

The berries are bursting, the cicadas are humming, and we hope you're taking full advantage of what remains in the summer season. There's no better way to enjoy Vermont's natural beauty than to spend time in the outdoors: go for a walk, make a bouquet of sunflowers, and savor the sunshine!



QUICK LINKS

- [Hot Issues](#)
- [Learn About VNRC](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Become an Activist](#)

[Join VNRC!](#)



We have a wealth of opportunities to help you transition into fall.

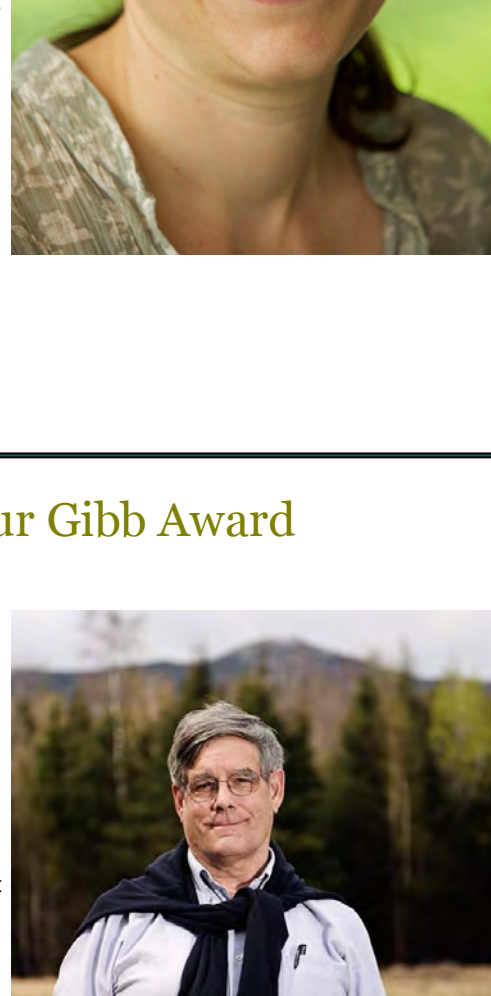
Mark your calendars for our sixth annual Wild and Scenic Film Festival, and don't forget to [RSVP](#) for our Annual Meeting at Farm and Wilderness Camps in Plymouth, at which we will honor a very special Vermonter with the Arthur Gibb Award. And read on to learn how you can take action to help more Vermonters weatherize their homes and start saving money and energy.

Thanks, as always, to the thousands of VNRC members and activists who make our work possible!

VNRC NEWS

Staff Profile: Kate McCarthy, VNRC's Sustainable Communities Program Director

Kate McCarthy has worked as VNRC's Sustainable Communities Program Director since October 2011. Kate brings her background in land use planning to VNRC's work, and collaborates closely with VNRC's three other programs to help advance energy, forest and wildlife, and water protection efforts using land use planning techniques. Smart growth is a big part of Kate's work. "We can't think about environmental health without also thinking about how humans use the landscape," she said. "Where we live, how we get around, and how we use land all impact our natural resources, so I promote smart growth solutions as environmental and community solutions."

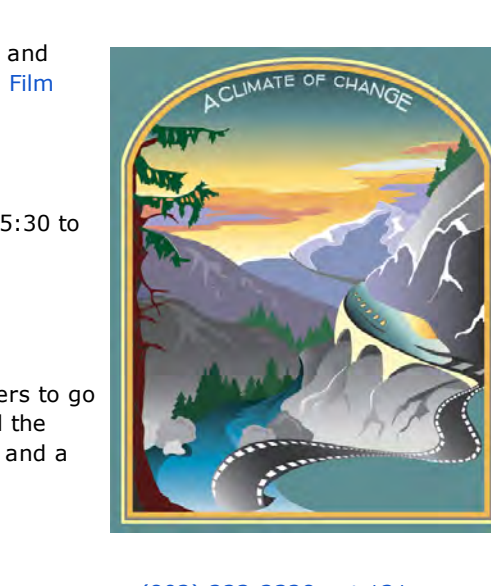


Before coming to VNRC, Kate worked as a regional planner for the Windham Regional Commission in Brattleboro. She holds a Master of Regional Planning from Cornell University, and a B.A. in Cultural Anthropology from Rice University. Before beginning her career in planning, she worked in the field of international education in Washington state, which allowed her to travel to China and Mexico. Kate and her husband, Tom Leahy, originally hail from Maine and now enjoy living in Montpelier. She enjoys the many pastimes that are so accessible: from walking downtown to hiking and cycling through the landscape.

Contact Kate: kmccarthy@vnrc.org, (802) 223-2328 x 114.

Bob Klein to Receive 2013 Arthur Gibb Award

VNRC is delighted to announce that Bob Klein will receive this year's Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership at our Annual Meeting on Thursday, September 19. This award is presented annually to a Vermont resident who embodies qualities similar to Arthur Gibb, the Vermont lawmaker who dedicated much of his life to public service and a healthy environment.



Since becoming the executive director of the Vermont Chapter of The Nature Conservancy in 1979, Klein has built a legacy for Vermont that Arthur Gibb personally supported. In addition to building an organization with over 6,500 members, he has been the foremost leader in protecting Vermont's fragile natural communities.

VNRC's Annual Meeting will take place at Farm and Wilderness Camps in Plymouth from 5:30-7 pm. Hors d'oeuvres will be catered by Farm and Wilderness, and a cash bar provided by East Creek Catering in Rutland. We've also lined up an excellent guest speaker: author Ben Hewitt, who wrote *The Town that Food Saved*, about the agricultural entrepreneurs who helped develop a sustainable economy in Hardwick. Hewitt's newest work, *Saved*, examines the role of money in the modern world.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Mari Zagarins at mzagarins@vnrc.org or (802) 223-2328 ext 121. Come and have fun with us!

Announcing VNRC's Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival

VNRC is excited to partner with Burlington retailers Skirack and Patagonia for our sixth annual Wild & Scenic Environmental Film Festival!



This fun event is scheduled for Thursday, October 24 from 5:30 to 9 pm at the Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center in Burlington.

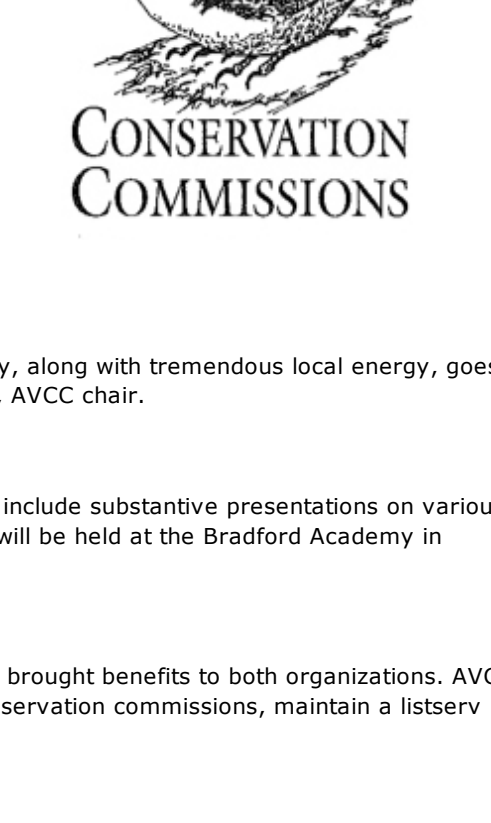
This event aims to inspire, educate, and motivate moviegoers to go out and make a difference in their communities and around the world. Join us for great food, drinks, a stellar silent auction and a fun and inspiring program of films.

For more information, contact Mari Zagarins at mzagarins@vnrc.org or (802) 223-2328 ext 121.

See us at the movies!

Button Up Vermont! A Statewide Day of Action

Making homes and buildings more energy efficient saves money and energy. It's also a powerful way to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change.



On October 5th, communities across Vermont are organizing events to motivate their friends and neighbors to retrofit - a.k.a. weatherize - their homes. To succeed, these communities need volunteers to help in a local "Button Up" energy efficiency action.

The Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network (VECAN), in partnership with VNRC, Efficiency Vermont, and local organizers participating in the Vermont Home Energy Challenge, is matching volunteers with local communities participating in the October 5 Day of Action. Local organizers will have a specific action plan - likely a door-to-door, phone-a-thon, tabling event, or something else - and VECAN will direct volunteers to the nearest local action, or an action in need of more volunteer support.

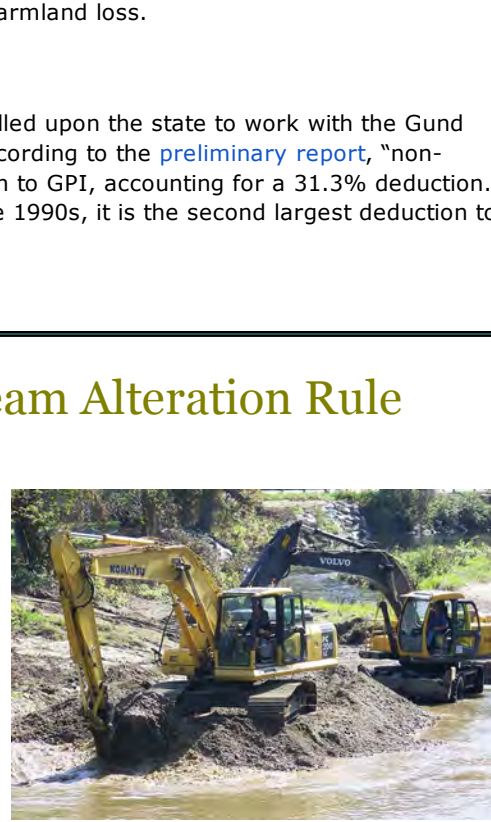
This one-day statewide event will be the first ever grassroots day of action taking on weatherization in Vermont - volunteer and help us make it a success! Commit a few hours of your time and help inspire your friends, neighbors and fellow Vermonters to invest in heating efficiency.

For more information, contact Johanna Miller at jmiller@vnrc.org or (802) 223-2328 ext 112.

VERMONT NEWS

AVCC Awards Grants, Invites You to October "Summit"

The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions recently awarded several grants to local conservation commissions, and the group has also scheduled its annual meeting/conservation "summit."



The awardees of AVCC's Tiny Grant program funding this year were: the Dorset Conservation Commission to fund a new informational kiosk and sign; the Fayston Natural Resources Committee for the construction of a shed roof addition to an existing shelter; and the Plainfield Conservation Commission for a trail consultant to design and map out a trail system in the 28-acre town forest. AVCC also granted the Warren Conservation Commission funding to help fund field verification of wildlife corridors. Grants ranged from \$470-\$600.

These dollars are targeted to the right place. "A little money, along with tremendous local energy, goes a long way for local conservation efforts," said Jake Brown, AVCC chair.

Also, AVCC set October 5 for its annual meeting, which will include substantive presentations on various topics relevant to conservation commissions. The meeting will be held at the Bradford Academy in Bradford.

Last year, AVCC and VNRC created a strategic alliance that brought benefits to both organizations. AVCC will continue to offer the grant program to help support conservation commissions, maintain a listserv and publish a newsletter, among other things.

Please sign up and stay tuned to the [AVCC listserv](#) for more details on the annual meeting and other news.

Gund Institute Unveils Findings on New Indicator

UVM's Gund Institute for Ecological Economics recently offered an early peek at its findings on research related to an alternative progress index known the Genuine Progress Indicator, or GPI.



Unlike conventional measures like Gross State Product, GPI looks at social, economic, and environmental factors - both pluses and minuses - when calculating our overall well-being. The state of Maryland uses GPI along with Gross State Product in analyzing state policy.

Among Gund's early findings: Vermont's GPI is dragged down by several environmental factors, including the cost of non-renewable energy depletion and farmland loss.

In 2012, the Vermont Legislature passed Act 113, which called upon the state to work with the Gund Institute to develop a state Genuine Progress Indicator. According to the preliminary report, "non-renewable energy depletion" is the "single largest deduction to GPI, accounting for a 31.3% reduction." And while farmland is being lost at a slower rate than in the 1990s, it is the second largest deduction to GPI in the environmental category.

DEC Seeking Comments on Stream Alteration Rule

A new proposed administrative rule is designed to help who contractors and others manipulate streams both during emergencies and non-emergencies.



The new rule stems from legislation passed in the wake of Tropical Storm Irene. That legislation directed the Agency of Natural Resources to revisit requirements governing digging in rivers and changing stream flow.

According to ANR, establishing clear and enforceable standards for the regulation of stream alterations during emergency situations and at other times will reduce local, state, and federal costs. Adopted state standards will enable towns to meet federal filing requirements for FEMA reimbursement.

Public hearings are set for September and the deadline for public comments is September 19.

Newspaper: Quechee Project in "Wrong Location"

A district environmental commission recently denied a large, mixed-use development proposed for Route 4 just off Interstate 89 because it failed to conform with the regional plan, a requirement for developments under Act 250.



The proposal's first phase would have included 10 buildings on 12.5 acres including 10,000 sq ft of residential space, 43,000 sq. ft. of retail space, and 62,000 sq. ft. of office space.

In a recent editorial, the Valley News praised the commission's decision in the case, saying that while the project may have been thoughtfully designed, "it's in the wrong location."

The paper noted that the project would have undermined the economic health of existing development centers of Quechee Village, White River Junction, and Woodstock.

The project was proposed for the town of Hartford. Hartford's town plan is more friendly to such development, but under Act 250, in cases where the project is of "substantial regional impact" it must be reviewed under the regional plan.

Stream Gauges in Vermont on Chopping Block

Stream gauges in the Lake Champlain basin will likely be the victim of federal cuts, and the result will be less information about flooding and pollution.



Unless the funding is restored or local groups take over the gauges, the federal government will likely begin to close the gauge stations in the coming months. Ten measurement stations - which look like small sheds along river banks with electrical equipment attached - in Vermont are targeted under the cuts.

The gauges not only help the state understand when flooding is imminent, but they also provide important information to help pinpoint pollution sources and movements. They also offer longer-term data to help the state plan for adaptation to climate change.

[Read a recent news account in the Burlington Free Press](#)>>

UPCOMING EVENTS

Shoreland Protection Public Meetings Underway

A series of public presentations began last week on Vermont's water protection strategies, and will include discussion of adding additional state safeguards to shorelands around lakes and ponds.



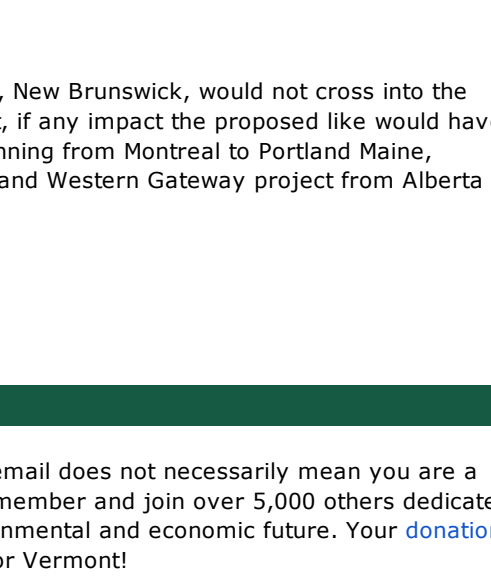
The first of the meetings took place last Friday, August 9, in Newport. The next meeting is Thursday, August 22 at the Kehoe Conservation Camp in Castleton.

At the meetings, which will continue into fall, a group of lawmakers and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation are explaining Vermont's water quality programs and outline the importance of safeguarding lakeshores as a part of the state's overarching clean water strategy, and then take questions and comments from the audience.

This past winter the Vermont lawmakers began crafting legislation to encourage greater protection for lakes and ponds. The House passed a solid bill last year and the Senate will likely act on the issue in January.

Native American Activist to Speak About Tar Sands

Native American climate justice activist Clayton Thomas-Muller will present "Tar Sands, Unconventional Oil and Pipelines: Indigenous Resistance and Struggles for Sovereignty in North America." His talk will describe a social movement led by Indigenous Peoples to defend against encroachments by oil extraction, pipelines and refineries; protect Earth's air, land and water; and honor Indigenous sovereignty.



Thomas-Muller, recognized as one of the "Top 30 Under 30 Activists" in the United States by Utne magazine and as a "Climate Hero 2009" by Yes! magazine, is a member of the Mathias Colomb Cree Nation of Northern Manitoba, Canada. He is involved in many initiatives to support the building of an inclusive movement globally for energy and climate justice, and for the last eleven years he has campaigned across Canada, Alaska and the lower 48 states to help organize hundreds of First Nations, Alaska Native, and Native American communities to defend against the encroachment of the fossil fuel industry.

The presentation is free and open to the public, and scheduled for Sunday, August 25 at the Goddard College Haybarn Theatre in Plainfield from 7 - 8:30 pm.

Take a Tour with the Vermont Tree Farmer of the Year

Join Vermont Tree Farmer of the Year John Hemenway and Forester Paul Harwood for the Vermont Tree Farmer of the Year Field Day Tour. The tour will highlight various aspects of management, like invasives control, bank stabilization, and stream crossings.

The event takes place on Saturday, September 14 at the Hemenway Tree Farm in Strafford, 8:30 am - 2:30 pm. [Register for the tour](#)>>

Photograph: 2013 Tree Farmer of the Year, John Hemenway (left), accepting Tree Farmer of the Year award at VVA Annual Meeting on April 6, 2013 with Forester Paul Harwood (right) and Tree Farm Chair Al Robertson (center).

NATIONAL NEWS

EPA Stormwater Calculator Available to the Public

EPA's National Stormwater Calculator, a desktop application that estimates the annual amount of rainwater and frequency of runoff from a specific site anywhere in the United States, is now available. Estimates of stormwater are based on local soil conditions, land cover, and historic rainfall records.

The calculator is designed to be used by anyone interested in reducing runoff from a property, including site developers, landscape architects, urban planners, and homeowners.

The calculator accesses several national databases that provide soil, topography, rainfall, and evaporation information for the chosen site. The user supplies information about the site's land cover and selects the types of low impact development (LID) controls they would like to use.

Water that washes into rivers and lakes from rain and snowmelt often carries with it oil, grease and sediment. One important way to cut water pollution is to control this stormwater and let more of it seep into the ground where it can get filtered.

Skateboarding's Not a Crime; it Might Save Our Bacon

Danish property owners may be thanking skateboarders next time it rains.

Denmark has increasingly seen more heavy rainstorms in recent years as a result of climate change, and among the results have been numerous floods that have damaged roads and houses. Rather than create a stand-alone drainage system that would take up public space when not in use, designers in one city realized that the bowl-like structure of skateparks could hold excess water in the case of overflowing river banks. Located at the Roskilde Musicom complex on the island of Zealand, developers have set about creating an irrigation structure that would direct floodwaters into the skatepark in the event of a flood.

[Learn more about the skate park design](#)>>

TransCanada Continues to Eye Eastern Route for Oil

TransCanada would like to move via a new pipeline as much as 1.1 million barrels of oil a day from oil sands in Alberta to Canada's east coast, but the plan will likely face opposition from environmentalists and native communities.

The province of Quebec, still smarting from the deadly July Lac Megantic oil train disaster, may take a dim view of the proposed 2,734 mile Energy East Pipeline, according to Peter Stoett, the director of the Loyola Sustainability Research Centre and professor of political science at Montreal's Concordia University.

The pipeline, which would end at the coastal city of St John, New Brunswick, would not cross into the United States, according to news reports. It is unclear what, if any impact the proposed line would have on discussions relative to the use of an existing pipeline running from Montreal to Portland Maine, through Vermont. Both the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline and Western Gateway project from Alberta to Canada's west coast have seen strong opposition.

[Read the full article in the Montreal Gazette](#)>>

Am I a VNRC member? Good question. Receiving this email does not necessarily mean you are a supporting-member, but now is a great time to become a member and join over 5,000 others dedicated to moving Vermont communities towards a healthy environmental and economic future. Your donation means a lot to us--and for Vermont!