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Taking an Interest & Getting Involved



[Weekly Planet column.](#)

Vermonters have a long history of engaging with our communities in local decision-making processes. At these times, protecting our "backyard" – whether it's a local swimming hole or an important farm or forest area – is not an act of selfishness, but one of community service. If done well, the results can have lasting public benefits and build the social capital that so many Vermont communities rely upon. Brian Shupe, VNRC executive director, recently wrote about just such a case in his [Rutland Herald](#)

It also goes to show that when we come together, address our challenges, remain open to opportunities, and celebrate successes, we can accomplish a lot! To learn how VNRC has been working throughout Vermont this past year, **don't miss our Annual Meeting on Thurs., Sept. 21, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in Middlebury.** We hope to see you there!

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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

VNRC NEWS

VNRC's Johanna Miller to serve on Vermont Climate Action Commission



Recently, [Gov. Scott signed an Executive Order](#) creating the Vermont Climate Action Commission and VNRC is [excited to announce](#) that Johanna Miller, our energy & climate program director, will serve on the 21 member Commission. "There is a critical need to address climate change, in Vermont and beyond," said Miller. "We need substantive action, and I hope this commission is a venue for moving that forward." Curious how you can be involved? Join VNRC and our partners throughout the summer and fall to [#ActOnClimateVT](#).

ACTION – Help Us Protect the LaPlatte River Natural Area



The LaPlatte River Marsh wetlands are truly an oasis in Chittenden County. At least 60 species of birds, 20 species of mammals, and 50 species of reptiles, amphibians, and fish can be found there – not to mention humans on foot or in canoes! [VNRC has petitioned](#) for the LaPlatte wetlands to receive the highest protections under Vermont law, and the [public hearing is set for Weds., Aug. 30, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at the Shelburne Town Office](#). We hope you'll join us to voice your support for this unique area.

VNRC on VPR Discussing Vermont's Forest Health

VNRC's Forest and Wildlife Program Director, Jamey Fidel, recently [spoke on VPR's Vermont Edition](#) about challenges facing Vermont's forests. The program explored declines in markets for wood,



changing demographics, and the increasing fragmentation of Vermont's forests. Jamey spoke about efforts to address fragmentation, [including H.233](#), a bill that would update Act 250 to ensure large subdivisions minimize the effects of fragmentation, and about the role of municipal and regional planning in maintaining forests and wildlife habitat. To learn about the diverse tools that help at the local level, check out our [Community Strategies for Vermont's Forests and Wildlife: A Guide for Local action](#).

challenges and opportunities.

Exit 4: Request for Concepts



Now that the land at Exit 4 has been conserved, we're ready to take the next step! Preservation Trust of Vermont, who now owns the 22 acres closest to the highway, would like to transfer the land to a person or group who will uphold the values of open space and farming. We're seeking submissions via a Request for Concepts. Send along your ideas by October 10, 2017 to be considered as a possible future owner of this beautiful land! [View the Request for Concepts here](#).

VCV Update: Protecting Vermont Communities from Toxic Chemicals



Last week, [Gov. Scott issued an executive order](#) forming the Vermont Interagency Committee on Chemical Management. The Committee is charged with assessing and improving how we track the use of toxic chemicals in the state, as well as identifying other ways to improve chemical management programs. VCV's Lauren Hierl responded to the order saying, "With tens of thousands of untested chemicals on the market, and real harm being felt by communities from toxic chemicals, it's clear we need further action as soon as possible." [Read Hierl's full statement here](#).

VERMONT NEWS

VNRC's Brian T. Fitzgerald: Removing Deadbeat Dams is a Win for Vermont



Caledonian Record – We're mid-stride through summer and many Vermonters are drawn to our waterways. Our rivers provide visitors and residents alike with a bounty of recreational opportunities: swimming, fishing, and boating. But, some Vermont rivers harbor unnecessary safety risks in the form of deadbeat dams that no longer serve any useful purpose. This year, dams in East Burke, East Highgate, Dummerston, West Fairlee, and West Windsor will be removed – hats off to the many partners, dam owners, funders, and state and federal agencies for who have worked to make these removals happen! [Read more](#).

Walters: Environmentalists Object to Scott Climate Panel Choice



Seven Days – Gov. Scott's Climate Action Commission hasn't even held its first meeting, but it's already taken a step that may alienate a broad swath of Vermont's environmental community. The commission's co-chair, Agency of Natural Resources Deputy Secretary Peter Walke, sent an email Wednesday seeking members for the commission's Technical Advisory Group. [Read the full article](#). And [read VNRC's full response](#) provided to Mr. Walters.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Savoy Theater & VNRC hosting An Inconvenient Sequel + Q&A

VNRC has partnered with Savoy Theater in Montpelier to bring you a



special showing of *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power* on Fri., Aug. 18, 2017 at 5:45pm. After the film, VNRC's Executive Director Brian Shupe will share how VNRC is taking truth to power about climate action in Vermont and how you can be involved. Can't make the 5:45pm showing, come early for the 8:00pm showing and catch the Q&A beforehand! [More information here.](#)

Norwich: Everyone's Economic Opportunity in Climate Action



Join VNRC & Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility on Aug. 24, 2017 at 6:00pm at the Porter Community Room at the Montshire Museum in Norwich, VT for a panel discussion about the economic benefits for all in climate action. [RSVP and submit a question for the panelists here.](#)

Can't make this event? Similar events will be happening in Brattleboro, Barre, Manchester, Burlington, and Middlebury – stay tuned!

Save the Date: VNRC Annual Meeting – Sept. 21, Middlebury



Join us for food, fun, and festivities at the Kirk Alumni Center at Middlebury College on Thurs., Sept. 21, 2017 at 6:00pm. VNRC will be joined by climate activist Bill McKibben to present this year's Arthur Gibbs Award for Individual Leadership, vote on new board members, and celebrate the work being done to protect Vermont's natural resources. Enjoy light dinner and a cash bar. [More information here.](#)

NATIONAL NEWS

New Climate Report: U.S. Already Feeling Impacts of Warming



A new report on climate change, part of a regular federal climate assessment, shows that warming is already having a large effect on the United States. Read [Nine Takeaways from the National Climate Report here](#), and [sign a petition](#) to publish the report without political interference or censorship by the Trump administration.

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