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The opinions expressed by VER contributors are not necessarily those of the Council. VNRC reserves the right to refuse advertising that is not in keeping with the objectives of the organization.

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VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT • SPRING, 1984 • PAGE 1
A Time to Take Stock

A 20th birthday is an excellent time to take stock—to figure out where you've been and to chart a course for the future.

That's just what we're doing with this special 20th anniversary edition of the Vermont Environmental Report.

This issue contains the first installment of "VNRCP: The First Twenty Years," a history of the Council's founding and of its evolution from a handful of dedicated volunteers to Vermont's largest and most respected environmental lobbying, research and educational organization.

"The Best of the Vermont Environmental Report" contains some of our favorite articles, letters to the editor and illustrations from the Council's long publishing history.

And the eight-page "centerfold" is VNRCP's 1983 Activity Report, describing a busy and productive year.

Our past is a source of pride and our future is full of promise. Thanks to VNRCP's hard-working staff, board, committees, interns and volunteers, we continue to explore new ways to increase the Council's effectiveness and productivity.

This magazine is an experiment with possible new directions for VNRCP's communications program. We are considering substituting a quarterly magazine and more frequent bulletins for the Council's bimonthly tabloid newsletter.

We are also experimenting with advertising in this issue. We were thrilled with the enthusiastic response from members and friends of VNRCP, and we anticipate that advertising revenues will more than cover the printing costs of this edition of the Vermont Environmental Report.

Please let us know what you think. Comments from Council members will determine whether we adopt a magazine format or advertising on a continuing basis.

And finally, let me take this opportunity to invite you all to join in the celebration of VNRCP's 20th anniversary at a very special annual meeting on September 8, 1984, at Vermont Technical College in Randolph. The program will include field trips and a business meeting followed by a birthday celebration and banquet. You'll receive an invitation in August, but mark your calendar now and save the date.

Seward Weber,
Executive Director
LETTERS

Nuclear Waste
No Minor Problem

To the editor:
I was much concerned about the article by Norman Smith regarding energy. In this and other articles, Smith appears to be speaking for the nuclear power industry rather than speaking to the problem of the energy needs of the United States.
I recently spoke to a federal geologist who is involved in the question of disposal of radioactive waste. Smith dismisses the waste problem as being a relatively minor one, whereas the geologist told me that it is an enormous problem yet to be solved. In addition, he told me that the Philadelphia Enquirer has run an eight-part series that gives an excellent account of the problems of using nuclear energy.
One other point, if Smith is supposed to be a “scientist,” I am surprised that he does not have a more positive attitude towards alternative energy forms. Surely he ought to be pushing for more funds for research in these areas so that the technological breakthroughs (which are sure to come) will occur much sooner — to the benefit of all mankind.
Sincerely yours,
Eugene Werner
Northfield, Vermont

Give “Soft” Energies a Chance

To the editor:
Your recent article by Norman E. Smith (Jan/Feb) is just another one of those saying that because renewable energy can’t supply our energy needs now, it won’t be able to do so in the future either. The fact is there is an incredible amount of research being done right now in photovoltaics that will, I’m sure, yield new, easier, more cost-effective ways of utilizing energy from the sun.

SHARING A MUTUAL CAUSE...

The Vermont Natural Resources Council and the Lake Champlain Committee Inc. share a 20 year history of conservation and preservation of natural resources in Vermont, while the COMMITTEE's purview extends beyond into the Adirondack Mountains of New York. As two powerful conservation organizations, we work cooperatively on issues affecting the land, water and air in the region.

The Lake Champlain Committee, Inc. congratulates the Vermont Natural Resources Council for their 20 years of environmental protection to the State of Vermont. We look forward to the next 20 years of active participation with the VNRC in our mutual cause.

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802-658-1414

The objectives of the Lake Champlain Committee, Inc., shall be to eliminate water pollution from all sources in Lake Champlain and its tributaries and to conserve the natural resources and scenic beauty of the Champlain Valley, for people and progress, without pollution.

Congratulations to VNRC!

One little-known contribution, among the many in VNRC's history, is its work toward establishing the OTTAWQUECHEE LAND TRUST, which has become a major Vermont land conservation organization. When people in the Woodstock area were searching for new ways to protect farm and forest land, VNRC's Environmental Law Service provided legal services needed to organize the Trust.

In the past four years, the Trust has become statewide in scope, adding staff representatives in central Vermont, the Champlain Valley, and southern Vermont. With 45 completed landowner agreements to date, the Trust has protected more than 10,000 acres of land, including operating farms, natural areas, Shelburne Farms, and land along the Appalachian Trail.

If you would like to learn more about the Trust’s program, receive its annual report, or become a member ($10 or more), send the coupon below to:

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VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT • SPRING, 1984 • PAGE 3
LETTERS

And maybe the solution isn't to have huge, central power stations, but smaller community or neighborhood or even individually based ones. Mr. Smith mentions the "nightmare of maintenance," but everything has to be maintained. I would hope that the competition generated by such use would urge businesses to produce high-quality products. It happens with oil burners, appliances, cars — why not solar collectors?

I firmly believe that if the money currently being spent on nuclear power plants was instead invested in renewable energy, we would have breakthrough after breakthrough very quickly. Our own nuke, Vermont Yankee, currently needs what could be $100 million for repairs in the next year. Think of what that $100 million could do if spent researching the "soft" path.

Mr. Smith also uses the word "eventually" to describe the amount of time it takes for nuclear wastes to be rendered harmless. Granted, some are broken down fairly soon, but some take hundreds - even thousands - of years. Eventually, indeed!

I do agree with Mr. Smith on one thing - there are no easy answers to our energy problems. But we have invested very little money so far in researching renewables when compared with what has been spent on nukes.

Let's give the "soft" path the same financial encouragement - and see what happens.

Sincerely,
Susan Meeker-Lowry, Editor
Good Money Publications
Montpelier, Vermont

Article Distorts Contribution of Renewables

To the editor:

Norman F. Smith in his article, "Alternative Energies Have Been Oversold," (VER, Jan/Feb, 1984), has distorted both the present-day contribution of alternative energies and their potential for the future. Let's look at the facts.

Smith makes the implicit assumption that electricity is the major energy source for Vermont. In fact, only 15.5% of Vermont's energy sales in 1980 was electricity.

Furthermore, much of Vermont's electricity use is for functions that can be powered with other fuels — usually at a lower cost. For example, in 1980, 34.6% of Vermont's residential electricity consumption was for water heaters and space heaters. That need can be reduced or eliminated with the use of passive solar space heating, solar water heaters, conservation efforts, and wood heat. By increasing the use of solar and

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KNOLL FARM is proud to be the first property in the Mad River Valley Farmland Preservation Project to complete a donation of permanent conservation restrictions.

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other renewables, electric demand can be lowered further.

The point is, renewable energy can and is being used for other means than generating electricity. Those uses do reduce electric demand. A lower electric demand can be met more economically and with less environmental damage whatever the source.

Solar electricity from photovoltaic cells is not the big disappointment Mr. Smith describes. In fact, photovoltaic use is growing at a rate faster than most experts predicted. 20 years ago, photovoltaics provided cost-effective electricity for space satellites at $1000 per peak watt. 10 years ago, at $100 per peak watt, photovoltaics were cost-effective for mountaintop communications and corrosion protection at remote oil drilling operations. Today, at a cost of less than $10 per peak watt, the range of cost-effective applications is increasing quickly—from Interstate motorist aid call boxes in Connecticut to Coast Guard signal buoys in Massachusetts to providing power for homes in northern New England which are located far from utility lines.

The price of photovoltaics can be expected to fall further while the cost of utility-generated electricity continues to increase. Competition for the PV market is fierce, between both well-financed American and Japanese industrial giants such as Mobil, Arco, and Sanyo and smaller innovators such as Energy Conversion Devices in Michigan and Chronar in New Jersey. Solar electricity is not going to provide 100% of Vermont's electricity demand. But neither is any other energy source. A balanced approach that uses different sources when appropriate is the best way of meeting Vermont's electrical needs.

Larry Sherwood, Associate Director, New England Solar Energy Association, Brattleboro, Vermont.

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Hooray for Vermont Wilderness!

On March 28, the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee approved the legislation which will designate 13,000 acres as the Big Branch Wilderness Area, 21,000 acres as the Breadloaf Wilderness Area, and 5,000 acres near Woodford as the George D. Aiken Wilderness Area. In addition, 22,000 acres will be designated the "White Rocks National Recreation Area."

VNRC worked hard to promote what we feel is a reasonable compromise in terms of acreage and accommodation of a great variety of outdoor users' needs. Many groups and individuals deserve credit for this conservation win.

We particularly salute Representative Jeffords and Senators Leahy and Stafford and their staffs for the painstaking and sensitive negotiations they conducted over the last nine months to reach a workable consensus.

The bill has already passed the House and been reported out of the Senate Agriculture Committee. It now awaits a Senate floor vote. DH

Water Resources Research Act

The University of Vermont may receive five-year funding for its Water Resources Research Center, thanks to new federal legislation.

The Water Resources Research Act of 1983 (S.684) was passed by both houses of Congress, but subsequently vetoed by President Reagan. However, on March 22, the veto was overridden—a significant move since the President has vetoed 23 bills since taking office and Congress has overridden only four.

Senator Stafford actively supported the bill, which will fund a Water Resources Research Board in every state. The cost will be shared by federal and state governments, with the state gradually assuming a larger contribution.

The successful five-year-old program had been attacked for loose enforcement of management standards, and future costs of the program became an issue as the Legislature wrangled over budget deficits.

VNRC testified on three separate occasions on behalf of House Bill H.505 and adequate funding for the program.

The Council also helped organize the Vermont Current Use Tax Coalition, an organization of 14 farm and forest groups, to educate legislators on the value of this program to agricultural and forest productivity.

H.505 passed in the closing days of the session to the relief of all of us who believe in this unique "productivity incentive" program. EP
**Clean Air Act Reauthorization**

The Clean Air Act is up for reauthorization this year, and despite the Reagan Administration's refusal to support an acid rain control program, Congress is busy examining bills aimed at reducing sulfur dioxide emissions from coal-fired power plants, which scientists label as the main contributors to acid rain.

On March 7, the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works passed Senator George Mitchell's (D-ME) acid rain control bill. S.145 mandates a 10-million-ton reduction in sulfur emissions in the 31 Eastern states over the next 10 years. (At press time the bill had not yet come before the full Senate.) In the House, the leading legislation is Rep. Henry Waxman's (D-CA) H.R.3400, which has been combined with Rep. Timothy Wirth's (D-CO) toxic air pollution control bill, H.R.5084, to form H.R.5314. This bill would mandate a 12-million-ton reduction in sulfur dioxide emissions, and would encompass the entire continental U.S., not just the East.

Even some traditional opponents of acid rain controls support this legislation because of its provisions to reduce emissions by helpful industry to use technological means instead of switching from high-sulfur to low-sulfur coal. Thus, jobs of high-sulfur coal miners would not be sacrificed, and the financial impacts on utilities would be lessened.

This bill is scheduled to be voted on in late April or May. Rep. James Jeffords is a co-sponsor of H.R.3400.

KB
Clean Water Stagnating

Congressional action on Clean Water Act reauthorization is slow, but conservationists hope for passage this year.

S.431, Senator John Chafee's strong reauthorization bill, may be endangered by weakening amendments. Senator Steven Symms (R-ID) is expected to try to weaken pretreatment requirements for toxic discharges. Senator Malcolm Wallop (R-WY) may try to exempt water project developers from responsibility for the downstream impacts of their projects on wildlife habitat and wetlands.

Conservation lobbyists are pressing to include strong measures to control non-point source pollution, which is responsible for half of our water pollution. Non-point sources include run-off from urban areas, farms, construction sites, and mining activities. KB
THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS

Getting answers to questions about how—and why—VNRC began is a lot like researching the origin of the universe. There are so many different theories that one is left with the conclusion that it was just one of those ideas whose time had come.

VNRC’s first chairman, Richard M. Brett of Woodstock, recalls discussing the idea with Lucy Bugbee, Hub Vogelmann and the late Dr. James Marvin. Belmont Pitkin and Goddard College founder Royce “Tim” Pitkin had similar ideas, along with former Forests and Parks commissioner Perry Merrill.

As VNRC pillar Jim Wilkinson says, “There was a ferment in the state to get some kind of organization started.” Some of that ferment was distilled and capped at a statewide conference on “Natural Resources in Transition” at Goddard College, February 25-26, 1963. The conference program included an inventory of the state’s resources by the Vermont commissioners of Agriculture, Forests and Parks, and Water Resources and the State Geologist, as well as discussions of the impact of technology on agriculture and transportation and the need for long-range planning for resource management and development.

According to a June 14, 1963, letter to participants from conference chairman Sam Ogden, “The idea of a Resources Council was proposed early in the conference by Mr. Robert Fish, Jr., a trustee of the Vermont Nature Conservancy. At a later session the idea was further explored by Mr. Fred Sargent, agricultural economist at the University of Vermont. At the final session the conference voted unanimously to establish a committee to formulate a proposal for a Vermont Resources Council.”

The conference appointed a six-member ad hoc committee chaired by Ogden which drew up plans and bylaws for the new organization and presented them to a meeting at Goddard on June 27, 1963. An organizational meeting was held the following day, and a press release dated June 29, 1963, proclaims that:

The Vermont Natural Resources Council was organized yesterday at Burlington. The objectives of the council are:

1. To educate the public in regard to the interrelationship of our soils, waters, plants and animals, their effect on man and man’s effect on them;
2. To promote wise use and preservation of natural resources to the benefit of Vermont citizens;
3. To provide a means for representing all interested individuals and organizations, and to present their representations to the public.

Temporary officers were elected, including chairman, Sam Ogden; vice-chairman, Belmont Pitkin; and secretary-treasurer, Perry Merrill. At a meeting later that summer, permanent officers were elected and Dick Brett replaced Sam Ogden as president.

Don Quixote

The founding of VNRC predated by several years a flood tide of environmental awareness that reached its crest with “Earth Day” in 1970. VNRC’s founders were ahead of their time, and their ideas and methods seem unorthodox to a generation of environmentalists steeped in the tradition of cost-benefit analysis, impact assessment and mitigation. Yet because of the times—and because of who they were—those early members of VNRC won the support of Vermont’s political leaders and were in no small way responsible for the state’s remarkable achievements in water quality protection and land use regulation in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

“It was very informal, a seat-of-the-pants kind of thing,” according to the gentleman who usually wore the pants in those years, Dick Brett, now 81, served as the Council’s chairman, newsletter editor and financier from 1963 to 1967.

“We got our point of view across by inviting people to visit sites, writing newspaper articles, getting
newspapers to review our projects, and buttonholing key people to explain to them what we thought—quite often in private," Brett recalls.

When the Army Corps of Engineers proposed a flood control dam which would have destroyed an important wetland at Victory, VNRC sent a bus-load of environmentalists to investigate. Council members were instrumental in organizing local opposition to this and a similar project on the White River in Gaysville. They also worked closely with state agencies to help formulate the state's position.

An all-volunteer organization with no staff or office, the scope of VNRC's activities was determined by the abilities and interests of its principal volunteers. Fortunately, those volunteers included the late Dr. James Marvin, who founded UVM's Proctor Maple Research Laboratory, UVM Botanist Hub Vogelmann, whose field of expertise is alpine vegetation, and Lucy Bugbee, whom Dick Brett claims was "so well-known that if you wrote a letter to 'Lucy—Vermont,' she'd get it."

Another of VNRC's principal areas of concern in the mid-1960s was construction of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant in Vernon. News Notes, the Council's first newsletter, reported that VNRC testified at the early commissioning hearings as well as meetings privately with utility officials.

St. George

By the late 1960s, second-home development was proceeding at a frenzied pace—especially in southern Vermont. Among the more spectacular development schemes of the late 60s and 70s were a 20,000-acre second-home development in the Stratton-Winhall area, a dam on the Mad River to create a 21-acre lake for a private residential development in Waitsfield, a 625-acre "Wildlife Wonderland" (complete with zebras, camels, exotic birds and a miniature railroad) in Weston and Mount Holly, and a Holiday Inn in the heart of Montpelier.

In February, 1969, VNRC chairman Justin Brande wrote to newly-elected Governor Deane C. Davis urging him to establish an "environmental quality commission" to "study and advise the government and citizens of the state on the trends and directions of our use of our environment" and to "recommend what changes should be made to ensure reasonable prospects for the survival of the state and its citizens."

Brande reported in a February 21 memo to VNRC members that Davis' reaction to his letter had been "very favorable," and on May 14, 1969, Davis created the 17-member Environmental Control Commission and its 29-member advisory committee. VNRC members were well-represented on both bodies.

The commission, chaired by Representative Arthur Gibb, met regularly from May, 1969, to March, 1970. Its report to the Governor, dated January 19, 1970, recommended as a basic goal "the preparation of a comprehensive land use plan for the state of Vermont to be undertaken as soon as practical and completed within a period of one year." Other recommendations included a ban on development above 2500 feet in elevation, regulation of the sale, production and use of pesticides, a long list of regulatory and legislative changes concerning the state's water resources, and creation of a state agency with primary responsibility for natural resources and environmental control.

Most of the commission's suggestions were translated into proposed legislation which swept through the Vermont General Assembly in the historic session of 1970.

VNRC's transition from an all-volunteer group to an organization with a paid professional staff, permanent offices and considerable political clout occurred within a few weeks of the introduction of Act 250.

In November, 1969, the VNRC board authorized the employment of Justin Brande as executive director for a four-month period, stipulating that "further employment depends upon raising sufficient funds to carry on the program." The Council rented a two-room office on the second floor of 97 State Street in Montpelier and opened for business in December, 1969.

VNRC Chairman Peg Garland expressed the new confidence—and responsibilities—of Vermont environmentalists in the February, 1970 News Notes:

"It is indeed strange for conservationists to adjust to their new public image. After years of being Don Quixote, we suddenly find ourselves as St. George. The windmills are now dragons! Let us hope that with the assistance of an aroused public, we will be able to slay our dragons!"
Growing Pains

By 1968, VNRC's membership was at 450 and growing. So was the Council's bank account. At the time of the 1968 annual meeting, VNRC had more than $4000 in cash and savings. No longer a shoestring operation, the Council could say "yes" to proposals like Duncan Campbell's audio-visual program, a slide show on natural resources and conservation combined with promotional brochures which brought in $2000 and 112 new members by April, 1969.

In 1969, the National Wildlife Federation recognized the promise of the new organization by selecting it as its Vermont affiliate.

But along with rapid progress, VNRC experienced the inevitable growing pains as it became clear to the Council's founders and supporters that they did not always share the same vision of the structure and goals of VNRC.

Many of the founders saw VNRC as a kind of federation of Vermont conservation organizations which would allow them to pool information and resources and to speak with one voice on the important issues of the day. In this camp was Fred Sargent, professor of agricultural economics at UVM, who argued in an editorial in the October 13, 1966, Burlington Free Press that the Council's board should include direct representation of major interest groups and organizations, and that VNRC should systematically survey its members before speaking on their behalf.

The Vermont Camping Association echoed Sargent's sentiments in a letter dated November 26, 1966, complaining that VNRC was not fulfilling its stated intention of providing a central clearing place of ideas from all member groups.

While some members felt the Council had strayed too far from the role of educator and information-giver, others felt that the times demanded that VNRC become more involved in directly influencing legislation and public policy, and that doing so meant becoming a "professional" organization with a paid staff and permanent offices.

Peg Garland and Jonathan Brownell spearheaded the drive for a paid, professional staff, and while this represented a completely new direction for the Council, Dick Brett conceded that it was necessary.

"Jonathan Brownell realized that there had to be a wider, more professional, more skillful approach than we had been using," says Brett. "Ours was strictly amateur."

The EPIC Era

Environmentalists had very little time to adjust to their new role before the dragons came charging over the hill. The ink was barely dry on Act 250 when the predictable reaction set in.

Signs of the mounting opposition to Vermont's environmental laws materialized as early as 1971. Critics blamed a 40% drop in non-residential construction in 1971 on Vermont's environmental laws, and Frank Snyder, president of Stratton Mountain Corporation and head of the National Ski Areas Association complained that Act 250 had stopped Stratton "dead in our tracks."
Dispelling some of the confusion and ill-will about Act 250 was the goal of VNRC's first major public education program.

In November, 1970, Justin Brande resigned and the Council began the search for a new executive director.

About the same time, a steering committee headed by Peg Garland began aggressively pursuing public and private grants to fund the Council's activities. In the spring of 1971, VNRC received a $15,000 grant from the New England Regional Commission to conduct a natural areas inventory, and in June of the same year it was awarded a $120,000 grant from the Ford Foundation for "a research and communication program focused on Vermont's new environmental laws."

The Environmental Planning and Information Center—EPIC for short—was directed by Arthur Ristau and designed to stimulate public participation in preparation of the Land Use and Development Plan mandated by Act 250.

EPIC conducted a public opinion survey to determine interest in and awareness of environmental laws in Vermont as well as countless meetings with selectmen, legislators and community leaders. Audio-visual productions included PSAs, public television programs, several studies and conferences and VNRC's famous slide-tape show, "So Goes Vermont."

Ristau assumed editorship of the Council's newsletter, which was renamed the Vermont Environmental Report. Also initiated during this period were the "Green Papers"—2-4 page reports on environmental topics which were often folded into the VER.

The Ford Foundation grant ended in April, 1973, but EPIC kept itself alive with another big grant—$132,000 from the National Science Foundation.

"The EPIC project was one of the more successful experiments in public/private cooperation," according to State Planning Director Leonard Wilson, and Peg Garland credits it with paving the way.
### VNRC Officers, 1963-1984

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<th>Year</th>
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<td>Carl Reidel</td>
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<td>Mollie Beattie</td>
<td>H. Kenneth Gayer</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Mollie Beattie</td>
<td>Sarabelle Hitchner</td>
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way for the adoption of the Capability and Development Plan which was signed into law in December, 1972.

The long-awaited State Land Use Plan was introduced into the Legislature in 1974, but the time was far from ripe. It was soundly defeated in 1974 and again in 1975, and in 1984, the language authorizing a state land use plan was deleted from Act 250.

After operating without an executive director for six months, the Council hired Seward Weber on June 14, 1971. Weber, who has served as VNRC's director for 13 years, has perhaps determined the course of the Council's development more than any other individual.

During the EPIC era, VNRC's activities were focused on Act 250 and the development of the proposed state land use plan, but it remained active in other areas as well. VNRC testified at hearings on clean air legislation, pesticide regulation and designation of portions of the Green Mountain National Forest as wilderness areas.

In 1970, the Council's board of directors voted to intervene as a party in proceedings before the Public Service Board concerning Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant. VNRC chairman Peg Garland explained in a September, 1970,
press release that "The evidence presented by the Conservation Society of Southern Vermont clearly demonstrated that the level of release of radioactive material permissible under the AEC standards is far too high," and that "the board...decided to intervene in order to emphasize the statewide impact of the issues raised in the case."
The resulting lawsuit escalated into a Supreme Court challenge to the constitutionality of the Atomic Energy Act. In 1972 VNRC joined the Conservation Society of Southern Vermont and several other environmental groups in charging that the Atomic Energy Commission was required to both promote and regulate nuclear power—an inherently inconsistent charge for a public agency. The case was still in litigation when Congress voted to split the functions of AEC into the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Energy Research and Development Administration.
Meanwhile back in Vermont, VNRC and CSSV contested Vermont Yankee's application for a "certificate of public good" from the Public Service Board. Vermont Yankee eventually signed an agreement stipulating that it would submit to state standards for radiation emissions even though they were 10 times stricter than federal standards.
Governor Deane C. Davis' retirement in 1972 marked the end of an era. During his tenure as governor, the Vermont Legislature passed the Land Use and Development Law (Act 250) and the Water Pollution Control Act, adopted and expanded subdivision regulations, authorized state regulation of the sale and use of pesticides and created the Vermont Agency of Environmental Conservation.
Meanwhile, the Vermont Natural Resources Council grew from a handful of concerned citizens to a professional organization with a staff of five and more than 1500 members.
In September, 1972, VNRC moved from its headquarters at 97 State Street to new offices at 26 State
A major reason for the environmental zeal of the late 60s and early 70s was the pace of development in Vermont. This list of proposed developments which were either abandoned or scaled down in the early days of Act 250 lends credence to one former district environmental commissioner’s claim that the real value of Act 250 is not the projects it stops, but the projects that never apply in the first place:

— a 700-unit campground in the unorganized Windham County town of Somerset

— a 2000-acre vacation home complex (100 14-family condominium units, 200-250 individual homes and a 700-acre lake) in the Ayres Brook region north of Randolph

— a 1000-unit campsite and recreational complex encompassing 2,400 acres in the towns of Plainfield, Orange and Groton, including a private clubhouse, swimming pool and tennis and basketball courts

— a 1,320-unit residential development in the Westford-Milton area

— 300 condominium units on 1800 acres in Duxbury near Camel’s Hump State Park

— a Holiday Inn at 135 State Street in Montpelier

— “Wildlife Wonderland,” a roadside zoo and amusement park complete with zebras, American bison, camels, antelope, exotic birds and a miniature railroad on a 625-acre site in Weston and Mount Holly

— a 21-acre lake on the Mad River for enhancement of a planned residential development in Waitsfield

R.I.P.

To be continued in the next issue of the Vermont Environmental Report.
Dear VNRC Member,

1983 was a busy and productive year for the Council, with a considerable amount of time devoted to long-range planning and organizational matters.

I returned from my leave of absence at Yale University with a renewed conviction that if VNRC is to meet the challenges of the eighties, it must be better managed and better financed. As a consequence, most of my time has been devoted to program, leadership and financial development.

A challenge grant was obtained from a foundation in the summer which produced the most successful annual fund drive ever. Steps are being taken to make fundraising a systematic effort rather than one resorted to primarily in times of distress.

The planning committee, which several years ago worked productively under the leadership of Edward Cronin, Jr., was reactivated under the chairmanship of Richard Mixer for the purpose of developing a five-year plan.

Efforts have been devoted to the organization of an internship program which could greatly extend the Council's research and project effectiveness at modest cost.

The death of one of the Council's most devoted and effective directors was a great blow to all of us who knew and worked with Red Arnold. His concern for the environment and his belief in the legislative process (in which he participated as a member of the General Assembly) suggested the memorial which the board of directors established at its fall, 1983, meeting. The Red Arnold Memorial Legislative Internship will be endowed with sufficient funds to support an intern each session to help VNRC and Vermont's environmental community advocate sensible environmental legislation.

It's been a good year and I wish to thank Don Hooper and the rest of the staff for their exceptional dedication in running the Council so well while I was away. I am also appreciative to the board of directors for allowing me to accept the fellowship which took me to Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies during the 1982-83 academic year.

Sincerely yours,

Seward Weber
LOBBETING

VNRC operations director Don Hooper (left) coordinated the Council's 1983 lobbying activities with the aid of skilled volunteers like former Forests and Parks Commissioner Jim Wilkinson (right).

VNRC was the only environmental group with a full-time presence at the Vermont State House during the 1983 General Assembly. With the aid of lobbyist and board member R. Montgomery Fischer and legislative intern Margy Erdman, the Council tracked nearly 30 environmental bills. Among the bills on which VNRC submitted formal testimony were:

- A trio of strengthening amendments to Act 250 which would eliminate the 10-acre exemption, replace the current criminal penalty for Act 250 violations with an enforceable civil penalty option and add a consumer protection measure providing that Act 250 permit conditions be recorded in town clerk offices.
- A wildlife check-off which would have enabled taxpayers to earmark a portion of their income tax refunds for non-game wildlife habitat protection.
- Vermont's electric energy plan. VNRC's Energy Committee provided extensive comment and constructive criticism of Vermont's first long-range electrical energy plan.
- Deer herd management. VNRC strongly supported the continued management of the state's deer herd by the Vermont Fish and Game Department rather than the General Assembly.
- A bill that would allow towns to exempt single-lot subdivisions from state review.
- An "omnibus" bill, incorporating a number of amendments to Vermont's Municipal Planning and Zoning Act.
- The ground water "correlative rights bill," which would revise Vermont's "absolute ownership" doctrine of ground water rights and make landowners liable for damages when altering the character or quality of ground water results in injury to other persons or property.

- Continued funding for Vermont's Current Use Tax Program, which allows productive farmland and forestland to be taxed on the basis of use value rather than development value.
- Three bills to strengthen Vermont's container deposit law.
- A joint resolution on acid rain, calling for a 50% reduction in sulfur dioxide emissions by 1990, won an overwhelming endorsement (116-4) in the House and unanimous approval in the Senate.

VNRC testified in committee on bills to:
- renew income tax credits for the installation of alternative energy systems.
- establish a trust fund and procedures for the eventual decommissioning of the Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant.
- create a state program for the control of spruce budworm.
- regulate the in-state transport of nuclear waste.
- require state review of government programs and projects that affect Vermont farmland.
- amend Vermont's billboard law to permit greater use of directional signs on our Interstate highways.

Act 250

- Eliminating the 10-acre exemption which allows large-lot subdivisions to avoid Act 250 scrutiny has been one of VNRC's top legislative priorities ever since the Act 250 10th Anniversary Conference in 1981 identified it as one of the principal weaknesses in the law. A bill to close the so-called "10-acre loophole" passed the House by a 2-1 margin but ran into opposition in the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. It was finally released by that committee only to be seized by the Senate Agriculture Committee, where it remained at the end of the session.*

- VNRC legal intern Steve Craddock examined and then briefed the Council and legislative committees on several important pieces of land-use legislation under debate in 1983. His work on the state subdivision regulations was instrumental in refining House Bill 94, which passed both houses of the General Assembly and was referred to a Committee of Conference as the session ended.

*VNRC lobbied hard to get the 10-acre exemption bill out of committee and to the floor in both the Senate and House during the 1984 legislative session. Both chambers eventually passed the bill by 2-1 margins, and on March 7, 1984, our efforts were rewarded when the Governor signed the bill into law.
Environmental Caucus
VNRC took the lead in organizing the Vermont Environmental Caucus, a coalition of Vermont environmental leaders which met regularly throughout the legislative session to share information and coordinate lobbying. Other caucus activities included:

- a legislative breakfast in Montpelier in January for members of the House Energy, Fish and Game, and Natural Resources Committees and the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and representatives of more than 15 Vermont environmental organizations.
- meetings with Senator Stafford (March) and Senator Patrick Leahy (May) to discuss national environmental legislation.
- a public meeting for legislators at the State House with Region I EPA Administrator Lester Sutton for an update on leadership and policy changes in the final days of the Gorsuch/Burford regime.

Container Deposit Legislation
- VNRC testified in support of amendments to strengthen Vermont's 10-year-old container deposit law by (1) enforcing the requirement that glass beer and soda containers be refillable at least five times, and (2) requiring that distributors certify that PET containers were recyclable before they could be distributed in Vermont. Both bills remained in committee at the end of the session.
- VNRC's summer intern Marjorie McCandless conducted a comparative study of container deposit legislation in the nine "bottle bill" states. Her study is being used by VNRC and the Vermont Agency of Environmental Conservation and other state agencies to respond to requests for information from citizens' groups and government agencies in other states.

PUBLIC LANDS
- The Council vigorously protested a United States Department of Agriculture proposal to auction off up to 19,000 acres of "surplus" public lands in Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest.
- The U.S. Forest Service reconsidered an earlier decision to open all of Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest to oil and gas exploration, thanks to an appeal to the Chief of the Forest Service by a coalition of environmental groups.
- VNRC, the Vermont Wilderness Association, the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society and the Conservation Law Foundation of New England filed an appeal in June, 1982, charging that the Regional Forester's Environmental Assessment was inadequate and calling for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- A November 15 ruling by USFS Chief Max R. Peterson does not specifically require an EIS, but does demand that the Regional Forester's Environmental Assessment (1) spell out requirements for pre-lease review and clearly retain authority to deny or attach conditions to leases, (2) consider no-lease alternatives for portions of the Forest, and (3) re-evaluate roadless areas inventoried during RARE II for potential wilderness designation.
- VNRC testified at a public hearing in Waitsfield in February on the Sugarbush Ski Area's plan to double its skier capacity by constructing three new lifts and additional trails on U.S. Forest Service land. Public protest fueled negotiations between the State of Vermont, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Mad River Valley towns which resulted in a "Memorandum of Agreement" creating a monitoring procedure for step-by-step implementation of the ski resort's development plans.
WILDERNESS

In March, 1983, Vermont's Congressional delegation introduced a bill to designate an additional 65,000 acres of wilderness in Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest. Senators Leahy and Stafford and Representative Jeffords made it clear from the outset that the bill was intended to serve as a base for discussions leading to a negotiated settlement. VNRC was a very active participant in those discussions:

- The Council testified at public hearings in Manchester and Middlebury and coordinated the testimony of other pro-wilderness spokesmen.
- VNRC organized field trips in mid-May which afforded a first-hand look at some of the areas slated for wilderness designation.
- VNRC operations director Don Hooper took part in a series of meetings over the summer with legislators, loggers, snowmobilers, hunters, state officials and U.S. Forest Service representatives which eventually produced a compromise wilderness proposal.*

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*In September, 1983, Vermont's Congressional delegation cosponsored the compromise wilderness bill which would set aside:
- a 22,000-acre White Rocks National Recreation Area to be managed primarily for wildlife habitat and primitive and semiprimitive recreation
- 21,000 acres in East Middlebury to be called the Breadloaf Wilderness Area
- 13,000 acres near Mount Tabor for the Big Branch and Peru Peak Wilderness Areas
- 5000 acres near Woodford which will be called the George D. Aiken Wilderness Area.

The bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives on a voice vote on November 15, 1983, and was approved by the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee on March 28, 1984. Final Senate action is expected in May, 1984.
INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

- VNRC's 21st Annual Meeting at Johnson State College on September 10 featured William Ruckelshaus, the newly-reappointed Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, as the keynote speaker. The afternoon included field trips to the Center for Northern Studies, the Lowell Asbestos Mine, Babcock Preserve, the Lamoille River, Hardwood Pond and Dave and Lucy Marvin's Butternut Mountain Farm.
- "Ski Area Development: A Lot Goes On Before the Skis Go On," was the theme of the 6th Annual Environmental Law Conference sponsored by Vermont Law School's Environmental Law Center and the Vermont Ski Areas Association. The conference, held at Bolton Valley Resort on November 10, featured a keynote address on different methods of environmental conflict resolution by Chicago land use lawyer Fred Bosselman as well as panel discussions on water quality, forest management, growth control and ski area development alternatives. More than 150 land use lawyers, developers, state and local officials, ski area operators and interested citizens attended.
- VNRC coordinated observance of National Wildlife Week in Vermont. The theme of the 1983 annual public education program was "This Is Our Land: Public Lands Belong to All of Us." VNRC issued four press releases on different aspects of public land management in Vermont, and, in conjunction with the State Department of Education, distributed more than 2000 curriculum kits to Vermont teachers.
- VNRC became the Vermont sponsor of the CLASS Project, an environmental education program for junior high school students developed by the National Wildlife Federation.
- VNRC's newsletter, The Vermont Environmental Report, included major articles on reclassification of the Little River, storage and transportation of radioactive wastes, Vermont wilderness, wood energy and ground water contamination in Williamstown.

CLEAN WATER

- The Council blocked a plan to discharge treated wastewater from two ski area developments to the Little River in Stowe. Trapp Family Lodge and the Mount Mansfield Company had planned to discharge to the Little River from a new sewage treatment plant serving a 98-room hotel and up to 100 condominiums at Trapp Family Lodge and a proposed 600-unit condominium development on Mount Mansfield.
- VNRC initiated a proceeding before the Vermont Water Resources Board in April contending that the location of the proposed outfall was within Class "B" waters, which are reserved for fishing, swimming and other recreational uses.
- The Board ruled in June that this section of the Little River had not been classified, making it Class B by default. VNRC then fended off a move to downgrade the stream from "B" to "C."

FORESTS

- With the assistance and guidance of VNRC, Sarah Thorne, a graduate student working in the Resource Policy Center at Dartmouth's Thayer School of Engineering, undertook a study of "The Feasibility of Forest Landowners' Associations in Vermont."
- Based on a survey of forest landowners in Windham County, she concluded that cooperative marketing and management associations are feasible in Windham County and possibly in other parts of Vermont as well, and that such associations could improve forest management on Vermont's many small woodlots and timber tracts.
- VNRC's Forest Policy Task Force has recommended that the Council give serious consideration to establishing one or more forest landowners' associations in Vermont, and the Board has the matter under study.
FUNDRAISING

- Antioch-New England graduate student Margy Erdman organized the third annual Vermont Heritage Festival at Bent Hill Settlement in Waitsfield as a benefit for VNRC. More than 500 people attended the Festival's craft demonstrations, live musical entertainment and an outdoor auction. The all-day event raised over $7000 for the Council.
- VNRC had its best annual appeal ever, thanks to the generosity of its members and to a matching grant from a private foundation. Between the matching grant and new and increased contributions, the Council realized more than $23,000.

MEMBERSHIP

It was a good year for membership development. More than 335 new members enrolled in the Council in the first three months of 1983, and at the end of the year, VNRC's membership was stable at about 3500 members, including more than 150 businesses and organizations.

More than two dozen Vermont craftsmen plied their trades at the 1983 Vermont Heritage Festival.

FINANCES

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STAFF

Kathleen Bond          Communications Coordinator
Katherine Clark        Membership Coordinator
Donald Hooper          Operations Director
Cherie Langer         Secretary/Office Manager
Marion MacDonald       Editor
Donna Pollard*         Office Manager
Sylvia Stewart*        Membership Secretary
Seward Weber          Executive Director

*Left the Council in 1983

INTERNS

Steve Craddock
Margy Erdman
Marjorie McCandless

Susan Prakelt
Sally Sweitzer
Sarah Thorne

SPECIAL THANKS FOR GENEROUS SERVICE

Ron Albee
Dick Andrews
Chuck Bergen
Darby Bradley
Bernice Burnham
Jack Byrne
Phillip Cecchini
Walter Cook
Peter Dennett
Jim Dohrman
Wally Elton
Bob Fasanella
Cheryl Fischer
Monty Fischer
Arthur Gallagher
Dorothy Gayer
Diane Geerken
Richard Hathaway
Norm Hudson
David Jiltson

Paul Markowitz
Hugo Meyer
Kenneth A. Rahn
Cort Richardson
Charles Ross
RSVP Volunteers
Carolyne Schipa
Gregory Schipa
William Schmidt
Sonja Schuyler
Leigh Seddon
Warner Shedd
Norma Skjold
Valerie Snapp
Harrison Snapp
Jake Stewart
James Wilkinson
WNCS Radio
Jared Wood

Many others gave generously of their time, energy, and talent in 1983 by:
- serving on one of VNRC’s ten task forces and committees
- writing articles for Council publications
- leading field trips and workshops at the Law Conference or Annual Meeting
- contributing to the success of the Vermont Heritage Festival
- coordinating grassroots lobbying efforts

Vermont Natural Resources Council
7 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602
The Best of the Vermont Environmental REPORT

VNRC's newsletter is as old as the Council itself. As early as December, 1963, discussion of the latest issue was the first item on the agenda at a board of directors meeting. Back then it was called News Notes, and it was edited by VNRC chairman Dick Brett.

In those days, VNRC was an all-volunteer organization with offices in a shoebox, so its first newsletter was quite spartan in appearance and content. Mimeographed both sides and stapled in the corner, News Notes was a hodge-podge of meeting and hearing notices, clippings from other publications and updates on the activities of state and federal agencies and other conservation groups.

In 1967, the editorship of News Notes passed from Dick Brett to VNRC Secretary-Treasurer Perry H. Merrill, who would serve as editor until 1970. Merrill continued to improve and expand the quarterly publication, which had graduated to offset printing. The very first photo — of Perry Merrill upon his retirement as editor — appeared in the February, 1970, issue of News Notes.

With Justin Brande, the Council's first executive director, as editor, News Notes switched from quarterly to monthly publication, and separate legislative bulletins were initiated. The publication also took on a different tone, with more analysis of state and federal legislation and a new emphasis on clean air, clean water and toxics.

In February, 1971, News Notes was replaced by the Vermont Environmental Report. The new VER was a very different animal, with bold headlines, a colored masthead and radically different content. A project of the Council's Environmental Planning and Information Center, it reflected the Council's active role in the development and promotion of Act 250 and the proposed state land use plan.

There was little news of VNRC's other activities in the early VERs, but this began to change under Arthur Williams' editorship. Williams explored every subject from streambank stabilization to bicycle routes and made the VER more of a general interest publication. He also introduced a new single-spaced two-column typewritten format and began using photos and illustrations.

Nat Frothingham became editor in May, 1975, bringing with him a lively journalistic style and a variety of types of articles — interviews, commentaries and feature-length stories as well as updates and short news items. He also added...

Headlines

...along with typset text and a colorful new masthead and mailing panel.

Assistant editor Rebecca Davison took over from Nat Frothingham in December, 1978. What Nat did for the readability of the VER, Rebecca did for its appearance. Photos — good photos — reappeared in March, 1979. And beginning with the September/October '79 issue, the VER became a very foxy-looking bimonthly tabloid with a new typeface, a four-column format and a stylish new masthead. It was supplemented by a one-page bulletin which took the place of the old legislative alert.

Rebecca Davison edited four of the new format VERs before handing over the reins to Marion MacDonald, who has been editor of the Vermont Environmental Report since April, 1980.

The VER provides a very complete record of the history of environmental awareness and activism in Vermont in the 1970s and 1980s. The articles excerpted here aren't necessarily "the best" of the Council's prodigious literary output — just personal favorites that bespeak the organization's vision and broad range of interests. MM
Learning to Love the Loophole

Arthur Ristau

Throughout most of its early history, the VER steered clear of analysis and stuck to strict reporting of "the news" in terse, pointed fast-paced prose. Once in a while, however, editor Arthur Ristau would stretch out in a special report such as one entitled "Learning to Love the Loophole," (November, 1972):

To some people, selling Vermont land is no different from selling livestock or second-hand furniture; the fastest way to get the highest price is to hold an auction. You may have to do some maneuvering to get around the delay of complying with Act 250, but the exemption for lots over 10 acres seems to provide the necessary loophole.

It takes time to find a purchaser able to come up with enough money to buy several hundred acres at once. If you divide it into 20 lots, however, it isn't taking much of a risk to assume you can gather enough city folk or mini-speculators usually eager to pay $500 to $600 an acre for smaller parcels.

How do you do it? A favorite way seems to be finding some friends to buy a farm, paying perhaps $50,000 for 200 acres. Get the land surveyed into lots of at least 10 acres. Advertise widely and on a Saturday afternoon sell each lot to the highest bidder for a total of perhaps...

$100,000. If questioned about your methods, blame Act 250 for the checkerboard development which breaks up traditional units. Noel Lussier is one of the state’s most prominent practitioners of this art. The Hardwick real estate broker has been auctioning land about five years... From his point of view the lots, which he says are bought mainly for summer camps by city residents, provide more taxes to the towns without placing any demands for services.

But, as one observer noted, most of the lots are sold with no roads, no water, no sewage, no knowledge-of-neighbors, much less any consideration of whether they might be the headwaters of a trout stream or in harmony with the area’s land use patterns...

Noel Lussier opposes a capital gains tax on real estate sold within a short time after it is acquired. He voiced his objections to any such tax in a letter to the Burlington Free Press. The high land prices are the result of the demand, not the fault of the brokers who are providing a service, he said.

Records indicate that such a service can be quite profitable, however. In early 1972, for instance, the following transactions took place. Lussier and [his partner William] Hill purchased a 350 acre farm with buildings for $85,000, or about $243 an acre. It was re-sold in pieces of various sizes at a wide range of prices. Eleven and a half acres brought $12,000, or $1,043 an acre. The brokers also sold the farmer a house in their development.

Assuming that the remaining land sold at an average of $500 an acre and that the brokers realized the usual rural real estate sales commissions and mark-up on the development home, the potential profit from this one deal is more than $100,000.

Best Illustrations/"Bobcat" by Jeanette Stebbins/December, 1977
The Lesson of Pyramid Mall

Darby Bradley

David slew Goliath with his slingshot and some stones, but as former VNRC attorney Darby Bradley points out in this sobering analysis of the Pyramid Mall victory, giants are still giants and slingshots are still woefully inadequate weapons (April, 1978):

Regardless of the final decision, the Pyramid case demonstrates that Act 250 is capable of achieving its purpose, namely, to allow a district commission to assess, on the basis of factual information, the probable impact of a proposed development...

Act 250 has succeeded in this case because the State of Vermont, the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, the City of Burlington, and other participants were willing to develop the necessary technical information. It has succeeded because the commissioners were willing to spend hundreds of hours attending hearings, reading reports, and digesting the complexities of market forecasting, traffic simulation, erosion and stormwater pollution abatement, heating and cooling efficiencies, and the fiscal impacts of a development the size of Pyramid on neighboring communities...

Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent by the State of Vermont on this case. The Pyramid Company has spent $2 million. Thousands of man-hours have been spent by state, regional and local employees and officials. These government servants have been diverted from other important responsibilities. Few people involved in the Pyramid case feel that the same effort would, or could, be made again. Yet, even if the mall is turned down, the same market forces which attracted Pyramid still exist. Unless we learn from the case, it seems inevitable that we will face the same threat again.

The real lesson, then, of the Pyramid case is that Vermont must re-think and revitalize the planning component of Act 250. Had there been an adequate plan stating where a development of the magnitude of a Pyramid Mall should or should not be located, this proceeding would have been greatly simplified, and hours of time would have been saved.

Proposals for a land use plan were ‘shot down’ several years ago amid cries of “local control.” Yet the adverse impacts of a Pyramid Mall fall primarily upon the region. Traffic congestion, air pollution, loss of tax base, and increased consumption of electrical power are all legitimate regional concerns. It is true that Williston landowners would probably benefit financially from a mall. Is it then realistic to expect that the local planning process can adequately address and protect regional concerns?

I am not suggesting that we dust off the old state land use plans, or give regional planning commissions veto power over developments which only marginally affect the region. What I am suggesting is that the regional planning process be used to decide where developments with significant impacts upon a region should be located and what size these developments should be. There are many factors which must be weighed in making these choices: capacity of the transportation system to handle increased volumes, availability of housing and schools, and capital investment plans. These considerations can best be weighed within the framework of a regional planning process, not in the case-by-case approach of Act 250.

If regional planning commissions are to be given authority to rule on the location and size of significant developments, they should be both responsive and responsible to the people of the region. Commissioners are currently appointed by local boards of selectmen. It has been suggested that a regional “council of government” composed of selectmen-representatives be established to review the work of the commissioners and adopt a regional plan. Such a council would also lead to greater contact between municipalities with the possibility of better cooperation and coordination among towns in addressing common regional problems other than planning.

The important point is that Vermont should reassess regional planning... Unless the regional planning process is strengthened, the education afforded by the Pyramid Mall experience... will be largely lost.
Notes from India

William Eddy, Jr.

William Eddy, Jr., visited India in March, 1979, at the invitation of the United States National Park Service. His mission was to respond to a request from the Indian government for help in establishing environmental education programs.

Eddy returned to Vermont with a fresh perspective on scarcity, resource economics and the Vermont landscape, and he shared that insight with VER readers in a September/October, 1979, commentary:

...With an area about one-third that of the United States, India has a population of over 600 million people. Even with a modest growth rate of 2%, India adds to its population about one million people every thirty days.

Such statistics taken out of context, and carried by the mass media in this country, form the basis for almost our entire view of India. In our minds India has become a world symbol for human suffering and environmental degradation.

...Oddly enough, a great many Indians do not seem to share this vision of their country. Perhaps it is because desperation leads to remarkable inventiveness in attempting to cope with the impossible. In the midst of all its difficulties India maintains one of the most efficient and least expensive railway systems in the world...

In the large and immaculately maintained public parks and gardens in the cities of India, a gas-powered lawnmower is an unheard-of luxury. Instead heavy reel-type mowers are pulled by the ever-present sacred cows. Behind each mower there is a canvas grass-catcher from which the cow gets a good meal after it has finished mowing.

Despite India's excellent relations with the oil-producing states of the Persian Gulf, gasoline is priced at about $2.25 per gallon. No one speaks of a conspiracy by the oil companies, and at every stoplight the drivers of motorcycle rickshaws and taxi cabs turn off their engines while waiting for the light to change.

Because cars and motorcycles as well as fuel are expensive, every imaginable alternative to the gas engine is used for transportation — bicycles, camels, bullocks, water buffalo, horses, elephants and donkeys. The bicycle is the only one that doesn't provide an important by-product needed for fuel or fertilizer...

In an extremely wealthy country like America we have been encouraged to depend on a long list of financial and social entitlements under the law. We view these "rights" not as a resource that we are privileged to draw upon in time of genuine need, but rather as a birthright we have come to expect. The people of India live under no such illusion. They know too well that nature is not an equal opportunity.
Best Letters to the Editor:

To the editor:
I have been a member of VNRC for nearly 10 years now, and an admirer and supporter of its careful, thorough work on environmental issues within the state. Over the same period of time I have been active in the non-violent peace movement, working to stop the war in Vietnam, to educate people about the realities of U.S. foreign policy, to oppose the tremendously wasteful B-1 bomber and to develop creative ways of defending our values and resolving conflicts...

I am writing to share with you my conviction...that both movements are profoundly connected; and that people...within each should become clear...about identifying the interconnections...

What most deeply concerns me is that I believe the problems we face are rapidly becoming so intertwined that we will find ourselves increasingly isolated and ineffective in our efforts to win lasting victories just on "our" specific issues. It is clear, for instance, that if we are to make real headway in working for safe energy, we must talk not only about the environment, but also about alternative sources, jobs, the economy, the power of corporations, and national priorities. If we are to talk about salmon in the Connecticut River we will find ourselves talking about the Law of the Seas, distribution of earth's resources, and the creation of viable transnational organizations. If we work for clean air we have to talk not only about paper mills, but about the B-1 bomber and the ozone layer — and thus about U.S. military goals and some aspects of foreign policy.

All this is not to say that VNRC should stop working for a Natural Areas Project — quite the contrary. What I would ask is that in its work and in its publications it permit itself to take the risk of raising the larger issues and inviting discussion on them. By so doing it could provide a valuable stimulus for readers with a specific concern to think about the wider context. It would enable the organization as a whole to gain insight as to the kinds of working relationships it might want to develop with other groups in dealing with the larger issues. It might illuminate specific strategies or coalition efforts we might want to consider as part of an effort for broader social change consistent with our basic concerns.

Scudder Parker
East St. Johnsbury, VT
April, 1976

To the editor:
To do as Mr. Parker suggests in his letter in the April Vermont Environmental Report would be the best way I can think of to "kill" VNRC and make it ineffective and put it out of business! Because of its present impartiality and concern with the Vermont environment, you draw strong support for all concerned citizens, be they conservative or liberal, but who are vitally interested in the future of Vermont. You cannot be all things to all people...you must aim for the support of a large body of generally conservative Vermonters to be effective and survive!

Sincerely
Andrew Titcomb
Perkinsville, Vermont
May, 1976
Vermont’s Environment:

In 1970, the famous Gibb Commission spelled out its vision of what Vermont ought to be — not what it could be — and its report to Governor Deane C. Davis became the philosophical underpinning for Vermont’s legislative and regulatory environmental safeguards.

The closest equivalent to the Gibb Commission in recent times was the 1980 “Agenda for the Eighties” committee. Composed of representatives of conservation organizations, government, universities and the general public, the committee worked together for a year to devise a new strategy for the wise use and protection of Vermont’s natural resources.

While no new legislation is directly attributable to the “Agenda for the Eighties” committee, its work is a reminder of “the big picture” and an excellent yardstick for public policy decisions.

Excerpts from its report appeared in the November/December 1980 VER, with the cautionary note: “This statement represents the ideas and opinions of many different people; the committee members who have signed their names below do not necessarily agree with every detail of its contents.”

Vermont At A Crossroads

The flood of 1927 washed out our rural past along with our roads and bridges. With the rebuilding and modernizing of our state following the flood, we began a hurried journey that has changed our economy and some of our values.

Now a time of greater uncertainty is at hand. The oil-fed global economy is tightening around our lives. The materials from which we build our daily lives are becoming scarcer and more expensive. But the time ahead of us need not be one of grimness and anxiety. A resurgence of Vermont’s traditional values can sustain us through the lean years ahead if we are willing to change, plan and make decisions. In drawing up this agenda, we have built upon the values and commitments that have been Vermont’s strength in the past and which will surely be the foundation of its future: individual freedom, a sense of community, self-reliance, independent thought, frugality and respect for the land.

Energy Self-Reliance

We can now see the decline of the Age of Oil, but every potential substitute form of energy has some disturbing implications. Wind power suggests mountaintop wind turbines; atomic energy entails a deadly legacy of radioactive wastes; hydroelectric generation may endanger our lakes and rivers.

We must produce more of the energy we need here in Vermont, relying upon a careful mix of energy from a variety of small-scale sources. The...Power Planning Division of the...Public Service Board should be charged with devising an energy plan for Vermont which includes specific goals and objectives. In our daily lives we must be more careful to conserve energy. We must travel less and rediscover our homes and families.

Food Self-Reliance

Though Vermont is the most agricultural state in New England, it imports more than eighty percent of its food. We harbor one third of the New England region’s remaining agricultural land, but our farmland is rapidly disappearing. We are too dependent on others for the food we eat, and our own marketing and processing industries have withered.

We need to grow, market and process more food here. In addition to maintaining the vitality of the dairy industry, we should aim to produce at least half of the food we now import by 1990. We must find better ways to keep farmland in farming, and the best way to do that is to make agriculture profitable. Management training, low-interest loans and revised inheritance laws may be required to help new farmers get started. We must allocate money for a program of development rights purchase of selected agricultural lands in some parts of the state. Elsewhere, tax incentives, land trusts, relief from nuisance ordinances and agricultural districting will help the farming community maintain its vitality and retain its essential network of grain dealers, milk haulers and other support industries. The Department of Agriculture should broaden its efforts to develop a system of local and regional markets and cooperative processing plants for Vermont farm products.

Protecting Our Air, Land and Water

In the years ahead, Vermont’s considerable body of environmental law may come under attack as
growth economy proponents, spurred by scarcity, attempt to override environmental safeguards. But the state's environmental laws should be refined and enhanced, not weakened. Vermont should remove itself from the Federal Government's list of potential sites for nuclear waste disposal. Polluters of rivers, lakes, air and water should be subject to the moderate principle behind Vermont's water pollution control statutes: clean up your act, with deliberate speed, but clean it up. And since most of Vermont has been given over to settlement and civilization, as much of it as is economically feasible should be left wild. We should encourage and promote state, federal and private efforts to protect what is left of Vermont's wilderness, with a special emphasis on preserving our endangered plant and animal species.

A Stable Economy

Vermont has been seen in this century as an impoverished satellite of the national commercial-industrial complex. We have responded to that perception by attempting to bring more of the national economy to Vermont. In view of the dependence of the national economy on such external factors as the price of oil and the size of the federal budget, we may want to reconsider this policy.

We need maximum employment at decent jobs for all Vermonters. Perhaps we need an economy less dependent on industries like tourism and recreation, which are tied to the price and availability of gasoline. We should give preference to industries which are more closely linked with the productive use of the state's natural resources: stone, wood, clean water and clean air. Cottage industries should also be given every possible encouragement.

Housing For All

Many Vermonters are unable to purchase housing, and others live in housing that is neither decent nor humane. Much of our housing is far from town and work place. Wherever possible, village life should be revitalized; a healthy downtown reduces gasoline consumption and conserves heat. Some private investors have already seen the value of restoring downtown commercial property. Public resources should be used to refurbish suitable village and city buildings for residential use instead of to promote new development in outlying areas. We should encourage downtown housing which provides an opportunity for residents to grow their own food in community gardens. We recognize that tourism is an important component of the Vermont economy, but second home development is not necessarily a good industry for Vermont. We may want to institute a stiff tax on second homes in order to conserve mountain land, heating oil, gasoline and building materials.

We must ensure that Vermont communities use growth planning as a tool to help them shape their own futures. Local plans should be coordinated with regional plans. Likewise, we must find a new way to finance education. As long as education is tied to the local property tax, there will be a strong incentive toward mindless growth. Act 250 must be actively and uniformly enforced so that it can continue to serve as the basis for land use controls.

Institutions May Have To Change

Vermont state government is small and accessible; most Vermonters would agree that these two characteristics help us to control our state and its programs. But we need some changes in organization to eliminate duplication and maintain flexibility as we begin the shift to a high-cost petroleum economy.

We must be sure that government is as lean and efficient as possible without jeopardizing essential programs. We must con-

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Best Membership Coupon
January/February 1982

Happy Marmot Day!

Since this paper went to bed during the wee hours of the morning on February 2nd, it seemed only fitting to pause for a moment of groundhog day that is, woodchuck appreciation. As you can see, this small mammal has rather tender feelings. In fact, a little burrowing (pardon the expression) revealed that the groundhog, or woodchuck, is actually a "grizzled thickest marmot of the northeastern U.S. and Canada."

Marmot or not, VNRC and this creature have common interests. We're dedicated to preserving our economic independence and our way of life by revitalizing Vermont agriculture. And if that isn't woodchuck lib, what is?
stantly strive for better-coordinated local, state, regional and federal programs. Transferring some programs from Montpelier to regional offices might bring them closer to the people they serve. Regional commissions should expand their role in helping communities establish economic, social and environmental priorities. More public dollars should be used to support mass transit and village-wide heating systems, and we must find better ways to market local products. Finally, the University of Vermont Cooperative Extension Service should place more emphasis on community education and service. It could assist churches, granges and other volunteer organizations and aid the development of coops.

How would these ideas work? Are they impossible or visionary? We think not. We believe they are the most practical choices for Vermont in the decade ahead. Vermont can become poorer as the national economy retrenches and stagnates for lack of affordable petroleum, or it can protect itself by returning to a smaller, healthier, more self-reliant way of life. We must decide what kind of future we want and make the choices that will help us attain it.

Ron Albee Peg Garland
Anne Baker Don Hooper
Richard Brooks Martin Johnson
Richard Carbin Cheryl King
Richard Cowart Carl Reidel
William Darrow Leonard Wilson
Monty Fischer
Congratulations from the
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION

Warner Shedd
New England Regional Executive
National Wildlife Federation

National Wildlife Federation extends its warmest congratulations to the Vermont Natural Resources Council on the occasion of its 20th anniversary. VNRC was only five years old, though already a strong and respected conservation organization, when it applied to NWF in 1969 to become our Vermont affiliate. With each passing year, I'm happy to say NWF's acceptance of VNRC's application has looked better and better as VNRC has continued to grow in size, strength and influence.

As the New England regional executive for National Wildlife Federation, my job is to work closely with our affiliate in each of the six New England states. This work includes such things as helping each affiliate with issues, giving advice on membership and finance campaigns, and providing liaison between the affiliate and NWF's staff at our Washington, D.C. headquarters. Thus a regional executive quickly develops a very close relationship with each affiliate in his region. However, as a Vermont native and resident, my relationship with VNRC has been especially close, and I can say with complete honesty that this relationship has been a continual source of pleasure.

Over the years, NWF and I have worked with VNRC on a wide variety of conservation issues and projects. The Great Vermont Wilderness Battle is an outstanding recent example, but many others come to mind: acid rain, the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts; Act 250; trying to put management of Vermont's wildlife, and particularly its deer herd, in the hands of the Fish and Game Department, where it belongs; and many, many other important state, regional, and national issues. Through all of these years and all of these issues, I've never failed to be impressed by the professionalism of VNRC's staff, the dedication of its volunteers, the organization's balance and fairness in dealing with controversial issues, and, above all, the outstanding spirit of friendliness and cooperation which VNRC has always extended to me and to the National Wildlife Federation.

Two summers ago I conducted a study for VNRC. In the process, I interviewed a number of prominent Vermonters — legislators and other elected officials, business leaders, conservation leaders, and a variety of others — to seek their opinions and attitudes about VNRC. Although some individuals were unfamiliar with VNRC and its work, those who were knowledgeable about the organization were almost unanimous in giving it high marks for objectivity, positions based on facts rather than emotion, moderation, thoughtfulness, toughness on key issues, and overall effectiveness.

This praise from leading Vermonters came as no surprise to me or to the National Wildlife Federation. After all, in 1971, NWF, the nation's largest citizen conservation organization, gave VNRC its coveted "Affiliate of the Year" award. Ever since, NWF has expected excellence from VNRC and has never been disappointed.

And so National Wildlife Federation salutes VNRC on its 20th anniversary. During the past 20 years we have watched VNRC attain and hold the enviable position of being Vermont's premier conservation organization. We view this achievement with great pride and look to VNRC for even more outstanding success in the coming years.

E. Warner Shedd
1984 Vermont General Assembly

During the 1984 legislative session VNRC was the only state environmental group with a full-time presence in the legislature.

Operations director Don Hooper and Antioch/New England graduate student intern Margy Erdman coordinated the Council's participation.

Interns Sally Sweitzer and Eric Palola helped lobby for toxics controls and current use.

On some bills, the Council dovetailed its activities with other groups. For example, on two important bills concerning the Current Use Tax program, VNRC worked with a coalition of 14 farm and forestland groups.

The Council offered formal testimony at public hearings on Act 250, Current Use, ground water protection, low-level nuclear waste storage, alternatives to herbicides on utility rights-of-way, bottle bills, state subdivision regulations and Vermont wilderness.

VNRC also testified in committee hearings on the above issues and a variety of others including: town planning and zoning provisions; acid rain; herbicide spray "drift"; appropriations for HEAT/RCC, the State Planning Office and the Agriculture Department; small-scale power rates, toxic waste cleanup, and hunting and fishing regulation.

If you would like a copy of any of our testimonies, call the VNRC office at 223-2328. DH/ME

Focus on Water

"Water... We Can't Live Without It" was the theme of 1984 National Wildlife Week, March 18-24. VNRC, as the Vermont affiliate of NWF, sponsored the activities along with the Vermont Departments of Education and Fish & Game. Teachers aid packets (produced by NWF) were distributed to public elementary schools, and Fish & Game wardens and field personnel visited classrooms to talk about water conservation.

Governor Richard Snelling proclaimed March 18-24 National Wildlife Week in Vermont, and urged people to unite in support of every activity that will help conserve and protect the quality of our water resources.

VNRC press releases promoted the educational activities while tying them into current issues such as small-scale hydro development, wetland protection, reauthorization of the Clean Water Act and ground water protection. Seward Weber and Don Hooper were interviewed by several radio and television stations on these topics. KB

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☐ Business — $25, $50 or $100

Mail to: Vermont Natural Resources Council, 7 Main Street, Montpelier, Vermont 05602

All contributions are tax-deductible
Welcome, Dorothy!

VNRC is pleased to have Dorothy Fredrickson on staff as Membership Coordinator and administrative assistant to the Executive Director. Dorothy recently moved to Montpelier from South New Berlin, New York, where she worked as a legal assistant. Questions about membership and/or contributions should be addressed to Dorothy.

The CLASS Project

As the Vermont affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation, VNRC is the Vermont sponsor of the CLASS Project, an environmental education program for junior high or middle schools developed by the National Wildlife Federation. The CLASS Project consists of a set of class lessons, each focused on an important environmental or ecological issue. Public school teachers can receive a project notebook by taking a CLASS Project workshop. Junior high teachers who are interested in using the materials should call Kathy Bond at VNRC, 223-2328, for more information. KB

TNC Moves On

VNRC gained some office space but lost its close association with the Vermont Field Office of The Nature Conservancy when the latter moved down street to 138 Main. In 1978, Robert Klein, who was a VNRC project staff member at the time, became the director of the new Vermont Field Office of TNC, which has shared office space with VNRC ever since.

Now, the gradual addition of three full-time staff people has necessitated a move to larger quarters.

We'll miss TNC, but we're glad to have the extra space for an increasing number of interns and volunteers.

VNRC congratulates the Vermont Conservancy in its growth and expanded programming. KB
New Members

VNRC wishes to welcome the following new members, who joined us in the first four months of 1984: J.K. Adams, Co., Inc.; Ms. Barbara P. Agnew; Mrs. Laniece D. Aldridge; Mrs. Longtin Ambrose; Ms. Catherine H. Ambrose; Sara W. Andrews; Mr. G. Ray Ault; Mr. Joseph Bahr; Ms. Lorraine M. Baker; Mr. Ernest J. Bailer; Ms. Ann J. Bannister; Carolyn Bates; Black Silver; Mr. John C. Bates; Kate & David Bayer; Susan & Gregory Bean; Ms. Eleanor K. Belding; Ms. Elizabeth M. Belshaw; Ms. Barbara J. Blais; Ms. Casey Blanchard; Mr. Norbert G. Blaskowski; Mr. Whitney Blodgett; Mr. Harold Boeschenstein, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. William Bond; Mr. David Bradford; David Brook; Mr. & Mrs. Philip Brooks; Mr. Duncan Brown; Mr. Robert L. Burger; Mrs. Laura S. Burnham; Mr. Dean Burrell; Mr. John B. Carpenter, Jr.; Mr. and Mrs. R.P. Carpenter, Jr.; Jim & Jean Cavanagh; Mr. John L. Chamberlain; Mr. & Mrs. Alfred H. Chambers; Mr. Ralph Chapman; Mr. William J. Cimoneetti; Mr. David A. Clavelle; Mr. and Mrs. Donald I. Coggins; Rudyard & Janet Colter; Ms. Polly Connell, Mr. and Mrs. Walter N. Cook; Mr. Robert B. Corliss; Mr. Alfred A. Crandall; Edward F. Crane; Ms. Emily W. Davis; Mr. Justus J. Devries, Jr.; Mr. Don Dewees, Jr.; John T. Driscoll; Ella N. Earle; Mr. Charles P. Evans; Hiram & Jean Evans; Ms. Janet Fowler; Rev. & Mrs. Warren E. Fowler; Mr. & Mrs. Paul V. Fraser; Furbishments, Inc.; Ms. Elizabeth Kent Gay; Ms. Charlotte H. Gibson; Mr. Roger C. Gilman; Ms. Penelope M. Goodkind; Nancy Graham & Bruce Harrington; Ms. Clara May Hemenway; David F. Henderson; Ms. April D. Hensel; Garrett & Nancy Hobart; Mrs. Carolyn H. Hodgdon; Dr. Virginia L. Hood; Housejoiner, Ltd.; Dr. Charles Houston; Howard Bank; Elaine & David Hudson; Mr. Robert H. Hunter; Hydro Consultants, Inc.; Isley Library; Dr. & Mrs. Edward S. Irwin; Mr. & Mrs. Stuart E. Jacobs; Ms. Elizabeth H. Jarey; Mr. Dudley R. Johnson; Mr. Richard W. Johnson; Mrs. J. Donald Johnston; Brennan Kelley; John H. Kington; Edwin M. & Elsa W. Kistler; M. & Howard J. Kontoff; Ms. Otto Kleppner; Ms. Jan Krantz; Mr. Austin T. Lambeth; Mr. & Mrs. Jack Lancaster; Ann H. Linton; Dr. & Mrs. Peter Linton; Dr. G.W. Leadbetter, Jr.; Ms. Karen Macke-Rohr; Mrs. B.H. MacLeod; Bruce R. MacPherson Family; Mr. Richard J. McCormack; Ms. Patricia Passmore McKeon; Joseph & Martha McSherry; Robert & Jeanne McWatters; Mr. Norman Marchegiani; Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Mason; Mr. John C. Medoy; Mrs. Helen B. Merrick; Dr. Howard J. Mindell; Ms. Jen Molnar; Montshire Properties; Mr. Peter J. Morrill; Mountain Environmental Company; Mrs. Marjorie M. Mudgett; Wilma K. Muller; Mr. Peter Nazarenko; Donald A. & Dorothy C. Nelson; New England Solar Energy Association; Mrs. Ruth S. Nisbet; Norman Williams Public Library; Mr. & Mrs. Wesley L. Nyborg; Mr. Terrence S. O'Neill; Mr. Eric Oberg; Mr. Anthony Otes; Mr. & Mrs. Robin Outwater; P.B. Enterprises, Inc.; P. & Railroad Corporation; Mrs. Sue C. Pauli; Leon & Sandra Pecor; Mr. Jeffrey L. Pelton; Ms. Faith L. Pepe; Wayne E. & Natalie C. Peters; Alice E. Peterson; Ms. Helen P. Pierce; Mr. Richard Piliero; Mr. David L. Polow; Pomerleau Real Estate; Ms. M. Ellen Powell; Ms. Joan B. Price; Mrs. Lawrence S. Pyne; Alan & Audrey Quakenbush; Mr. Gerald Raftery; Mr. David B. Ratti; Dr. Mildred A. Reardon; Ms. Beverly Reilly; Frederick & Laurel Reed; Ms. Marlene Richter; Brenda Roberts; Mr. Richard M. Rodier; Mr. & Mrs. Ron Rood; Hannelore Rossotto; Michael Rossotto; Ms. Caroline Rovnak; Rutland Free Library; Mr. Wendell Savery; Mr. Hal Schafer; Mr. Otto G. Scheuermann; Mr. Scot N. Schindler; Mr. Alan Schmidt; Douglas & Joan Shaw; Mr. Gilbert Simard; Ms. Melissa S. Simmons; Ms. Gertrude Sinclair; Mr. J. Charles Skylark; Mr. Jack Slagle; Mrs. Marilyn M. Smith; Mrs. Ralph H. Smith; Jeff Sommer; Mr. & Mrs. Edward W. Spanko; Leslie Sproule; Mr. Louis J. Stare, Jr.; Mr. Kevin Stine; Ms. Lucie A. Strayer; Dick & Sue Strifert; Mr. Joseph C. Terenzii; Mr. Frederic W. Thomas; Mr. Jack Thomas; Rob Thomson & Lydia McIntire; David Van Vleck; Ms. Anita G. Viverito; Bodil Wallis; Mr. George Worburton; Mr. Richard F. Watt; Mr. Steven D. Webster; Ms. Dinny Weed; William B. Wessell; Ms. Diana Whittington-Strobridge; Mr. Thomas G. Wicker; Mrs. Marion P. Wilcox; Mr. & Mrs. H. B. Woodman.

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"HAPPY 20TH ANNIVERSARY VNRC"

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VERMONT ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT • SPRING, 1984 • PAGE 29
Eric S. Palola
While at VNRC, Eric Palola has researched and lobbied on the Current Use Tax program and agricultural land policies, written press releases and assisted with the Vermont Environmental Report.
Eric has a B.S. in Resource Economics and Environmental Studies from UVM. He has past experience as a planning consultant for the town of Jericho, Vermont and has worked as a professional ski racer, carpenter, logger, and coach. His interests center on conservation education, agricultural and forest programs, and environmental politics. After a summer position with the state Water Resources Department, Eric will be available for a permanent position.

Eric Ellis
Eric Ellis, a second-year student at Sterling College in Craftsbury Common, Vermont, spent two months at VNRC this winter. He produced a valuable subject index of all VNRC newsletter articles, monitored state ground-water legislation and wrote press releases ad infinitum.
Eric will be transferring to a college out-of-state next year.

Bill Chamberlin
Bill Chamberlin is a graduate student enrolled in the Environmental Studies program at Antioch/New England. Bill came to VNRC to pursue his interest in land use issues and to gain some experience in environmental advocacy, as well as exposure to the legislature and the agencies of state government. He has drafted a wetlands policy statement for VNRC and will produce a report designed to help VNRC assess the state's wetlands protection program.
Bill's interest in environmental issues developed over many years. He is an avid backcountry skier and outdoor enthusiast, and he spent three years as an environmental educator at the Hulbert Outdoor Center in Fairlee, Vermont. He expects to finish his Master's program in June, 1985.

Sally Sweitzer
After working as a VNRC volunteer during the fall, Sally joined the Council's lobbying team during the 1984 session. Her specialties include herbicides, toxics and hazardous and low-level radioactive waste. She gained experience in environmental advocacy as she tracked the progress of several bills, testified in committee and at public hearings, briefed the Council staff and wrote articles for the VER.
Sally has lived in the Mad River Valley for seven years and is the founder and president of the Mad River Valley Audubon Society chapter. She is on the lookout for a permanent job which combines her environmental interests and experience.

Sally

Margy Erdman
Margy Erdman, now finishing her masters degree in Environmental Studies at Antioch/New England, came to VNRC as a legislative intern in 1983. She had a hunch that public policy and education were her real interests—and she was right! Margy fundraised for VNRC last summer, and helped coordinate the Council's lobbying activities over the winter. An active outdoorswoman, Margy hopes to remain in Vermont and find an appropriate outlet for her administrative and educational talents, and to continue her involvement in environmental issues and state politics.

Margy
Visit Vermont state parks and forests this summer!

Nature programs are conducted in several parks and include naturalist-guided walks and field trips, campfire talks, slide shows and movies, workshops, craft fairs and concerts.

Parks with such programs are: Bomoseen, Branbury, Brighton, Button Bay, Carmi, D.A.R., Grand Isle, Groton, Half Moon, Jamaica, and Maidstone.

Most state parks and forests have hiking trails, and maps are available from the main office in Montpelier, or the individual parks. For more information, write the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, or call 828-3375.

June 9-10
The Vermont Institute of Natural Science sponsors the 12th Annual Bird Conference at Johnson State College. The day's events include: workshops; field trips to Babcock Nature Preserve, Stowe valley, Fairfield Swamp, Jay Peak, and Bear Swamp; and speakers such as Tom Mountain from Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge and Pete Dunne from Cape May Bird Observatory, New Jersey. Register before May 25 by calling 457-2779.

June 25-29, July 2-7.
A field mammalogy course at Johnson State College will acquaint students with Vermont's native mammals and their habitats, and with study techniques including identification, capture and tagging, sign reading and interpretation, determination of food utilization, population estimation, community analysis, radio tracking, and use of night-vision equipment and ultrasonic listening devices.

June 27-29

July 6, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
The World of Whales, a slide presentation by Sherryl Taylor at the VINS loft in Woodstock. $2.00 for members, $2.50 for non-members, $1.00 for students and children. Call 457-2779 for more information.

July 7
Whale Watch with pelagic bird expert Walter Elison. Depart from VINS at 4:00 a.m. for a 7:30 rendezvous in Newburyport, Massachussetts. $55 for members, $60 for non-members includes transportation. Call 457-2779 for more information.

July 9-13 and July 16-20
Green Mountains Natural History course at Johnson State College. Discussions and field trips will cover a range of subjects including the glacial history of the Green Mountains, relict arctic plant populations of the mountains, and principal plant and animal communities of the forests and tundra.

Thanks to R & R Acres Lending Library for advice and assistance with this issue of the Vermont Environmental Report.

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Summer Courses at the Center for Northern Studies
Call 888-4331 for more information

June 2, 3, 9, and 10 (weekends), 6:00 a.m.-noon.
**Field ornithology.** Early morning field walks with naturalist and artist Richard Smyth will take you through a variety of northern habitats during the height of the spring migration and breeding season.

June 27-29, 7:00-9:45 p.m.
**Wichikapache, The Northern Trickster.** Participants will learn about this familiar character in Native North American mythology, the Cree language, culture, and natural history. Free.

July 9-13, 9:00 a.m.-noon
**The Inuit (Eskimos)** will examine the evolution of Inuit culture from prehistory to the introduction of satellite communications and large-scale oil and gas development in the Arctic. Free.

July 25-27, 9:00 a.m.-noon
**Inuit Art** will explore Inuit art and crafts from 500 B.C. to the present through lectures, discussions, slides and videotapes. Free.

August 13-17, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
**Mountain Ecosystems.** Students will learn to identify northern hardwoods, alpine flora and bird life with forest ecologist and acid rain authority, Charlie Cogbill.

August 20-22, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
**Mammals of the Green Mountains.** Lectures and field studies led by mammalogist Joe Merritt will explain how small animals adapt to the mountain environment, where they live, and how they interact with other species. Students will also learn to livetrap and handle small animals and to use radio-telemetry to study the activity and distribution of individual mammals.

August 23-25
**Birds of the Northeast.** Ornithologist Paul Spitzer will lead bird walks and/or canoe trips into the Missisquoi Wildlife Refuge, Bear Swamp and other good birding sites around northern Vermont.

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