with the permission of the COMMISSION, delegate certain duties and responsibilities to the staff of the COMMISSION, except for the signing or countersigning of checks, vouchers and other instruments.

ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS AND VOTING

SECTION 1. REGULAR MEETINGS

- (a) Regular monthly meetings of the COMMISSION shall be held on the fourth Thursday of the month at a place to be determined by the COMMISSION. Members may participate in meetings by electronic means to the extent

permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. The COMMISSION may change the date and time of any regular meeting at any prior meeting and may adjourn any meeting from time to time or to another place. The June meeting shall regularly be the annual meeting of the COMMISSION.

- (b) The order of business at all regular meetings ~~shall~~ shall include be as follows the following agenda items: (a) roll call, (b) approval of minutes of previous meeting, (c) Treasurer's Report, ~~(de)~~ public address, ~~(ed)~~ old business, (fe) new business, (gf) area-wide clearinghouse review, (hg) executive director's report, and (ih) adjournment.
- (c) All meetings of the Regional Commission, ~~at which official action is taken~~ shall be open to the public and all records of the Regional Commission shall be a public record. The COMMISSION may meet in ~~executiveclosed~~ session only for reasons ~~prescribed~~ permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.
- (d) The Chair shall ensure that all members receive notice of all regular and special meetings of the COMMISSION, and oversee and validate a record of their proceedings. The proceedings shall be a public record, ~~and a copy~~ of which shall be ~~mailed-sent~~ with the notice of the next succeeding regular meeting of the COMMISSION.

SECTION 2. SPECIAL MEETINGS

Special meetings may be called by the Chair at the Chair's his/her discretion or by ~~any six (6) members of the COMMISSION~~ representatives from at least one-third of participating members upon seventy-two (72) hours notice to all members in writing or via established electronic means. The time, place and purpose of the special meeting shall be stated. ~~The press will be alerted~~ Notice shall be provided to the public as ~~prescribed~~ required by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act.

SECTION 3. QUORUM

~~Thirteen (13) representatives~~ A simple majority of the members ~~Commissioners in Good Standing~~ of the COMMISSION shall constitute a quorum provided that a representative from at least ~~six different~~ a majority of participating members is present. Good Standing shall mean that the participating member is current in the payment of all dues, assessments, and other financial obligations owed to the COMMISSION, ~~unless the COMMISSION~~ has approved alternative payment arrangements, and that such member has not been suspended or otherwise declared not in Good Standing by action of the COMMISSION.

SECTION 4. VOTING

As provided in ARTICLE III, SECTION 2 of the Agreement, each member of the COMMISSION shall be entitled to one vote on matters before the COMMISSION. All actions of the COMMISSION may be taken by a majority vote of all members present and voting, provided that no action shall be taken without the concurring vote of ~~at least six (6) representatives~~representatives from at least a majority of participating members, except that a lesser number may adjourn a meeting. No vote by any COMMISSIONER shall constitute or be construed as an official or unofficial commitment of the participating members.

ARTICLE IX - COMMITTEES

SECTION 1. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- (a) Membership - There shall be an Executive Committee composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, immediate past Chair, and up to three (3)~~an~~ at-large members chosen annually by vote of the COMMISSION. The COMMISSION Chair and Vice-Chair of the COMMISSION shall be the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee.
- (b) Meetings - Meetings of the Executive Committee shall be called by the Chair as necessary. Meetings may also be called by the Executive Director upon written request of two members of the Executive Committee.
- (c) Quorum - A Quorum shall consist of a simple majority of the membership of the Executive Committee.
- (d) Duties - The Executive Committee shall perform the functions of finance and of a personnel committee, and shall prepare and regularly review the budget, review and update the personnel policy, and address budgetary and personnel concerns and make recommendations to the COMMISSION in regard thereto. The Executive Committee shall have such further powers and duties as may from time to time be assigned to it by the COMMISSION.

SECTION 2. OTHER COMMITTEES AND TASK FORCES

The COMMISSION may establish such other special and standing committees and temporary task forces, advisory, strategic, technical or others, as it shall deem desirable for the transaction of its affairs.

ARTICLE X - ADMINISTRATION

SECTION 1. STAFF

The COMMISSION board shall hire an Executive Director and conduct an annual performance evaluation of the position~~Executive Director~~. The Executive Director shall employ a staff of qualified professional and other persons, pay to them such compensation as it shall deem necessary and advisable to carry out ~~its~~the COMMISSION'S duties and implement

its projects, programs and other functions.

SECTION 2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The ~~chief executive officer of the staff shall be the~~ Executive Director ~~who~~ shall have direct supervision of all ~~other~~ employees of the COMMISSION. ~~The Executive Director and~~ shall have direct control, subject to the authority of the COMMISSION, of the management of the day-to-day affairs of the COMMISSION.

SECTION 3. DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In addition to being the COMMISSION'S chief source of professional guidance and initiator of worthy considerations, the duties of the Executive Director shall be, but not limited to:

- (a) ~~-~~Maintain and manage the business office of the COMMISSION.
- (b) ~~-~~Be custodian of all COMMISSION property and records.
- (c) ~~-~~Conduct the correspondence of the COMMISSION.
- (d) Assist the COMMISSION officers and Committee Chair in carrying out their duties as may be appropriate.
- (e) Attend all COMMISSION meetings and be prepared to report on any and all business, activities, meetings, proposals, cooperative endeavors, etc., in which the COMMISSION is currently engaged or may be in the process of developing.
- (f) Maintain close ~~personal~~ contact with representatives of Federal, State, and local agencies which currently are, or subsequently will be, cooperatively involved in accomplishing the objectives of the COMMISSION.
- (g) Acquire and maintain a working knowledge of the current laws, regulations, and procedures which govern the Federal, State, and local agencies in order that the COMMISSION may take full advantage of opportunities for joint endeavors.
- (h) Prepare in cooperation with the Treasurer and Executive Committee annual budgets for consideration and adoption by the COMMISSION and for presentation to ~~its the governmental units~~ members.
- (i) Prepare annual reports showing activities and accomplishments leading toward fulfilling COMMISSION objectives, together with audited reports of receipts and expenditures for presentation to the ~~respective-respective~~ members governmental units.
- (j) Be responsible for carrying out all orders and directives issued by the COMMISSION. Review and comment on all applications for federal or state financial assistance from member jurisdictions, which, in ~~his/her~~ their opinion, do

not conflict with the goals and policies of the COMMISSION and do not needlessly duplicate efforts of other agencies or jurisdictions. ~~He/she~~They shall, as part of the regular organizational review, contact representatives of each of the jurisdictions involved in an application. Such action by the Executive Director shall be reported to the COMMISSION at its next regularly scheduled meeting. All other applications shall be reviewed by the COMMISSION after review and recommendation by the staff and/or a committee of the COMMISSION.

- (k) Be responsible for the hiring, supervision and direction of any other employees hired ~~by~~ to work for the COMMISSION.

SECTION 4. EXECUTION OF INSTRUMENTS

The Executive Director, upon specific authorization by the COMMISSION, shall have power to sign ~~in~~on its behalf any agreement or other instrument to be executed by the COMMISSION. Unless otherwise provided, the Executive Director may sign or countersign checks and vouchers in payment of obligations of the COMMISSION within limits established by the COMMISSION.

ARTICLE XI - FINANCES

SECTION 1. BUDGET

- (a) The COMMISSION shall prepare an annual budget for presentation to the participating members of the COMMISSION, with specific budget requests to the individual participating members. Such requests shall be in amounts pro-rated among the respective governmental members on a per capita basis, with contributions from higher education institution members determined by the COMMISSION. Amounts are due on the first of July and payable not later than ~~July~~September 30.
- (b) The annual budget shall show proposed cash outlays for all operating expenses, capital equipment and improvements. Each item of expenditure shall be justified and explained in appropriate detail. Such budget shall also show any equipment and facilities provided in kind. A breakdown of the source of funds should show amounts to be appropriated by each county, city, town, and educational institution, amount to be provided in kind, and amount to be obtained through Federal grants.

SECTION 2. COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS

- (a) All members of the COMMISSION may be compensated for expenses of attendance of regular Commission meetings. In addition, Commission members may be reimbursed for expenses incurred while on official Commission business.

- (b) In addition to ~~the~~any per diem and mileage compensation ~~provided for~~established by the COMMISSION, the Chair or any member of the COMMISSION may be allotted a sum in such amount as may be determined from time to time by the COMMISSION and said allotment will constitute an expense allowance.
- (c) Compensation for the Executive Director, ~~and all other employees of the COMMISSION, shall be determined by the COMMISSION.~~ shall be determined by the COMMISSION. Compensation for all other employees shall be determined by the Executive Director within the approved budget.

SECTION 3. DISBURSEMENTS

Only authorized expenditures as approved by the COMMISSION may be disbursed.

SECTION 4. MONIES AND PAYMENTS

The monies of the COMMISSION shall be deposited in such bank as the COMMISSION shall designate. All disbursements shall be made by check or electronic fund transfer, and all payments (with exception of those from petty cash) shall, so far as practicable, be made by checks. In the absence of the Treasurer and/or the Executive Director, All checks and drafts ~~may~~shall be signed ~~in the name of the COMMISSION~~ by any two of the following:— authorized signatories: the Executive Director ~~or, the Treasurer or Chair or, the Chair, the~~ Vice-Chair, or the Immediate Past Chair. Electronic fund transfers are permissible with proper documentation. Electronic transactions must receive prior authorization from the Executive Director and be executed by two separate staff members to maintain controls. Adequate records shall be maintained for all financial transactions.

SECTION 5. AUDITS

The COMMISSION, at least once each year, shall cause an audit to be made by an independent certified public accountant of the financial activities of the COMMISSION.

SECTION 6. BONDS

The COMMISSION shall cause fidelity bonds to be issued covering each ~~of the members~~officer and employee of the COMMISSION ~~and its employees~~ who receives or disburses its funds in amounts deemed by it to be adequate.

ARTICLE XII - SEAL

SECTION 1. SEAL

The seal of the COMMISSION shall be an impression in the form of a circle, and shall contain the "New River Valley Regional Commission" around the outer circumference.

ARTICLE XIII - AMENDMENTS

SECTION 1. AMENDMENT

Any proposed amendment, repeal or alteration, in whole or in part, of these By-laws shall be presented in writing or available in a public electronic format seven (7) days prior to a regular meeting of the COMMISSION. Such proposal may be considered and shall be subject to further consideration and amendment germane to the section or sections affected by such proposal at such meeting. The proposal may be ~~acted upon by~~ adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members of the COMMISSION in Good Standing at the regular meeting or a special meeting called for the purpose, given proper quorum attendance at said meeting, ~~and shall thereafter be acted upon.~~

ARTICLE XIV - PROCEDURES

SECTION 1. PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

In all matters of parliamentary procedure not specifically governed by these By-laws, Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail.

Last Revision ~~April, 2015~~ August 27, 2026

New River Valley Regional Commission

Policy on Requests for Letters of Support from Non-Member Organizations

PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines and procedures for evaluating and responding to requests for letters of support from organizations that are not members of the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC). The intent is to ensure that all such requests align with the mission, priorities, and legal responsibilities of the NRVRC while maintaining fairness, transparency, and consistency.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all requests for letters of support submitted by non-member organizations, including but not limited to:

- Nonprofit organizations
- Private sector entities
- Educational institutions
- Regional or statewide organizations
- Other non-governmental entities

This policy does not apply to member localities and member higher education institutions or projects directly initiated or sponsored by the New River Valley Regional Commission.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The New River Valley Regional Commission will consider requests for letters of support based on the following principles:

- **Regional Benefit:** The proposed project should demonstrate a clear benefit to one or more jurisdictions within the New River Valley service area (Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, Radford).
- **Mission Alignment:** The request must align with the Regional Commission's mission, strategic priorities, and adopted plans.
- **Non-Advocacy of Policy Positions:** Letters of support shall not be construed as endorsement of specific policy positions that conflict with local, state, or federal law, or adopted policies of members.
- **Neutrality and Fairness:** The NRVRC will avoid preferential treatment and ensure consistent evaluation across all requests.
- **Capacity and Resources:** The NRVRC must ensure that providing support does not create an obligation of staff time, funding, or future commitment beyond the letter itself unless explicitly approved.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for consideration, the requesting organization must:

1. Demonstrate that the project will have a measurable economic, community, or infrastructure benefit within the New River Valley region.
2. Provide sufficient documentation describing the project scope, funding source, and intended outcomes.
3. Disclose all project partners and funding commitments.
4. Confirm that the request does not conflict with existing projects or priorities of members.

REQUIRED SUBMISSION MATERIALS

All requests must be submitted in writing and include:

- Organization name and contact information
- Description of the project
- Grant program and funding agency
- Amount of funding requested
- Specific role (if any) expected of the New River Valley Regional Commission
- Explanation of regional impact
- A complete, or substantially complete, draft of the grant application for review, including narrative sections sufficient to evaluate project scope, objectives, budget, and outcomes
- Draft letter of support (optional, but encouraged)

Requests must be submitted at least **14 calendar days** prior to the grant deadline.

REVIEW PROCESS

1. **Initial Review:** Staff will review the request for completeness and alignment with this policy, including review of the submitted draft grant application to assess project feasibility, clarity, and regional impact.
2. **Consultation:** Staff may consult with affected members to assess potential impacts or conflicts.
3. **Executive Director Determination:**
 - The Executive Director may approve routine requests that clearly meet policy criteria.
 - Requests with potential policy, political, or financial implications may, at the Executive Director's discretion, be forwarded to the Executive Committee for final determination.
4. **Executive Committee Review (if necessary):** The Commission may approve, deny, or request modifications.

LIMITATIONS

The New River Valley Regional Commission will not provide letters of support for:

- Projects that primarily benefit areas outside the New River Valley region
- Requests that conflict with adopted plans or priorities
- Projects that require financial commitment without prior approval
- Applications that are incomplete or submitted after the 14-day review deadline
- Requests that may create a perceived or actual conflict of interest

NATURE OF SUPPORT

Letters of support issued by the New River Valley Regional Commission:

- Reflect general support for the concept or potential regional benefit
- Do not constitute a financial commitment or partnership unless explicitly stated
- Do not imply endorsement of all aspects of the applicant's organization or operations

RECORDKEEPING

All requests and responses shall be documented and maintained by NRVRC staff to ensure transparency and consistency in future decisions.

AMENDMENTS

This policy may be amended by the New River Valley Regional Commission Board as needed to reflect changes in law, funding requirements, or organizational priorities.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy shall become effective upon adoption by the New River Valley Regional Commission at its meeting on August 27, 2026.

New River Valley Regional Commission

Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

This section provides definitions for key terms used in the AI policy to ensure clarity and common understanding among all stakeholders.

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI):** A broad term referring to systems that use computations to simulate human intelligence or to automate tasks. This can be through AI tools such as Gemini, ChatGPT or Claude.
- **AI Tool(s):** A program, platform or service that uses AI to generate content, information or materials. Some examples include, but are not limited to, Gemini, ChatGPT or Claude.
- **AI Generated Content:** Data and content originating from an AI tool. This can include written text, code, images, music, simulations, or videos.
- **AI Guided Content:** Data and content originating from a person with modification by an AI tool. This can include proofreading, formatting, or data analysis.
- **Bias:** A systemic error in the data, algorithms, or the interpretation of outputs from AI systems that can lead to unfair or discriminatory outcomes.
- **Hallucination:** Instances in which generative AI models created seemingly plausible but factually incorrect outputs under the appearance of fact.
- **Primary Source:** Document, first-hand account, or other source that constitutes direct evidence of an object of study.
- **Sensitive Information:** Information that may contain personal identifying information, information protected by law, or information that is of a protected nature. This can include, but is not limited to, social security information, HIPPA protected information, or information under embargo.

INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines principles and guardrails for ethical and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies across all departments of the New River Valley Regional Commission (NRVRC). It aims to establish practical guidelines for staff to utilize these technologies responsibly and in a manner that upholds accountability and transparency in government operations. This policy also aims to be adaptable and flexible to an ever-changing AI environment, and recognizes that guidance must evolve alongside technological advancements.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear framework and set of guidelines for Commission staff using AI tools in their workflow, including AI features embedded within standard software applications (such as Google, Adobe, Canva, and other commonly used tools). These tools may be used; however, all AI-assisted work must comply with requirements outlined in this policy.

This policy ensures that the NRVRC's use of AI supports organizational integrity, protects sensitive information, and aligns with our role as a governmental entity. Staff who have questions about whether a specific AI tool or use case is permitted should consult their supervisor before proceeding.

Commission staff should review this document's guidelines before using AI tools in their work.

Failure to comply with this policy may lead to corrective or disciplinary action in accordance with NRVRC's established Personnel Manual.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Human Oversight and Decision-making: AI technologies should complement human judgment and not replace it. Decisions impacting individuals' rights or public services should involve meaningful human oversight. All AI-generated content must be reviewed and verified by a staff member prior to dissemination, publication, or decision-making.

Ethical Use: NRVRC staff shall ensure that AI technologies are applied in ways that strengthen the organization's mission and uphold its ethical responsibilities to staff, partners, and the communities it serves. All AI-guided activities must be fair, transparent, and consistent with NRVRC's standards for professionalism, integrity, and accountability.

Transparency and Accountability: Staff must disclose when AI tools are used as a primary source when creating AI-generated content. Disclosures should specify how AI contributed and identify relevant methodologies or data sources when applicable. Disclosing the use of AI should be treated similarly to citing data sources in reports and presentations. Disclosure is not intended for AI assist tools commonly found in word processing and presentation software that help with clarity and formatting.

Privacy and Data Protection: AI systems shall be used in a manner that respects privacy rights and complies with data protection laws. NRVRC staff must not input, upload, or share any sensitive, confidential, or personally identifiable information into AI platforms. This includes information about individuals, internal reports, financial data, or any materials that are not publicly available.

All staff share responsibility for protecting NRVRC data and upholding applicable privacy laws and organizational confidentiality requirements.

Security and Safety: Staff must use AI technologies only in accordance with applicable cybersecurity, privacy, and data protection standards. Any security incidents or risks related to AI use must be reported promptly.

Equity and Non-discrimination: The use of AI must be free from discrimination and should promote equity and inclusion.

RISKS

Using AI tools and AI-guided content involves both known and unknown risks that are critical for users to keep in mind. The risks outlined in this section are not meant to be exhaustive, and users must always give additional thought to whether their use of AI tools will introduce risks to themselves or NRVRC.

Inaccurate Information/Hallucinations

AI systems can produce inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading information. These errors may result from limitations in the tool's training data, misinterpretation of the user's prompts, or the AI tool's lack of understanding and judgment. All output data must be reviewed and verified by staff.

Input Data/Data Security

AI programs and services often use input data and prompts to further train and refine their algorithms. Users must be conscious of inputting privileged NRVRC or personal information when creating a prompt or request for AI. Similar to inaccurate information, input data for prompts or other processes should be verified and validated before beginning.

Bias

As AI programs and services use extremely large datasets, often scraped from the internet, they have the potential to scrape biases from other information sources and present answers to prompts that incorporate those biases. Users must be mindful of preexisting biases and review answers provided by AI programs.

Ethical and Legal Compliance

The use of AI tools can present ethical and legal challenges, such as unauthorized use for copyrighted materials, creation of misleading or even harmful content, or violation of privacy or data protection regulations. Staff must comply with all applicable laws and professional standards, as well as NRVRC's brand and style guidelines, when developing AI-supported materials.

Cybersecurity Risk

AI tools can introduce cybersecurity vulnerability. Staff shall only access AI tools through secure, authorized sources and avoid clicking on or sharing AI generated links from unknown sources.

POLICY & RULES

The following policies are meant to uphold professional standards of work and informational integrity for writing produced with the help of AI tools.

Accuracy & Fairness

Review all AI-generated contents for accuracy and fairness. Misinformation, explicit and implicit biases are easily incorporated into AI-generated content, and it is important for NRVRC staff to review and verify all AI-generated content for misinformation and bias.

Disclosure

Note or cite that content has been created with the help/support of AI tools.

Sensitive Information

Do not enter sensitive information into AI prompts. This includes personally identifiable information, confidential information, or protected/private data.

Authentic Work

NRVRC values authenticity and professional integrity in all work products. AI tools should be viewed as assistants that support, not replace, human creativity and decision-making. Staff must ensure that AI-assisted writing, analysis, or visuals maintain their own voice, professional discretion, and subject-matter expertise. Staff are expected to discuss use of AI with their supervisor for any fee-for-service projects to ensure the human creative strategy is paramount and AI supports align with the work product being created.

Input Data

Review and determine if the information and data that will feed into an AI prompt is sensitive or protected information. All information entered into AI prompts is utilized for further AI-generating tools and capabilities.

Training and Accountability

NRVRC will support regular training and resources to ensure staff understand how to use AI tools responsibly and in alignment with this policy. All staff are expected to complete assigned training, provide certificate(s) of completion (if applicable) by specified deadlines, follow approved practices, and apply sound judgment when using AI. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring compliance and addressing any concerns or misuse consistent with NRVRC's personnel policies.

External Use of AI Tools in NRVRC Meetings

NRVRC acknowledges that some external partners and participants may use AI-powered notetaking, transcription, or recording tools during virtual meetings. Because these tools automatically capture and store meeting content, staff should exercise caution when participating in such settings.

If NRVRC staff join a meeting where an AI notetaker is present, they are encouraged to ask whether the meeting is being recorded by AI and who will have access to the AI-generated transcript or recording. Staff should use professional discretion when sharing information, understanding that anything discussed in such meetings may be retained, redistributed, or subject to disclosure.

If staff are uncomfortable with AI transcription or uncertain about how the recording will be used, they should promptly notify their supervisor to discuss a strategy specific to the situation. If NRVRC staff is acting as the host in a meeting where an AI notetaker is present, they are permitted to remove notetakers or opt not to admit them. Staff should notify their supervisor or NRVRC leadership of any concerns related to external AI use to ensure proper documentation and follow-up.

Training AI Agents

When training or providing examples to AI tools, staff must only input materials that reflect NRVRC's established professional standards, branding, and communication style. Content used for training should be consistent with the organization's tone, quality, and visual identity to ensure AI-generated outputs align with NRVRC's expectations and public image.

USE CASES & RECOMMENDATIONS

Use cases and recommendations will be periodically reviewed and updated by the AI Policy Committee to reflect evolving technologies, staff needs, and legal or ethical standards.

Prompts and Questions

Effective AI use begins with thoughtful prompting. Staff should take time to develop clear, detailed prompts that define the task and include any necessary context or guidelines. Generative AI can answer questions or provide suggestions, but the quality of its response depends on how the question is framed. Questions should be specific, verifiable, and neutral to avoid biased or inaccurate outcomes. When using AI to inform a response, staff should verify the information using trusted sources before including it in NRVRC materials or decisions.

Drafting and Brainstorming

AI can be a valuable support tool for generating ideas, organizing content, or creating early drafts of documents and presentations. Staff may use AI to outline concepts, structure reports, or generate examples that inform their work. However, all AI-generated material should be considered a starting point — not a final product. Staff must always refine AI outputs to ensure accuracy, professionalism, and consistency with NRVRC tone and mission.

Recording Review and Transcription

AI may be used to transcribe or summarize meeting recordings when appropriate. However, staff must ensure that the recordings do not include confidential information or personally identifiable details before uploading or processing them. Any AI-generated transcription or summary shall be carefully reviewed and edited to confirm accuracy before it is shared or stored as an official record. AI tools that automatically distribute summaries shall have the setting disabled. If the setting cannot be adjusted, the AI tool is not permitted for official NRVRC business.

Images/Photographs

AI tools may be used to enhance existing NRVRC-owned images or assist with layout and design ideas for communications or presentations. Generating entirely new AI-created images is discouraged. All visuals must comply with NRVRC's standards for accessibility, copyright, and professional presentation.

Review and Editing

AI tools may be used to draft, edit, or refine documents. All materials created or edited with the assistance of AI tools must be reviewed and verified by NRVRC staff before being shared publicly or internally. Staff are responsible for fact-checking all content, confirming the accuracy of any data or statements, and ensuring that the tone, formatting, and messaging align with NRVRC's professional standards. AI should never be relied upon to produce unverified or final work products without human oversight.

Agents & Analyses

AI may be used to analyze large volumes of data, including public feedback from surveys, forums, and other engagement channels, to identify trends, themes, and community priorities. All AI outputs must be reviewed by human staff to ensure accuracy, contextual relevance, and alignment with AI policy. Analyses should be conducted with appropriate safeguards for data privacy and security.

COMPLIANCE

The New River Valley Regional Commission is committed to the responsible, ethical, and secure use of AI. AI is intended to support employees in their work by improving efficiency and enhancing productivity, while employees remain responsible for the quality, accuracy, and integrity of all work completed on behalf of the Commission.

Employees are expected to:

- Review and verify AI generated content before using or sharing it.
- Protect confidential, personal, financial, and other sensitive information.
- Follow Commission policies, grant requirements, contracts, and applicable laws.

- Ask questions whenever they are unsure about the appropriate use of AI.
- Report concerns or mistakes promptly so they can be addressed.

The Commission recognizes that learning new technology comes with questions and occasional mistakes. Employees are encouraged to speak up if they believe an issue has occurred or if they have concerns about how AI is being used. Employees should report concerns to their immediate supervisor. If the concern involves the supervisor, employees should contact the Deputy Executive Director or Executive Director.

PUBLIC PRESENTATION/CITATION

Transparent communication is essential to maintaining public trust and upholding the Commission's responsibilities as a governmental entity. When artificial intelligence tools contribute to the development of **public-facing** materials, it is important to clearly acknowledge that assistance so audiences understand how the information was produced and to affirm that all content has been reviewed and verified by commission staff.

All documents that include AI-generated content as a primary source should include the following disclosure:

*AI tools assisted in the development of this material in accordance with NRVRC AI Policy.
Final reviews and edits were completed by NRVRC staff.*

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

This policy is effective upon approval by the New River Valley Regional Commission Board of Directors and applies to all NRVRC staff, contractors, and partners engaged in AI-related work with NRVRC. NRVRC will review this policy periodically to ensure it reflects current technologies, legal requirements, and organizational needs. Updates or revisions will be shared with all staff, and questions related to interpretation or implementation should be directed to NRVRC leadership.

Periodic Review Schedule

- **Annual Review:** Commit to an annual review of the AI policy to reflect technological advancements, societal changes, and feedback from stakeholders.
- **Update Procedures:** Establish procedures for updating the policy, ensuring a transparent process that incorporates public and expert input.



6580 Valley Center Drive | Suite 124 | Radford, VA 24141 | 540-639-9313

N R V R C . O R G

MEMORANDUM

To: NRVRC Board Members

From: Leo Priddy, Economic Development Planning Specialist

Date: August 20, 2026

Re: NRVRC Regional Economic Strategy - New Committee Members Appointment

Each year the New River Valley Regional Commission reviews and updates the region's Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The purpose of the RES is to continue federal and local partnerships to address economic development in the region. The RES also serves to document the planning efforts to identify economic development needs in the region, which is required for grant applications to the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA), the Appalachian Regional Commission, and various other state and regional grant-making agencies.

The Commission's designation by the EDA as an Economic Development District (EDD) includes a requirement to engage a committee of regional representatives from public and private sector organizations and businesses in the development of the strategic document. The committee reviews content, strategies and assists in developing updates.

Over time, adjustments to the RES Committee reflect leadership transitions and evolving representation across the region. Staff recommends one (1) appointment to support a well-rounded committee with experience across key areas of regional economic development.

Should you have any questions or wish to review information related to the RES, please contact Leo Priddy at lpriddy@nrvrc.org.

Strengthening the Region through Collaboration

Counties

Floyd | Giles
Montgomery | Pulaski
City
Radford

Towns

Blacksburg | Christiansburg | Dublin
Floyd | Narrows | Pearisburg
Pembroke | Pulaski
Rich Creek

Higher Education

Virginia Tech
Radford University
New River Community College



2026 Committee Members



Name	Affiliation	Sector
Ann Cassell	Blacksburg Partnership	small business
Matt Hanratty	Blacksburg, Town of	local government
Angie Marcolini	Blacksburg, Town of	local government; small business support
Retta Jackson	Christiansburg, Town of	local government
Miles Campbell	Christiansburg, Town of	local government; small business support
Lydeana Martin	Floyd County	local economic development
Cora Gnegy	Giles County	local economic development; tourism
Jeff Dinger	Giles County	local economic development
Heather Fay	Greater Roanoke + NRV SBDC	small business support
Anthony Graftsky	Greater Roanoke + NRV SBDC	small business support
Ernie Maddy	Locus	finance institution
Brian Hamilton	Montgomery County	local economic development
Samantha Livesay	Montgomery County	local government; tourism
Joe Butler	Narrows, Town of	local government
Mark Rowh	New River Community College	higher education
Jenny Bolte	New River Workforce Development Board	workforce; economic development
Kevin Byrd	NRVRC	regional staff
Leo Priddy	NRVRC	regional staff
Katie Boswell	Onward NRV	regional economic development
Erika Tolbert	Pulaski County	tourism
Lydia Crockett	Pulaski County	local government; small business support
Drew Foxx	Pulaski County EDA	local economic development
Shannon Ainsley	Pulaski, Town of	local economic development
Kim Repass	Radford City	local government; economic development
Angela Joyner	Radford University	higher education; economic development
Nichole Hair	Radford University	higher education; economic development
Erin Burcham	Roanoke Blacksburg Innovation Alliance	regional innovation; economic development
Elli Travis	Virginia Tech	higher education
Kiyah Duffey	Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center	regional innovation; economic development
Emily Gibson	VT local government liaison	higher education



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N R V R C . O R G

MEMORANDUM

To: NRVRC Board Members

From: Kevin Byrd, Executive Director

Date: August 20, 2026

Re: 2026 Regional Commission Awards

In June, the Commission began soliciting nominations for the awards program. The awards solicitation was sent to all Commissioners, local government managers and numerous community partner organizations via constant contact email. The program was also promoted on Commission social media sites (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). The nominations closed on August 15th with numerous highly qualified nominations received.

The names of the nominees, and the statements submitted on their behalf, will be sent directly to Regional Commission Board Members. *This information is for board member review only and not to be shared or distributed.* Commissioners will vote for award recipients at the August meeting.

The three award categories are as follows:

Champion of the Valley – An elected or appointed official (past or present) from within or representing the New River Valley that has made significant contributions for the betterment of the region. Focus will be on candidates that improve communities through their dedication, collaborative approach and impact.

Citizen of the Valley – A citizen or organization in the New River Valley that has made significant contributions to the betterment of the region. Focus will be on candidates that improve communities through their dedication, collaborative approach and impact.

Friend of the Valley – An individual or organization outside the New River Valley that has made significant contributions to the betterment of the region.

Past Award Winners:

Champion of the Valley

2014 – Mr. Joseph Sheffey
2015 – Mr. Rick Boucher
2016 – Del. Joseph Yost
2016 – Mr. Bill Brown
2017 – Mr. Chris McKlarney
2018 – Ms. Susan Kidd
2019 – Del. Nick Rush
2020 – Mr. Chris Tuck
2021 – Mr. Craig Meadows
Ms. Lydeana Martin

Citizen of the Valley

2014 – Dr. Charles Steger
2015 – Mr. Ken Anderson
2016 – Ms. Penelope Kyle
2017 – Mr. Woody Crenshaw
2018 – Mr. David Hagan
2018 – Ms. P. Buckley Moss
2019 – Mr. Raymond Smoot
2020 – Mr. Bill Ellenbogen
2021 – Ms. Shelley Fortier
Mr. John Dooley

Friend of the Valley

2016 – Mary Moody Northen Foundation
2017 – Mr. Bill Shelton
2019 – Mr. John Smolak, III
2022 – New River Conservancy
2025 – Dr. Tamarah Holmes

2022 – Ms. Penny Franklin	2022 – Mr. Janaka Casper
2023 – Del. Jason Ballard	2023 – Ms. Cathy Hanks
Mr. Robert Graham	2024 – Dr. Pat Huber
2024 – Mr. Jonathan Sweet	Ms. Sandy Davis
2025 - Hon. Judge Lee Harrell	2025 – Ms. Angie Covey