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October 2018 E-News

It was wonderful to see so many of you at our Annual Meeting on September 20! Catch up below with our latest news, and learn about opportunities to help us protect Vermont's environment and communities.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **VNRC Annual Meeting** -- We're thrilled that so many of you were able to join us to celebrate another year of environmental advocacy. Find a re-cap of the meeting below.
- **Tracking Parcelization Trends in Vermont** -- VNRC just published a [report](#) and [website](#) that systematically track the increasing parcelization of our forests. Learn more below.
- **VCV's Environmental Scorecard is Live!** -- See how your legislators voted on key environmental issues in 2017-18. [Access it here](#) and learn more below.

VNRC IN THE PRESS

- **Climate refugees may have their eyes on Vermont** -- [Brian Shupe](#) was interviewed in *The Bridge* about how Vermont can improve its resiliency before an anticipated influx of climate "refugees" arrives.
- **Here's one reason Vermont's deer population is surging** -- In *Seven Days*, Forest & Wildlife Program Director Jamey Fidel spoke to the way Vermonters are slowly losing access to large undeveloped parcels of land.
- **Crude oil crossing:** Energy and Climate Program Director [Johanna Miller](#) tells [Northeast Public Radio](#) that a resurgence in oil train transport across the Adirondack & VT region puts Lake Champlain, one of Vermont's biggest economic engines, at risk.
- **Treasured reservoir in peril** -- In the *Stowe News & Citizen*, Policy and Water Program Director Jon Groveman lends context to a recent court ruling that threatens the Green River Reservoir.

IN OTHER NEWS...

- **VNRC's 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](#)

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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.

Vermont Natural Resources Council
9 Bailey Ave.
Montpelier, VT 05642
802-223-2328

see if you're eligible for a Small Grant from VNRC. Applications now being accepted.

- **Grants for Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment** -- Approximately \$2.4 million in grants are now available to expand Vermont's network of electric vehicle charging stations (also called Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment, or EVSE). Grant applications for the first round are due November 30. Learn more [here](#).
- **Transform Transportation** -- In Vermont, transportation is our least renewable energy sector. Earlier this year, it became the largest source of carbon pollution in the United States overall. [In a new report](#), the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) insists that to head off the worst of climate change, we must transform, innovate, and invest in cleaner transport -- now.
- **Vermont Designates Strafford as the 150th Village Center** -- The more, the merrier! (Strafford celebrated with local ice cream, of course.) [Read the full press release](#) from the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

STAFF UPDATES

- **Congratulations, Kate McCarthy!** -- Our Sustainable Communities Program Director was recently appointed to serve on the Board of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB). She was also named to Vermont Business Magazine's Rising Stars Class of 2018. More below.
- **Colin Keegan Selected to the Vermont Changemakers Table** -- Our Membership and Outreach Coordinator is among the 2018 annual cohort of [this professional network for mission-driven young Vermonters committed to the future of Vermont and positive change](#). Way to go, Colin!
- **Welcome, Kelsey Gibb** -- VNRC is pleased to welcome Kelsey Gibb, our new Office Associate. Kelsey grew up in Rutland, VT and attended Colgate University, where she majored in Sociology and Anthropology. After college, she moved to the Roaring Fork Valley of Colorado, where she worked for a solar company and developed a passion for clean energy and sustainability. Kelsey is excited to be back in her home state, and we're thrilled to have her in her new role!
- **Welcome, Ashley Strobridge** -- Ashley joins us as VNRC's new AmeriCorps Member and Community Energy & Climate Action Coordinator. In this role, she will help strengthen Vermont's network of approximately 125 town energy committees, assist in organizing the 11th annual VECAN Conference, and manage VECAN's digital communications. Ashley grew up in VT and recently moved back after living for many years in Virginia, bringing with her a diverse background of environmental and communications work. We're excited to have her on board!

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

Best,

Brian Shupe
Executive Director, VNRC

VNRC Honors Paul Costello at 2018 Annual Meeting in Waitsfield

At our Annual Meeting on September 20 in Waitsfield, we were honored to present the 2018 [Arthur Gibb Award for Individual Leadership](#) to Paul Costello, executive director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development. Paul has promoted economic vitality and stewardship of Vermont's natural assets in all



corners of the state, and is a leader on climate change, having begun an initiative at VCRD to make Vermont a national hub for climate economy development. Congratulations, Paul, and thank you for your continued work! The guest of honor is pictured (center) with Brian Shupe, VNRC Executive Director and Kate McCarthy, VNRC Sustainable Communities Program Director.

Tracking Parcelization Over Time: A New Report from VNRC



This week, VNRC launched a report and website that systematically track parcelization trends in Vermont. VT is the third most forested of the lower 48 states, with approximately 4.6 million acres of forestland. But in a concerning trend, the state is actually losing forest cover due to parcelization, subdivision, and the subsequent development of land. **Tracking Parcelization Over Time** examines key parcelization trends from 2004-2016, such as:

- The amount of land in larger parcels is shrinking, while the amount of land in smaller parcels is increasing.
- The number of large parcels (50 acres of larger) declined over the study period, while the number of parcels less than 50 acres increased by 8,746 parcels.
- The amount of “woodland,” which represents mostly undeveloped forestland (there may be a seasonal camp), decreased by 147,684 acres, or approximately 12-15% over the study period.
- Residential acreage increased by 162,670 acres, which is a 7% increase over the study period.

Find the website here: <https://vtforesttrends.vnrc.org/home> and the final report here: <https://vtforesttrends.vnrc.org/reports>, including a helpful [data exploration tool](#). We look forward to hearing your feedback on these new resources. (Photo credit: A. Blake Gardner)

VCV Environmental Scorecard is Now Live



Last week, Vermont Conservation Voters (VCV) released its **2018 Environmental Scorecard**. This interactive online tool gives voters easy access to their legislators’ voting records on clean water, climate change, holding polluters accountable, and other key environmental issues addressed by the 2017-2018 Legislature. Find your legislators using an enhanced search feature, review legislative profiles and voting records,

view concise bill descriptions, and contact elected officials. Find the Scorecard here: <http://vermontconservationvoters.com/legislative-scorecard/>.

Recognizing Kate McCarthy!



Kate McCarthy, our Sustainable Communities Program Director, was appointed this summer to the Board of the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) by Vermont House Speaker Mitzi Johnson. She will sit on the Board as a Montpelier resident rather than on behalf of VNRC. Kate is looking forward to supporting the Board’s community revitalization goals from a smart growth perspective, and helping to ensure that housing in Vermont enables a variety of transportation options.

Kate was also named to Vermont Business Magazine’s Rising Stars Class of 2018, a group of 40 winners under the age of 40 who were selected for their commitment to business growth, professional excellence, and involvement in their communities. View the full list of winners here. Congratulations, Kate!