

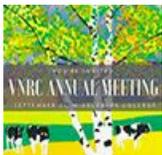


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Join Us In Celebrating Good Work – And The People Who Make It Possible



Have you RSVPed for our Annual Meeting? Join us for food, fun, and inspiration on Thurs., Sept. 21st at the Kirk Alumni Center at Middlebury College. With author and activist Bill McKibben we will be co-presenting this year's **Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership to Warren King**. We look forward to celebrating with you!

As a membership-based organization, our work is rooted in local communities and helped forward by motivated citizen advocates. We are deeply saddened by the recent loss of Tom Gray – a friend, climate action advocate, and deeply committed and engaged community member. As the former executive director of the American Wind Energy Association, Tom worked tirelessly to turn his concern about climate change into economic opportunity for Vermonters and we will miss him greatly. [Read more stories about Tom in the tribute on AWEA's website.](#)

VNRC NEWS

Revitalizing Downtown Bennington



Citizens for a Greater Bennington, in partnership with Preservation Trust of Vermont and VNRC, recently announced a \$100,000 grant to support the Putnam Block redevelopment project. This project is a great example of citizen involvement helping make Vermont communities stronger and we're proud to be involved. Brian Shupe, executive director of VNRC, noted, "The Putnam Block project is a great example of the type of compact, mixed-use development that Vermont communities need, and is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to revitalize

downtown Bennington." [Read more.](#)

Get Out Your Calendars...



This autumn, there are several important opportunities for you to let Vermont decision makers know that the time is now to take action on climate and to steward our natural resources for generations to come.

Vermont Climate Commission: Earlier this summer, Governor Scott announced the creation of a Climate Action Commission which is charged with making three recommendations to the governor and the legislature before the end of the year. The Commission wants to hear from you and is [hosting four public scoping sessions](#). Join VNRC, Vermont Conservation Voters (VCV), and our partners in the Energy Independent Vermont coalition just before each session to meet fellow activists and feel prepared to deliver your comments at these hearings. [RSVP and let us know you plan to attend](#) one of the following: Manchester – Sept. 21; St. Albans – Sept. 28; and Brattleboro – Oct. 5.

Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC): In June, Governor Scott launched [VOREC](#) to engage stakeholders in a public conversation about outdoor recreation, the Vermont economy, and stewardship of our natural resources. VOREC is hosting seven public forums to gather input from the public – you! – about how to leverage and strengthen Vermont's outdoor recreation assets to strengthen the economy. We hope you attend a VOREC session near you and ask Vermont's decision makers to protect healthy, intact forestlands, make a greater investment of public and private dollars to the stewardship of our public lands and trail networks, and make sure that all Vermonters have safe, local access to recreational opportunities and open space. Upcoming public forums include: Island Pond – Sept. 25; Rutland – Oct. 3; St. Albans – Oct. 10; East Dummerston – Oct. 16; White River Junction – Oct. 23; and Arlington – Oct. 24. [RSVP and let us know you'll be 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 challenges and opportunities.

Everyone's Economic Opportunity In Climate Action



Don't put those calendars away just yet – you don't want to miss one of the upcoming panels we're hosting with Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility. The events bring together respected business voices, elected officials, low-income advocates, and environmental representatives to focus on job-creating, beneficial opportunities for everyone by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning off of fossil fuels. Attendees have the opportunity to ask questions and offer ideas. Upcoming panels include: Barre – Oct. 10; Burlington – Oct. 16;

Manchester – Oct. 19; and Middlebury – Oct. 30. [More information about each panel and RSVPs available here.](#)

Removing Small Dams To Restore Rivers



Vermont rivers have hundreds of 'deadbeat' dams that serve no useful purpose. Dams block fish passage, can be safety hazards for anglers and boaters, and can pose a threat to downstream people and property. [Vermont Public Radio recently highlighted](#) the work of VNRC and our many partners in removing small dams and restoring Vermont rivers. To learn more about our dam removal work, visit freevtrivers.org

The Day-to-Day Actions Of Genuine Leaders



No one can predict how the Trump era will end, but if recent months are any indication, things may get worse before they get better. In light of this gloomy outlook at the national level, it is reassuring that Vermont has a long history of individuals stepping up to meet environmental challenges in creative, common sense ways. These individuals make it more possible for state leadership to protect the health and safety of our citizens and natural resources. [Read more.](#)

Protecting Vermonters From Toxic Chemicals



The PFOA contamination in and around Bennington made it all too clear that Vermont communities need better protection from toxic chemicals. A recent [five-part investigative reporting series by VTDigger and Bennington Banner](#) highlighted that need and provided an in-depth look at the history, discovery, and impact of PFOA contamination in Southern Vermont. Last session we worked with partners to help pass a toxic chemical reform bill in the Legislature, but it wasn't able to make it all the way through the Senate before the end of the 2017

session. That bill –S.103–will be taken up by senators when they return to Montpelier in January. [Read more about VCV's work to safeguard Vermont families and natural resources from toxic chemicals.](#)

VERMONT NEWS

Vermont Makes A New Push For Wood Heat



(Rutland Herald) The state Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation has hired a new wood energy coordinator to help expand the use of wood heating across Vermont. "Vermonters have a significant opportunity to tap into more advanced, modern wood heating to replace fossil fuels for heating their homes," noted VNRC's Energy Program Director Johanna Miller. [Read more.](#)

Scott Administration Questions Rationale For Silvio O. Conte Refuge Expansion



(VTDigger) Governor Scott recently submitted a letter to the federal government noting he's "very apprehensive about the federal government acquiring additional land for the Silvio O. Conte Wildlife Refuge" In response, VNRC's Forest and Wildlife Program Director Jamey Fidel noted, "It's concerning to us and disappointing that the governor submitted that letter. We wish it had reflected more of that comprehensive input made by Vermonters." [Read more.](#)

Vermont Clean Water Fund Board Seeks Public Input

(VTDigger) The Clean Water Fund Board is accepting public comments on their final draft recommended Clean Water Fund Budget for the next State fiscal year. The Clean Water Fund supports municipalities, farmers, and others in making needed investments in priority projects to improve water quality in Vermont's lakes, rivers, and wetlands. [Read more.](#)



Gaye Symington: Listening To Irma, Reflecting On Irene



(*VT Digger*) The work of government matters at times of disaster – but we need government to plan ahead, learn from events such as Irma, and not just respond when big storms kick up. Adjusting development patterns based on the lessons of the storms would be more frugal and would reflect government at its best. [Read more.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Conservation Into The Future – 2017 AVCC Conservation Summit: Sept. 23



The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions' annual Conservation Summit will be on Sat., Sept. 23 at Common Ground Center in Starksboro, VT. This year's theme is 'Conservation into the Future' and the all-day conference will feature presentations, trainings, and networking essential to Vermont's conservation community. Register today at vtconservation.com/conservation_summit.

10th Annual VECAN Community Energy & Climate Action Conference: Dec. 2



This year, we're celebrating the 10th anniversary of VECAN's annual Community Energy & Climate Action Conference. The event will highlight programs and opportunities leaders can implement locally, as well as frame the opportunities we can seize together to make needed climate action. [Learn more and RSVP here.](#)

NATIONAL NEWS

Water For Sale



A new report from Maude Barlow, a member of the Council of Canadians and VNRC Advisory Committee member, has found that modern free trade and investment agreements impede the ability of people and their governments to maintain environmental laws and regulations to protect their water. They also pave the way for the privatization and commodification of water. [Read more.](#)

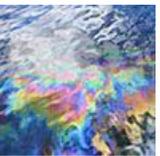
The Northeast Should Limit Pollution From Transportation



(*UCSUSA*) Over the past decade, the Northeast region of the U.S. has helped lead the country—and the world—in supporting and developing clean, renewable sources of electricity. Taken together, the policies of Northeast states, from Maine to Maryland, have generated billions of dollars in investment for solar, wind, and efficiency. The next big step for the states of the Northeast is to bring that same sense of commitment, ingenuity and purpose towards clean transportation. [Read](#)

[more.](#)

The Toxic And Economic Cost Of Hurricanes



The twin Hurricane disasters of Harvey and Irma left American communities battered, flooded, and facing extensive clean-up efforts. Together, the hurricanes inflicted [nearly \\$190 billion in direct damages](#), with the lingering impacts on the economy not yet known. [Research shows](#) that as global surface temperatures rise, so too do the frequency of extreme storms. And yet, the federal government continues to abdicate its role in helping our cities, towns and rural communities mitigate and adapt to climate change. Equally concerning, the flood water that saturated Houston have been [found to contain a variety of dangerous, toxic chemicals](#). This contamination, as well as the several fires and explosions at chemical sites, highlights the potentially [severe dangers of deregulation](#). Similarly, just two weeks before Harvey's landfall in Texas, the Trump administration [rescinded a federal rule](#) requiring federal, state, and local agencies to take steps to protect buildings, highways, and other infrastructure from flooding. The rule was established in 2015 under the Obama administration with the intent of protecting cities from rising waters and climate change, which President Trump has called a "hoax".

Bigger And Bigger Homes – Can We Afford Them?



(PropertyShark) Over the past century, new American homes have become 74% larger on average with personal living space increasing 211%. In a recent PropertyShark analysis that looked at carbon dioxide emissions by home, Vermont homes were the second most taxing for the environment primarily because of their large size and reliance on fuel oil for heating during cold winters. [Read the full report here.](#)

Coffee, Bees, And Climate Change – New UVM Study Finds Links

(NPR) A new study from the University of Vermont's Gund Institute for the Environment is the first to model the impact of climate change on both coffee and pollinators – and the results aren't looking good. By 2050, climate change could reduce the amount of ground usable to grow coffee in Latin America by up to 88 percent. [Read more.](#)



Let's Fund Disaster Relief – And Fight Climate Change – With a Tax on Carbon



(Forbes) A federal tax on carbon could discourage emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that are warming our seas and the air. Done right, a carbon tax could also bankroll cleanup campaigns led by FEMA and local agencies. [Read more.](#)

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