



Town of Gill



Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program

MVP Resiliency Plan

April 2026

Facilitated by the
Franklin Regional Council of Governments
A State-Certified MVP Provider



MVP Resiliency Plan

Including the Summary of Findings from the
Community Resilience Building Workshop

April 2026

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Cover photo by Vicky Jenkins.

Town of Gill

Community Resilience Building Workshop

Summary of Findings

1. Overview

The Town of Gill is proactively increasing resiliency to natural hazards and climate change at the local level through the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. As of 2026, almost all 351 municipalities in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have become certified as MVP communities. 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.

According to down-scaled climate data from resilientMA.org, the major climate change drivers in Franklin County are:

- An increase in average temperature, as well as more extreme heat and extreme temperature fluctuations
- An increase in annual precipitation and an increase in very heavy precipitation events – where more rain, snow, or ice falls in a short period of time – interspersed at times with very dry periods
- Stronger storms with higher winds, due to an overall warmer climate with more moisture in the atmosphere¹

Over the last decade, Gill has experienced impacts from weather-related natural hazards such as high winds, “nor’easters” including the damaging storm in late October of 2011 nicknamed “Snowtober,” flash flooding, and droughts. The impacts from Hurricane Sandy (September 2012) and Tropical Storm Irene (August 2011) in New England increased the urgency for municipalities to increase resilience to address extreme weather and climate change vulnerability. 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. Although 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. Between January 2016 and December 2025, the Connecticut River Valley drought region (of which Gill is a part) experienced 11 months in a “critical” drought condition and 15 months in a “significant”

¹ <http://www.resilientma.org/map/>

drought condition.² 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.

The Town actively identified Gill's vulnerabilities from natural hazards through the development of the Town's FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan, dated September 14, 2020 (2020 HMP). In consideration of these factors, the Town is taking the necessary steps to build on the results of the Town's 2020 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 map below). 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 Community Resilience Building (CRB) Workshop. The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) is a state-certified MVP Provider and was hired by the Town of Gill to assist in a community-driven process that brought together climate change information and local knowledge to conduct community outreach and the CRB Workshop.

² <https://www.mass.gov/doc/drought-status-history-0/download> and <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/history-of-drought-declarations-in-massachusetts#6-1-2024-through-present>

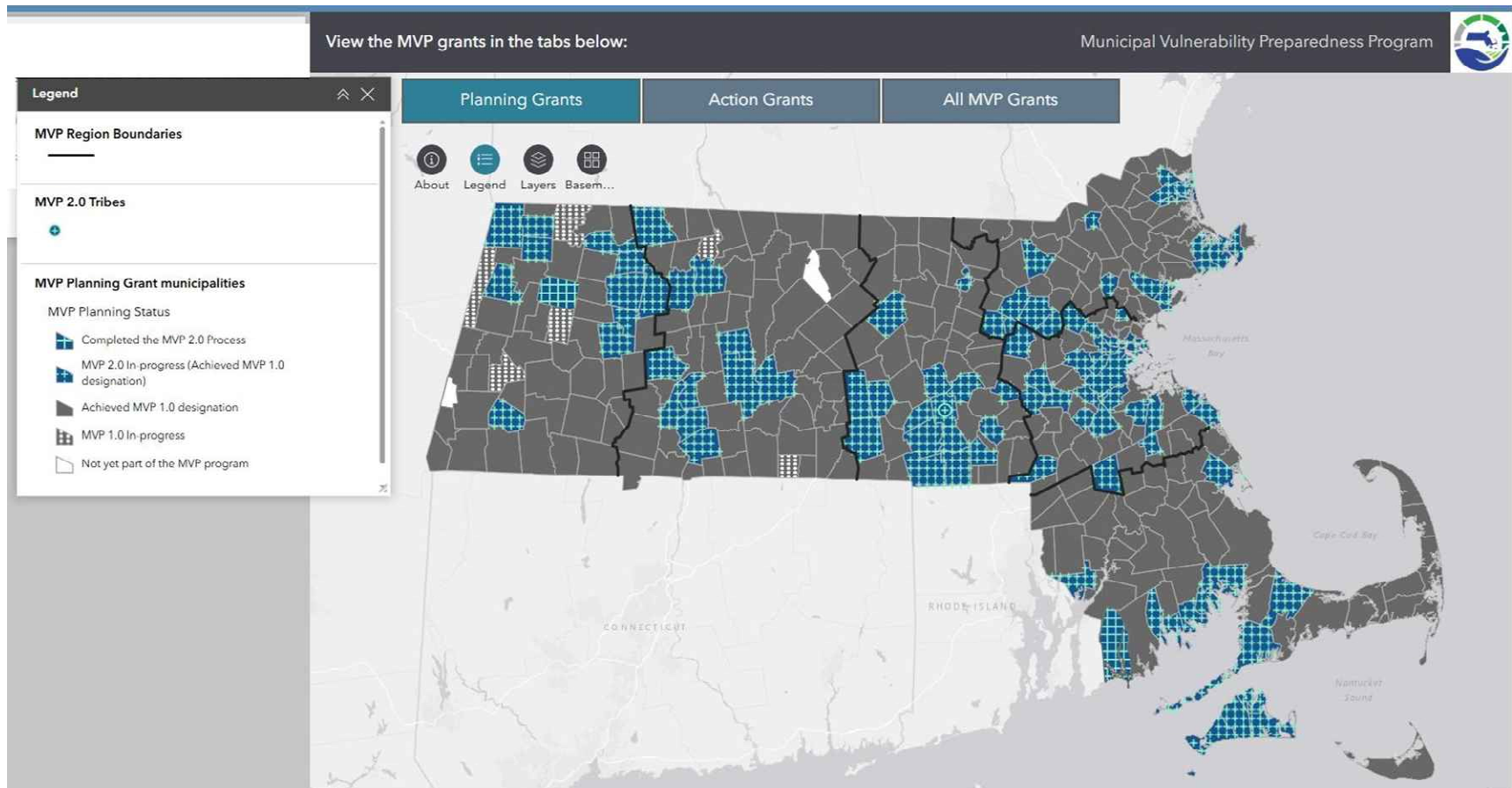


Figure 1. Map of Massachusetts in the MVP grants viewer

2. Community Resilience Building Workshops

Summary of Findings

The Town of Gill has conducted several planning projects in previous years, including its 2020 Hazard Mitigation Plan, which enabled the Town to identify high priority hazards as well as areas, infrastructure and populations vulnerable to a variety of hazards, and action items to address hazards. Gill also updated its Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2021.

Despite Gill's diligence in completing these planning efforts, there is still a need for the community to conduct a hazard assessment across scales – from individual buildings and bridges to rivers and landscapes, and across sectors – infrastructure, society and environment – looking specifically through the lens of climate change and its likely impacts on the Town. This project used the Community Resilience Building (CRB) process (www.communityresiliencebuilding.org), including holding two 4-hour Community Workshops on January 20 and February 11, 2026.

The Workshop's central objectives were to:

- Identify top local natural and climate-related hazards of concern.
- Identify existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities.
- Develop prioritized actions for Gill.
- Identify immediate opportunities to collaboratively advance actions to increase resilience.

During the workshops, participants considered climate change impacts most likely to affect Gill, both in quantity and intensity. The workshops also allowed participants to develop resiliency actions Gill can take to build on identified strengths and vulnerabilities.

The workshop was critical to enabling participants to think about and engage with people from different sectors. In addition to numerous town residents who participated, representatives from the Highway Department, Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Management, Town Administration, Select Board, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Energy Commission came together to discuss the most threatening hazards to the Town of Gill and to agree upon high priorities and actions to address them.

3. Top Hazards and Vulnerable Areas

During discussions, residents recalled several recent extreme weather events that affected areas of town: recent high wind events that involved significant blowdowns in forested areas, closing off roads and causing power outages; flash flooding events that have caused erosion along roads including a large landslide that took out part of Route 2 just downstream of the Turners Falls Dam; droughts that have affected farm crops; and an increased frequency of extreme hot weather and extreme cold events, one of which led to burst pipes and flooding in the basement of the Town Hall.

Top Hazards

Workshop participants discussed hazards that affect Gill, deliberating on how frequent, how intense and how widespread each hazard has been and could potentially be in the future. Hazards discussed included: dam failures, severe winter storms/ice storms, hurricanes, windstorms/microbursts, tornados, floods, wildfires, droughts, and extreme temperatures. Top hazards identified by the participants are as follows:



Vulnerable Areas

Infrastructure

Undersized culverts and stream crossings on Chapell Drive, West Gill Road, Main Road near FM Kuzmeskus, Ben Hale Road, and Barney Hale Road are a concern. There is a bridge that is partially shut down on North Cross Road.

The area in Gill along Boyle Road and North Cross Road is known for shallow wells, low producing wells, wells that go dry, and wells that collapse. Increased water use in that area (i.e. from accessory dwelling units or other new dwellings) could create supply issues.

There is limited firefighting water available on the west side of town.

The sewer pump station in Riverside is vulnerable near the confluence of Heal-all Brook and the Connecticut River.

On Main Road, a 6-inch metal culvert is completely exposed and appears to be nonfunctioning. The culvert may be a safety hazard to drivers and DPW equipment.

Cell phone coverage in town has a notable gap around the Public Safety Complex (Police, Fire, Highway, Emergency Operations Center) at 196 Main Road. In addition, in West Gill on Center Road, there is an area with no cell service.

Mud Season travel is particularly difficult on Ben Hale Road due to a high water table from a nearby swamp and exacerbated by beaver impoundments up- and downstream from the road.

Several tributaries to the Connecticut River have been experiencing siltation near the confluence with the CT River, threatening infrastructure. This includes Heal-All Brook, and the unnamed stream near Chappell Drive.

Environmental

Recent blowdowns on Pisgah Mountain and along Barney Hale Road are fuel for a potential forest fire.

Forested areas around Darby and Mason Hills have difficult access into large forest tracts, which may affect forest fire fighting capability if needed.

Though there are trails on private land, particularly for snowmobiling, the public do not necessarily have access to them.

Along the Connecticut River, riverbanks have been eroding at an accelerated pace, exacerbated by the sub-daily river fluctuations from the operation of Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project in Northfield. This causes the loss of farmland, and has led to steep bank slopes, making recreation and emergency access difficult, and water access for firefighting difficult along the entire Gill shoreline because the water is sometimes out of reach and the shoreline excessively muddy.



Figure 2. Low water level on the CT River. (Photo submitted to FERC by Jonathan Trudel)

Increased dam beaver activity along North Cross Road, South Cross Road, Ben Hale Road, Barney Hale Road, and Main Road pose or potentially pose a threat to infrastructure.

Erosion along Dry Brook (also called Unadilla Brook) next to Center Cemetery has threatened an embankment and could disturb graves if erosion gets worse.

The collage features several newspaper pages and photos. At the top left, 'The Recorder' (October 31, 2011) has a main headline 'Snowstorm slams region' and a sub-headline 'Thousands without power'. It includes a photo of a snowplow clearing a road. To the right, 'Greenfield Recorder' (August 1, 2012) has a headline 'MassDOT: Route 2 repairs in Gill expected to take 4 or 5 weeks' and a photo of a landslide on a road embankment. Below this, another 'The Recorder' page (November 1, 2011) has a headline '100 percent of Gill still without power'. A 'Related stories' box on the right side of the collage points to 'MassDOT closing Route 2 in Gill to address slope erosion'.

Figure 3. Headlines of severe weather-related impacts in Gill.

4. Current Concerns & Challenges Presented by Hazards and Climate Change

Community members and participants in the workshop discussed a number of hazards that have affected the community in recent years. The following paragraphs describe the top concerns identified during the community workshops.

Wind and Microbursts

Participants noted that several storms with high winds have happened in the past few years, knocking many trees down. Two areas in town were hit with what seemed like a microburst: one along Pisgah Mountain Road, making the road impassable for a week because of fallen trees, the other on Bascom Road, which had an area of trees that were all knocked down.

Many workshop participants mentioned concern about there being no emergency shelter in town. Two buildings could play that role for limited amounts of time, the town hall and the elementary school, which is one reason why there is interest in making sure both have backup generators installed.

Flooding and Extreme Precipitation

Workshop attendees expressed concern about the impacts flooding has had on the Town's roads. Undersized and aging culverts and bridges increase the threat of flooding, and erosion has increased on roadside shoulders. The roads in Gill have inadequate drainage infrastructure to manage stormwater for today's storms. In addition, frequent freeze and thaw cycles create potholes and create "Mud Season" conditions during every winter month on unpaved roads. Washouts, mudding, and ice can make roads impassable, leaving residents isolated in remote locations.

Route 2 experienced a washout when heavy storms and flash flooding occurred in July 2023. Stormwater runoff from several days of record level rainfall led to the erosion of one lane of Route 2 in the area between the intersection with Main Road and the bridge over Fall River, as a landslide occurred on the banks of the Connecticut River downstream of the Turners Falls dam. Emergency repairs to stabilize and rebuild this major traffic corridor were undertaken by the MA Department of Transportation. The work took several months and cost millions of dollars.

There is a connection between road and culvert maintenance (described in the infrastructure section) and the protection of wetlands and associated biodiversity, including aquatic organism passage and impacts of salt and gravel that moves from roads to wetlands during severe rainfall events.

In 2025, a new beaver dam was established on South Cross Road that caused minor damage to Green Hill Road when the dam breached during heavy rains in May. The dam has subsequently been rebuilt and remains a threat. The dam is located entirely on private property, which complicates the Town's response to the threat.

Extreme Temperatures and Droughts

Gill is proud of its farms, and participants expressed concerns about prolonged droughts, extreme precipitation events, and extreme temperatures and the effect on agricultural products and the viability of farms in town.

Invasive species and the increase in pests due to extreme temperatures were also amongst the top concerns discussed by workshop participants. A later first frost means pests such as mosquitoes and deer ticks pose health risks to residents later into the year. Additionally, invasive species are encroaching on public and private property, and the Town's infrastructure and conservation land have been affected by invasive species such as oriental bittersweet and Japanese knotweed.

5. Specific Categories of Concerns and Challenges

Infrastructure

Drinking Water Supply

There are two areas within Gill that have public water supply. The Riverside neighborhood and western Route 2 area near Main Road are served by the independent Riverside Water District with water purchased from the City of Greenfield. The Riverside District does not have a backup source of water if Greenfield was ever unable to provide water. Northfield Mount Hermon School (NMH) has a water supply system for its campus located at the northern end of town. There are four other small public water supplies that are currently active. They include the Gill Elementary School on Boyle Road, the Gill Tavern on Main Road, FM Kuzmeskus on Main Road, and the Barton Cove Campground on Barton Cove Road.

All remaining areas of town have private individual wells. Participants expressed concern about wells drying up during drought, requiring that they be hydrofracked, or in some cases drilled deeper.

Fire Fighting Water Supply

Gill has fire hydrants in Riverside as far east as the Barton Cove boat ramp and extending up Main Road 0.2 miles. The hydrant system is owned by the Riverside Water District. The NMH campus is also served by a hydrant system. Bernardston's hydrants can be used in the northwest corner of town.

The fire department can also pull water from the Connecticut River at the Barton Cove boat ramp, as well as other locations like at the Split River Farm, but access can be difficult because of fluctuating water levels from Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project's operations. When water levels are low, access is farther out and mud is difficult to get through.

Northfield Mount Hermon School has a water tower to improve pressure, and would provide fire protection for their buildings, including a 4-story dormitory that is the biggest structure in Gill. NMH installed a dry hydrant at Shadow Lake in 2024. The water level



Figure 4. Gill Fire Department at Shadow Lake. (Photo by Bill Kimball)

in 2025 dropped below the level of the dry hydrant intake, but the fire department can still draft from this pond when water levels are below the dry hydrant intake levels.

There is a bridge culvert over Otter Brook on Ben Hale Road (a gravel road) that is a good source for pumping water to fill fire trucks. Other water sources are intermittently available in town, such as the bridge at North Cross Road.

Wastewater Treatment

The Riverside section of town (serving 115 homes and businesses) and NMH are the only areas in town that are served by wastewater treatment systems.³ The Riverside sewer system terminates at a pump station on Riverview Drive; the sewage is pumped beneath the Connecticut River into the Town of Montague's sewer system. The Town contracts with the Montague Clean Water Facility for sewage treatment.

Participants expressed concern that rainwater or groundwater is getting into the Riverside Sewer System. The entire system was installed around 1980. There is a need for an updated Infiltration and Inflow study. Some camera work was last done in 2012 and 2013, and the MA Rural Water Association will be assisting the Town with the use of a camera in the near future.

The sewer pump station is on Riverview Drive, near Heal-all Brook. There is silt buildup in the Connecticut River at the confluence with Heal-all Brook. Further build up could result in water backing up in the cove, and the brook, which could pose a risk to the sewer pump station. Significant infrastructure is near this brook and river. Land along much of the shoreline is owned or managed by FirstLight Power, and coordination would be necessary to undertake any improvements or repairs.

The rest of town uses private septic systems for wastewater treatment.

Roads & Public Transportation

Gill has 38 miles of roads maintained by the town. Of those 38 miles, 10.4 miles (27% of Gill's roads) are unpaved or gravel roads. Route 2 is a state highway that runs across the southern end of Gill.

Shifting weather patterns due to climate change are increasing the difficulty and expense of maintaining paved and unpaved roadways, especially given the increase in freeze/thaw cycles seen throughout the season. Camps and residences along the Connecticut River have unpaved private roadways and can be difficult to access by emergency vehicles during parts of the year.

Gill's highway superintendent has observed more frequent severe storms, and Gill's roads don't have enough designed drainage and cross pipes. The highway superintendent has observed that road drainage systems that once performed adequately no longer have sufficient capacity for heavy or extended rainfall events.

Participants also noted that several storms with high winds have happened in the past few years, knocking many trees down.

The Franklin Regional Transportation Authority (FRTA) does not offer any transportation routes with stops in Gill. FRTA provides demand-response transportation services in Gill for anyone aged 60 and older, and for people with disabilities. The FRTA Access Program also services Gill and offers self-scheduled transportation for all members of the public. Most people in Gill depend on roads and vehicles for their transportation.

Gill has one road that is not maintained in the winter, Pisgah Mountain Road. Drivers using GPS systems for navigation sometimes are not warned that the road is impassible in the winter, and the Town has had to respond to drivers getting stuck on this road in the winter. In recent years, the Town has blocked off the road with a barricade.



Figure 5. Freeze-thaw cycles lead to deteriorating road conditions. (Photo by Vicky Jenkins)

Culverts and Bridges

In the late spring and summer of 2023, FRCOG conducted an inventory and assessment of Gill’s culverts (defined as any structure that conveys water that is less than 10 ft in diameter) on public roads. The survey did not include culverts along the state-owned Route 2 and did not include private driveways. FRCOG identified a total of approximately 526 culvert and drainage structures on Gill’s roadways. Of these, 7% were Poor, and 4% were identified as being in Critical condition needing immediate attention for either replacement or maintenance. Of the culverts and bridges, there are 101 structures associated with stream crossings of which two were in critical condition and four were in poor condition.

Gill’s highway superintendent reports an increase in galvanized pipe failures due to aging infrastructure, resulting in sinkholes in roads and nearby areas.

Electrical Infrastructure

Power lines can be damaged or brought down by snow and ice, in addition to wind events, causing extensive impacts to the Town. Wind causing downed trees leading to power outages is of special concern throughout town.

Eversource used to have a grant program that provided money to towns to purchase tractors equipped with side-mounted boom mowers to cut back brush along utility lines, but Eversource eliminated the program in 2018. The equipment the Town received under that program in 2006 is now aging out. The Town may want to consider sharing certain pieces of equipment with other towns.

Communications

The Town of Gill negotiated a new 10-year cable license with Comcast in 2016 and will be negotiating a renewal license for 2026-2036. Comcast’s cable infrastructure reaches 95-96% of the households in Town.



Figure 6. A culvert on West Gill Road in critical condition as of the 2023 FRCOG culvert survey. (FRCOG photo)

Verizon’s copper lines are still installed and in use throughout the town, although, more households have discontinued their landlines in favor of the convenience and lower cost of cell phones and voice-over-internet phones.

Most areas of town have decent cellular service from the major carriers, with a notable and well-known exception of a ½- to ¾-mile radius around the Public Safety Complex (Police, Fire, Highway, Emergency Operations Center) at 196 Main Road. In addition, in West Gill on Center Road, there is an area with no cell service.

Buildings and Facilities

Town Hall: The area around town hall has a high water table, and the building requires two sump pumps that run year-round during normal or elevated levels of groundwater. Heating and cooling are provided by mini splits. There is a forced hot water boiler that is still operational but should only be run when the mini splits are turned off. In 2023, during a multi-day sub-zero temperature spell, both units were run at the same time, and that resulted in frozen pipes that flooded half of the first floor and most of the basement. The building is wired with a generator transfer switch so that a portable generator could be brought on site, allowing the well pump and boiler to operate.



Figure 7. Gill Town Hall. (Photo by Vicky Jenkins)

Gill Elementary School: According to the school district’s facilities manager, the elementary school is wired for a generator, and a standby generator would be very helpful. Air conditioning is very much needed, and the school has been wanting to get one mini split for every two classrooms installed, which would also provide a backup source of heat. Efforts are underway to install a new roof and it will be designed to accept solar panels in the future.

Highway Department, Police Department, and Fire Department: These departments are co-located at 196 Main Road at the Public Safety Complex. An office and a meeting room within the fire station are the Town’s Emergency Operations Center. Two oil-fired boilers heat the building, and window air conditioners are used for the several offices and break rooms. Vehicle/garage bays are heated but not air conditioned. The entire building is served by a diesel emergency generator. The building has been recommended for mini splits, but the building’s

electrical panel is undersized and will not support the additional load. Three-phase power will need to be brought to the building to accommodate the upgrades. The Energy Commission is working to fund these needs.

Library: The library is equipped with a generator transfer switch for use with a portable generator. The building is primarily heated and cooled with mini splits, with a forced hot air furnace as a backup. The furnace was called into action in February 2026 during a week-long malfunction of the mini splits.

Dams

There are several dams near and far away from Gill that would impact Gill in the event of a failure, but any of these would impact less than 10% of the town.

- **Turners Falls Dam:** The Turners Falls Dam on the Connecticut River, owned and operated by FirstLight Power Services LLC, is federally regulated and is classified by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) as a Low Hazard Potential dam. There are no areas of Gill that would be impacted by the failure of this dam, except possibly Route 2 and the Route 2 bridge abutments over the Fall River.
- **Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project:** Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project is located east of Gill across the Connecticut River in Northfield and Erving and is owned and operated by FirstLight Power Services LLC. The Emergency Action Plan for this facility includes inundation maps for the Northfield Main Dam and the Northwest Dike of the Northfield Mountain Upper Reservoir in Erving. Both the dam and the dike are federally regulated and are classified as High Hazard Potential dams by FERC.
 - Northwest Dike: If the dike were to fail, floodplain areas in Gill along the Connecticut River south of Four Mile Brook in Northfield would be impacted. Upon failure of the dike, the nearest properties in Gill would have approximately 34-36 minutes before the arrival of flooding.
 - Main Dam: If the main dam failed, the floodplain and additional areas in Gill along the Connecticut River south of the Millers River would be impacted. The portions of Gill nearest the mouth of the Millers River would be impacted by flooding within approximately 39-41 minutes. Residences and businesses located in the Riverside residential neighborhood would be impacted by flooding within approximately 53-55 minutes. There is currently no flood warning siren in the Riverside neighborhood. FirstLight has implemented a reverse 911 call system for residences within the inundation area of the dam or dike, which would send a message to registered phone numbers within minutes of a failure. Each year, FirstLight sends postcards to addresses within potential inundation zones with instructions on how to register for the reverse 911 call system.

- **Moore Dam:** Approximately 158 miles upstream from Gill on the Connecticut River is the Moore Dam in Littleton, New Hampshire and Waterford, Vermont. It is owned and operated by Great River Hydro and is a storage hydropower on the mainstem of the Connecticut River. Under Probable Maximum Flood conditions, flood waters would inundate a section of Munns Ferry Road and the area surrounding the intersection of River Road and Pisgah Mountain Road, and flooding caused by a failure of the dam would take 23 hours to reach Gill.
- **Additional dams:** Upstream of Gill is the Vernon Dam and Bellows Falls Dam on the Connecticut River, as well as several U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control dams in Vermont and New Hampshire.
- **Harriman Dam:** The Harriman Dam is owned and operated by Great River Hydro and is in the upper Deerfield River watershed and located in Whitingham, VT. The only area of Gill identified to be impacted by flooding if dam failure were to occur is the Fall River outlet area. No residential or commercial buildings are found in this area.
- Above the intersection of Vassar Way and Grist Mill Road (off of River Road), on Dry Brook, there are remnants of a dam and water backs up behind the remnants during high flow.

Several town roads have been historically impacted by beavers, and there are periodically active dams on Barney Hale Road, Ben Hale Road, Main Road, and North Cross Road that have required beaver removal permits to protect road infrastructure.

Societal

Population Demographics

As of the 2020 Census, Gill's population was 1,551, but the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates (2020-2024) has the town's population at 1,740 (the ACS is a statistical approximation). The median age in Gill is 43.8, which is lower than the median age in Franklin County (47.2 years) but higher than it is statewide (40). Of the town's population, 19% are aged 18 and younger, and 21.1% are 65 and older. Approximately 90% of Gill's residents are White alone, which greatly exceeds the Massachusetts average.⁴

In terms of income, the annual median household income of Gill is estimated to be \$90,000. According to the Massachusetts 2020 Environmental Justice mapper online, the Town of Gill does not currently have any environmental justice populations based on race, income, or language proficiency. In 2010, a sewer system pump replacement project in the Riverside

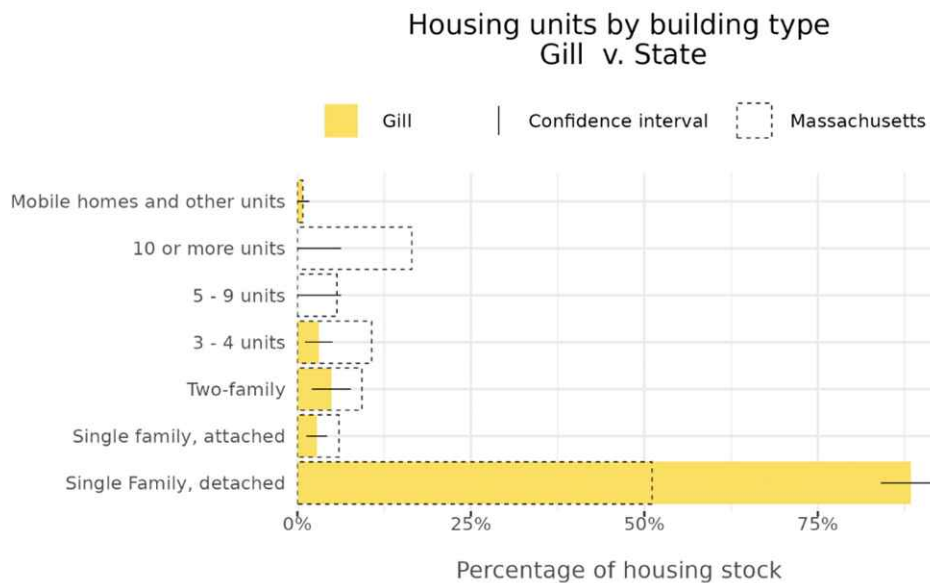
⁴ The demographic information is from the 2024 ACS 5-year estimates.

neighborhood of Gill was qualified to use Housing Rehabilitation Revolving Loan Fund proceeds (with origins from Community Development Block Grants), which demonstrates at that time at least 51% of the residents in the neighborhood were low- or moderate- income., but the town has not received CDBG funding since then. The Town was part of a CDBG-funded housing rehabilitation loan program in 2016 and is the lead town in a similar program in 2026.

Of Gill’s working population, 41% have a commute of 15 minutes or less, with an estimated 17% working from home. Residents would therefore be able to react quickly in the event of an emergency close to home. Most people who commute do so by car.

Housing

Gill’s housing is predominantly of one type – out of 674 housing units in town, 86% are single-family homes, 25% of which were built before 1940. Older housing can cost more to maintain and is less energy efficient without significant upgrades. Since 2010, 26 new homes have been built in Gill; of those, 20 were single-family units, 6 were 2-family units, and none were multi-family units. The state’s revision to zoning law and regulations breaking down zoning barriers to allow Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) are helpful to promote housing, but high construction costs and additional costs associated with installing or upgrading private wells and septic systems are likely to damper enthusiasm for ADUs in rural areas.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2020-2024 5-year estimates. Table S2504: Physical Housing Characteristics



Figure 8. Housing units by building type in Gill (figure produced by Mass Housing Partnership's online tool, [DataTown](#))

The Franklin County Regional Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) operates one public housing facility for seniors located in Gill. Stoughton Place is located off Main Road, a short distance north of Route 2, and has 14 one-bedroom apartments, one of which is fully accessible to those with mobility impairments.

Schools

Gill Elementary School (K through 6th grade) is the only public school in town. Gill is part of the Gill-Montague School District, and students go to Great Falls Middle School and Turners Falls High School beyond the 6th grade. Because of declining school enrollment throughout the county, the towns of Bernardston, Gill, Leyden, Montague, Northfield, and Warwick have been exploring merging school districts (to be called the Great River Regional School District). If that comes to fruition, students in those towns would attend middle school at what is now the Pioneer Regional High School, and high school at the Turners Falls High School. Gill Elementary School is owned by the town but leased and operated by the school district, making the use of the space for emergency purposes somewhat difficult logistics-wise.

NMH has a large generator that powers the entire campus. Their soccer field is a landing zone that can be used for helicopters. NMH has been an excellent partner with the Town in the past, and, with further discussion, the campus could be a resource during a disaster.

Town Communication and Community Connectivity

The Town currently has a volunteer-written quarterly newsletter that reaches most residents and is posted on the Town website. The Town subscribes to a Reverse 9-1-1 program called CodeRED by Crisis24 and can initiate alerts that go out as telephone calls, text messages, and emails. Residents in Gill can register through a link on the town website to receive CodeRED messages.

Gill has several events held each year that foster a sense of community, including Christmas in July (sponsored by the private Franklin County Boat Club), Fall Harvest Festival (organized by the Town's Agricultural Commission), a Memorial Day ceremony at the Veterans' Monuments, an Afterschool Community Theater (ACT) school play performed at Town Hall, and the bonfire at the elementary school (put on by the Parent Teacher Organization).

Residents of Gill tend to be self-sufficient and are willing to help neighbors when needed. However, participants noted that with an aging population and increase in extreme weather events, there is a growing need for the Town to respond to seniors who can no longer do everything for themselves. There is a Gill Neighbors group, not affiliated with the Town and comprised of volunteers, who provide rides to seniors for appointments, pick up prescriptions and groceries, and deliver library books.

Climate Migration and Future Development

As sea levels in the Commonwealth rise, populations may begin shifting inland, especially towards communities in Franklin County which are viewed as being spacious and affordable, relative to Boston and other coastal cities. Future climate migration may present development-related challenges in the community, given the small size of the community and its current resources.

Warming and Cooling Centers

One vulnerability for Gill that workshop participants noted is that there is no warming or cooling center in Gill. The Town Hall and Elementary School lack backup generators, and if one or both were able to find the funding for generators, either building could provide warming or cooling over the short term.

Emergency Response

Gill's Fire, Police, and Public Works departments bear much of the burden of responding to the increased threats to humans that result from climate-induced hazards. As severe storms and erratic weather patterns increase in frequency, emergency services can be needed with greater frequency.

Mutual aid agreements are in place at the regional, state, and inter-state level for fire, public safety, and public works assistance in the event of an emergency.

The 2012 Gill Disaster and Recovery Plan listed the following locations as being places for temporary shelters to be established if needed.

1. Play field behind Town-owned Riverside Municipal Building, 54 French King Highway
2. Town-owned farm field at intersection of Main and West Gill Roads, aka "Mariamante property"
3. Gill Elementary School playground field at 48 Boyle Road
4. Northfield Mount Hermon School athletic fields
5. Boyle Lot on Center Road

These locations will serve as sites to erect temporary portable shelters. Ideally, temporary shelters should be located as near as possible to public services such as a grocery store, house of religion, jobs, medical care, human service agencies, and recovery centers. However, as none of those public services are in Gill, siting of a temporary shelter will depend on other considerations including availability of personnel to staff a shelter, numbers of people to be sheltered, road and bridge closures, etc.

Provisions, Medicine, Fuel

Maintaining access to essential supplies like groceries, medicines, and fuel (for vehicles, heating, and generators), as well as critical medical care and drug treatment during emergencies is important during hazard events. Gill has very few retail establishments in town. One gas & diesel station with a convenience store is located along Route 2 in the southern end of town, and there are several farm stands and farm stores that offer farm-raised meats, eggs, meat, dairy products, and seasonal produce.

There are no public hospitals or pharmacies in Gill.⁵ While there is a nurse's office at Gill Elementary School and a health center at NMH, neither would be able to provide critical medical care or drug treatment during a community-wide emergency.

There is a 1,000-gallon diesel fuel tank at the Public Safety Complex that fuels the Highway Department's fleet and the majority of the Fire Department's fleet. The safety complex is equipped with a generator that will supply the entire building and their fuel pump. There is no storage of gasoline on site. All three of the Police Department's cruisers are gasoline-fueled.

Environmental

Agriculture

Gill is an agricultural community with excellent soils along the Connecticut River. According to Gill's 2021 OSRP, 868 acres in Gill (9.1% of Gill's total land area) are privately owned permanently protected agricultural open space; 1,172 agricultural acres (12.4% of land area) are temporarily protected as 61A lands. Climate impacts such as drought, excessive rain, and changing temperatures may affect agriculture and livestock for both commercial and residential agricultural practices. Invasive species also pose a threat to agriculture in Gill.



Figure 9. Bascom Hollow Farm in Gill. (Photo by Faith Rand)

Trees and Forests

Gill is 65-70% forested. Forests provide critical ecosystem services that help buffer the effects of climate change, from storing and sequestering carbon, to increasing groundwater recharge, to modulating local temperature. Trees and forests are also threatened by climate change. Wind and storms cause blowdowns, drought can contribute to die-off, invasive plants and pests are eliminating certain tree species and changing soil health, and other tree species are in decline due to shifting temperature and precipitation regimes that favor more southerly species. Many foresters and ecologists, including those who served on the MA Climate Forestry Committee, believe that a combination of passively managed wild reserves and actively managed woodlands offer the best range of biodiversity, climate resilience, and other environmental benefits.⁶

Brush Fires and Forest Fires

With increased forestation, the Gill Fire Chief says there is an increased fuel load in town, with hundreds of acres of wooded land in between paved roads. Other than a power line access road and a snowmobile trail, there is limited access into forested areas if a fire needed to be managed. Fire chiefs in Franklin County have observed recent droughts increasing the risk of brush fires of a more severe nature. In Gill, most brush fires are caused by people burning when they should not be doing outdoor burning, or failing to properly extinguish an outdoor fire, or improperly disposing of wood stove ashes or cigarette butts.

Fires can be important for maintaining biodiversity, so not all of them need to be extinguished immediately, unless the flames and smoke are a threat to life and property.

Parks and Open Space

Open space provides ecosystem services that help buffer the effects of climate change, from sequestering carbon, to increasing groundwater recharge, to modulating local temperature. Open space is also critical in floodplains for providing a buffer and increased flood storage, near public water supplies to maintain high water quality and promote recharge, and to maintain overall habitat connectivity that is vital to allowing ecosystems and individual species to adapt to a changing climate. From a social perspective, open space and parks also provide opportunities for recreation and stress-relief, as well as relief from extreme heat events.

⁶ The MA Climate Forestry Committee was convened by the Healey Administration in 2023, and its reports and recommendations are linked on this web page: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/forests-as-climate-solutions>.



Figure 10. A view of Otter Pond in Blake Town Forest (FRCOG photo)

Invasive Species and Stress on Native Species

Forest and upland ecosystems are threatened by a variety of invasive species that pose a significant challenge and have serious consequences for ecosystem health and resilience, and these impacts are likely to increase in response to climate change. Warming temperatures will also bring new invasives and vectors of disease to the area, and these will have an easier time gaining a foothold if the Town's natural ecosystems are simultaneously weakened due to changes in climatic conditions.

Many gardeners and property owners in Franklin County, including Gill, have recently reported observation of an Asian worm called jumping worms (*Amyntas spp.*) on their properties. Although all or most earthworms in North America are believed to be non-native, jumping worms pose an additional risk to forests and landscapes through their ability to alter the soil structure and chemistry. They can quickly consume a critical layer of organic matter that supplies nutrients vital for other wildlife, particularly in forests. UMASS Extension recommends taking precautions not to spread them to new locations.⁷

Warmer, wetter conditions lead to increased mosquito and tick populations as well as a longer season of activity, while the absence of sufficient periods of cold means that pest populations

⁷ <https://www.umass.edu/agriculture-food-environment/landscape/fact-sheets/jumpingcrazysnake-worms-amynthas-spp>

that would historically have been killed off or reduced are able to survive the winter and emerge in greater numbers the following season. Tick-borne illnesses most common in Massachusetts are Lyme Disease, Babesiosis, and Anaplasmosis.⁸ As the Massachusetts climate begins to look more like the climate of the mid-Atlantic and southern states, we are seeing new types of diseases show up in existing pests (e.g. mosquitoes carrying West Nile Virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis, or Zika and ticks carrying Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever). These changes present a major public and animal health challenge in terms of education, prevention, and treatment. A bite from a lone star tick can cause some people to develop a food allergy to red meat (called alpha-gal syndrome or AGS), which is a public health threat and an economic threat to the local agricultural economy. In March 2026, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health made AGS a reportable disease so that it can be better tracked within the state.

Waterbodies

Gill is surrounded by rivers on three sides. The Fall River is the western boundary of Gill, and the Connecticut River is the eastern and southern boundary of Gill. Upstream of the Turners Falls Dam, Ashuela Brook and Otter Brook/Dry Brook are tributaries to the CT River that flow through Gill.

Wetlands serve several important ecological functions, including flood storage and water quality improvements. In Gill, the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act regulations are overseen by the Gill Conservation Commission. Conservation Commissions have the authority and responsibility to regulate activities within the Riverfront Area under the wetland regulations (310 CMR 10). The Riverfront Area is a 200-foot-wide corridor on each side of a perennial river or stream.

Gill's zoning bylaws include a floodplain overlay district that is based on the 100-year floodplain as identified by FEMA in 1980. All of Franklin County needs updated FEMA floodplain mapping, and new FEMA maps are expected to be finalized in the next few years. Land uses within the floodplain are limited to farming, forestry, recreation, and wildlife management, unless a building pre-dates when the zoning provision went into effect. Amending Gill's floodplain bylaw to match the current FEMA model bylaw is being undertaken by the Planning Board in 2026.

Stormwater Runoff

Franklin County has experienced increased precipitation or precipitation intensity (flash flooding) since around 2010. High intensity rainfall can overwhelm stormwater systems, such as catch basins and culverts along roadways. According to the 2016 MA land use/land cover

⁸ <https://www.mass.gov/tick-borne-diseases>

analysis, Gill has 300 acres of impervious surface, or 3% of Gill’s land area.⁹ To retain river health and reduce erosion problems along streams, staying below the 5% imperviousness level in any watershed is best. Gill’s zoning bylaws help to address runoff issues by placing limits on the maximum percentage of a lot that can be covered by impervious materials.

⁹ <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-2016-land-coverland-use#data-development>

6. Current Strengths and Assets

The Town has taken a proactive approach to emergency preparedness, which was evident at the workshop as participants readily provided vulnerabilities and strengths and actions to address these vulnerabilities. Participants cited several strengths and assets that help keep their community resilient in the face of climate change and other challenges. They include the following strengths and assets:

Infrastructural

- Eversource recently (2024) completed a round of tree cutting along telephone & electric poles in town, reducing impacts to power lines from fallen trees.
- The electrical distribution system (Eversource) has redundancies and no weak spots in Gill.
- A water filtration and UV treatment system was installed at the Gill Elementary School water supply in 2019 to address potential contamination.
- Franklin County fire departments provide good mutual aid and coordinate well together to provide water to a fire site scene with tanker shuttles.
- Gill's new Engine 1 has a higher clearance and is 4-wheel drive vehicle, so it is better at getting to parts of town with gravel and farm roads, and to homes along the steep banks of the Connecticut River.
- If all other communication goes down, there is a local ham radio group.
- The pump station serving the Riverside sewer system pump has a backup generator.
- The Town works hard to upgrade safety equipment, hold training events, and have excellent staff.
- No Town-owned buildings are in flood-prone areas.
- As of early 2026, there are 2 large-scale commercial solar systems, 3 small-scale business solar systems, and 102 small-scale residential solar systems in Gill.¹⁰ With 700 housing units in Gill as of the 2020 U.S. Census, that means approximately 14.5% of housing units in Gill have solar power. The number of battery systems and generators are unknown; however, small, portable gasoline-powered generators are thought to be widespread throughout town.
- The largest private bus company in Franklin County, FM Kuzmeskus, is based in Gill. In the event of a large-scale evacuation, their fleet of vehicles could possibly be put into use.

¹⁰ Based on email communication between Mike Kane of Eversource with Andrea Donlon of FRCOG.

Societal

- Gill residents are independent, hardy, and tough.
- There are many farmstands and places to buy locally made and locally sourced food in Gill, despite having no supermarkets.
- Farmers in town help each other out.
- There are multiple community events in Gill that bring people together.
- There is an increase in multi-generational living situations, with family members able to help each other out.
- There are several senior centers in nearby towns that Gill residents can go to and take advantage of.

Environmental

- There are extensive forests in Gill.
- Hiking trails in the two Town Forests provide climate refuge and are well used.
- Local farms are a great asset.
- Beaver populations can enhance wetland resources and improve habitat and water quality.
- Gill is one of the few towns in Franklin County with a Green Burial cemetery.
- As of the 2021 Gill OSRP, 16.5% of Gill's 9,474.6 acres were permanently protected. Another 35% enjoys "temporary protection" under Chapter 61, 61A, and 61B tax programs.
- During 2025, three permanent Conservation Restrictions (CRs) in Gill were filed at the Registry of Deeds totaling 96 acres. An 8-acre Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) is in the works for 2026/27.

7. Top Recommendations to Improve Resilience

High Priority Recommendations

Infrastructural

Address paved road drainage issues. Prioritize culverts and drainage issues for maintenance, upgrade, or replacement. Prioritize additional locations in need of drainage. Seek grants to fund work. Add cross-pipes under roads and create better drainage opportunities using stormwater best management practices. Raise funds to update bridges with structural problems.

Backup generators for Town Hall and Elementary School. Seek funding to be able to install backup generators at the Gill Town Hall and Gill Elementary School so that these buildings can provide services during power outages and potentially be used on a short-term basis as heating and cooling centers.

Resolve communication dead zone at the Public Safety Complex. Contact cell tower companies to better understand gaps due to topography and identify possible resolutions. See if a micro tower would be possible, particularly near the Public Safety Complex on Main Road in Gill. Provide residents of all ages information on newer cell phones that have the SOS feature, which will access any carrier for 911. Update outdated contact info in Reverse 911 database and encourage new residents to sign up for this service.

Societal

Backup generator at Stoughton Place. Work with the Franklin County Regional Housing and Rehabilitation Authority's (HRA's) Director of Property Management to find funding for a generator at the affordable senior housing project at Stoughton Place, to be able to offer heating/cooling or the ability to power vital equipment in the event of a power outage.

Support aging residents so they can stay in town. Increase housing diversity in Gill by updating the Gill zoning bylaws. Apply for an become designated as a Rural and Small Town Housing Choice Community to gain access to housing-related grant opportunities. Promote a network of volunteers to support people as they age in town.

Create a "resiliency" lending library. Create a tool and lending library, portable generators, portable sump pumps, and other equipment that could make the community more resilient or self-sufficient.

Hold knowledge sharing workshops. Hold workshops to facilitate knowledge, skills, and resource sharing on forest conservation, diversifying forest age structure to reduce forest blowdown impacts, and invasive species removal.

Environmental

Manage invasive species. Include images in quarterly town newsletter to educate residents about different invasive species. Consider targeted treatments in ecologically sensitive areas or other priority areas identified by the community. Arrange for nature walks to teach residents how to identify invasive species and learn ways to control the spread. Work with other towns to create a depository for invasive plants that need to be disposed.

Reduce fire vulnerability. Survey the town for areas of greatest fire vulnerability; work with landowners to plan response to blowdowns and fire. Identify structures that are most at risk. Engage with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to learn if/how the agency considers access for fire control when reviewing/funding forest management plans and forest cutting plans. Provide outreach to residents about creating a zone around homes that is less fire prone. Capitalize on synergy between trail work, recreation, and firefighting access.

Expand public trail system. Maintain existing public trails; work with willing landowners to expand access on private land. Consider developing a trails committee in town, similar to what Williamsburg and Ashfield have done. Do it in a way that recognizes the ecological benefit of certain areas. Create accessible trails for aging residents.

Reduce impact of river fluctuations. Continue working with FirstLight, state agencies, FRCOG, and other partners to reduce the frequency and magnitude of river fluctuations, or reduce the impact of river fluctuations, from Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project operations and to stabilize and restore riverbanks. Explore possibility of establishing secure access to the river for fire and rescue vehicles. Improve road access to Stacey Ferry Road, at the end of River Road, for water access.

Protect Center Cemetery. Conduct regular/routine monitoring of Unadilla/Dry Brook next to Center Cemetery. Consult with fluvial geomorphologist, engineer, and/or wetlands specialists about preventative and protective measures that could be taken to protect the cemetery from erosion.

Medium Priority Recommendations

Infrastructural

Address unpaved road drainage issues. Fix poor drainage in the problem road sections, rebuild the road base in failing sections (in some cases build the road level back up), stabilize road in soft sections, and improve road crown to promote drainage. Refer to FRCOG's [Unpaved Road Stormwater Management Toolkit](#) for best management practices on unpaved roads. Consider posting seasonal weight limits on some roads. Seek grants to fund work.

Reduce erosion in road shoulders. Improve drainage and stabilize roadside shoulders to prevent stormwater from eroding soil into waterways. Re-shape and re-ditch the shoulders so runoff flows in a controlled path rather than washing across bare soil. Add stone berms, check dams, or vegetated swales to slow water down and reduce erosive force. Stabilize shoulder areas using gravel, crushed stone, erosion-control matting, or vegetation.

Establish more firefighting water access locations. Find funding to establish more firefighting water access locations in Gill.

Address tributaries that pose a risk to infrastructure. Work with FirstLight to survey and address tributaries that pose a risk to infrastructure at the confluence with the Connecticut River.

Identify sources of I&I in sewer system. Conduct an Inflow & Infiltration (I&I) study to identify where rainwater or groundwater is entering the Riverside Sewer System.

Improve emergency alert coverage. Increase the number of town residents on the CodeRed alert system by seeking funding for outreach project to sign up as many people as possible, continue to publicize CodeRed in the Gill newsletter, and consider an insert in the 2027 annual census mailer.

Societal

Improve sheltering information. Identify, plan, and share information about a location that can serve as a shelter for residents who cannot shelter in place. Take time to create a culture of giving and receiving help among neighbors and community members.

Improve emergency outreach. Use the town newsletters, email lists, and website to improve emergency information and local services outreach. Refer residents and provide training on creating a home survival kit and how to prepare homes and structures for drought, wildfire and severe storms. Develop evacuation plans for areas that may be difficult to evacuate during wildfires.

Promote local farms. Create a list on the Town website of local farm stands. Update the brochure on Gill farms. Promote local farms with more aggressive advertising.

Monitor water quality in Gill. Contact the Connecticut River Conservancy and see if locations in Gill could be added to their water quality monitoring program.

Environmental

Reduce mosquito and tick-borne illnesses. Increase number of locations monitored by Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District. Educate residents about mosquito control preventative measures. Educate residents about tick-borne illnesses, subsidized tick testing & seek funds to continue program.

Improve water access. Survey town for possible public swimming locations and assess what would be needed to make them usable and accessible. Identify opportunities and landowners who may be open to allowing more access to water and trails in town.

New boat access site on the Connecticut River. Identify potential locations to build new boating access sites or repurpose or expand use to existing sites.

Low Priority Recommendations

Infrastructural

Address hazardous trees. Conduct a tree risk assessment to identify high-risk trees along roadways and remove high-risk or hazard trees. Increase resident awareness about who is responsible for what trees. Evaluate town budget for tree removal.

Upgrade electrical service at Public Safety Complex. Seek funding to upgrade the electric service at the Public Safety Complex to meet future operational needs, efficient heating and cooling, and energy resiliency.

Improve drinking water resilience in times of drought. Identify backup water source or connections for Riverside section of town and support land use practices that maintain healthy groundwater for private wells throughout town. Explore idea of setting up an emergency water filling station at the municipal Riverside Building, which is connected to the Riverside Water District. Ensure that Board of Health, FRCOG FCCIP, and CPHS are aware of local issues of wells going dry. If necessary, work with the planning board to promote zoning districts and lot size requirements that maintain sustainable water use of groundwater, depending on location in town.

Societal

Strengthen culture of caring. Continue to track vulnerable populations in Gill and enhance the culture of neighbors helping neighbors. Help invigorate local neighbors volunteer group, explore opportunities for public transportation in Gill, and promote formation of neighborhood groups.

Environmental

Conserve forest land. Designate wild reserves, and more broadly promote ecological/climate forestry that maintains diverse forest age, structure, and species.

Support farming. Conserve more farmland and support viability of local farms by working with farmers to broaden access to local food, working with Agriculture Commission to ensure farmers know what state and federal support is available for pest and weather impacts, and setting aside funds for Town match on Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) projects.

Manage problem beaver dams. Survey town for infrastructure vulnerable to impacts from beaver dams, and work with landowners and state agencies to see if problem beaver impoundments can be managed.

Protect coldwater streams. Protect coldwater fishery habitats in town by assessing the status of these fish and opportunities to revive fishery or promote new fishing opportunities and promoting vegetated riparian buffers along all waterbodies.

8. CRB Workshop Participants

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

Name	Department/Group	Workshop #1 1/20/26	Workshop #2 2/11/26
Jim Asbel	Resident		X
Doris Beaubien	Resident	X	X
Gene Beaubien	Emergency Management Director, Core Team member	X	X
Mark Beaudry	Planning Board member, Core Team member	X	X
Tupper Brown	Resident		X
Claire Chang	Energy Commission member	X	
Brian Donahue	Conservation Commission chair, Core Team member	X	X
Andrea Donlon	FRCOG	X	X
Dan Flagg	Resident	X	
Evan Fox	Resident	X	X
Liz Gardner	Resident		X
Holly Grosvenor	Resident		X
Erika Heilig	Resident	X	
Vicky Jenkins	Energy Commission chair, Core Team member	X	X
Ellen Johnson	Resident	X	
Michael Kane	Eversource	X	X
Jess Kern	Resident	X	X
Bill Kimball	Fire chief, Core Team member	X	X
Sue Kramer	Resident		X
Chet Kuzontkoski	Resident	X	
Nona LaGrande	Administrative Clerk, Conservation Commission member, Core team member	X	X
Kimberly Noake MacPhee	FRCOG	X	

Name	Department/Group	Workshop #1 1/20/26	Workshop #2 2/11/26
Janet Masucci	Resident	X	X
John Miner	Highway Superintendent, Core Team member	X	X
Joan Pillsbury	Resident	X	
Ray Purington	Town Administrator, Core Team member	X	X
Chris Redmond	Police chief, Core Team member	X	X
Emily Samuels	Resident		X
Steven Schechterle	Resident	X	
Colleen Sculley	Resident, Core Team member	X	X
Seth Tuler	Resident, Core Team member	X	X
Nicki Vassar	Resident	X	
Alan Wallace	Resident	X	X
John Ward	Select Board member	X	
Barbara Watson	Resident	X	X

In addition, a public listening session was held on March 23, 2026, as part of a select board meeting. All members of the public were encouraged to attend. A draft Summary of Findings was available for public review, and a presentation was given to summarize the results of the community workshops.

9. Citation

Town of Gill (2026) Community Resilience Building Workshop Summary of Findings Report, Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) and Town of Gill, Massachusetts.

10. CRB Workshop Project Team

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

Name	Role
Gene Beaubien	Emergency Management Director
Mark Beaudry	Planning Board member
Brian Donahue	Conservation Commission chair
Vicky Jenkins	Energy Commission chair
Michael Kane	Eversource
Bill Kimball	Fire chief
Nona LaGrande	Administrative Clerk, Conservation Commission member
Tim McKinney	Northfield Mount Hermon School
John Miner	Highway Superintendent
Ray Purington	Town Administrator
Chris Redmond	Police chief
Colleen Sculley	Resident
Jeff Suprenant	Water/Sewer district
Seth Tuler	Resident

The Core Project Team, along with technical assistance from FRCOG, planned and facilitated the two-day workshop (totaling eight hours). FRCOG was responsible for preparing the CRB workshop materials, leading presentations, and organizing group exercises. Members from the Town's Core Team met twice before the workshops to go over Gill's background information and planning for the workshops, and during the workshops facilitated and documented key information during the group exercises.



Figure 11. Participants at the Community Workshop #1. (FRCOG photo)

11. Public Comment Period

A public listening session and public comment period were held to provide Gill residents and Town Officials an opportunity to review and comment upon the draft Gill MVP Resiliency Plan.


The public listening session was held as a select board meeting on March 23, 2026 at 5:30pm. FRCOG staff provided an overview of the MVP program as well as findings from the workshop, provided opportunities for feedback on the Town's top resiliency actions, and answered questions from attendees.

At the end of the listening session, the Select Board members and participants discussed the priorities to address first. There was agreement that roads and culverts were a priority, followed by getting backup generators at the Town Hall and elementary school. There was additional discussion of communication gaps at the Public Safety Complex building. Overall, attendees were happy with the plan and presentation.

The public comment period was held from March 23, 2026 to April 6, 2026, and extended another week for input from Core Team members. The public was invited to submit comments via email. All comments received were incorporated into the plan.

The workshops and draft plan were advertised on the Town of Gill's website [on the MVP page](#).

Appendix A: Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix						TOWN OF GILL																		
H-M-L priority for action over the S hort, L ong term, or O ngoing V = Vulnerability S = Strength				Top Priority Hazards Recommendations					Extreme Precipitation		Drought		Wind & Microbursts		Extreme temperatures		Priority H - M - L		Time Short Long Ongoing					
									Features		Location		Ownership		V or S									
Infrastructural																								
Undersized and aging culverts, bridges, stream crossings and drainage structures		Town-wide with particular concern on Chapell Drive, West Gill Road, Main Road near Kuzmeskus, Barney Hale Road. Partial bridge closure on North Cross Road.		Town/state		V		Prioritize culverts and drainage issues for maintenance, upgrade, or replacement. Prioritize additional locations in need of drainage. Seek grants to fund work. Add cross-pipes under roads and create better drainage opportunities using stormwater best management practices. Raise funds to update bridges with structural problems.					X								H		O	
Blocked or restricted streams entering Connecticut River, and the possible impacts of upstream flooding during extreme precipitation or spring snow melt		Heal-All Brook where it passes under Riverview Drive and enters CT River (large silt mound in river); Unnamed stream from Chappell Drive where it crosses under Route 2 (approx 400 feet from Route 2 to river's edge) - unknown potential for flooding if stream is blocked		Private and FirstLight		V		Work with FirstLight to survey and address tributaries that pose a risk to infrastructure.					X								L		O	
Trees falling block roads & cause power outages		Town-wide		Town rights of way		V		Conduct a tree risk assessment. Identify high-risk trees along roadways. Remove high-risk or hazard trees. Request timeline from Eversource for completing 2024 tree trimming project that skipped West Gill Road and some side roads. Increase resident awareness about who is responsible for what trees. Evaluate town budget for tree crew.					X				X				L		O	
Eversource recently did a round of tree cutting along telephone & electric poles in town.		Town-wide		Eversource		S		Continue to engage with Eversource around tree maintenance in town.					X				X				L		O	
Freeze-thaw cycles cause potholes and create a Mud Season in every winter month		Town-wide, particularly bad on Ben Hale Road				V		Fix poor drainage in the problem areas, rebuild the road base in failing sections, stabilize road in soft sections, improve crown. (Refer to FRCOG's Unpaved Road Stormwater Management Manual). Possibly post seasonal weight limits. Seek grants to fund work.									X				M		O	
Rainwater and/or groundwater getting into Riverside Sewer System		Riverside		Town		V		Conduct an Inflow & Infiltration study to identify where rainwater or groundwater is entering the system.					X								M		O	
If all other communication goes down, there is a local ham radio group.		Regional		N/A		S		Establish and maintain contact of local ham radio group so that communication can be established in the event of an emergency.													L		O	
There is no generator at the Elementary School, which means the school must close and students sent home during a medium-duration power outage and limits the ability to use the building for emergency shelter/warming center.		Elementary School		Town		V		Seek funding for generator. Wiring has already been set up for a generator.					X				X		X		H		S	
Town Hall lacks an emergency generator capable of powering the entire building which limits ability to use space for warming/cooling center		Town Hall		Town		V		Seek funding for generator and wiring upgrade.					X				X		X		H		S	
Riverside sewer pump has a backup generator.		Riverside		Sewer district		S		Maintain generator in working order.					X								L		O	

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix



TOWN OF GILL

H-M-L priority for action over the **S**hort, **L**ong term, or **O**ngoing

V = Vulnerability **S** = Strength

Top Priority Hazards

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	Recommendations	Extreme Precipitation	Drought	Wind & Microbursts	Extreme temperatures	Priority	
									H - M - L	Short Long Ongoing
Stormwater increasing erosion on roadside shoulders, which impacts waterways	Town-wide	Town/state	V	Improve drainage and stabilize roadside shoulders to prevent stormwater from eroding soil into waterways. Re-shape and re-ditch the shoulders so runoff flows in a controlled path rather than washing across bare soil. Add stone berms, check dams, or vegetated swales to slow water down and reduce erosive force. Stabilize shoulder areas using gravel, crushed stone, erosion-control matting, or vegetation.	X				M	O
Fire fighting water access limited in town. Few dry hydrants, CT River has plentiful water but fluctuations (mud during low water times), ice, and bank erosion (steep banks) make access difficult	Town-wide, most notably on east side, center of town, and west side.	Town	V	Find funding to establish more fire water access locations in Gill.	X			X	M	S
Wireless communication facilities - coverage gap in parts of town	Dead zones at public safety complex,	Wireless carriers	V	Contact cell tower companies to better understand gaps and topography and possible resolutions. See if microtower would be possible. Provide information on newer cell phones that have SOS feature, which will access any carrier for 911. Teach this in the school?	X	X	X	X	H	S/O
Electrical service public safety complex (PSC) is undersized for electrification of the HVAC system.	Public Safety Complex	Town	V	Seek funding to upgrade the electric service at the public safety complex to meet future operational needs, efficient heating and cooling, and energy resiliency.			X	X	L	L
Code Red alert system allows for town-wide communications but contact database is not complete	Town-wide	Town	S/V	Seek funding for outreach project to sign up as many people as possible. Continue 2x yearly reminder of CodeRed system in Gill newsletter. Explore idea of including an insert in the 2027 annual census mailer.	X	X	X	X	M	O
Town works hard to upgrade safety equipment, trainings, good staff	Town-wide	Town	S	Maintain healthy working environment to continue providing good services	X	X	X	X	L	O
Electrical system has redundancies and no weak spots	Town-wide	Eversource	S	Establish/maintain regular contact with Eversource to identify and troubleshoot any problem areas.	X		X	X	L	O
Municipal water only in Riverside, remaining town residents are on private wells	Town-wide	Water district and private	V or S	Identify backup water source or connections for Riverside section of town and support land use practices that maintain healthy groundwater for private wells.		X			L	O
Improve drinking water resilience in times of drought. Private wells are going dry and need to be drilled deeper.	Town-wide, but seems more common on Boyle Road, North Cross Road	Private	V	Explore idea of setting up an emergency water filling station at the municipal Riverside Building, which is connected to the Riverside Water District. Ensure that Board of Health/FRCOG FCCIP, and CPHS are aware of local issues of wells going dry. If necessary, work with the planning board to promote zoning districts and lot size requirements that maintain sustainable water use of groundwater, depending on location in town.		X			L	O
Societal										
A quarter of Gill residents are age 65 or older. That age group is more likely to have health and mobility issues.	Town-wide	Volunteers	S/V	There is a culture of neighbors helping neighbors in Gill. A volunteer group has provided rides for people over 80 years old to doctors, etc. This group has found it difficult to attract volunteers and has limited services to those over 80 years old. Town could publicize volunteers and/or re-invigorate volunteer program so that can provide more reliable and broader support, or group could host social events to promote social bonding. Explore opportunities for bus access in the form of routes, stops, expanded schedules, and accessibility. Promote the formation of neighborhood groups. Continue to track vulnerable populations in Gill.	X	X	X	X	L	O
Gill residents are independent, hardy, and tough.	Town-wide	N/A	S	Identify, plan, and share information about a location that can serve as a shelter for residents who cannot shelter in place. Take time to create a culture of giving and receiving help among neighbors and community members; an informal process can sometimes be more effective.	X	X	X	X	M	O

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix



TOWN OF GILL

Top Priority Hazards

H-M-L priority for action over the **Short**, **Long** term, or **Ongoing**

V = Vulnerability **S** = Strength

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	Recommendations	Extreme Precipitation	Drought	Wind & Microbursts	Extreme temperatures	Priority		Time	
									H - M - L		Short	Long Ongoing
Residents are so independent that helping them is often difficult.	Town-wide	N/A	V	Utilize the town newsletters, email lists, and website to improve emergency information outreach. Refer residents and provide training to MEMA guidance on what to include in a home survival kit and how to prepare homes and structures for drought, wildfire and severe storms. Include links to mass.gov Pandemic Preparedness Checklists and public health guidance and directives. Develop evacuation plans for areas that may be difficult to evacuate during wildfires (see section on environmental features / risk of wildfire). The TRIAD group with FCHOC (jail) mostly lend out equipment. Also meals on wheels (Lifepath) need to see at least one person in order to leave meals maybe this could be expanded. Currently 10 residents in Gill get Meals on Wheels. Meals on Wheels delivery drivers are mandated reporters of suspected abuse or neglect.	X	X	X	X	M		O	
There are no supermarkets in town, yet there are many farmstands and places to buy locally made and locally sourced food.	Town-wide	Private	V/S	Create a list on the Town website of local farm stands. Update the brochure on Gill farms. Promote local farms with more aggressive advertising.					M		S	
Farmers in town help each other out.	Town-wide	N/A	S	Create a phone chain of farmers through the town Agricultural Commission.	X	X	X	X	L		S	
Food insecurity and energy insecurity is common. It's difficult to afford household bills.	Estimated 10% of town population	N/A	V	Survey (anonymously) to assess how wide spread these problems are. Think about setting up a program like Good Neighbors Wendell that helps with food insecurity. Provide information in Town newsletter with a QR code for info about food bank locations and services that help with food & energy insecurity. Get grants to provide support for older and low-income homeowners with repairs, weatherization, and energy efficiency. Continue to promote Mass Save, including the income-eligible program through Community Action Pioneer Valley, for insulation, air sealing, and heating system/appliance upgrades. Start a local community garden, potentially with help from local farms.	X	X	X	X	M		O	
Mutual aid agreements are in place for highway, fire, police, and regional shelters	Town and region-wide	Town, regional services	S	Maintain these agreements. Provide residents with timely information about sheltering options.	X	X	X	X	L		O	
Stoughton Place (14 affordable senior housing apartments) does not have a backup generator	Stoughton Place	Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority	V	Work with HRA's Director of Property Management to find funding for a generator that would energize the community room and the corridors leading to it, to be able to offer heating/cooling or the ability to power vital equipment in the event of a power outage.	X	X	X	X	H		S	
Limited housing diversity in town means seniors can't downsize and there are very few houses on the market.	Town-wide	N/A	V	Promote a network of volunteers to support people as they age in town (see above). Promote housing diversity through updating the Gill zoning bylaw. Work with local organizations like land trust and housing organizations. At Stoughton Place, there is a long waiting list and rare turnover. Gill residents have no special priority at this location over any applicant. Apply for and become designated as a Rural & Small Town Housing Choice Community to gain access to housing-related grant opportunities.	X	X	X	X	H		L	
There are multiple community events in Gill that bring people together	Town-wide	N/A	S	Keep those running and create more.	X	X	X	X	L		O	
Mental health responders are now available 24/7 & dedicated to Gill 1 day/week through a state funded program.	Town-wide	N/A	S/V	If this program continues to be successful, work with state legislators to ensure that funding is sustainable over the long term. Governor's proposed budget for coming year (FY2027) has a 50% cut in this program statewide. Advocacy (call your legislators) will be needed to boost this amount.	X	X	X	X	L		O	
There is an increase in multi-generational living situations, with family members able to help each other out.	Town-wide	N/A	S	Promote word of mouth spread of alternative living situations that work for some families.	X	X	X	X	L		O	
Seniors can go to several regional Senior Centers	Town-wide	N/A	S	Encourage Council on Aging to update their "Resources for Seniors" sheet and to make it easier to find on the town website.					L		O	

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix




TOWN OF GILL

Top Priority Hazards

H-M-L priority for action over the **Short**, **Long** term, or **Ongoing**

V = Vulnerability **S** = Strength

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	Recommendations	Extreme Precipitation	Drought	Wind & Microbursts	Extreme temperatures	Priority	
									H - M - L	Short Long Ongoing
There is a need for specialized equipment during a severe weather event, and a need for specialized information sharing.	Town-wide	N/A	V	Create a tool and lending library, portable generators, portable sump pumps, and other equipment could make the community more resilient. Hold workshops to facilitate knowledge sharing (see environmental category for more info).	X	X	X	X	H	L
Increased storm runoff affects water quality in streams, ponds, and wetlands, affecting both people and other species. Need for more water quality testing and public outreach.	Town-wide	Private	V	Contact the Connecticut River Conservancy and see if locations in Gill could be added to their water quality monitoring program.	X				M	L
Environmental										
Town has extensive forest cover that is getting more mature. This is a strength, as trees absorb carbon, create shading, and provide habitat and human health benefits. But older and taller trees may be susceptible to climate extremes like wind.	Town-wide	Private/town	S/V	Conserve forest land. Designate wild reserves, and more broadly promote ecological/climate forestry that maintains diverse forest age, structure, and species. Organize workshops for landowners to share resources, ideas, skills, and labor.		X	X		L	O
Invasive species, particularly pests such as hemlock woolly adelgid, are proliferating from climate changes and are affecting tree survival.	Town-wide	Private/town	V	Include images in quarterly town newsletter to educate residents about different invasives. Consider targeted treatments in ecologically sensitive areas or other priority areas identified by the community. Arrange for nature walks to teach residents how to identify invasive species and learn ways to control the spread. Work with other towns to create a depository for invasive plants that need to be disposed.	X	X		X	H	O
Killing frost happens later in the fall and winter temperatures tend to be milder. Both lead to longer seasons for mosquito and tick activity and less winter die-off for insect populations.	Town-wide	Private/town	V	Increase number of locations monitored by Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District. Educate residents about mosquito control preventative measures. Educate residents about tick-borne illnesses, subsidized tick testing & seek funds to continue program.	X			X	M	O
Recent blowdowns are fuel in the case of forest fires, and are likely to increase with maturing forest and more severe windstorms.	Pisgah Mountain, Barney Hale Road	Private/town	V	Diversify forest age structure. Organize workshops for landowners to share resources, ideas, skills, and labor.		X	X		L	L
Access in large forest tracts is difficult, may affect forest fire fighting ability	Forested areas around Darby and Mason Hills	Private/town	V	Survey town for areas of greatest fire vulnerability; work with landowners to plan response to blowdowns and fire. Identify structures that are most at risk. Engage with MassDCR to learn if/how the agency considers access for fire control when reviewing/funding forest management plans and forest cutting plans. Provide outreach to residents about creating a zone around homes that is less fire-prone. Capitalize on synergy between trail work, recreation, and firefighting access.		X			H	O
Hiking trails in forests provide climate refuge. Public access to trails limited to town-owned land @ Town Forest and Mountain Road. Extensive trail system exists on private lands with public access limited to snowmobile club and private agreements.	Blake Town Forest	Town/private	S/V	Maintain existing public trails; work with willing landowners to expand access on private land. Consider developing a trails committee in town, similar to what Williamsburg and Ashfield have done. Do it in a way that recognizes the ecological benefit of certain areas. Create accessible trails for aging residents.				X	H	L
River fluctuations from Northfield Mountain pumped storage project combined with natural river events is causing erosion along the CT River, causing loss of soil, steep banks that affect emergency and fire use.	Land abutting Connecticut River	Private	V	Continue working with FirstLight, state agencies, FRCOG, and other partners to reduce impact of river pumping and to stabilize and restore banks. Explore possibility of establishing secure access to the river for fire and rescue vehicles. Improve road access to Stacy Ferry, off River Road, for water access.	X				H	L
Local farms are a great asset. Farmers are experiencing increased pest pressure and crop losses from warming winters and extreme wet and dry events	Town-wide farmland	Private	S/V	Conserve farmland. Work with farmers to broaden access to local food. Work with Agriculture Commission to ensure farmers know what state and federal support is available for pest and weather impacts. Try to set aside funds for Town match on APR projects.	X	X			L	S

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix				 TOWN OF GILL		Top Priority Hazards						
H-M-L priority for action over the Short, Long term, or Ongoing				Recommendations	Extreme Precipitation	Drought	Wind & Microbursts	Extreme temperatures	Priority		Time	
V = Vulnerability S = Strength									H - M - L	Short Long Ongoing		
Features	Location	Ownership	V or S									
Increased beaver populations improve habitat in some areas but contribute to infrastructure problems.	North Cross Rd, South Cross Rd, Ben Hale Road, Barney Hale Road, Main Road.	Private	S/V	Survey town for impacted or vulnerable infrastructure. Work with landowners and state agencies to see if beaver impoundments can be managed.	X				L	L		
There aren't many places for residents to swim - swimming holes have dried up and CT River access difficult.	Dry Brook on Boyle Road, CT River	Private	V	Survey town for swimming possibilities and assess what would be needed to make them usable and accessible. Identify opportunities and landowners who may be open to allowing more access to water and trails in town.		X		X	M	S		
Coldwater fish, like brook trout, and associated fishing opportunities have declined or been eliminated in small streams in town.	Dry Brook/Unadilla Brook	Private	V	Assess status of these fish and opportunities to revive fishery or promote new fishing opportunities. Promote maintaining vegetated riparian buffer along all waterbodies.		X		X	L	L/O		
Erosion on Dry Brook/Unadilla Brook next to Center Cemetery has, in the past, threatened an embankment. Severe erosion could mean disturbance of graves.	Center Cemetery	Town	V	Regular/routine monitoring; consult with fluvial geomorphologist, engineer, wetlands specialists about preventative and protective measures that could be taken to protect cemetery.	X		X		H	O		
Gill is one of the few towns in Franklin County that currently has a Green Burial cemetery. Green burial is more environmentally friendly than cremation (energy usage) or embalming (chemical use), but uses more space.	Riverside Woods Cemetery	Town	S	Cemetery Commission should maintain updated information about green burial at Riverside Woods.					L	O		
Boating, canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding provides relief from summer heat and connection with nature. There is no public access for boats between Barton Cove in Gill and Pachaug boat access in Northfield.	Connecticut River	Private	V	Survey town for opportunities to build new boating access site, or repurpose or expand use to existing sites (NMH boat dock, etc).				X	M	S		

Appendix B: Town Map

Hazards and Infrastructure, Gill, Massachusetts 2025

Flood Related

- Dam
- 100 YR Flood Plain
- Moore Dam, Inundation Zone
- Localized Flooding

Evacuation Route

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary

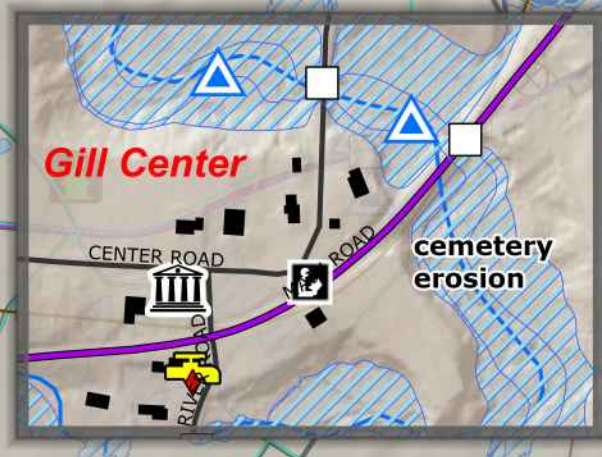
Infrastructure

- Radio Tower
- Public Water Supply
- Sewage Pump
- Chemical Facility
- Gas Station

Other Symbols

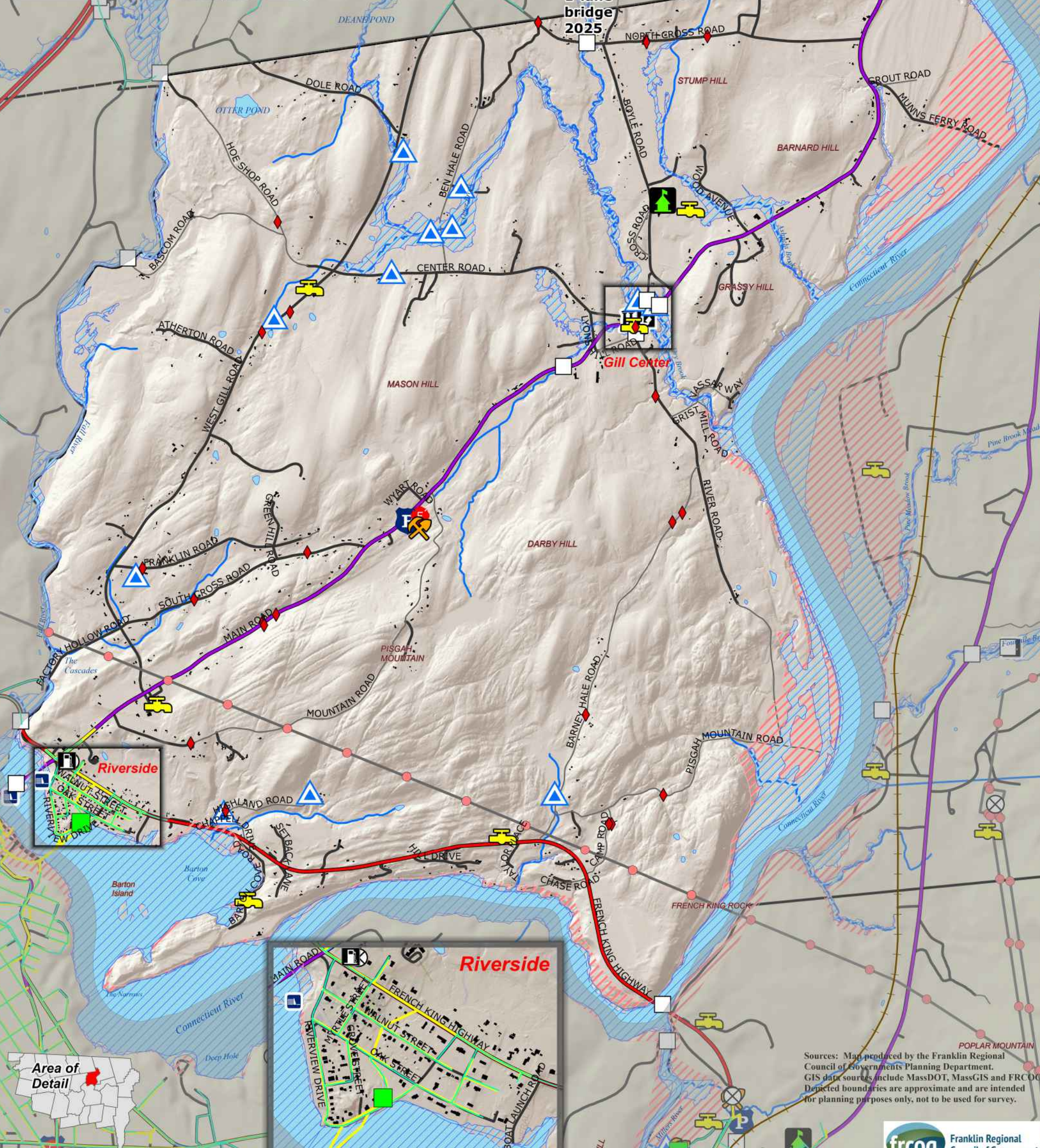
- Culverts (critical)*
- Transmission Line
- Rail Line
- Sewer Line
- Water Line
- School
- Library
- Town Hall
- Fire Station
- Police Station
- DPW
- Bridge
- Major Road
- Gravel Road
- Local Road
- Building Footprint

*culvert report 2023



1-lane bridge 2025

Capped Landfill



Sources: Map produced by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments Planning Department. GIS data sources include MassDOT, MassGIS and FRCOG. Depicted boundaries are approximate and are intended for planning purposes only, not to be used for survey.

Appendix C: Community Building Workshop 1



MVP
Municipal Vulnerability
Preparedness



Town of Gill

COMMUNITY INPUT SESSION

Calling all Gillbillies! Help identify and map Gill's vulnerabilities and strengths during extreme weather & prioritize actions the Town can take to increase resilience. This will help the Town apply for and be eligible for grants.



Tuesday, January 20, 2026



**Gill Town Hall
@ 325 Main Road**



5:30 - 9:30 PM

Food provided

For more information:

Ray Purington, Town Administrator

413-863-9347 (town hall)

Andrea Donlon, FRCOG

adonlon@frcog.org



Town of Gill
MVP Resiliency Plan
Community Resilience Building
Workshop #1



January 20, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Gill Town Hall



MVP
Municipal Vulnerability
Preparedness

AGENDA

Approximate Duration	Activity and Objectives	Facilitator
Before meeting starts	Sign in	
5 min	Welcome and Introductions General introduction of project Introduce Core Team members	Ray Purington, Town Administrator
10 minutes	Overview Presentation Workshop purpose Desired outcomes	Andrea Donlon, FRCOG
15 minutes	Identify top 3-4 hazards for Gill	Andrea Donlon or in Teams 1, 2, 3
30 minutes	Identify infrastructural vulnerabilities and strengths (together or Team 1)	Vicky Jenkins & John Miner
30 minutes	Identify societal vulnerabilities and strengths (together or Team 2)	Seth Tuler & Jean Beaubien
30 minutes	Identify environmental vulnerabilities and strengths (together or Team 3)	Brian Donohue & Colleen Sculley
15 minutes	Report out, wrap up, and set stage for Workshop #2	Andrea Donlon, FRCOG



Town of Gill MVP Resiliency Plan Public Meeting



MVP
Municipal Vulnerability
Preparedness

January 20, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Gill Town Hall

PLEASE SIGN IN

Name	Street Address & Affiliation (if any)	Email address
VILKY JENKINS	76 River Rd Gill MA Energy Committee	vjenkins01354@gmail.com
Doris Beaubien	185 Main Rd, Gill, MA	gmbdab@comcast.net
Gene Beaubien	185 Main Rd Gill MA	EMD@GILLMASS.ORG
Ellen Johnson	15 Vassar Way	ellenjohn316@yahoo.com
Steven Schichterle	257 W. Gill Rd	steveschichterle@yahoo.com
SETH TULER	95 W. Gill Rd.	STULER@WPI.EDU
Mike Kane	Ever source	Ever source, com michael.kane@
JOAN Pillsbury	270 Mountain Rd Gill	Pillsbu@comcast.net
Nicki Vassar	45 Vassar Way Gill	nichollettervassar57@gmail.com
CHET KUZONIKOSKI	25 RIVER ROAD Gill	chetk5@comcast.net
Erika Heilig	430 main rd. Gill	erikaheilig@gmail.com
Dan Flagg	430 Main Road	flaggfarm@gmail.com
John Masucci	64B French King Hwy	JMASUCCI@MSN.COM

Name	Street Address & Affiliation (if any)	Email address
Evan Fox	8 Cross Rd Con Com	evanfox413@gmail.com
Jess Kern	75 Bascom Rd	JLKERN@gmail.com
William Kimball	141 Center Rd Fire Chief	wkimball@gillmass.org
MARK BEAUDRY	51 BEN HALE RD. Planning Board	MBEAUDRY@CIVILWORKSNE.COM
John Miner	Highway SUPT.	
Nona LeBrenade	ConCom, Admin Toma Heul	
Barb Watson	143 C River Rd	bwatson106@gmail
Alec Walker	143 C River Rd	
RAY PUKINGTON	Town Administrator 29 Atherton Rd	
Chris Redmond	196 B Main Rd	
John Ward	Select Board 4 Grove St.	
Claire Chang	Energy Committee 4 Grove St.	
Kimberly MacPhee	12 Olive St. Greenfield	FRCOG kmacphee@frcog.org
Brian Donahue	ConCom 71 Bascom Rd.	
Andrea Donlon	FRCOG 12 Olive St, Greenfield	adonlon@frcog.org
Colleen Sculley	334 Mountain Rd.	



Community
Resilience
Building
Workshop #1



Town of Gill

January 20, 2026

1

Agenda



- Overview of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program
- Review climate impacts on towns
- Review top hazards
- Identify strengths and vulnerabilities

2

Impetus Behind the MVP Program

A climate resilient town will be able to maintain functions, protect its residents and emerge stronger and better prepared for a changing climate.



Source: NJ Climate Change Resiliency Study

3

MVP Workshop Concept

Build Resilience and Preparedness - to more frequent and intense weather events.

Improve pre-event planning, response & recovery, and long-term actions.

A prepared and resilient town will be able to maintain functions, protect its residents and emerge stronger and better prepared for future storm events and a changing climate.

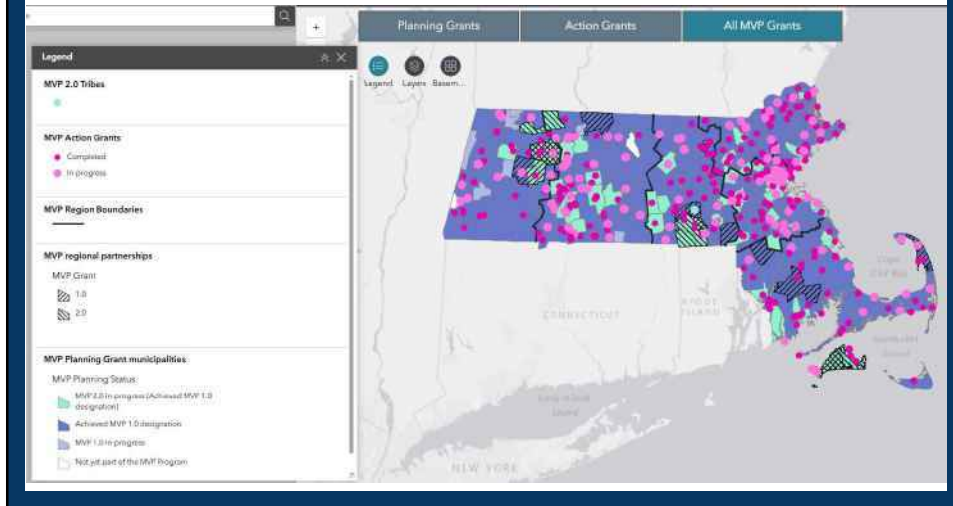
- Review climate change and natural hazard background information and identify top 4 hazards
- Identify and map vulnerabilities and strengths:
 - Infrastructure
 - Societal
 - Natural resources
- Develop and prioritize actions and clearly delineated next steps

4

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program

Millions to cities and towns since 2017

Once certified as an MVP community, Gill will become eligible for Action Grants



5

Gill will become eligible for Action Grants

Montague



MVP Grant: \$33,750
 Match Amount: \$11,250
 Total Project Cost: \$45,000

New! Match not required for rural towns

Montague City Road Flooding Protection Project: Design and Permitting



Deerfield



MVP Grant: \$47,325
 Match Amount: \$19,611
 Total Project Cost: \$66,936

Culvert Redesign and Retrofit and Bylaw Update



6

Linkages between climate and existing hazards

• Changing weather

- Higher temperatures
- Shorter winters
- More frequent & intense storms
- Droughts

• Amplifies existing risks

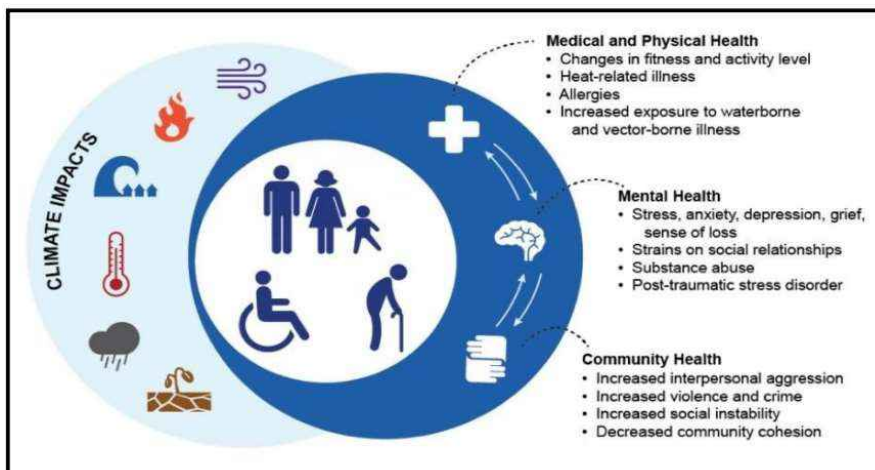
- Community and regional infrastructure
- Local and regional economies
- Public health
- Natural resources and our environment

Goal for Building Resilience to a Changing Climate:

Protect life, property, natural resources and the economy

7

Extreme weather events & disasters can have direct and indirect effects



8

ResilientMA Climate Change Clearinghouse www.resilientma.org

ResilientMass Climate Change Projections Dashboard

VIEW THE LATEST RESILIENTMA CLIMATE PROJECTIONS BY MA, CO2 by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) in partnership with COMCAST UNIVERSITY, LLC, BIOLOGICAL TRUSTS and TUFTS UNIVERSITY. THE RESILIENTMA CLIMATE AND WATERSHEDS PROJECTIONS ARE A PART OF THE NEW CLIMATE PROJECTIONS FOR THE COMMONWEALTH. Select a watershed basin, target future decade and desired trends to view temperature and precipitation projections. Click on the shaded square (in the bottom map) and select '100 Year' and select the 'ResilientMA Frequency Table' to view projections of various species for various future (target) years.

Climate Change Projections Dashboard

HOW TO USE THIS DASHBOARD

Select the basin you are interested in on the map. The dashboard will display the median value of climate metrics for the selected basin. The dashboard also displays the range of climate metrics for the selected basin. The dashboard also displays the range of climate metrics for the selected basin. The dashboard also displays the range of climate metrics for the selected basin.

HOW TO USE THIS DASHBOARD

Select the basin you are interested in on the map. The dashboard will display the median value of climate metrics for the selected basin. The dashboard also displays the range of climate metrics for the selected basin. The dashboard also displays the range of climate metrics for the selected basin. The dashboard also displays the range of climate metrics for the selected basin.

Climate Metric	Median Value	Min Temperature (Degrees F)	Average Duration of Coldness (Days)	Number of Coldness Events (Events)	Days Below 32 degrees F (Days)
Median Value	3.6	3.6	-1	0	-3
Average Temperature (Degrees F)	3.6	-2	-21	-955	-29

9

Higher Temperatures

www.showyourstripes.info

In the CT River Valley:

- Number of days >90 ° are predicted to increase.
- By 2050: ~20 more days
- By 2090: ~53 more days

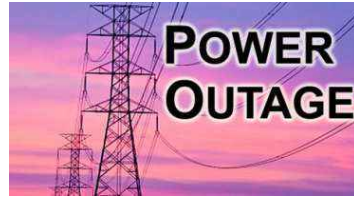
10

More Impacts from Higher Temperatures

Infrastructure

Energy

- Increased demand will strain energy infrastructure
- Disrupt service (potential for widespread brownouts or blackouts)

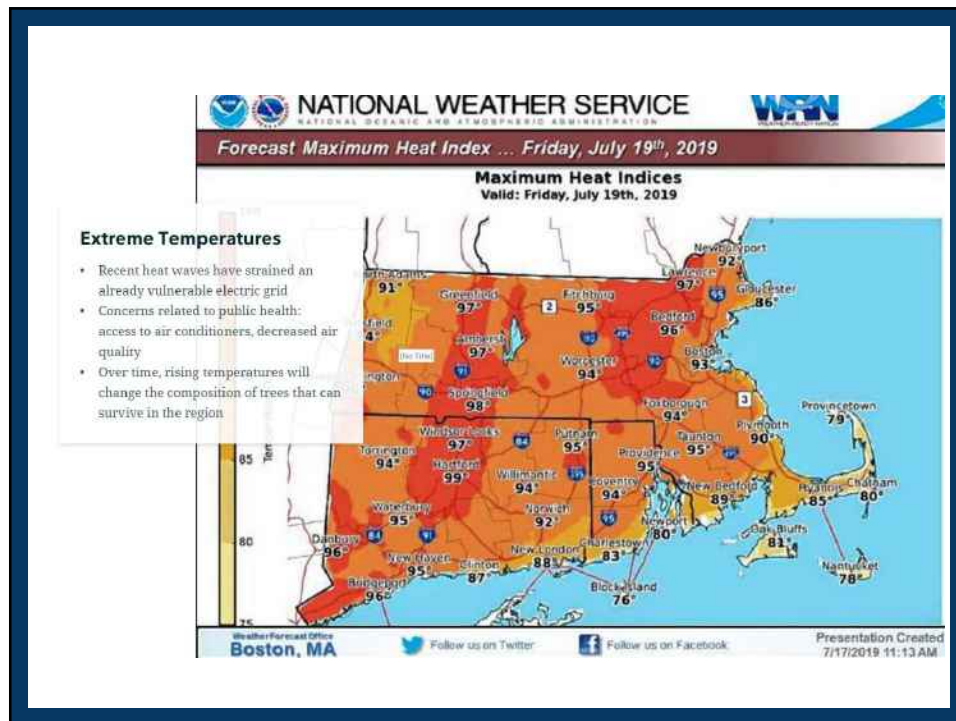


Transportation

- More frequent maintenance required to address:
 - deterioration of asphalt roads
 - buckle railroad tracks
 - thermal expansion of bridges




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12


Extreme Weather Events





Flash flooding,
tropical storms



Severe wind,
thunderstorms



Tornadoes



The frequency, intensity, duration and geographic extent of these extreme storms is likely to increase.

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Flash Flooding



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Droughts

Becoming more frequent – “critical” last March, currently “mild”

MASSACHUSETTS DROUGHT ALERT March 18, 2025

LEVEL 1 Mild Drought LEVEL 2 Significant Drought LEVEL 3 Critical Drought LEVEL 4 Emergency Drought

DROUGHT STATUS:

Massachusetts is *still in a Drought*. Although the state received some snow and rain in February, conditions have continued to worsen. EEA has declared the following drought conditions: Connecticut River Valley, Central and Northeast Regions at **Level 3—Critical Drought** and Western, Southeast, Cape Cod and Islands Regions at **Level 2—Significant Drought**.

CURRENT CONDITIONS:

Over the past month, most of the state received 2-4 inches of precipitation which is 1-1.5 inches below normal. Despite temporary surges in streamflow from recent precipitation, streamflow and groundwater conditions have worsened in nearly all regions, and recharge that typically occurs at this time of the year to groundwater and reservoirs is diminished. It is imperative that we continue to practice indoor water conservation to ensure that our drinking water supplies are sustained, and to fully recover from and reduce drought impacts.

We're entering FIRE SEASON early!

Massachusetts Drought Status
DECLARED MARCH 7, 2025

Drought Levels

- Level 1: Mild Drought
- Level 2: Significant Drought
- Level 3: Critical Drought
- Level 4: Emergency Drought

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA):
Rebecca L. Tepper

Director of MEMAC:
Dawn Brantley

For information on Water Conservation

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Example Severe Storm: 2008 Ice Storm



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Example Severe Storm: 2011 Tropical Storm Irene



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Snowtober!!! 2011 Historic Nor'easter

Making tracks
Crews working to clear snow from roads in the mountains.

Pumpkin toes
Dancing, singing and eating pumpkins to help raise funds.

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HOURS OF NEWS

THE RECORDER
Serving the people of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region.

WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 2, 2011

Snowstorm slams region

Thousands without power

By JIMMY HANCOCK

A heavy snowstorm hit the region on Tuesday, leaving thousands of people without power and causing widespread tree damage. The storm, which brought heavy snow and strong winds, hit the region late in the evening and continued through the day. Power outages were reported across the region, with some areas losing power for several hours. The snow also caused significant damage to trees and power lines, leading to widespread outages. Many homes and businesses were left without power, and some areas experienced significant snow accumulation. The storm was a surprise for many in the region, as it was not expected to hit so late in the season.

THE RECORDER LOCAL

100 percent of Gill still without power

By JIMMY HANCOCK

Residents in Gill, Vermont, are still without power as of Tuesday morning. The power outage, which began on Monday night, has affected the entire town. The outage is being caused by damage to power lines and transformers caused by the snowstorm. The town is currently without power, and residents are being urged to stay safe and avoid using candles or other unsafe heating methods. The power company is working to restore power as quickly as possible, but it is unclear when power will be restored to the town.

THE RECORDER

Serving the people of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region.

WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 2, 2011

Storm recovery slow

Widespread tree damage hampers line repairs

By JIMMY HANCOCK

Power companies are slowly restoring power to homes and businesses in the region, but the process is being slowed by widespread tree damage. The storm caused significant damage to power lines and transformers, and the heavy snow and strong winds are making it difficult for crews to access the damaged areas. Crews are working to clear the snow and remove the damaged trees, but the process is taking longer than expected. Many homes and businesses are still without power, and the recovery process is expected to continue for several more days.

Storm

By JIMMY HANCOCK

The snowstorm that hit the region on Tuesday was a historic event, bringing heavy snow and strong winds. The storm was a surprise for many in the region, as it was not expected to hit so late in the season. The snow accumulation was significant, and the strong winds caused widespread tree damage. The storm was a major weather event for the region, and it is expected to have a significant impact on the recovery process.

THE RECORDER

Serving the people of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region.

TUESDAY
NOVEMBER 1, 2011

Area cold seek shelter

Residents flock to Turners high school

By JIMMY HANCOCK

Residents in the region are seeking shelter from the cold weather as temperatures drop. Many people are flocking to Turners High School, which is providing a warm and safe place for them to stay. The school is open to anyone who needs a place to stay, and it is providing food, clothing, and other necessities. The cold weather is a major concern for many in the region, and it is important for everyone to stay safe and warm.

Area cold seek shelter

Residents flock to Turners high school

By JIMMY HANCOCK

The cold weather is causing many people to seek shelter, and Turners High School is providing a warm and safe place for them to stay. The school is open to anyone who needs a place to stay, and it is providing food, clothing, and other necessities. The cold weather is a major concern for many in the region, and it is important for everyone to stay safe and warm.

Shelter: People get warm, charge devices

By JIMMY HANCOCK

People are getting warm and charging their devices at the shelter. The shelter is providing a warm and safe place for people to stay, and it is providing food, clothing, and other necessities. The cold weather is a major concern for many in the region, and it is important for everyone to stay safe and warm.

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Example Severe Storm: 2017 Tornado (Conway/South Ashfield)



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Example Severe Storm: 2019 Microburst

Microburst wreaks havoc in Deerfield, Montague -
The Recorder 7/31/2019

Montague and Deerfield took heavy damage from Tuesday afternoon's storm, with Eversource reporting about 800 power outages from downed trees and utility poles between the two towns.

In addition, the storm damaged crops and greenhouses.



Pictures by Recorder Staff Max Marcus



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Workshop Outcomes

Main goal: build resilience!

1. Understand strengths and vulnerabilities in 3 sectors



Infrastructure



Society






Environment

Next Workshop:

2. Brainstorm actions to build on strengths and address vulnerabilities

25

Identify strengths and vulnerabilities	Things to consider
 Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads and bridges • Power grid • Drinking Water • Wastewater Treatment • Communications • Housing • Emergency Response • Schools
 Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coldwater streams • Forests • Farmland • Floodplains • Habitat • Wetlands • Aquifers
 Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of health care services • Access to lifelines (food/water, emergency response personnel, etc.) • Support networks that connect and maintain the supply of goods and services to vulnerable populations

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Let's Get Started!

**Identify Past,
Current and
Future Hazards**

**Determine Top
Priority Hazards**

Which 3-4 hazards
pose the greatest
threat to the town
currently and in the
future?

GILL from page A1

the board voted unanimously to continue with one unified rate.

School Regionalization

Selectboard member Greg Snedeker explained the possibility of proposing two school regionalization plans to Gill voters: one for a six-town district and another for a five-town district. Under this proposal, Warwick, which has recently created its own municipal school district, could vote to remain independent and the other five towns could still merge their school districts.

Snedeker, who also serves as vice chair of the Six Town Regionalization Planning Board, said people in other towns were worried Warwick “could potentially be a poison pill” in the process.

“It just seems a little messy,” countered selectboard member John Ward.

“It makes the voting complicated,” said town administrator Ray Purington, “but I think the overwhelming reason for having the two votes now is we’ve got everybody engaged in the conversation, we avoid having to restart the whole planning board process, and all of the data is freshly-crunched.”

“It will save a lot of time and money,” Snedeker agreed.

The board agreed to send a letter expressing their preference for including both six-town and five-town options on the ballot. (*See Montague selectboard notes, Page A1.*)

Other Business

Vicky Jenkins, chair of the energy commission, presented on upcoming energy efficiency plans in town. The commission has decided to focus on the public safety complex, which houses the police, fire, and highway departments.

The group plans to get a free comprehensive building assessment and explore potential upgrades, such

as installing mini-splits, adding electric vehicle chargers, or using geothermal energy.

Jenkins thanked Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) employee Tamsin Flanders for the support she provided. “She’s been the push that we needed,” Jenkins said, “because we were totally overwhelmed.”

David Conway has resigned from the sewer commission. There is now an opening in the commission for a Riverside resident who uses the sewer system and wants to help set rates, determine policies, and brainstorm ways to improve the town’s sewer infrastructure.

The board appointed Zachary Ozdarski as a firefighter. Ozdarski served as a junior firefighter for the town when he was younger.

Small towns like Gill receive occasional technical assistance through FRCOG. The selectboard determined the town’s greatest need for technical help was on the matter of the relicensing process for the Turners Falls dam and Northfield Mountain pumped-storage project. Other priorities include an unpaved roads assessment and floodplain map changes.

Purington reported “excellent turnout” and “a really good community discussion” at the first community input session to create a municipal vulnerability preparedness plan. The program aims to make towns more resilient to climate change, and an up-to-date plan will make the town eligible for state grants.

“Every minute was the kind of neighbor-to-neighbor conversation that you want to hear,” Purington said.

The next input session will be held Wednesday, February 11 at 5:30 p.m. at the town hall, and will focus on “identifying and prioritizing actions that reduce vulnerabilities and reinforce strengths.” Food will be provided.

Selectboard chair Charles Garbiel asked if the town should approve a special one-day liquor license for that meeting as well. “I don’t think that’s a vulnerability we need to address,” Purington answered.



Appendix D: Community Building Workshop 2



MVP
Municipal Vulnerability
Preparedness



Town of Gill

COMMUNITY INPUT SESSION # 2

Calling all Gillbillies! Help identify & prioritize actions the Town can take to increase resilience during extreme weather events. This will help the Town apply for and be eligible for MVP grants.



Wednesday, February 11, 2026



Gill Town Hall
@ 325 Main Road



5:30 - 9:30 PM
Food provided

For more information:

Ray Purington, Town Administrator

413-863-9347 (town hall)

Andrea Donlon, FRCOG

adonlon@frcog.org



Town of Gill
MVP Resiliency Plan
Community Resilience Building
Workshop #2



February 11, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Gill Town Hall



MVP

Municipal Vulnerability
Preparedness

AGENDA

Approximate Duration	Activity and Objectives	Facilitator
Before meeting starts	Sign in	
5 minutes	Welcome and Introductions Project & meeting purpose Core Team members	Ray Purington, Town Administrator
15 minutes	Overview Presentation Workshop purpose Summarize top hazards and findings from Workshop #1	Andrea Donlon, FRCOG
30 minutes	Review environmental vulnerabilities and strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-visit identification, locations, and ownership of vulnerability and strengths • Identify actions to reduce vulnerabilities or reinforce strengths Identify priority and urgency of each	Brian Donahue & Colleen Sculley
30 minutes	Review infrastructural vulnerabilities and strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-visit identification, locations, and ownership of vulnerability and strengths. • Identify actions to reduce vulnerabilities or reinforce strengths • Identify priority and urgency of each 	Vicky Jenkins & John Miner

Approximate Duration	Activity and Objectives	Facilitator
30 minutes	Review societal vulnerabilities and strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-visit identification, locations, and ownership of vulnerability and strengths • Identify actions to reduce vulnerabilities or reinforce strengths • Identify priority and urgency of each 	Seth Tuler & Gene Beaubien
15 minutes	“Sticker dot” exercise to pick top action items for Gill	Group action
15 minutes	Report out, wrap up, and next steps	Andrea Donlon, FRCOG



Town of Gill MVP Resiliency Plan Public Meeting



MVP
Municipal Vulnerability
Preparedness

February 11, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

Gill Town Hall

PLEASE SIGN IN

Name	Street Address & Affiliation (if any)	Email address
Nona LaGrenade	79 S. Cross Rd Town Admin Clerk	clerical@gill mass.org
BRIAN DONAHUE	Conservation Commission 71 Bascom RD	bdonahue@brandeis.edu
John Minus	Highway Supt	highway@gill mass.org
VICKY JENKINS	76 River Rd Energy Commission	vjenkins01354@gmail.com
Doris Beaubien	185 Main Rd, Gill	gmbdab@comcast.net
Gen Beaubien	185 Main Rd	FMD@Gillmass.org
Mike Kane	Eversource	michael.kane@Eversource.com
Janet Masucci	FRENCH KING HWY	jmasucci@msn.com
RAY PURINGTON	29 Atherton Rd	adminstrator@gillmass.org
Jess Kern	75 Bascom Rd Gill	JLKERN@aol.com
MARK BEAUDRY	51 BENHALE RD., GILL Planning Board	MBEAUDRY@CIVILWORKSNE.com
Sue Kramer	54 Boyle Rd, Gill	sueotgill@gmail.com
Liz Gardner	385 Main Rd Gill	esgardner65@gmail.com

Name	Street Address & Affiliation (if any)	Email address
Tupper Brown	58 River Rd.	atbrown.laur@comcast.net
BARB WATSON	143 RIVER RD	bwatson100@gmail.com
Art Wadman	143 River Rd	adw1947@gmail.com
Evan Fox	8 S Cross Rd	evanfox413@gmail.com
Colleen Scully	324 Mountain Rd	cescully@gmail.com
Emily Samuels	267 Main Rd	samuels77@comcast.net
William Kimball	141 Center Rd Fire Chief	wkimball@gillmass.org
SETH TUCKER	95 W. Gill Rd.	STULER@WPI.EDU
JIM ASBEL	Cross Rd	jasbel.ja@gmail.com
HOLLY GROSVENOR	Cross Rd	grosvenorholly@gmail.com
CHRIS REDMOND	196 B MAIN RD Police Chief	chief@gillmass.org
ANDREA DONLON	FRCOG	



Community Resilience Building Workshop #2



Town of Gill

February 11, 2026

1

Agenda



- Overview of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program
- Review top hazards, strengths and vulnerabilities
- Identify actions to reinforce strength and reduce vulnerabilities

2

Impetus Behind the MVP Program

A climate resilient town will be able to maintain functions, protect its residents and emerge stronger and better prepared for a changing climate.



Source: NJ Climate Change Resiliency Study

3

MVP Workshop Concept

Build Resilience and Preparedness - to more frequent and intense weather events.

Improve pre-event planning, response & recovery, and long-term actions.

A prepared and resilient town will be able to maintain functions, protect its residents and emerge stronger and better prepared for future storm events and a changing climate.

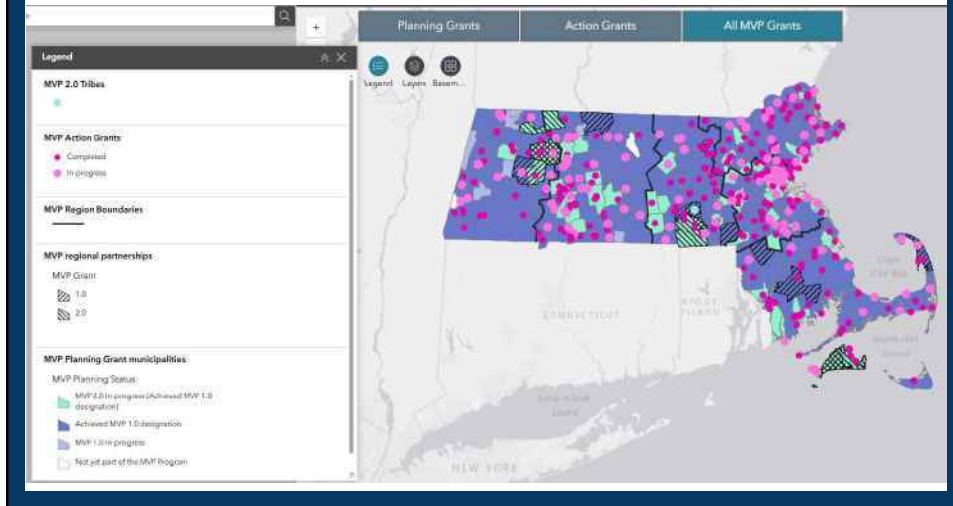
- Review climate change and natural hazard background information and identify top 4 hazards
- Identify and map vulnerabilities and strengths:
 - Infrastructure
 - Societal
 - Natural resources
- Develop and prioritize actions and clearly delineated next steps

4

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program

Millions to cities and towns since 2017

Once certified as an MVP community, Gill will become eligible for Action Grants



5

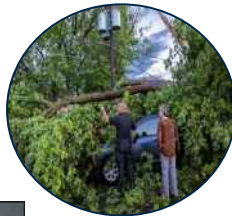


Extreme Weather Events



Flash flooding,
tropical storms

Severe wind,
thunderstorms



Tornadoes



The frequency,
intensity,
duration and
geographic
extent of these
extreme storms
is likely to
increase.

6

Snowtober!!! 2011 Historic Nor'easter

THE RECORDER
Serving the people of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region

Snowstorm slams region
Thousands without power

By the numbers

- 100% of power restored in Franklin County
- 100% of power restored in Berkshire County
- 100% of power restored in Hampshire County
- 100% of power restored in Hampden County
- 100% of power restored in Worcester County
- 100% of power restored in Middlesex County
- 100% of power restored in Essex County
- 100% of power restored in Suffolk County
- 100% of power restored in Barnstable County
- 100% of power restored in Dukes County
- 100% of power restored in Nantucket County

THE RECORDER LOCAL

100 percent of Gill still without power

Franklin County residents were still without power Monday morning, a day after a historic snowstorm hit the region. The state Department of Transportation (DOT) said it was still working to clear roads and restore power to the area.

DOT officials said that about 100 percent of the area is still without power. The state is working to clear roads and restore power to the area. The state is working to clear roads and restore power to the area.

THE RECORDER
Serving the people of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region

Storm recovery slow

Widespread tree damage hampers line repairs

Power lines were still being repaired Monday morning, a day after a historic snowstorm hit the region. The state Department of Transportation (DOT) said it was still working to clear roads and restore power to the area.

DOT officials said that about 100 percent of the area is still without power. The state is working to clear roads and restore power to the area. The state is working to clear roads and restore power to the area.

THE RECORDER
Serving the people of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region

Area cold seek shelter

Residents flock to Turners high school



People are flocking to Turners High School for shelter from the cold weather. The school is providing a warm place for people to stay until they can get home.

The school is providing a warm place for people to stay until they can get home. The school is providing a warm place for people to stay until they can get home.

7

More Recent Events



Flash flooding led to collapse of bank on along Route 2 in Gill in 2023

MassDOT: Route 2 repairs in Gill expected to take 4 or 5 weeks



Damage from heavy winds & a thunderstorm at the Franklin County Fairgrounds, October 2020

GILL — Route 2 eastbound just west of the Turners Falls-Gill Bridge will be able to reopen to traffic after four or five weeks of work to install an earth support system, the state Department of Transportation announced Tuesday.

Related stories

- MassDOT closing Route 2 for 10th anniversary of collapse
- MassDOT: Route 2 repairs in Gill expected to take 4 or 5 weeks

8

Workshop Outcomes

Main goal: build resilience!

Workshop #1.
Understand strengths and
vulnerabilities in 3 sectors



Infrastructure



Society



Environment

**Workshop #2. Brainstorm actions to build on strengths
and address vulnerabilities**

9

Workshop #1 recap

- Identified Gill's top hazards:
 - Extreme precipitation
 - Drought
 - Wind & microbursts
 - Extreme temperatures

10

Workshop Process

2 Brainstorm resiliency projects

Examples:




-  Upgrade culverts, flood-proof drinking water supplies
-  Evacuation drills and extreme weather communications protocols to protect vulnerable populations
-  Protect wetlands and floodplains to improve flood resiliency



Photo credit: Mass DER

13

Workshop #1 recap: Infrastructural

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S
Infrastructural			
Undersized and aging culverts, bridges, and drainage structures	Town-wide. Particular concern on Chapell Drive, West Gill Road, Main Road near Kuzmeskus. North Cross Road closure	Town/state	V or S
Trees falling block roads & cause power outtages	Town-wide		V
Freeze-thaw cycles cause potholes and create a Mud Season in every winter month	Town-wide		V
Rainwater getting into Riverside Sewer Pump	Riverside	Town	V
If all other communication goes down, there is a local ham radio group.	Regional	N/A	S
Riverside sewer pump has a backup generator	Riverside		S
Stormwater increasing erosion on roadside shoulders, which impacts waterways	Town-wide	Town/state	
Fire fighting water access limited in town. Few dry hydrants, CT River has plentiful water but fluctuations (mud during low water times), ice, and bank erosion (steep banks) make access difficult	Town-wide, most notably on east side, center of town, and west side.		V
Relatively new utility poles seem to be rotting	Riverside		V
Wireless communication facilities - coverage gap in parts of town	Dead zones at public safety complex,	Wireless carriers	V
Code Red alert system allows for town-wide communications	Town-wide	Town	S
Town works hard to upgrade safety equipment, trainings, good staff	Town-wide	Town	S
Electrical system has redundancies and no weak spots		Eversource	S
Municipal water only in Riverside, remaining town residents are on private wells			
Private wells are going dry and need to be drilled deeper	Town-wide, but seems more common on Boyle Road, North Cross Road	Private	V

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Workshop #1 recap: Societal

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S
Societal			
Gill residents have a good percentage of residents > the age of 65 (25% as of the 2020 Census), more likely to have health and mobility issues	Town-wide	Volunteers	S
Gill residents are independent, hardy, and tough.	Town-wide	N/A	S
Residents are so independent that helping them is often difficult.	Town-wide	N/A	V
There are no supermarkets in town, yet there are many farmstands and places to buy locally made and locally sourced food.	Town-wide	Private	V/S
Farmers in town help each other out.	Town-wide	N/A	S
Food insecurity and energy insecurity is common. It's difficult to afford household bills.	Estimated 10% of town population	N/A	V
Mutual aid agreements are in place for highway, fire, police, and regional shelters	Town and region-wide	Town, regional services	S
Stoughton Place (14 affordable senior housing apartments) does not have a backup generator	Stoughton Place	Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority	V
Limited housing diversity in town means seniors can't downsize and there are very few houses on the market.	Town-wide	N/A	V
There are multiple community events in Gill that bring people together	Town-wide	N/A	S
Residents are so independent that helping them is often difficult	Town-wide	N/A	V
Mental health responders are now available 24/7 & dedicated to Gill 1 day/week through a state funded program.	Town-wide	N/A	S/V
There is an increase in multi-generational living situations, with family members able to help each other out.	Town-wide	N/A	S
Increased storm runoff affects water quality in streams, ponds, and wetlands, affecting both people and other species. Need for more water quality testing and public outreach.	Town-wide	Private	V

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Workshop #1 recap: Environmental

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S
Environmental			
Town has extensive forest cover that is getting more mature. This is a strength, as trees absorb carbon, create shading, and provide habitat and human health benefits. But older and taller trees may be susceptible to climate extremes like wind.	Town-wide	Private/town	S/V
Invasive species, particularly pests such as hemlock woolly adelgid, are proliferating from climate changes and are affecting tree survival.	Town-wide		V
Recent blowdowns are fuel in the case of forest fires, and are likely to increase with maturing forest and more severe windstorms.	Pisgah Mountain, Barney Hale Road	Private/town	V
Access in large forest tracts is difficult, may affect forest fire fighting ability	Forested areas around Darby and Mason Hills	Private/town	V
Hiking trails in forests provide climate refuge. Public access to trails limited to town-owned land @ Town Forest and Mountain Road. Extensive trail system exists on private lands with public access limited to snowmobile club and private agreements.	Blake Town Forest	Town/private	S/V
River fluctuations from Northfield Mountain pumped storage project combined with natural river events is causing erosion along the CT River, causing loss of soil, steep banks that affect emergency and fire use.	Land abutting Connecticut River	Private	V
Local farms are a great asset. Farmers are experiencing increased pest pressure and crop losses from warming winters and extreme wet and dry events	Town-wide farmland	Private	S/V
Increased beaver populations improve habitat in some areas but contribute to infrastructure problems.	North Cross Rd, South Cross Rd		S/V
There aren't many places for residents to swim - swimming holes have dried up and CT River access difficult.	Dry Brook on Boyle Road, CT River	Private	V
Coldwater fish, like brook trout, and associated fishing opportunities have declined or been eliminated in small streams in town.	Dry Brook/Unadilla Brook	Private	V
Boating, canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding provides relief from summer heat and connection with nature. There is no public access for boats on 11.5 miles of Connecticut River in Gill for residents. Closest access sites are at Barton Cove and Pachaug boat access in Northfield.	Connecticut River	Private	V

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Brainstorm Resiliency Actions/Projects



Planning, Assessments, and Regulatory Updates



Nature-based Solutions for Ecological and Public Health



Resilient Redesigns and Retrofits for Critical Facilities and Infrastructure



Photo credit: Mass DER

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Nature Based Solutions

Projects that restore, protect, and/or manage natural systems and/or mimic natural processes to address hazards like flooding, erosion, drought, and heat islands in ways that are cost-effective, low maintenance, and multibeneficial for public health, safety, and well-being.



Riverbank restoration on the North River, Colrain MA




Low impact development project, Greenfield MA


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Example of funded & completed MVP Action Grant project:

•Fort River Watershed Improvements for Flood & Water Quality Resilience



Amherst FY24





AWARD •\$169,250 **MATCH** •\$56,838

PROJECT TYPE •Design & Permitting

CORE PRINCIPLES DEMONSTRATED •Furthering a community identified action to address climate change; Conducting robust community engagement.

DESCRIPTION

- This project involved the data collection, design and permitting for the replacement of three culverts throughout the Fort River Watershed.
- The design incorporates predicted 2070 storm flows and provides wildlife passage by meeting the Massachusetts Stream Crossing Standards.





•Learn More:
•[Amherst Project Website](#)


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Example of funded & completed MVP Action Grant project:

•Culvert Asset Management and Bank Stabilization



Wilbraham FY24



AWARD •\$60,000 **MATCH** •\$20,000



PROJECT TYPE •Data Collection and Summary Report

CORE PRINCIPLES DEMONSTRATED

- Furthering a community identified priority action to address climate change impacts;
- Building community capacity for climate resilience

DESCRIPTION

- Develop a prioritized culvert inventory consisting of GIS data and a 5-year capital improvement plan (CIP) to prioritize repairs, replacement and maintenance.
- Assess 5 stream channels for bank stabilization and conceptual restoration plans with preference to natural channel design and nature-based solutions.





•Learn more:
•[Wilbraham's Storm Water Resources Page](#)


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Example of funded & completed MVP Action Grant project:

• Norwood Nature Based Solutions for Flooding and Heat





Norwood FY25



- Learn More
- [Visit the Norwood project website](#)

AWARD	•\$144,300	MATCH	•0
PROJECT TYPE	•Planning, Assessments, Capacity-Building, and Regulatory Updates		
CORE PRINCIPLES DEMONSTRATED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Employing Nature Based Solutions •Conducting robust community engagement and supporting strong partnerships with EJ populations and other priority populations 		
DESCRIPTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Updated regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Revised stormwater regulations and implement permitting system, update wetlands and zoning regs. •Community outreach utilizing a community liaison approach and a tree give-away program 		

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Example of funded & completed MVP Action Grant project:


Ashfield Living Culture and Rural Climate Resilience Project

Ashfield FY25



- Ashfield experienced inland flooding in 2023/24, demonstrated financial need, and included a focus on NBS for flood resilience in this project.
- Learn more: [Visit the Ashfield project website](#)
- \$166,000 **MATCH \$0***

PROJECT TYPE	Planning, Assessments, Capacity Building , and Regulatory Updates
CORE PRINCIPLES DEMONSTRATED	Building community capacity for climate resilience; Conducting robust community engagement and supporting strong partnerships with EJ; Achieving broad and multiple community benefits.
DESCRIPTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town collaboration with local arts and culture organizations Double Edge Theatre and Ohketeau Cultural Center. • Focus on equitable and inclusive outreach, engagement, and relationship-building. • Core themes: Clean Energy, Affordable Housing, Nature-based Solutions. • Three Community Dinners & dialogues, two Site Tours, Community Resilience Day.




22

Example of funded & completed MVP Action Grant project:

Hatfield 2040 Comprehensive Plan: A Vision to Protect, Prepare, and Prosper



Hatfield FY23



- Learn more:
- [Project Website](#)

AWARD	•\$283,900	MATCH	•\$94,625
PROJECT TYPE	•Planning, Assessments, Capacity Building, and Regulatory Updates		
CORE PRINCIPLES DEMONSTRATED	•Achieving broad and multiple community benefits; Conducting robust community engagement and supporting strong partnerships with EJ and other priority populations		
DESCRIPTION	•Located along the Connecticut River, Hatfield faces increasing risk for flooding to local farms, and its village center with critical facilities and homes in harm's way. This project involved a process in defining, reckoning with, and planning for that risk while also advancing the great strengths within a small rural community into the future, along the following themes: A thriving local economy; A capable and resilient local government; Affordable homes and vibrant neighborhoods; Our natural resources; Together as community – welcoming and supportive for all; and Health and wellness. The project also involved review of municipal code and development of regulatory recommendations to support Hatfield 2040 planning objectives.		



23

Identify Actions/Projects for Gill

- Environmental
- Infrastructural
- Societal

24

Vote on priority action items

- Pick up 5 sticker circles
- Place your stickers on 1-5 of the vulnerabilities and action items that you think should be a high priority for Gill
- You can put 1 sticker each on 5 actions, or all of your stickers on one action, or some combination in the middle

25

Project Tasks

- **Complete MVP Workshop Activities**
 - ❖ Review Massachusetts' changing climate
 - ❖ Identify top hazards
 - ❖ Identify strengths and vulnerabilities
 - ❖ Brainstorm resiliency projects
- Workshop #1
- Workshop #2
- Compile Information into a **Summary Report**
 - **Public Listening Session** to present Summary Report findings – **Monday, March 9 @ Select Board meeting.**
 - Finalize MVP Report and Request **MVP Designation**

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Societal

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix



TOWN OF GILL

Top Priority Hazards

H-M-L priority for action over the Short, Long term, or Ongoing

V = Vulnerability S = Strength

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	Recommendations	Extreme Precipitation	Drought	Wind & Microbursts	Extreme temperatures	Priority	Time
									H-M-L	Short Long Ongoing
Gill residents have a good percentage of residents > the age of 65 (25% as of the 2020 Census), more likely to have health and mobility issues	Town-wide	Volunteers	V	There is a culture of neighbors helping neighbors in Gill. A volunteer group has provided rides for people over 80 years old to doctors, etc. This group has found it difficult to attract volunteers and it is limited to those over 80 years old. A recommendation is for the Town to make an explicit call for volunteers and/or re-invigorate volunteer program so that can provide more reliable and broader support. Explore opportunities for bus access in the form of routes, stops, expanded schedules, and accessibility. Promote the formation of neighborhood groups. Establish town Council on Aging? Continue to track vulnerable populations in Gill. <i>L. GILL MARCHING C. DNA & GR. CENTER (IN TOWN)</i>	X	X	X	X		
Gill residents are independent, hardy, and tough	Town-wide	N/A	S	Identify, plan, and share information about a location that can serve as a shelter for residents who cannot stay in place. Ensure location has backup generator, etc. MOUs and cost sharing may be helpful with owners. Investigate opportunity of Gill residents to access shelters in abutting towns. <i>Have Safety Complex on private reserve</i>	X	X	X	X		
Residents are so independent that helping them is often difficult.	Town-wide	N/A	V	Utilize the town newsletters, email lists, and website to improve emergency information outreach. Refer residents to MEMA guidance on what to include in a home survival kit and how to prepare homes and structures for drought, wildfire and severe storms. Include links to mass.gov Pandemic Preparedness Checklists and public health guidance and directives. Develop evacuation plans for areas that may be difficult to evacuate during wildfires (see section on environmental features / risk of wildfire).						
There are no supermarkets in town, yet there are many farmstands and places to buy locally made and locally sourced food.	Town-wide	Private	V/S	Create a list on the Town website of local farm stands. Promote local farms with more aggressive advertising. <i>locate brochure on town website</i>						
Farmers in town help each other out.	Town-wide	N/A	S	Ag committee where farmers meet to create phone chain?	X	X	X	X		
Food insecurity and energy insecurity is common. It's difficult to afford household bills.	Estimated 10% of town population	N/A	V	Survey (anonymously) to assess how wide spread these problems are. Think about setting up a program like in Wendell - Good Neighbors Wendell - that helps with food insecurity. Provide information in Town newsletter about services that help with energy insecurity. Get grants to provide support for older and low-income homeowners with repairs, weatherization, and energy efficiency. Continue to promote Mass Save, including the income-eligible program through Community Action Pioneer Valley, for insulation, air sealing, and heating system/appliance upgrades. Start a local community garden (maybe one of the farms would help out)	X	X	X	X		
Mutual aid agreements are in place for highway, fire, police, and regional shelters	Town and region-wide	Town, regional services	S	Maintain these agreements. Provide residents with timely information about sheltering options.	X	X	X	X		
Stoughton Place (14 affordable senior housing apartments) does not have a backup generator	Stoughton Place	Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority	V	Work with HRA's Director of Property Management to find funding for a generator that would energize the community room and the corridors leading to it, to be able to offer heating/cooling or the ability to power vital equipment in the event of a power outage.	X	X	X	X		
Limited housing diversity in town means seniors can't downsize and there are very few houses on the market.	Town wide	N/A	V	This situation suggests that as people age they may stay in their homes rather than downsizing. This reinforces the need for a network of volunteers to support people as they age in town. While there is an increase in multi-generational living situations, with family members able to help each other out, this is not a town-wide solution. At Stoughton Place, there is a long waiting list and rare turnover. Gill residents have no special priority at this location over any applicant.	X	X	X	X		

Societal (cont.)

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix



TOWN OF GILL

H-M-L priority for action over the Short, Long term, or Ongoing

V = Vulnerability S = Strength

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S	Recommendations	Top Priority Hazards				Priority	
					Extreme Precipitation	Drought	Wind & Microbursts	Extreme temperatures	H - M - L	Short Long Ongoing
There are multiple community events in Gill that bring people together	Town-wide	N/A	S	KEEP GOING & PROMOTE <i>add to their report</i>	X	X	X	X		
Residents are so independent that helping them is often difficult	Town-wide	N/A	V	The TRIAD group with FCHOC used to work well. Also meals on wheels need to see at least one person in order to leave meals maybe this could be expanded. They are mandated reporters. - yes wrong	X	X	X	X		
Mental health responders are now available 24/7 & dedicated to Gill 1 day/week through a state funded program.	Town-wide	N/A	S/V	If this program continues to be successful, work with state legislators to ensure that funding is sustainable over the long term.	X	X	X	X		
There is an increase in multi-generational living situations, with family members able to help each other out	Town-wide	N/A	S		X	X	X	X		
Increased storm runoff affects water quality in streams, ponds, and wetlands, affecting both people and other species. Need for more water quality testing and public outreach.	Town-wide	Private	V	Contact the Connecticut River Conservancy and see if locations in Gill could be added to their water quality monitoring program.	X					
<i>↳ Maybe Environmental/Infrastructure as well</i>										
<i>TICKS AWARENESS/ATTENTION</i>	TOWN-WIDE		V							

Town-wide Inventory - Exchange of Resources

Environmental

Community Resilience Building Risk Matrix



TOWN OF GILL

Top Priority Hazards

H-M-L priority for action over the Short, Long term, or Ongoing

V = Vulnerability S = Strength

Recommendations	Extreme Precipitation	Drought	Wind & Microbursts	Extreme temperatures	Priority		Time
					H M L	Short Long Ongoing	

Features	Location	Ownership	V or S
----------	----------	-----------	--------

Town has extensive forest cover that is getting more mature. This is a strength, as trees absorb carbon, create shading, and provide habitat and human health benefits. But older and taller trees may be susceptible to climate extremes like wind.	Town-wide	Private/town	S/V	Specialty nurseries to assist with landowners through... Conserve forest land. Designate wild reserves, and more broadly promote ecological/climate forestry that maintains diverse forest age, structure, and species GET MORE, MANAGE		X	X			
Invasive species, particularly pests such as hemlock woolly adelgid, are proliferating from climate changes and are affecting tree survival.	Town-wide		V	Consider targeted treatments in ecologically sensitive areas or other priority areas identified by the community. PROVIDE MATERIALS AT LOCAL LEVEL	X	X		X		
Recent blowdowns are fuel in the case of forest fires, and are likely to increase with maturing forest and more severe windstorms.	Pisgah Mountain, Barney Hale Road	Private/town	V	Diversify forest age structure		X	X			
Access in large forest tracts is difficult, may affect forest fire fighting ability	Forested areas around Darby and Mason Hills	Private/town	V	Survey town for areas of greatest fire vulnerability; work with landowners to plan response to blowdowns and fire. Identify structures that are most at risk.		X				
Hiking trails in forests provide climate refuge. Public access to trails limited to town-owned land @ Town Forest and Mountain Road. Extensive trail system exists on private lands with public access limited to snowmobile club and private agreements.	Blake Town Forest	Town/private	S/V	Maintain existing public trails; work with landowners to expand access on private land -Townwide group/trail committee to manage trails PLANNING				X		
River fluctuations from Northfield Mountain pumped storage project combined with natural river events is causing erosion along the CT River, causing loss of steep banks that affect emergency and fire use.	Land abutting Connecticut River	Private	V	Continue working with Firstlight and state agencies to reduce impact of river pumping and to stabilize and restore banks. Explore possibility of establishing secure access to the river for fire and rescue vehicles.	X					
Local farms are a great asset. Farmers are experiencing increased pest pressure and crop losses from warming winters and extreme wet and dry events	Town-wide farmland	Private	S/V	Conserve farmland. Work with farmers to broaden access to local food. Work with Agriculture Commission to ensure farmers know what state and federal support is available for pest and weather impacts	X		X			
Increased beaver populations improve habitat in some areas but contribute to infrastructure problems.	North Cross Rd, South Cross Rd, Barn Hale Rd, Barney Hale Rd	Private	S/V	Survey town for impacted or vulnerable infrastructure. Work with landowners and state agencies to see if beaver impoundments can be managed.	X					
There aren't many places for residents to swim - swimming holes have dried up and CT River access difficult.	Dry Brook on Boyle Road, CT River	Private	V	Identify landowners who would allow access to river (safe/stable/accessible) Survey town for swimming possibilities and assess what would be needed to make them usable and accessible			X		X	
Coldwater fish, like brook trout, and associated fishing opportunities have declined or been eliminated in small streams in town	Dry Brook/Unadilla Brook	Private	V	Promote riparian Assess status of these fish and opportunities to revive fishery or promote new fishing opportunities.			X		X	
Boating, canoeing, kayaking and paddleboarding provides relief from summer heat and connection with nature. There is no public access for boats on 1.5 miles of Connecticut River in Gill for residents. Closest access sites are at Barton Cove and Pachaug boat access in Northfield.	Connecticut River	Private	V	Survey town for opportunities to build new boating access site, or repurpose or expand use to existing sites (NMH boat dock, etc). LOOK AT ACCESS POSSIBILITIES OF PISGAH Mtn. ROAD/RIVER Rd					X	
invasive plants/pests.			V	put pamphlet w/ images in quarterly newsletter to warn/teach landowners			X		X	
Erosion along dry brook near Center Cemetery	Dry brook/Center Cemetery	Private/Town	V	routine monitoring, stabilization						

MANAGE FOR FLOOD/EROSION (4-10-2024)

Appendix E: MVP Listening Session



SELECTBOARD AGENDA & MEETING NOTICE

March 23, 2026

***Indicates item added after the 48 hour posting
bold underlined time = invited guest or advertised hearing
(all other times are approximate)

Location: Town Hall, 2nd floor meeting room, 325 Main Road, Gill

5:30 PM Call to Order (If the meeting is being videotaped, announce that fact. If remote participation will occur, announce member & reason, & need for roll call voting)

MVP Plan – Public Listening Session

- Overview of MVP program, process, & Summary of Findings
- Priority next steps/actions and implementation methods
- Q&A and public comments

Old Business

- Review of Minutes: 2025: 3/24, 4/7, 4/22, 5/5, 5/20, 6/2, 6/16, 6/30, 8/11, 8/18, 9/8, 9/17, 10/6, 10/16, 10/20, 11/3, 11/17, 12/15, 12/29; 2026: 1/12, 1/26, 2/9, 3/9
- Proposed APR acquisition on Boyle Road by Mass Dept. of Agricultural Resources (MDAR)
 - MDAR is requesting Town's consent to reduce 120-day notice period to not less than 60 days
 - MDAR is requesting Town's assistance with a local contribution of \$14,250 (5% of the APR value of \$285K). Any funds not contributed by Town are taken as bargain sale by landowner
- Highway Department – Snow & Ice budget deficit, guidance on purchasing salt

New Business

- Highway Department - Chapter 90 project – chip sealing southern end of Mountain Road from Main Road to high tension lines (approx. 1 mile); use Highway budget or Chapter 90 funds for approx. \$12,536 of crack sealing? (Chapter 90 funds: \$73,694 w/o crack sealing or \$87,484 w/ crack sealing)
- Memorial Committee – purchase order request - \$12,133 to Negus & Taylor Monuments for new monument (funding split between donation accounts, possible grant, and private contributions)
- Fire Department – purchase order request - new water tank (\$3,865 from United Plastic Fabricating) & plumbing supplies for Brush Truck
- Review & adopt “Sustainable Purchasing Policy” – replaces the *Recycled Product Purchasing Policy* and is a requirement to receive Recycling Dividend Program funds from MassDEP
- Renewal of Food Concession Trailer License for 2026 – Cielito Lindo
- Other business as may arise after the agenda has been posted.
- Public Service Announcements, if any
 - Planning Board public hearing on proposed zoning bylaw changes – Thur, March 26th @ 7 PM
 - Gill Elementary Roof Project – info sessions Wed, Apr 8 @5:30PM and Sat, Apr 11 @9:30AM
 - Computer Classes for seniors starting April 3. Keep the computer after attending all 6 classes!
- Warrants
FY26 #19 – Vendors (\$596,751.64) & Payroll (\$41,664.99) – reviewed/signed on 3/9
FY26 #20 – review & sign

Adjournment

Other Invitations/Meetings:

Date	Time	Event	Location
Mon 4/6	5:30 PM	Selectboard meeting	Town Hall
Mon 4/20		Patriots' Day holiday	
Tues 4/21	5:30 PM	Selectboard meeting	Town Hall



Municipal
Vulnerability
Preparedness (MVP)
Listening Session

Town of Gill



March 23, 2026



1

Agenda


- Overview of the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program
- Summary of Workshop Findings
- Feedback on the Action Plan

2

Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP)

- ✓ Provides support for MA municipalities to plan for climate change resiliency and implement priority projects that are *important to the community*
- ✓ Provides a simple, straightforward process
- ✓ Certifies municipalities as MVP communities
- ✓ Provides funding to complete design & implementation of resiliency projects





3

Program Outcomes

*A climate resilient town will be able to **maintain** functions, **protect** its residents and emerge stronger and **better prepared** for a changing climate.*


RESILIENCE






4


Changing Climate Variables




Increased precipitation



More frequent droughts



Higher temperatures



More frequent & intense storms

Amplify existing risks:


- Community and regional infrastructure & economies
- Public health and well being
- Natural resources and our environment

***Goal for building resilience to a changing climate:
Protect life, property, natural resources and the economy***

5

Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program Launched 2017

>\$100 million awarded to 341 cities and towns for Planning & Action Grants

View the MVP grants in the tabs below: Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program 

Legend

MVP Region Boundaries

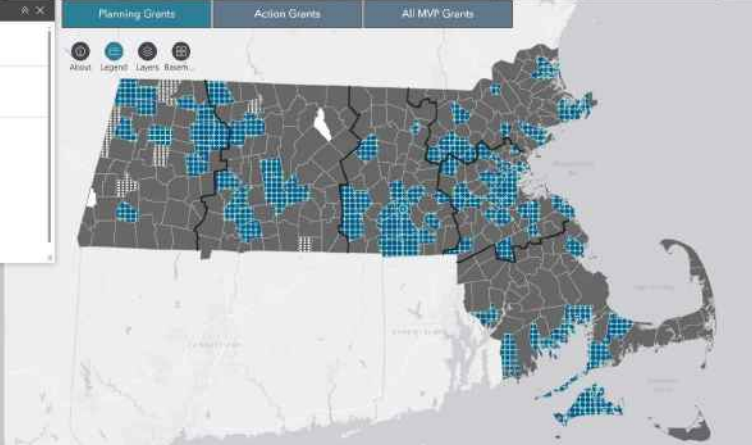
MVP 2.0 Tribes

MVP Planning Grant municipalities

MVP Planning Status

- Completed the MVP 2.0 Process
- MVP 2.0 in progress (Achieved MVP 1.0 designation)
- Achieved MVP 1.0 designation
- MVP 1.0 in progress
- Not yet part of the MVP program


About Legend Layers Search




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Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP)


Community Components



Infrastructural



Societal



Environmental

Gill Community Resilience Building Workshops

January 20 & February 11

- ✓ Identified top local natural and climate-related hazards of concern
- ✓ Identified existing and future strengths and vulnerabilities
- ✓ Developed a list of prioritized actions for the Community

7

Workshop Participants

Town Administration

Highway Department

Fire Department

Police Department

Emergency Management

Conservation Commission

Planning Board

Energy Committee

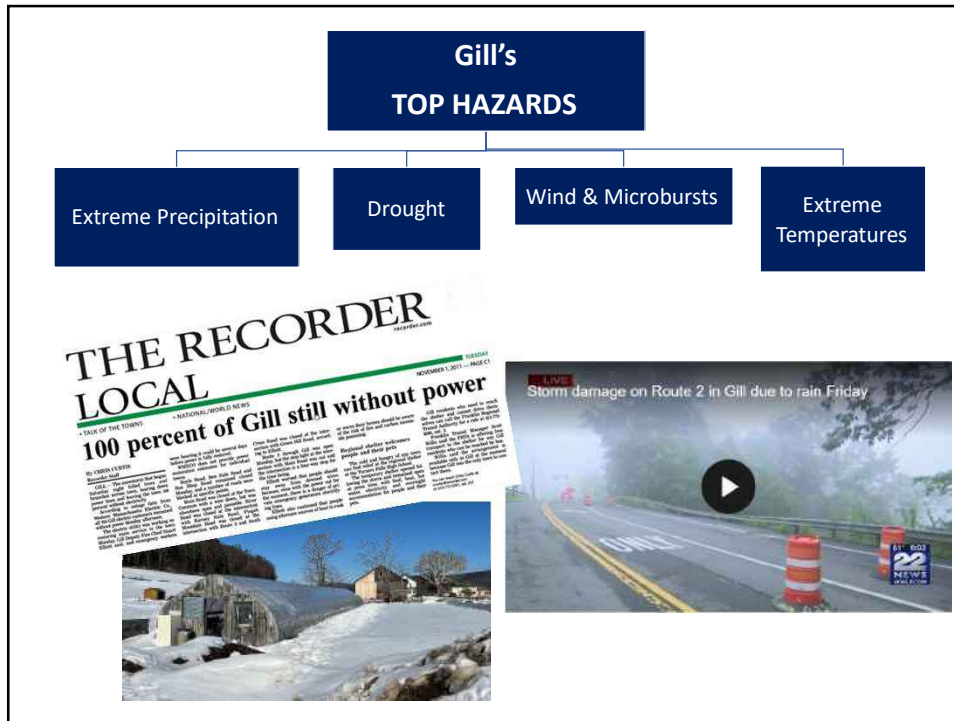
Eversource

Residents!

Benefits of having participants from different sectors/departments:




- Local knowledge and experience
- Working across departments / sectors
- Reaching consensus

8



9

Gill's Vulnerabilities

 Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate road drainage for today's storms Communication gap near Public Safety Complex No warming or cooling center in town
 Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in insect-borne diseases Growing need to help seniors in times of emergency Very little housing diversity (86% single-family homes)
 Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invasive species threaten farming, ecology & infrastructure High wildfire potential throughout Town Increased precipitation contributes to stormwater runoff

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Gill's Strengths

- Recent Eversource tree cuttings lowered power loss risk
- Strong mutual aid system with local fire departments plus new 4WD fire engine
- Residents are independent, hardy, and tough
- Many community events in town
- Locally grown food available
- Forests and local trails provide climate refuge

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Gill's MVP Action Plan

12



Draft Recommendations

Infrastructural

High Priority	Action
Address paved road drainage issues	Prioritize culverts, stormwater BMPs, bridges to maintain, upgrade, and replace.
Backup generators for Town Hall and Elementary School	Seek funding so that one or both buildings can act as heating and cooling centers.
Resolve dead zone issue near Public Safety Complex	Improve understanding of the site and solutions; investigate microtower option.
Medium Priority	Action
Address unpaved road drainage issues	Rebuild road base, improve drainage through maintenance, install BMPs, post seasonal weight limits.
Reduce erosion in road shoulders	Establish adequately sized ditches, stabilize road shoulders, use check dams and other BMPs.
Establish more firefighting water access locations	Seek funding to install additional dry hydrants.

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Draft Recommendations

Societal

High Priority	Action
Support aging residents so they can stay in town	Update Gill zoning bylaw to promote housing diversity. Promote a network of volunteers to support senior residents.
Backup generator for Stoughton Place	Work with Franklin County Regional Housing & Rehabilitation Authority to get funding for generator.
Create a "resiliency" lending library	Create a lending library of portable generators, portable sump pumps, and other equipment that residents don't often need.
Hold knowledge sharing workshops	Share knowledge, skills, and resources on forest conservation, diversifying forest age, and invasive species removal.
Medium Priority	Action
Improve sheltering and information	Identify, plan, and communicate about shelter locations. Provide training for managing severe weather events. Create culture of giving and receiving help from neighbors.
Promote local farm stands	Update brochure on Gill farms. Promote local farms.
Monitor water quality in Gill	Work with CT River Conservancy to establish WQ monitoring site(s) in Gill.

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Draft Recommendations

Environmental

High Priority	Action
Manage invasive species	Educate residents on identification. Consider targeted treatments. Work with other towns to create a proper disposal area for invasives.
Reduce fire vulnerability	Identify areas and structures most at risk. Educate homeowners. Work with DCR on forest management plans. Capitalize on synergy between trail work, recreation, and firefighting access.
Expand public trail system	Maintain existing trails and work with landowners to establish more that are publicly accessible.
Reduce impact of river fluctuations	Work with FirstLight and others to reduce impact of Northfield Mountain. Establish secure access for emergency vehicles.
Protect Center Cemetery	Monitor Unadilla/Dry Brook and consult with fluvial geomorphologist to explore measures to protect cemetery.
Medium Priority	Action
Reduce mosquito & tick-borne illnesses	Increase PV Mosquito Control District monitoring locations. Educate residents about mosquito & tick control, illnesses. Continue funding tick testing program.
Improve water access	Identify locations and landowners to allow more water access in town for recreation and cooling.
New boat access site on CT River	Identify or expand boat access on the CT River for emergency management, fire protection, recreation, and cooling.

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Which resiliency action should Gill pursue first?

Infrastructural

- Address paved road drainage issues
- Backup generators for Town Hall and Elementary School
- Resolve dead zone issue near Public Safety Complex

Societal

- Support aging residents so they can stay in town
- Backup generator for Stoughton Place
- Create a “resiliency” lending library
- Hold knowledge sharing workshops

Environmental

- Manage invasive species
- Reduce fire vulnerability
- Expand public trail system
- Reduce impact of river fluctuations
- Protect Center Cemetery

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MVP Action Grants

 **Planning, Assessments, and Regulatory Updates**

 **Nature-based Solutions for Ecological and Public Health**

 **Resilient Redesigns and Retrofits for Critical Facilities and Infrastructure**



Photo credit: Mass DER


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Nature Based Solutions

Projects that restore, protect, and/or manage natural systems and/or mimic natural processes to address hazards like flooding, erosion, drought, and heat islands in ways that are cost-effective, low maintenance, and multi-beneficial for public health, safety, and well-being.



Riverbank restoration on the North River, Colrain MA



Low impact development project, Greenfield MA

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Example of funded & completed MVP Action Grant project:

Fort River Watershed Improvements for Flood & Water Quality Resilience

Amherst FY24

•Learn More:
•[Amherst Project Website](#)

AWARD	•\$169,250	MATCH	•\$56,838
PROJECT TYPE	Design & Permitting		
CORE PRINCIPLES DEMONSTRATED	Furthering a community identified action to address climate change; Conducting robust community engagement.		
DESCRIPTION	This project involved the data collection, design and permitting for the replacement of three culverts throughout the Fort River Watershed. The design incorporates predicted 2070 storm flows and provides wildlife passage by meeting the Massachusetts Stream Crossing Standards.		

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Example of funded & completed MVP Action Grant project:

Ashfield Living Culture and Rural Climate Resilience Project

Ashfield FY25

*Ashfield experienced inland flooding in 2023/24, demonstrated financial need, and included a focus on NBS for flood resilience in this project.

Learn more: [Visit the Ashfield project website](#)

AWARD \$166,000 MATCH \$0*

PROJECT TYPE	Planning, Assessments, Capacity Building , and Regulatory Updates
CORE PRINCIPLES DEMONSTRATED	Building community capacity for climate resilience; Conducting robust community engagement and supporting strong partnerships with EJ; Achieving broad and multiple community benefits.
DESCRIPTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town collaboration with local arts and culture organizations Double Edge Theatre and Ohketeau Cultural Center. Focus on equitable and inclusive outreach, engagement, and relationship-building. Core themes: Clean Energy, Affordable Housing, Nature-based Solutions. Three Community Dinners & dialogues, two Site Tours, Community Resilience Day.

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Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness: NEXT STEPS

1. Incorporate public comments into Summary of Findings
2. Submit MVP Plan to be designated an MVP community
3. To maintain designation, the town submits a yearly progress report describing steps taken to implement priority actions, such as:
 - a) Applying for MVP or other grants
 - b) Working to implement local policies or bylaws
 - c) Updating existing local plans using workshop outcomes
 - d) Completing more detailed vulnerability assessments

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Community input welcome!

- **2-week public comment period** through Monday April 6 at 5:00 pm
- The full draft is posted on the Town website: www.gillmass.org/MVP
- Submit comments to Town Administrator Ray Purington (administrator@gillmass.org) or FRCOG Planner Andrea Donlon (adonlon@frcog.org)



Town of Gill



Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program

MVP Resiliency Plan


DRAFT March 2026

Facilitated by the
Franklin Regional Council of Governments
A State-Certified MVP Provider




22

Gill Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan



Q & A



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graph LR; A[1. Engage Community] --> B[2. Identify impacts & hazards]; B --> C[3. Assess vulnerabilities & strengths]; C --> D[4. Develop & prioritize actions]; D --> E[5. Take action]
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ERIN-LEIGH HOFFMAN / Staff Photo

Gill town officials listen to Franklin Regional Council of Governments Senior Land Use and Natural Resources Planner Andrea Donlon, right, who presented the draft Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) plan for Gill on Monday.

Input sought on draft MVP plan

Feedback due
Monday, April 6

By ERIN-LEIGH HOFFMAN
Staff Writer

GILL — The town is seeking feedback from residents on a draft Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) plan until Monday, April 6.

The 41-page draft plan, prepared by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG), details some of the town's infrastructural, societal and environmental needs, along with what strengths it has for hazard resiliency. Once the public comment period on the draft plan closes, FRCOG will submit the plan to the state, and the town would become eligible for grants to support projects and programs identified by the MVP process.

"We had a lot of different town departments represented as workshop participants and board members, which was really great," FRCOG Senior Land Use and Natural Resources Planner Andrea Donlon told the Selectboard on Monday about the process of drafting the plan. "The conversations

were very fruitful."

The draft breaks down the top concerns for Gill's infrastructural, societal and environmental needs. These include first responder communication gaps from a lack of service connectivity, roadway conditions, stormwater drainage, no access to warming centers during extreme temperatures, wildfire threats from surrounding forests, invasive species, a lack of housing diversity, support for senior residents and insect-borne illness.

Underscoring one of these issues was Gill Fire Chief William Kimball, who shared that the service dead zone around the Public Safety Complex at 196 Main Road impacts first responders' emergency radios. He said that as long as the internet connection at the complex is stable, they have repeaters to boost the Wi-Fi connectivity for these radios, except for when they are in areas behind the building.

"I know we can be on a call and all of a sudden lose [service] at the shop," Highway Superintendent John Miner said.

In terms of some of the hazard resiliency ideas that could eventually receive MVP

grant funding, Donlon highlighted a need to install backup generators at Gill Elementary School, Town Hall and Stoughton Place, the senior living facility; resolve the Public Safety Complex dead zone; create a resiliency library so residents can borrow emergency preparedness items; hold knowledge-sharing workshops to educate neighbors; and support aging Gill residents so they can continue to live in town, among other goals.

The town's roads and culverts are also of concern, with Selectboard member Greg Snedeker noting that MVP funds could support replacing or repairing aging culverts. Miner agreed.

Energy Commission Chair Vicky Jenkins commented that roadway infrastructure is "the top priority." Jenkins also said that the idea of putting backup generators in municipal buildings is good in case of prolonged power outages.

Comments can be sent to Town Hall via Town Administrator Ray Purington, who can be reached at administrator@gillmass.org. A copy of the draft plan is available on the town website at tinyurl.com/38rrv7ba.