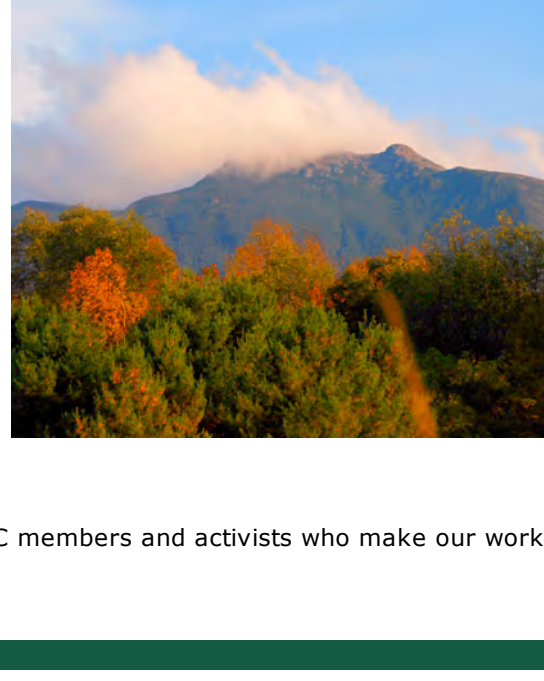


Fall can be a busy time for Vermonters, and we at VNRC are no exception. In between planning events like the [Wild and Scenic Film Festival](#) at the end of this month and participating in the very first Button Up Vermont statewide day of action, we've barely had time to sneak outside and admire the blazing trees and clear blue skies. But even so, the season never ceases to take our breath away.

This E-News edition shows the breadth of VNRC's work, from creating informative publications to mobilizing activists and planning fun and inspiring events.

Thank you to the thousands of VNRC members and activists who make our work possible.



QUICK LINKS

[Hot Issues](#)

[Learn About VNRC](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

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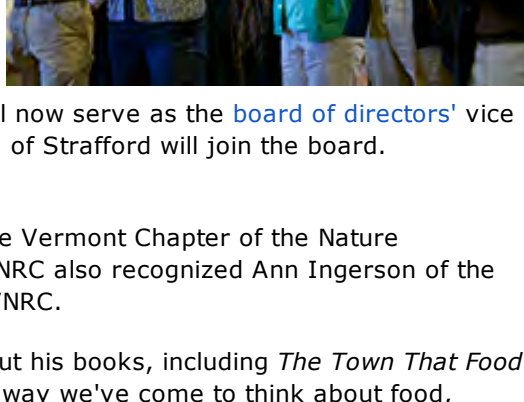
[Join VNRC!](#)



VNRC NEWS

Annual Meeting Marked 51 Years . . . And Counting!

VNRC celebrated its 51st Annual Meeting last month at [Farm and Wilderness Camps](#) in Plymouth. In addition to the beautiful venue, Farm and Wilderness supplied our hungry guests with delicious, freshly-harvested food from the camp. [East Creek Catering](#) of Rutland provided a great cash bar and friendly service.



Retiring board chair Kinny Perot led the general membership meeting and passed the leadership baton to Elizabeth Humstone of Charlotte. Judy Geer of Morrisville will now serve as the [board of directors'](#) vice chair, and Richard Czaplinski of Warren and John Echeverria of Stratford will join the board.

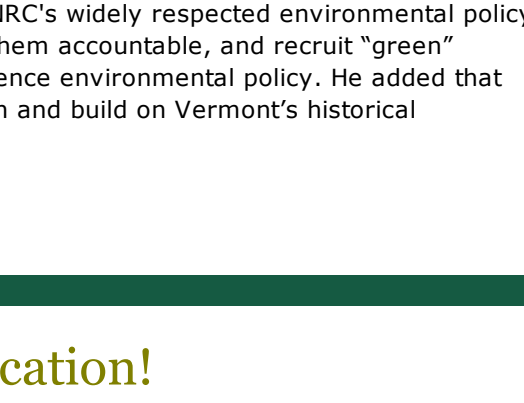
Also at the meeting, VNRC awarded Bob Klein, director of the Vermont Chapter of the Nature Conservancy for over 30 years, the 2013 Art Gibb award. VNRC also recognized Ann Ingerson of the Wilderness Society for her many years of partnership with VNRC.

Keynote speaker and Vermont author [Ben Hewitt](#) spoke about his books, including *The Town That Food Saved* and *\$aved*, and inspired the audience to question the way we've come to think about food, money, and prosperity in the modern world.

Many thanks to those who attended, as well as to all of our members and supporters. Here's to the next fifty years of working to strengthen the foundations of a healthy Vermont!

VNRC and VCV Enter into New Partnership

VNRC announced this week that it was entering into a strategic partnership with [Vermont Conservation Voters](#), or VCV (formerly the League of Conservation Voters).



The groups said they had formed an alliance in part to help Vermonters and their communities contend with the emerging environmental challenges of the coming decades.

The organizations will remain separate entities and pursue their complementary missions, but will have overlapping boards of directors.

"We need to develop new strategies to meet new challenges and we think partnerships that can expand our impact are key," said Beth Humstone, chair of VNRC's board of directors.

Stark Biddle, chair of the VCV board, said that combining VNRC's widely respected environmental policy work with VCV's ability to directly support candidates, hold them accountable, and recruit "green" candidates increases the ability of each organization to influence environmental policy. He added that the alliance helps the environmental community capitalize on and build on Vermont's historical leadership on conservation.

[Read the story in the Burlington Free Press >>](#)

VERMONT NEWS

Check Out VNRC's Newest Publication!

We are delighted to unveil [Community Strategies for Vermont's Forests and Wildlife: A Guide for Local Action](#).

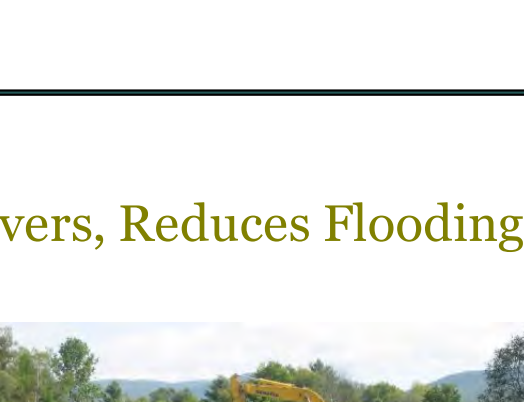


Over the years, VNRC has supported Vermont communities by offering proactive solutions to reduce forest fragmentation and parcelization in Vermont to protect wildlife habitat and maintain the rural character of our state. There are many different ways that communities can help sustain forests and wildlife at the local and regional levels, and this guide provides town officials and interested citizens with the tools – both regulatory and non-regulatory – to do just that.

[You can download a copy for free here.](#)

Button Up Vermont Day - A New Vermont Tradition

Earlier this month, Vermonters in over 30 communities worked to motivate their friends and neighbors to take actions toward lowering their energy bills this winter and reducing their contribution to climate change. Button Up Vermont Day was organized by VNRC in partnership with the [Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network](#) and [Efficiency Vermont](#) to support communities participating in the Vermont Home Energy Challenge. Gov. Shumlin officially proclaimed October 5 as Button Up Vermont Day, and noted in a [video statement](#) that home weatherization "puts money in our pockets... and makes our planet more livable for future generations."

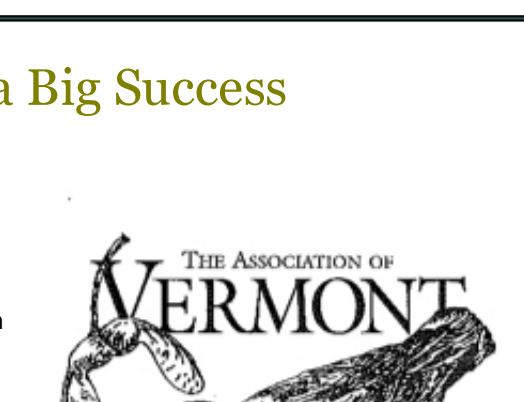


On Button Up day, Volunteers went door-to-door with information about energy efficiency opportunities, tabled at farmer's markets and other places, and hosted energy-efficient home tours in Burlington.

Keil Corey, VNRC's AmeriCorps Member who helped organize Button Up Day, was thrilled with the outcome. "It's clear that we've started something great and have a solid foundation to build upon in the coming years," he said.

Obsolete Dam Removal Frees Rivers, Reduces Flooding

This year, for the first time in at least 150 years, the [Batten Kill](#) will be a [free-flowing river](#) through [Vermont's countryside](#). This change will be brought about by the removal of the Dufresne Pond Dam in Manchester, the last remaining dam on the mainstem of the Batten Kill in Vermont.

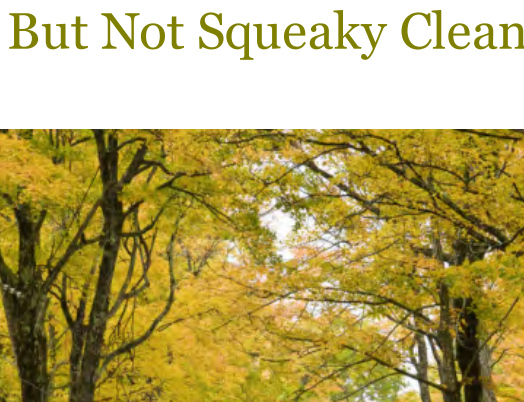


VNRC's Kim Greenwood hailed the news. "VNRC has long recognized that there are a large number of dams that no longer serve any purpose, except to put the public at risk for their failure and to diminish aquatic habitat," she said. "Getting this dam out, restoring the habitat and maintaining public access means everyone wins."

The first dam at Dufresne Pond was built in 1868 to power a sawmill. In 1956, the dam and adjacent land was acquired by the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, which developed it as a public access area and invested a significant amount of money in dam repairs. By the mid-1990s, the amount of water leaking through the dam began to concern state engineers. The state conducted an assessment and identified options to address the dam's problems. Since the problems were deep in the dam's embankment, there was no easy fix. Most involved reconstructing a major portion of the dam. The other option, which was the least expensive, was to remove it. The state will continue to maintain the public access area and keep it available to local residents.

AVCC Annual Meeting/Summit a Big Success

The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions held its annual meeting/conservation summit last Saturday in Bradford. The group elected new board members, and then attended a range of break-out sessions. The topics included climate change and wildlife, shore lands protection, the open meeting law, effective public participation, using the digital Biofinder tool, and conservation partnerships and funding. VNRC's Kate McCarthy was the keynote speaker.



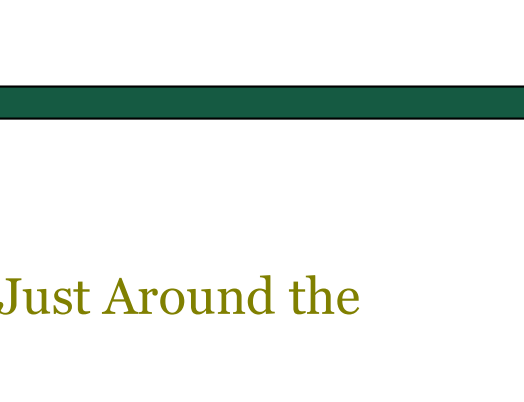
"It was clear at the event that there is tremendous enthusiasm among conservation commissions across the state of Vermont, and they are glad AVCC has been reinvigorated," said Jake Brown, chair of AVCC's board of directors. "The board, in turn, was energized by that enthusiasm."

The AVCC listserv now has 430 members, up three-fold from a year ago. The organization is going to launch a new website shortly and will continue to administer its tiny grant program, among other initiatives.

For more information email vtconservation@gmail.com.

Unpaved Roads: Charming, Yes, But Not Squeaky Clean

Dirt roads make up about half of all Vermont roads. For years we've known that our beloved roads contribute pollution to our waters. Until recently, we didn't know exactly how much.



Now, a [new study by UVM professor Beverley Wemple](#) finds that these "dirt" roads contribute between 10 and 30 percent of pollution loads into Lake Champlain. Steeper roads, not surprisingly, contribute more pollution than flatter roads as water runs off them and through roadside ditches at a faster speed, taking more soil with them.

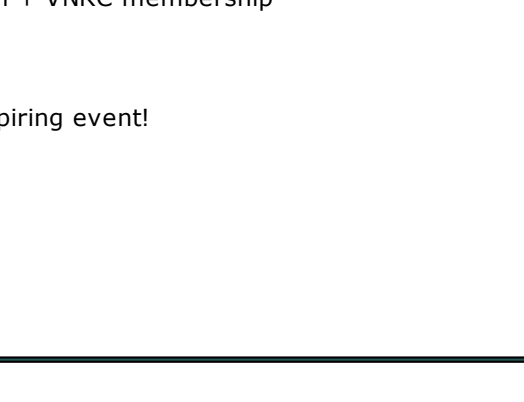
Practices like growing grass and lining ditches with stone, providing turnouts to prevent the water from running into the streams, and installing check dams all reduce the pollution coming off the steep roads. These practices are not only good for stream water quality, but can prevent costly repairs in the future.

VNRC's Water Program director Kim Greenwood said, "the farther away from our rivers we can keep our infrastructure, the better our waters and our pocketbooks will be."

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wild and Scenic Film Festival is Just Around the Corner!

Join VNRC and Patagonia Burlington for the sixth annual [Wild and Scenic Film Festival](#). The theme of this year's event is activism in all of its forms, and no matter what your own causes are, we are sure you'll leave the festival feeling motivated to go forth and make a difference in your community or the world. [Watch the film trailers on our website!](#)



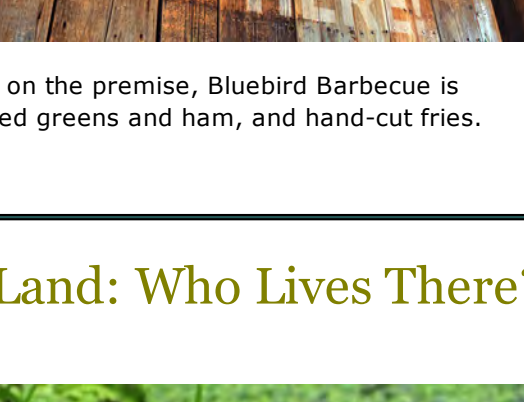
In addition to a great program of award-winning films, this evening-long event will feature food and drinks catered by Skinny Pancake and a silent auction with over fifty chances to win big, including a season pass to Sugarbush, overnight accommodations, outdoor gear, fine-art prints, and much more. And guess what? **Bidding starts TODAY!** [Check out our silent auction site and make an early bid.](#)

When: October 24, reception at 5:30 pm, films from 6:30 – 9 pm
Where: The Main Street Landing Performing Arts Center (host sponsor)
Cost: \$10 VNRC members, \$12 nonmembers, \$25 admission + VNRC membership

[Purchase tickets and learn more.](#) Don't miss this fun and inspiring event!

Bluebird Barbecue Community Night to Support VNRC

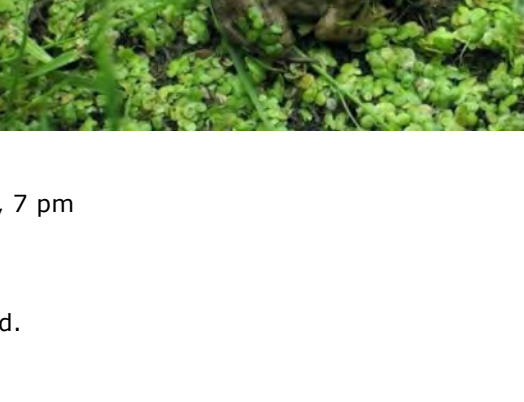
In search of a place to go for a special night out on the town this fall? Look no further! Burlington's [Bluebird Barbecue](#) is sponsoring a community night to support VNRC on Wednesday, November 13 from 4:30 - 9 pm. Just arrive with an appetite, sign in as a VNRC enthusiast at the host desk, and enjoy some delicious made-from-scratch barbecue! If the guest count exceeds 25, the restaurant will donate 10% of the entire evening's sales to VNRC.



In addition to a great selection of meats that are all smoked on the premise, Bluebird Barbecue is famous for its delicious sides, including cheddar curds, braised greens and ham, and hand-cut fries.

Where the Water Meets the Land: Who Lives There?

Join the [Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium](#) for an evening of discovery that will be held in two locations on different nights. This family-friendly, multimedia presentation will introduce the audience to the birds, bugs, fish, furry creatures, and amphibians who spend part or all of their lives on the shores and in the shallows of Vermont's lakes and ponds. Presenters will also explain the threats facing this critical wildlife habitat and the steps Vermonters can take to help protect this special part of our environment.



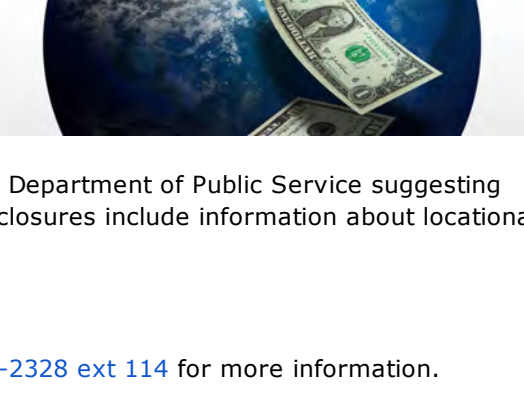
The events take place as follows:
 October 23, Kellogg Hubbard Library, Montpelier, 7 pm
 October 24, Fairbanks Museum & Planetarium, St Johnsbury, 7 pm

Free and open to the public, light refreshments will be served.

NATIONAL NEWS

Locational Efficiency: Complicated? Naw, it's Pedestrian

When people think about "efficiency," they often think about automobile miles per gallon, or even squeezing the most out of a manufacturing process.



Locational efficiency may sound like jargon, but it's quite simple: it's the concept that where a person lives can be efficient or... inefficient.

Two new online tools allow you to get a read on how efficient a given location is, whether it be your home, your businesses or any other location. [Abogo.cnt.org](#) is a tool for calculating the affordability of transportation from any address across the United States. [Walkscore.com](#) allows you to identify the walkability of a given place.

In a related development, VNRC recently filed a letter to the Department of Public Service suggesting that any state requirement for building energy efficiency disclosures include information about locational efficiency.

Contact Kate McCarthy at kmccarthy@vnrc.org or (802) 223-2328 ext 114 for more information.