

August 2022

PINNACLE

Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

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Save the Date:

**Calendar of Upcoming Meetings
and Trainings**

Cover Photo
Mark of the Potter
Habersham County, GA
Courtesy of Laurin Yoder, GMRC

Executive Director's Report



Heather Feldman
Executive Director

- Congratulations to **Union** County who was recently named one of the top 50 performing non-metro communities in the nation for economic development!!

- Congratulations to Council Member Vicki Boling who recently received the designation of becoming a member of Rotary's Paul Harris Society. Globally, out of 1.4 million Rotarians, just over 20,000 are members of the Paul Harris Society! Thank you, Vicki, for your service to changing lives in the community.



- Thank you to the City of **Hiwassee** for allowing GMRC to facilitate the city council's strategic planning retreat on August 13th. It was a productive day, and we enjoyed getting to know the Hiwassee Council better.



- Thank you to **Lumpkin** County for hosting our regional city and county managers meeting on August 25th. We had great attendance, and it was a great day of peer-to-peer exchange and best practices. We were also fortunate to have staff from both ACCG and GMA attend and provide legislative updates. I would also like to thank Goodwyn Mills Cawood for sponsoring our lunch.

- The senior management team and I recently had a day long retreat focused on creating strategic direction and goal setting for the GMRC. In 2018, the GMRC Council adopted the first ever Strategic Plan for the organization with a goal to update the document every five years. Staff is gearing up for the 2023 update and planning for "where do we want to be as an organization" in five years. Thank you to the **Dahlonega-Lumpkin** County Chamber of Commerce for hosting us at their facility.



- The Development District Association of Appalachia (DDAA) recently held their summer board meeting in Cambridge, Ohio. As First Vice-President for DDAA, I was able to engage and learn from my peers about the issues and opportunities throughout the Appalachian Region as well as development training opportunities that will benefit communities in Appalachia. While we all serve different states, it's easy to see that we all share the same concerns.



- Thank you to **Habersham** County for hosting our monthly GMRC Council meeting. Our program this month was Council Member Training. Thank you to Congressman Andrew Clyde for attending the meeting.



- 2022 is the 60th anniversary of the GMRC!! **Save the Date - our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Friday, December 2nd beginning at 4:45 p.m. at the Dillard House.** The committee, chaired by Ms. Deborah Mack is working hard to plan a fun and festive evening for everyone. I appreciate the hard work of the committee and stay tuned for more information!

Sincerely,

Heather Feldman

Heather Feldman
Executive Director



Economic Development

- On behalf of the City of **Hiawassee**, an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) application in the amount of \$690,148 was submitted to assist with construction of a boardwalk between Mayor's Park and Lloyd's Landing.



- The Georgia Mountains **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and Regional Plan** is now available for public comment and review. This important document serves as the region's vision and plan for economic growth and development in advancing the area's economic prosperity and collectively sets forth a coordinated economic strategy for all 12 counties in the Georgia Mountains Region. To view this document , please visit [here](#).

Planning

Regional Transit Study Update

The GMRC is working with the Georgia Department of Transportation and their consultant partners to develop a pilot assessment of public transit needs and objective for the region. These will eventually be done for other regions across Georgia, and the information gathered will help shape future policy and programming for state support of local transit systems.

To date, the process has developed a profile of existing systems and county demands and conducted a series of interviews and surveys with local stakeholders to understand what is and isn't working about transit services in our region. They've also completed a draft of a vision and series of goals which will be used for guiding the development of recommendations in the final document.

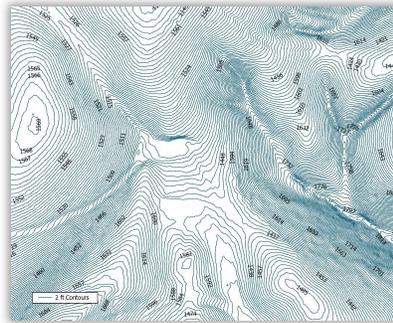
The next opportunity for public input will be a pair of virtual meetings will be held on September 22nd, at 12:00 PM and 6:00 PM. If you or someone you know has vested interest in transit services in your community, contact the GMRC about how to participate in either of these forums, or simply send your comments to ahazell@gmrc.ga.gov.



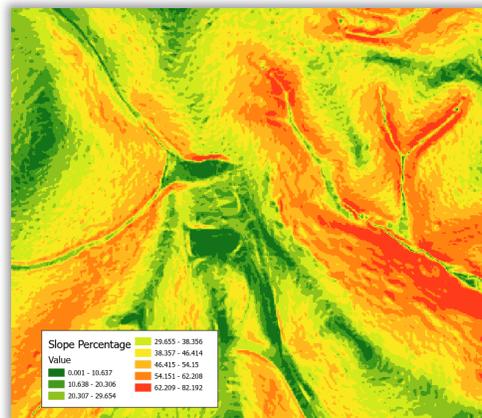
Part 2

One of the main purposes of LiDAR data is topographical analysis. This is the process of deriving data and products from a topographic dataset captured from remote sensing, such as LiDAR data.

One of the most popular and useful products derived from air to surface LiDAR data (like the data we recently received) are contour lines. Contour maps serve a variety of purposes. Nearly every project begins with a location, and knowledge of the surrounding terrain cannot be overrated when it comes to planning and improving our communities. From cell phone towers to reservoirs, an accurate account of the surface within area of interest sets the foundation of the project. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) creates the flood plain maps using LiDAR data. Knowing what areas are prone to flooding and what direction the flood waters may be moving are important factors when large amounts of the population become stranded in flood waters, as we have seen in Kentucky and across the nation this past month.



Another product derived from LiDAR data, that is often used along side contour lines is slope data. Slope data is useful in determining locations that may be prone to erosion, or to identify potential hazards, such as landslides. Slope data is also a practical tool when fighting wildfires. Slope maps aid in identifying geographic features such as ridges and valleys. A derivative of a slope map, an aspect-slope map, is used to determine the amount of solar energy a specific location can produce.



If you have any questions about the LiDAR data or you would like an estimate for any of LiDAR derivative products please contact Brandon Carlock at bcarlock@gmrc.ga.gov or the GIS Director. Faith Bryan at fbryan@gmrc.ga.gov.

WorkSource

- Staff attended community meetings in **Banks, Dawson, Habersham, Hall, Lumpkin, and Rabun** Counties reaching 150 community partners. Application and overview sessions were held in **Habersham, Hall and Stephens** Counties assisting 35 people in starting their career training programs. While attending Tech Express events at North Georgia Technical College, **Clarksville**, Currahee, and **Blairsville** staff assisted 15 students with applications.



- WIOA staff at the **Dawson** County - A Family Fair.

- Adult staff attended the Regional Manufacturing Sector Employer Tour at Tsubaki Nakashima (TN) headquarters in Forsyth. TN is a specialized manufacturer of precision balls and rollers as well ball screws and other mechanical parts. Cesar Rizo, Regional L3 / TPM Manager - Americas Region, presented on Tsubaki Nakashima's "systemic, plant-wide approach for continually improving all processes to deliver better value to the customer." The ultimate goals of the program are to improve quality, eliminate waste, reduce lead time and increase efficiency.



- Business Services Staff joined the Manufacturing Society of Forsyth County in partnership with Next Generation Manufacturing for a tour of the **LG-MRI** production facility in Forsyth County. LG-MRI is the market leader in the design and manufacture of digital outdoor LCD display solutions used in public venues for advertising and wayfinding.

WorkSource Georgia Mountains: Business Services

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING (OJT)

- Get reimbursed 50% - 75% of wages earned while training your new employee(s)
- Maximum of 800 hours or \$12,000 of WIOA reimbursement per new employee
- Quick & simple - WorkSource Georgia Mountains handles ALL the paperwork
- You refer candidates to us to see if they qualify and you decide who to hire

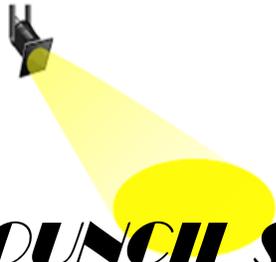
CONTACT:

Niki McPherson, OJT Coordinator P: 770.538.2734 E: nmcpherson@gmrc.ga.gov W: www.gmrc.ga.gov/employers	Daniel Thomson, Business Services P: 770.538.2597 E: dthomson@gmrc.ga.gov W: www.gmrc.ga.gov/employers	
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- Would you like to train new employees without it effecting your bottom line? WorkSource Georgia Mountains can help! Take advantage of our On the Job Training Program (OJT). OJT can assist companies who are looking to expand their business and need additional staff trained with specialized skills by providing wage reimbursements to employers. This will help compensate the costs associated with training and loss of production for newly hired employees. Employers interested in partnering with WorkSource Georgia Mountains for Temporary Work Experiences, Internships, or On-the-Job Training or that need Incumbent Worker Training, should contact Niki McPherson at 770.538.2734 or nmcpherson@gmrc.ga.gov. More information can be found [here](#).

Events Around the Region

<p align="center">Clayton Farmers Market Reopening!</p> <p>April 2 - October 1, 2022 9a.m.-12p.m. Saturdays only</p> <p>Clayton Food Bank 46 Plaza Way Clayton, GA 30525</p> <p>Homemade foods, plants, honey, breads, mushrooms, pottery, and more!</p> <p>Call (706)490-1179 or visit the page on Facebook for more information</p>	<p align="center">Georgia Mountain Fairgrounds— Towns County</p> <p>Dailey & Vincent's American Made Music Fest September 15-17, 2022 1 p.m.-10p.m.</p> <p>NE Georgia Mustang Club's 49th Annual Mustang Car Show September 23-24, 2022</p> <p>For more information please visit: Georgiamountainfairgrounds.com</p>	<p align="center">Currahee Military Weekend</p> <p>Historic Downtown Toccoa September 29—October 2, 2022</p> <p>Come honor the military history of Toccoa. The event will be held throughout the weekend with a banquet, reenactment, Currahee Mountain Run, parade, and more! Visit our website for more details!</p> <p>www.mainstreettoccoa.com</p>
<p align="center">Hiawassee Night Market</p> <p>First Fridays May—October 5 p.m.—10 p.m. Free Event</p> <p>Town Square 19 S. Main Street Hiawassee, GA,</p> <p>Family friendly, open-air night artist and artesian market with fresh produce, food trucks, games, and live music.</p>	<p align="center">First Friday Fest in Clayton</p> <p>First Fridays of the Month in June through October 2022</p> <p>Live concerts, food, and vendors.</p> <p>Rock House on Main Street Clayton, GA 30525</p> <p>(706) 982 1284</p>	<p align="center">First Friday in Gainesville</p> <p>Friday, September 2, 2022</p> <p>Every first Friday from June through September.</p> <p>Starts at 6 p.m.—Bring your lawn chairs and picnic blankets!</p> <p>Historic Gainesville Square 301 Main Street Gainesville, GA 30501</p>
<p align="center">Town of Clermont Festival</p> <p>Clermont Days Festival September 16 & 17, 2022 639 Main Street Clermont, GA 30527</p> <p>Parade, fire works, live entertainment, arts & crafts, food and more!</p>	<p align="center">Weekends in Dawsonville</p> <p>Food Truck Fridays September 9, 2022 5-8 p.m. Farmers Market Pavilion 86 Allen Street Dawsonville, Georgia</p> <p>Labor Day Car Show Saturday, September 3, 2022 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Georgia Racing Hall of Fame 415 Hwy 53 East Dawsonville, GA For more car show info, click here.</p>	<p>Want your event listed? Please send all regional events with date, time, and location to arus-sell@gmrc.ga.gov the month before the event and we will do our best to have it featured!</p>



GMRC COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT!

Bruce Palmer, Chairman, Habersham County BOC



Bruce Palmer is the Chairman of Habersham County's Board of Commissioners. Bruce has served on the board for almost two years. He has had an active career with the Fire and Emergency Services for over 30 years. Bruce was a volunteer fire fighter with the Habersham County Volunteer Firefighters for 30 years, worked with the Hall County Fire Services for 25 years, and has had multiple training and education posts throughout the years, as well as being a business owner for 30 years. Among the many accomplishments of public safety service, Bruce also has been able to serve on many committees and boards. Other than being Chairman of Habersham Board of Commissioners, he has been on the Chestatee Chattahoochee Regional Development Board, the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, Avita Board, and Habersham County Board of Health. He has an ACCG Core Commissioner Certification and has served on numerous committees such as ACCG Economic Development and Transportation Committee, ACCG Public Safety and Courts Committee, as well as ACCG Health and Human Services Committee. Bruce has a Specialty Track in Leadership Development, as well as a Specialty Track in Economic Development and Transportation.

When he is not busy with his public service commitments, Bruce likes to spend time with his four sons and four grandchildren. His favorite thing about the region is the people that it is made of. His future hopes are for the region to retain its rural charm all the while increasing businesses and industries to thrive in the future.



We thank you Bruce for your commitment to our region!

UPCOMING GMRC COUNCIL MEETINGS AND PROGRAMS



- ⇒ September 29, 2022 **White County**
- ⇒ October 27, 2022* **Dahlonega/Lumpkin County**
- ⇒ November 17, 2022* **City of Dawsonville**

GMRC Council Meetings begin at 6:00 PM; Executive Committee meets prior at 5:00 PM.

*** WD Board Meeting at 4:00 PM**