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August 2018 E-News

Dear Friend,

Summer's on its way out. Don't get sad -- get going! Catch up with our latest news, events, and opportunities to join us in protecting Vermont's environment and communities.

NEWS

- **Working together for equity** -- VNRC and Vermont Conservation Voters are among the numerous Vermont organizations consciously evaluating how we can better support and create racial equity and fairness in VT through our daily work, in the wake of Rep. Kiah Morris' decision to step down from re-election due to racist threats made against her and her family. Read our full shared statement [here](#).
- **Conservation in Vermont really pays off** -- We helped our partners at the Trust for Public Land release a new report detailing just how valuable. [Find it here](#) and read more below.
- **It's still not too late to share input on Act 250** -- The last public forum will take place in Burlington on 9/12. [RSVP here](#). Can't come? Attend our webinar, or [take the Commission's survey](#). More below.
- **Thirty years of climate change urgency** -- In *VT Digger*, David Moats recalls dire conditions in 1988 that have only gotten worse. *Then* was the best time to take action -- but now will do, if we get moving. [Read it here](#).
- **VNRC Recognizes Steve Sinclair, former Director of Forests** -
- VNRC's Forest and Wildlife Program Director Jamey Fidel presented Steve Sinclair with an award for his long-standing dedication to Vermont's forests, and to VNRC's Forest Roundtable. More below.
- **Progress Made on Dam Removal in Colchester** -- See below, and the [Colchester Sun](#), for more details about the ongoing project.
- **NEW: Vermont Forest Indicators Dashboard** -- The Vermont Forest

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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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Indicators Dashboard, a new product from the Forest Ecosystem Monitoring Cooperative ([FEMC](#)), provides an understanding of the health of our forests in four areas: Structure, Condition, Services, and Stressors. You can access the dashboard here: <https://www.uvm.edu/femc/indicators/vt>.

EVENTS

- **"Rise for Climate" Day of Action** (*Saturday, September 8*) -- Join VNRC and VCV, 350VT, and other allies as we celebrate a global day of action calling for more aggressive steps to break free from fossil fuels. There are events happening statewide; find the schedule of planned actions [here](#).
- **VNRC's Annual Meeting** (*Thursday, September 20*) -- Festivities will take place on Thursday, September 20 at American Flatbread, at Lareau Farm Inn in Waitsfield. Email Stephanie Gomory (sgomory@vnrc.org) to RSVP. We'll present this year's Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership to Paul Costello, Executive Director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development.
- **AVCC 2018 Summit on Vermont's Waters** (*Saturday, September 29*) -- The Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) will hold its Annual Summit, *Caring for Vermont's Waters: What We Can Do!*, at Green Mountain College in Poultney, VT. Click [here](#) to register.
- **LEAP Electrical Vehicle Fest** (*Wednesday, September 26; 5:30-7:30pm*) -- Learn about electrical vehicles while enjoying free pizza, brought to you by the Waterbury Local Energy Action Partnership. More info [here](#).

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Small Grants 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 from VNRC! Applications now being accepted.
- **Are you signed up for Button Up Vermont?** - The deadline to become a community partner is September 17th; [sign up here](#) to help Vermont reach its statewide goal of 25% energy savings in 80,000 homes by the year 2020.
- **Short Survey: Recreation on the Winooski** -- As part of seeking a new federal license for operation of the Bolton Falls hydroelectric dam, located in Duxbury, Green Mountain Power is required to seek input on how the community uses the area for recreation. If you enjoy this section of the Winooski, please consider filling out the [short survey](#) to help maintain and improve access. The survey closes on September 30.
- **"Making It Happen" Conference** (*Monday, October 1*) -- Join local leaders working to improve life in their communities at the Vermont Council on [Rural Development's VT Community Leadership Summit](#).

Find more detail on select topics below. As always, we welcome your feedback and support.

Best,

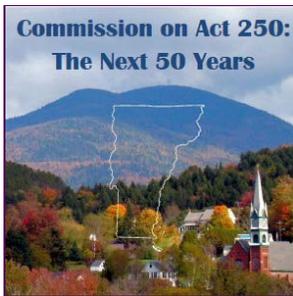
Brian Shupe
Executive Director, VNRC

For Every \$1 Spent on Conservation, \$9 is Returned to VT Economy



We all knew conservation was valuable in Vermont, but now we know just *how* valuable. A report compiled by the Trust for Public Land (TPL), commissioned by VNRC and other members of the Forest Partnership, revealed yesterday that **for every \$1 spent on conservation in Vermont, \$9 is returned in goods, services, and benefits** like recreation, tourism, forestry, and food production. That's a Return on Investment of 1:9, one of the most impressive ratios seen yet by TPL, whose economists have compiled reports like Vermont's in various states. You can read it here in full: www.tpl.org/Vermont-ROI.

There Are Still Ways to Share Your Input on Act 250



The **Commission on Act 250: The Next 50 Years** will hold its final public forum in Burlington next week on Wednesday, 9/12. In preparation, VNRC will be holding a webinar on Monday, 9/10, where we'll share background on Act 250 and let you know what to expect from the forum. If you're interested in joining the webinar, please RSVP to Stephanie Gomory at sgomory@vnrc.org. (You're welcome to join even if you're not planning on attending the forum in person.) We can also make a recording of the presentation available to you.

If you haven't attended a forum already and can't make this one, **there are still ways to make your voice heard** on your priorities for Act 250 and the future of Vermont's landscape. You can email the Commission directly at Act250Comments@leg.state.vt.us. Plus, the Commission recently released a 15-minute survey where you can sh

VNRC Recognizes Steve Sinclair, former Director of Forests



At the most recent Forest Roundtable, a gathering of forest professionals and policy advocates first convened by VNRC 12 years ago, VNRC's Forest and Wildlife Program Director Jamey Fidel presented Steve Sinclair with an award for his long-standing dedication to Vermont's forests, and to the Roundtable itself. As Director of Forests at the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, Steve was a critical partner

in implementing many of the Roundtable's recommendations, including VNRC's research on subdivision trends in Vermont's forests and promoting planning to help landowners keep their forestland intact. Steve recently retired after 43 years with the Department.

VNRC Makes Progress on Dam Removal in Colchester



VNRC is working with the owner of Mill Pond Dam in Colchester and project partner The Nature Conservancy (with funding by an Ecosystem Restoration Grant from the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Clean Water Initiative Program) to restore the surrounding stream to a more natural condition, eliminate the public safety hazard posed by the deteriorating dam, and relieve the owner of a financial and legal liability. Read more in the Colchester Sun.