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## July 2014 E-News



It's been a really busy summer at VNRC! We've had staff changes, plenty of policy work, exciting family expansions, and we're now getting ready for several fall events including our annual meeting. (Pictured at left are VNRC's Johanna Miller and Jamey Fidel at last year's annual meeting.) Please, read on for more details about all of this and more . . .

And remember, VNRC is a membership organization and we count on support of our members. If you are not a VNRC member already, [please click here to join](#) >

As always, thank you for all that you do!

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## VNRC's Mission

Through research, education, collaboration and advocacy, VNRC protects and enhances Vermont's natural environments, vibrant communities, productive working landscapes, rural character and unique sense of place, and prepares the state for future challenges and opportunities.

## VNRC NEWS

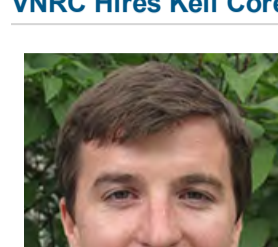
### Kate McCarthy on the Tube, Talking About VNRC's Sustainable Communities Program



What exactly does VNRC's Sustainable Communities Program do? Watch this short video and find out! Program director Kate McCarthy talks about sustainable communities, and how her work is integrated with VNRC's programs, including energy, forests and wildlife, and water.

[Watch now >>](#)

### VNRC Hires Keil Corey as Membership and Outreach Coordinator



Keil Corey of Montpelier will be joining the staff of the Vermont Natural Resources Council as Membership and Outreach Coordinator. He will start in his new position in mid-August.

For almost two years, Keil has been an AmeriCorps member, working in the VNRC offices as a community energy and climate action organizer with the Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network.

Keil, who grew up in Bristol, Vermont, says he is thrilled to be tackling important issues in his home state.

"Keil has proven himself to be a hard working, effective organizer who has strong outreach skills," said Brian Shupe, VNRC's executive director. "We are very pleased he has agreed to join the VNRC team."

### It's Been a Really Busy Month on the Family Front for Some VNRC, VCV Staff Members

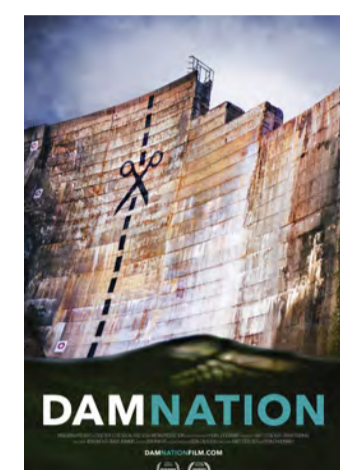


VNRC Sustainable Communities Program Director Kate McCarthy and Vermont Conservation Voters Political Director Lauren Hierl both gave birth to baby boys this month.

Kate's child, Will, was born June 30 and Lauren's child Isaac was born July 3. All are doing well. Remaining staff are holding down the VNRC and VCV forts at least for the next several weeks.

If you see Kate or Lauren, be sure to wish them well!

### VNRC's Dam Movie Event in Waitsfield a Success; Miss it? You Can Rent, or Buy!



Did you miss VNRC's Waitsfield screening last month of DamNation, the movie about the national dam-removal movement that's picking up steam? [You can rent it or buy it with the click of a mouse.](#)

Approximately 100 people attended our screening of the powerful film, which explores the sea change in our national attitude related to dams. Where obsolete dams come down, rivers come back to life, giving salmon and other wild fish the ability to return to their spawning grounds after decades without access. DamNation's majestic cinematography and unexpected discoveries move through rivers and landscapes altered by dams, but also through a metamorphosis in values, from conquest of the natural world to knowing ourselves as part of nature.

[See the trailer, and learn more about renting or buying.](#) You can also watch it On Demand via Comcast, Time Warner, Cox, Bright House, Verizon, Charter, Suddenlink, AT&T, Google Play, VUDU, Amazon, PlayStation, and Xbox.

### VNRC's Vermont Environmental Report, with a Forest Focus, is Hot off the Press



The summer issue of VNRC's member magazine the Vermont Environmental Report has hit the streets.

This issue contains an informative and lively story on forest fragmentation by writer Will Lindner, updates on our four programs, other VNRC news, and a Q and A with a VNRC member who works in conservation finance.

Our fantastic volunteer Clare Neal, pictured here, helped us drop a few complimentary copies around Montpelier recently. If you are a VNRC member, you get the magazine delivered to your home in the mail.

If you are not sure you are a member, email our outreach and membership coordinator Mari Zagarins at [mzagarins@vnrc.org](mailto:mzagarins@vnrc.org) to check. (Just because you get this email does not mean you are a VNRC member.)

VNRC is a membership organization – and we rely on our members for support!

## VERMONT NEWS

### Old Dam in Groton is Removed, Adding Some Freedom and Flow to Wells River Water



structure and four foot drop were a major obstacle to fish, primarily native brook trout, and other wildlife.

CRWC thanked funders and partners on this project, including; the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation & TransCanada, American Rivers & Green Mountain Coffee Roasters, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the State of Vermont, Trout Unlimited, Patagonia, the Vermont Dam Task Force, the Town of Groton, Milone & MacBroom, Chief Bogie Crushing & Excavation, individual CRWC members & donors, and all the neighbors in Groton.

For more information contact Ron Rhodes at the CRWC, [rrhodes@ctriver.org](mailto:rrhodes@ctriver.org).

### ANR Proposes Changes to Water Quality Standards; Hearings Set Around the State



Department of Environmental Conservation is proposing changes to the Vermont Water Quality Standards, and has scheduled hearings on the draft changes.

The changes include revisions to the E. coli criteria for the protection of water for swimming, revisions to toxic substances criteria contained within "Appendix C" of the current rule, including the addition of criteria for chloride (de-icing salt), and the addition of new phosphorus criteria framework for lakes and ponds and wadeable streams. The changes also include housekeeping edits related to moving rulemaking authority from the Natural Resources Board to the Agency of Natural Resources.

The hearings are set for the following dates:

- July 29th, 2014, 10 am. Winooski Room, National Life Building, 1 National Life Drive, Montpelier
- August 5th, 2014, 5:30 pm. Fox Room, Rutland Free Library, 10 Court St., Rutland
- August 8th, 2014, 1 pm. Eastside Restaurant, 47 Landing St., Newport

[Read the full text of the Water Quality Standards, with proposed markup >>](#)

### EPA, Citing VNRC Work, Releases Tool to Make Communities More Flood-Resilient



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recently released a new tool to help communities prepare for, deal with, and recover from floods.

The Flood Resilience Checklist offers strategies that communities can consider, such as conserving land in flood-prone areas, directing new development to safer areas, and using green infrastructure approaches, such as installing rain gardens, to manage stormwater.

The underlying EPA report on which the checklist is based cites VNRC's work in this area several times.

[Read more and find links to the report and to the "resilience checklist" here >>](#)

### Vermont Conservation Voters Offers Early Endorsements for State Legislature



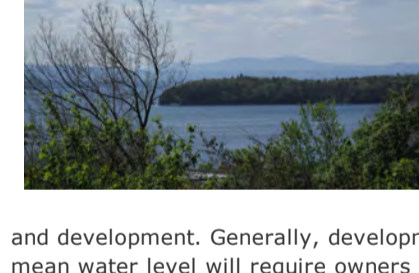
As the 2014 campaign season kicks into gear, Vermont Conservation Voters has given early endorsement to over three-dozen candidates for the state legislature.

VCV plans to present a full slate of endorsements in September that will include additional candidates, but decided to make an early round of endorsements for environmental leaders facing a challenger this election season.

"We have selected these candidates for early endorsement because they have particularly strong pro-environment track records, including their voting history over the course of their legislative careers and in the 2013-2014 biennium," said Lauren Hierl, political director for VCV.

"We want voters to know that these candidates – all of whom are in contested races this year – support Vermonters' environmental values," she said. "These are leaders who have consistently stood up for clean water, for Vermont's working landscape and downtowns, for reducing exposure to toxic chemicals, and for strong action on climate change."

### Shorelands Law Takes Effect This Month, and DEC's Busy with Outreach and Training



A law to safeguard lake water quality and shoreland habitat went into effect this month and the Department of Environmental Conservation is continuing outreach and on-the-ground training efforts across the state this summer.

Better lake shorelands protections have been a top priority of VNRC for several years and VNRC and other organizations worked hard to assure lawmakers passed a bill last year.

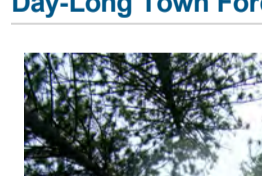
The new law outlines standards for the creation of cleared and impervious areas, like driveways and rooftops, in shoreland zones while seeking to balance good shoreland management

and development. Generally, development or redevelopment projects occurring within 250 feet of a lake's mean water level will require owners to register or apply for a permit. It applies to lakes and ponds greater than 10 acres, but does not apply to rivers.

Check out the [DEC webpage](#) for more details, or contact the program at [ANR.WSMDShoreland@state.vt.us](mailto:ANR.WSMDShoreland@state.vt.us) or 802-490-6196.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

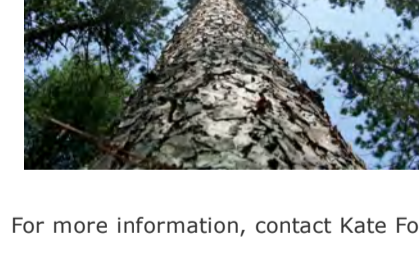
### Save the Date: VNRC's Annual Meeting Set for September 18



Mark your calendars now! VNRC's Annual Meeting will take place Thursday, September 18 in a location in Chittenden County to be determined.

Please save the date . . . and stay tuned for details.

### Day-Long Town Forest Summit Set for September 27



Come celebrate town forests and share information and network with other interested Vermonters at a full day event in Barre Town Middle/Elementary School on September 27.

Hear stories from town forests around Vermont, share experiences and ideas on issues that communities face as they manage town forests and learn how your town can acquire new or manage existing town forests.

Event partners include the Northeastern States Research Cooperative, Northern Forest Center, Trust for Public Land, University of Vermont Environmental Program, UVM Extension, UVM Historic Preservation Program, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and Vermont Land Trust.

For more information, contact Kate Forrer at [katherine.forrer@uvm.edu](mailto:katherine.forrer@uvm.edu) or (802)223-2389 ext 210.

### Celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act



On September 28, the Green Mountain National Forest will be holding a family friendly, fall day celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act - the landmark environmental law that designated wilderness areas for all to enjoy. Today, America boasts 758 wilderness areas covering nearly 110 million acres. The Forest Service manages nearly 100,000 acres of wilderness here in Vermont.

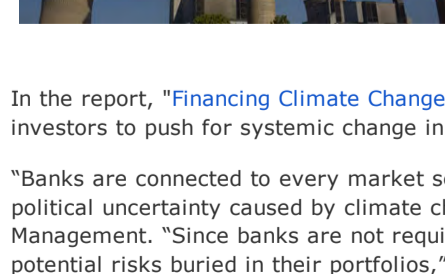
This free, public event is part of a national celebration of the Wilderness Act and honors Vermont's tradition of conservation and partnerships.

The event takes place at the Middlebury College Breadloaf Campus on Rte 125 in Ripton from 11 am to 3 pm.

For more information, contact Jennifer Wright at [jenniferwright@fs.fed.us](mailto:jenniferwright@fs.fed.us) or (802) 747-6775.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Asset Management Firm Highlights Climate Risk Lurking in the Banking Sector



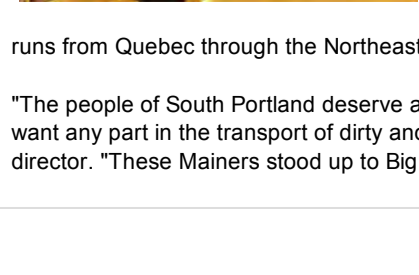
Investors may unwittingly be investing in financial institutions that will be adversely impacted by the effects of climate change, according to a new report from Boston Common Asset Management.

The banking industry has not successfully integrated climate change risk into its long-term strategic planning, or understood the implications of this game-changing phenomenon for its business operations, Boston Common asserts in a recently issued report. Boston Common is a Boston-MA-based investment manager specializing in sustainable and responsible global equity strategies.

In the report, "Financing Climate Change: Carbon Risk in the Banking Sector," Boston Common calls on investors to push for systemic change in the banking industry to address climate change risks.

"Banks are connected to every market sector, making them uniquely vulnerable to the economic and political uncertainty caused by climate change," says Geeta Aiyer, president of Boston Common Asset Management. "Since banks are not required to disclose climate risks, investors simply cannot see the potential risks buried in their portfolios," she says. "The time to act is now."

### South Portland Strikes Blow to Future Tar Sands Shipment Through New England



New England tar sands opponents scored an important victory last week when the city council of South Portland, Maine, enacted an ordinance prohibiting the Portland Montreal Pipe Line from loading tar sands crude onto oil tankers in South Portland.

The ordinance, which passed by a vote of 6 to 1, protects South Portland's vital waterfront from the polluting, industrial structures needed to load dangerous, climate disrupting, tar sands oil onto tankers to be hauled to refineries.

VNRC and other organizations have strongly opposed the transport of tar sands oil through New England. Portland Montreal Pipeline runs from Quebec through the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, across New Hampshire and Maine, to the coast.

"The people of South Portland deserve a big 'thank you' from Vermonters, and other New Englanders, who don't want any part in the transport of dirty and dangerous tar sands oil," said Johanna Miller, VNRC's energy program director. "These Mainers stood up to Big Oil and they should be congratulated."