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When we last wrote you, a month ago, we were preparing for the end of the legislative session. It's now June, and we're in the third week of legislative overtime. How did this happen? Below, we provide a full rundown in our end of session wrap-up.

In other news, we have some exciting announcements to share about our work and staff, and even a job posting! We hope you'll read on and, as always, we welcome your feedback and continued support.

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## VNRC NEWS

### End of Session Wrap-Up: Where Are We Now?



Vermont's 2018 legislative session ended on May 12, but Governor Scott called lawmakers back for a "special session" just a week later. As of now, it's unclear when the special session will wrap up its work and concerns are mounting about a possible state government shutdown. In the meantime, there's some solace: VNRC has prepared an end of session summary that addresses the mechanics of

the special session, highlights key issues we worked on this year, and provides a status on key bills. [Find it here.](#)

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### Experts Convene for Act 250 Conference at Vermont Law School



VNRC played a leading role in helping to organize the [Act 250: What's Next? conference](#) at Vermont Law School, which took place on May 24. Panelists addressed the past, present, and future of Act 250, and how we can improve on this landmark legislation from an interdisciplinary standpoint. Plus, participants had time to discuss key issues in close groups. Not only was the conference standing room only; 500+ people tuned into the live stream! [Watch the footage here.](#)

(Included, a panel moderated by VNRC's executive director Brian Shupe, about other states' perspectives on Vermont's challenges.)

## VNRC gives Warm Support to 'Feel Good Heat' Campaign



VNRC has been helping to support the [Feel Good Heat](#) initiative, a collaborative effort led by the Northern Forest Center to promote the use of efficient Automated Wood Heat across New England and New York. The effort's aim is to spread the word about how Vermonters can contribute towards energy independence here at home while supporting our rural economy, and staying warm, of course. Don't know the first thing about efficient Automated Wood Heat? These [FAQs](#) will help!

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## VNRC Collaborates on Amicus Brief in Support of Contamination Victims



Last month, [Governor Scott vetoed S.197](#), a bill VNRC fought hard for that would have allowed Vermonters to sue for medical monitoring damages when a release of toxic chemicals caused them to have high level of toxic substances in their bodies. Now, VNRC has joined with public health and environmental organizations to submit an Amicus ("friend of the court") brief, prepared by Vermont Law School and Earth

Justice, in support of plaintiffs in Hoosick Falls, New York who are seeking medical monitoring damages for toxic contamination. The goal of the lawsuit is to help victims of toxic pollution get the best outcome possible from the court. Stay tuned as we update you on our progress. Image of Hoosick Falls, NY by Daniel Case.

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## Kate McCarthy Selected for VHCB Leadership Project



VNRC's Sustainable Communities Program Director Kate McCarthy is among 25 leaders chosen to participate in the second cohort of a new leadership project organized by the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB). Established with support from the Vermont Community Foundation, the [VHCB Leadership Project](#) aims to build and strengthen collaboration among those leading the future of housing and conservation work in Vermont. McCarthy will join other experts from non-profit organizations and state agencies to collaborate on challenges

facing the field, and to receive trainings on topics including social justice, equity, intergenerational communication, the legislative process, and leadership. Find more information, and the full press release, [here](#).

## Brian Shupe: Governor Fails at Protecting the Vulnerable



"Gov. Scott's oft-stated goals for his administration are to improve Vermont's economy, make the state more affordable and protect the most vulnerable. How he balances these priorities — or even evaluates the impact of policy alternatives on these goals — is a mystery." Here's our executive director Brian Shupe in *VT Digger* calling attention to the Governor's hypocrisy in claiming to want to protect Vermonters, and yet failing to sign a succession of bills that would help us live better lives. [Read it here.](#)

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## Farewell, Hannah Huber!



In December 2015, VNRC hired Hannah Huber as Energy & Climate Community Organizer. After discussing carbon pollution pricing with countless Vermonters, organizing a climate solutions dance party float for a parade, and helping to expand [VNRC's video portfolio](#), Hannah is moving on to grad school. We wish her the best as she pursues a self-designed master's in Applied Mycology (study of fungi) and Ecological Restoration at Antioch University New England. You can email her at [hhuber@antioch.edu](mailto:hhuber@antioch.edu) to stay tuned about her soon-coming mushroom blog.

## VERMONT NEWS

### Latest Vermont GPI Report: Genuine Progress Indicator



The [2018 Vermont Genuine Progress Indicator \(GPI\) Report](#) was released this spring. GPI is an alternative measure of economic wellbeing meant to correct the faults and flaws of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In contrast to GDP's gross measure, GPI measures net economic welfare. It considers factors such as the loss of ecosystems and habitats, the depletion of non-renewable natural resources, and pollution as cost items, and takes into account output like volunteer work and domestic production. Check out the [new report](#) to see how Vermont has fared on GPI since 2015.

## Bill McKibben Addresses Ecological Devastation at State House



This week, the [Vermont Poor People's Campaign](#), part of a national movement, dedicated its fourth consecutive week of protest at the State House to ecological devastation and its connection to public health. The highlighted speaker was friend of VNRC Bill McKibben, who spoke about environmental justice here in Vermont and globally. Tune into our [video of Bill's talk here](#), and see images from the rally on [VNRC's Twitter feed](#).

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## New Whales' Tails, Coming Soon to Exit 4



You're probably already familiar with the iconic "Whale Tails" sculpture visible from I-89 in South Burlington. But did you know that sculptor Jim Sardonis will soon be creating a new set of tails, similar to "Reverence," to be placed at its original location, at Exit 4 in Randolph? The project was commissioned by the Preservation Trust of Vermont, along with the Vermont Community Foundation. [Read more](#) about the history of the beloved tails and their new incarnation.

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## State Investigates PFAS Contamination



Last week, state scientists tested 35 water supplies near the Rutland-Southern Vermont Regional Airport and found traces of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in 17 sites, [reports VPR](#). These toxic chemicals include PFOA, the harmful substance found in multiple wells in Bennington. As a result, the state is continuing to test water in the areas surrounding the airport in Clarendon. Further,

[WCAX reported elevated levels of PFAS chemicals](#) on a Vermont National Guard installation in Burlington.

Meanwhile, the federal EPA held a summit on PFAS contamination issues last week, amidst concerns expressed by Vermont's Congressional delegation and many others about the [withholding of a federal study anticipated to show that the health safety levels for PFAS chemicals should be far below current EPA advisory levels](#).

## JOIN OUR TEAM

### We're Hiring a Community Organizer!



VNRC, in partnership with Vermont Conservation Voters (VCV), has an exciting opportunity for an outgoing person who wants to have a significant impact on the future of Vermont. We are looking for a motivated person to help advance policy initiatives related to climate action, clean energy and environmental protection through grassroots engagement. Does this sound like you or someone you know? [Click here for details on how to apply](#), and please share widely!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Senator Bernie Sanders' Energy Resource Fair and Town Meeting



Join Sen. Sanders **this Saturday, June 9** from 10am to 2pm for the [Energy Resource Fair and Town Meeting](#) at Vermont Technical College in Randolph. Learn how to make your home, business, or town more efficient, and find out which renewable energy makes the most sense for you. Presenters, exhibitors and workshops will cover topics ranging from financing options to the latest in technology innovations. Entrance is on a

first-come, first-serve basis, but RSVPs are strongly recommended. [Click here to RSVP](#), or call Sen. Sanders' Burlington office at 1-800-339-9834.

## IN OTHER NEWS

### Clean Energy for All, Despite the Odds



A new report from the League of Conservation Voters (LCV) details the work LCV and its 30 state affiliates (including VNRC affiliate [Vermont Conservation Voters](#)) have done to advance climate solutions at the state and local level, in what LCV calls "a void of climate leadership" under the Trump administration. [Read up](#) for some much-needed good news about climate action in Vermont and nationwide!

**Support from VNRC's members is critical to our work. Join today!**

## JOIN OR CONTRIBUTE