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## August 2018 E-News

We're trying out a new format for the August e-newsletter, with updates followed by longer descriptions further below, when needed. Please catch up with our latest news, and we hope to see you at one or more upcoming events!

### VNRC NEWS

- **It's not too late to share input on Act 250** - Weigh in with your priorities for an improved Act 250 at upcoming public forums in Island Pond (8/22), Rutland (9/5), and Burlington (9/12). The schedule is [here](#). If you can't make it out in person, the Commission will be sending around surveys to solicit input as well. Learn more below.
- **Climate Action Commission delivers recommendations** - On July 31st, after a year of study, Governor Scott's Climate Commission delivered its final recommendations for how Vermont can reduce greenhouse gas emissions while encouraging economic growth. Find the full recommendations from the Climate Commission [here](#) and read more below.
- **VCV announces first round of 2018 Election Endorsements** - Vermont Conservation Voters (VCV) closely tracks legislators' actions at the State House, including key votes on environmental bills and sponsorship of legislation that advances the *Environmental Common Agenda*, which VCV releases each legislative session in partnership with other advocacy organizations. As you get ready to vote in Vermont's Primary Election on August 14, check out VCV's initial list of candidate endorsements: <http://vermontconservationvoters.com/elections/>.
- **More Proof of PFAS Contamination in Vermont Schools** - When VNRC testified on the toxic bills that Governor Phil Scott vetoed last session, we warned there would be more revelations of toxic contamination to come. Sure enough, two Vermont schools (Grafton Elementary and Warren Elementary) are now exhibiting levels of PFAS contamination in their drinking water above the state safety standard, meaning children are in danger of harmful contamination by simply going to school. This won't be

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## About Us

For more than fifty years, VNRC has been Vermont's leader in protecting our natural resources and communities. 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. From the State House to your town hall, VNRC keeps Vermonters informed on the environmental issues that you and your family care about most.

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the last of such findings, if inaction at the state level continues. [Read more at VPR.](#)

- **LaPlatte Wetlands Granted Highest Level of Protection-** Last March, VNRC filed a petition with the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) to reclassify the LaPlatte River Marsh Wetlands as a Class I Wetland, which would grant it the highest level of protection under Vermont law. After more than a year of review, the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules approved Class I designation for LaPlatte, to go into effect on August 12. We're extremely pleased that this incredible ecosystem, which provides vital natural water quality functions in the Lake Champlain basin and is home to well over a hundred animal species, will be protected for generations to come.

## **EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Early Voting is Open!** - Primary Elections in Vermont will be held on August 14. Anytime between now and the 14th, you can either go in person to your town clerk or request a mail-in ballot and vote. Find your 2018 polling place [here](#).
- **Film Screening of *Broke in Montpelier*** - On Monday, August 27 at the Savoy Theater in Montpelier, VNRC will present [Broke, an award-winning documentary about the Refugio Oil Spill](#) that hit Santa Barbara in 2015, and the aftermath of this environmental catastrophe. More details below.
- **VNRC Annual Meeting** - Join us on Thursday, September 20 as we review our year in environmental advocacy, vote on new board members, and present this year's Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership to Paul Costello, Executive Director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development. More below.
- **AVCC 2018 Summit on Vermont's Waters** - Join the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC), for the AVCC Annual Summit, to be held this year in Poultney, VT on September 29. *Caring for Vermont's Waters: What We Can Do!* will feature sessions on drinking water, protecting native fish populations, using social media for communications & outreach, and more. Former Rep. David Deen will deliver the keynote. For more information, and to register, click [here](#).
- **Apply for a Small Grant for Smart Growth!** - Earlier this year, VNRC launched the [Small Grants for Smart Growth program](#) to provide seed money for community-based, local initiatives related to smart growth. We're currently accepting applications. Learn more below.
- **VNRC is Hiring** - We're looking for a Part-Time Office Associate! Read on for more details and for how to apply.

## **STAFF UPDATES**

- **VNRC Staff Appointed to Vermont System Planning Committee (VSPC)** -- VNRC's Energy and Climate Action Program Director Johanna Miller was appointed to the Vermont System Planning Committee, which improves coordination among Vermont's utilities.
- **Welcome (Again), Ian Hitchcock!** - Ian joined VNRC for an 11-month role as our AmeriCorps Member and Community Energy and Climate Action Coordinator, helping to start and strengthen town energy committees across

the state. Now, VNRC is happy to welcome him on a more permanent basis as our new Community Organizer. He'll be working to educate the public on our environmental campaigns, building the support we need to advance a pro-climate, pro-environment policy agenda, and to elect environmental and climate champions to public office. We can't wait to have him on board in this new position!

- **Farewell, Summer Interns** - Dani Bradtmiller and Suzanne Vachula, our summer legal interns from Vermont Law School, are wrapping up their time with us in the next couple of weeks. Thank you, Dani and Suzanne, for your hard work and fresh perspectives!

As always, we welcome your feedback and support.

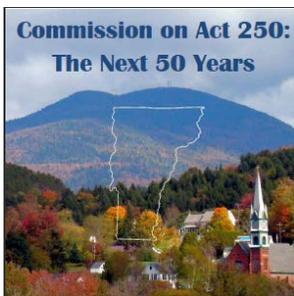
Best,

Brian Shupe

Executive Director, VNRC

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## Act 250 Public Forums: It's Not Too Late to Participate



The **Commission on Act 250: The Next 50 Years** is mid-way through a series of public forums to engage Vermonters on their priorities for the future of our landscape and how to maintain Vermont's unique environment and sense of place. ***We need you!***

Upcoming forums will be held in Island Pond (8/22), Rutland (9/5), and Burlington (9/12). Find the event schedule [here](#) and on the Commission's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Act250Next50/>. If you're interested in carpooling,

please contact Kate McCarthy ([kmccarthy@vnrc.org](mailto:kmccarthy@vnrc.org)) and let her know what session you're planning to attend, and whether you're seeking a ride or offering one.

**Meeting Prep Webinars:** To help you prepare to speak up, VNRC will be holding webinars in advance of key events, where we'll share background on Act 250 and let you know what to expect from the Commission's forums. Look out for emails about these webinars, or contact Kate McCarthy, Sustainable Communities Program Director, with any questions: [kmccarthy@vnrc.org](mailto:kmccarthy@vnrc.org).

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## Climate Commission Delivers Recommendations



On July 31st, after a year of study, Governor Scott's Climate Commission delivered its final recommendations for how Vermont can reduce greenhouse gas emissions while encouraging economic growth. Find the full recommendations from the Climate Commission [here](#). VNRC's Energy and Climate Action Program Director

Johanna Miller, [quoted at VPR](#) and in [VTDigger](#), said the recommendations are strong, but "are cumulatively insufficient in terms of what needs to be done to meet our goals." She also noted that a new greenhouse gas report out of the Department of Environmental Conservation "just intensifies that shortfall – to an extreme."

## Apply for a Small Grant for Smart Growth!



Is your organization working on a smart growth project in land use, transportation, housing, conservation, historic preservation, or a related area? [Learn more here to see if you're eligible](#) for a Small Grant. We're currently accepting applications. (Plus, we were psyched to see that one of our first grant recipients, the Rich Earth Institute in Brattleboro, [was recently featured on NPR's Planet Money](#) for its work harvesting urine as fertilizer!)

## Film Screening | **Broke: The Santa Barbara Oil Pipeline Spill of 2015**



On **Monday, August 27** at the Savoy Theater in Montpelier, VNRC will co-present *Broke*, an award-winning 56-minute documentary about the Refugio Oil Spill on the coast of Santa Barbara in 2015 and the aftermath of this environmental catastrophe. Director Gail Osherenko, a former Vermont resident and academic, was on the scene of the oil spill from day one, and followed the story for 2 1/2 years. In the film, she puts current realities in context by looking back at another Santa Barbara oil spill, in 1969, that helped

launch the environmental movement, the EPA, and clean air and water laws.

After the film, hear from Osherenko, VNRC experts, and others about how oil spills could affect us here in Vermont. This will be the first screening of *Broke* on the East Coast, so don't miss it! Learn more about the film [here](#). **Stay tuned for an email with further details, including how to get tickets.**

## Save the Date: VNRC's Annual Meeting is September 20



Our annual meeting is coming up on Thursday, September 20 at American Flatbread in Waitsfield. Join us from 5:30 – 8:30pm as we review our year in environmental advocacy and vote on new board members. We'll also present this year's Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership to Paul Costello, Executive Director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development. Enjoy light

dinner and a cash bar. RSVP to Colin Keegan at [ckeegan@vnrc.org](mailto:ckeegan@vnrc.org) or by calling him at 802-223-2328, ext. 119.

## VNRC is Hiring a Part-Time Office Associate



We're looking for a Part-Time Office Associate who is highly organized, enjoys working in a collaborative nonprofit environment, possesses excellent verbal and written skills, has an attention to detail and basic computer skills, and is reliable

and adaptable. Broad duties will include coordinating travel and meeting arrangements, assisting with membership appeals, copying and filing, and other assignments as needed. Does this sound like you? If so, please email resume and cover letter to Nancy Davila: [ndavila@vnrc.org](mailto:ndavila@vnrc.org).