

VECAN

VERMONT ENERGY & CLIMATE
ACTION NETWORK

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Late March 2021 E-News

Dear Local Energy Leaders,

Spring has sprung! We hope you are able to get outside to enjoy this warm weather.

Below, please find a list of upcoming events, important opportunities and some exciting projects your community might participate in:

- **Join the Conversation About Vermont's Electrical Grid - March 25 at 11:30 AM** - Join REV and VELCO for a special webinar and public comment session on Vermont's Long-Term Transmission Plan. Contact Kit Price at kit@revermont.org to register. Find more information below.
- **Opportunity to Implement On-Demand Microtransit Pilot Project in Your Town!** - There is a unique opportunity to help your neighbors and save energy by partnering with the Vermont Agency of Transportation to try out an alternative type of public transportation, which in Montpelier is being called "On-Demand Microtransit Montpelier Pilot." Learn more about the pilot program below
- **The Future of Rural Transit Project Seeks Pilot Community - Yours?** - The Network Action Team is looking for a partner Supervisory Union and community in Vermont to study the feasibility of introducing combined public transit and school transportation using electric buses. [Learn more about the project here](#) and below.
- **Mark Your Calendar for Our Next VECAN Lunch and Learn April 19th at Noon** - Bring your lunch and learn about what's on the horizon for federal stimulus dollars and how your town can best take advantage of them. [Register to attend here!](#)
- **How Do Vermonters Think About Weatherization?** - Join Efficiency Vermont for a free webinar on April 13 at noon to learn about the results of a statewide survey on weatherization in Vermont, conducted by the Center for Research & Public Policy on behalf of Efficiency Vermont and Vermont Gas Systems. [Learn more about the webinar, including how to join here.](#)
- **Building Resilience Against Climate Misinformation Webinar - March 30 at 6:00 PM** - Join Shelburne Farms for the first event in their Climate Change Education Engagement Series with Dr. John Cook of the Center For Climate Change Communication at George Mason University. [Learn more about the event here](#) and below.
- **USDA's Rural Energy for America Program Application Open** - The program provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding

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Share

We are always looking for great stories of local action for our blog, social media and as helpful resources for our network. Please consider sending along anything you or others have accomplished or are working on by responding to this email or emailing rkuster@vnrc.org

About Us

VECAN is a network of statewide Vermont organizations helping communities across the Green Mountain State to reduce energy costs and climate impacts through conservation, increased energy efficiency and conversion to renewable energy sources.

VECAN's mission is to start, support and strengthen town energy committees.

Committee Changes?

Help us keep our network up to

to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy, heating and efficiency. All of Vermont meets the geographic requirement, grants/loans are available up to \$20,000. The application deadline is March 31 at 4:30 PM. [Find more information here.](#)

date! Email changes in committee leadership or contact info to rkuster@vnrc.org

- **Clean Energy Group (CEG) Seeks Project Director for Solar Energy & Energy Storage** - The Project Director will carry out project management, outreach, research, writing, and administrative tasks related to CEG's project efforts, including the Resilient Power Project and Phase Out Peakers, as well as policy-focused work primarily related to energy storage. [Learn more about the position, including how to apply here.](#)
- **Grid Block: Vermont's Aging Transmission Network Can't Keep Pace With Green Power Projects** - Vermont's grid has been woefully underinvested in for years, resulting in massive constraints for local renewable energy deployment. It is clear that the state will need to make significant investments in transmission infrastructure and grid modernization to accommodate additional renewable sources and meet the state's now mandated climate and energy goals. [Read the full *Seven Days* article here.](#)
- **Energy Action Network (EAN) Announces Summer Internship** - Applications for Energy Action Network (EAN) 2021 Summer Internship Program are now being accepted for college and graduate-school students (rising juniors and above). The application deadline is Friday, April 9 at 5 pm. [Learn more about the internship program here](#) and below.
- **Get Your Ticket for the 2021 Wild & Scenic Film Festival on April 8 at 6:30 PM** - Join VNRC for a night of inspiring short films about the resilience of nature and the people who care for it. Tickets are by donation. \$10 or more includes entry into a raffle for local prizes. [Get your ticket and view the film line-up here!](#)

As always, thanks for all that you do.

Best,

Bekah Kuster, Community Energy Coordinator, AmeriCorps Member, VECAN
802-223-2328 ext. 116 - rkuster@vnrc.org

Join Conversation on Vermont's Long-Term Transmission Plan - March 25 at 11:30 AM



Join REV and VELCO for a conversation about the state of Vermont's electrical grid!

Every three years, VELCO, the operator of Vermont's transmission system, must update its 20-year Long-Range Transmission Plan. The plan identifies reliability concerns, transmission alternatives to address those concerns, and serves as the basis for considering whether alternatives, including new generation and energy efficiency, can meet Vermont's reliability needs. It provides information about transmission projects that may be needed to maintain grid reliability. VELCO welcomes comments on the [updated draft 2021 plan](#)

[here.](#)

Contact Kit Price at kit@revermont.org to register and receive the webinar link.

Opportunity for Communities to Try Out On-Demand Microtransit Pilot Project



There is a unique opportunity to help your neighbors and save energy by partnering with the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) to try out an alternative transportation system as part of VTrans's [Mobility and Transportation Innovations \(MTI\) Grant Program](#). VTrans and the local transit provider have been working with residents in Montpelier who are part of the

Sustainable Montpelier Coalition (SMC), to roll out an on-demand transit program called [MyRide](#).

The pilot program provides riders with a request-based transportation system similar to Uber and Lyft; riders can book rides from wherever they are to wherever they need to go through an app on their smartphones. VTrans has funds to support this in other similar-sized/density communities as Montpelier, but they need the on-the-ground help that the Montpelier volunteers have been providing.

The residents provide support by:

- Forming and participating in a Microtransit Advisory Committee.
- Contributing to the outreach plan associated with the microtransit pilot.
- Conduct and contribute to multiple surveys.
- Provide advocacy info and copy to local media (earned media).
- Meet with residents to assist them in uploading the app and using the service.
- Staff tables and promote the service throughout the microtransit service region.
- Meanwhile, the local transit provider plans and implements the new service and VTrans provides support in coordinating the transportation vehicles, funds, etc.

Interested in learning more? Reach out to Ross MacDonald at

Ross.MacDonald@vermont.gov or Dan Currier at Daniel.J.Currier@vermont.gov.

Future of Rural Transit Project Opportunity



The Future of Rural Transit project aims to prepare Vermont to have the most efficient, equitable, and cost-effective rural transportation system in the US by combining public, Medicaid, and school transportation into a single electrified public transportation system.

The project, which was selected by EAN members at the 2020 EAN Summit, is now looking for a partner school supervisory union and community in Vermont to study

the feasibility of combined public transit and school transportation using electric buses.

A brief application due April 16 is available for completion by interested supervisory unions.

The application and background information is available on the [Future of Rural Transit webpage here](#).

Register for the Next VECAN Lunch and Learn: The (Climate) Potential in Federal Stimulus Dollars - April 19 at Noon

Continuing our monthly Lunch and Learn series, we will be discussing what's on the horizon for federal stimulus dollars. We know millions of dollars – more! – will be coming into



APRIL 19, 2021 AT 12:00 PM

Vermont for critical emergency and pandemic response measures and that it's likely other, more flexible dollars will be available to potentially fund needed, climate-friendly and energy-saving strategies.

Register to attend here!

Even if you won't be able to attend, register anyway to receive the follow-up email with the recording and other materials.

If you missed our last Lunch and Learn on March 15, [click here to view a recording](#) of the short presentation about communications resources being developed by VECAN partners and an overview of high-level goals for successful community outreach. You can access all recordings of previous Lunch and Learn events at our [website here](#).

How Vermonters Think About Weatherization Webinar - April 13 at Noon



The Center for Research & Public Policy will present the results of a statewide survey on weatherization in Vermont, conducted on behalf of Efficiency Vermont and VGS.

This statewide survey was designed to collect input from Vermont residents on their experience with (and perceptions of) weatherization. This research can be used to help all who work in the weatherization space to improve our understanding of potential gaps between actual opportunities for weatherization and customers' perceived opportunities for weatherization.

[Learn more about the webinar here](#), including how to join.

Building Resilience Against Climate Misinformation Webinar - March 30 at 6:00 PM



SHELBURNE FARMS

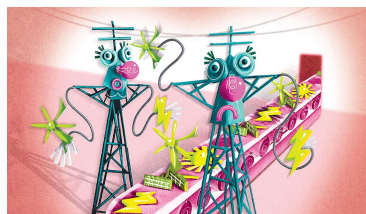
Shelburne Farms launches its Climate Change Education Engagement Series, a series of public events with related teacher workshops. The workshops are open to everyone, including community members, youth climate advocates, and educators.

In the first workshop of the series, Dr. John Cook, from the Center for Climate Change Communication at George Mason University will share discoveries from his

extensive scientific research into how our minds respond to misinformation and conspiracy theories, and engage you with techniques to identify and neutralize misinformation in your daily life.

[Register to attend and learn more about the series here!](#)

Grid Block: Vermont's Aging Transmission Network Can't Keep Pace With Green Power Projects



When Franklin Foods cream cheese plant in Enosburg Falls wanted to convert their cheese wastewater into renewable electricity, they came face to face with Vermont's massive grid constraints.

Simultaneously, renewable energy in the Sheffield-Highgate Export Interface, or SHEI for short, which stretches across parts of six northern counties — Grand Isle, Franklin, Lamoille, Orleans, Caledonia and Essex — has outstripped the capacity of rural wires. If you missed *Seven Days* deep dive into this challenge, be sure to [read the full article here to learn more](#).

We will be sure to keep you apprised on this issue, and we will also continue to follow it, including exploring potential ways to help address this transmission constraint challenge by helping more people in the Northeast Kingdom strategically electrify to harness the cost-saving, pollution-reducing benefits of clean electricity.

Energy Action Network (EAN) Summer Internship Program



ENERGY ACTION NETWORK

Energy Action Network (EAN) announced their **2021 Summer Internship Program**. Applications are now being accepted for college and graduate-school students (rising

juniors and above) excited by EAN's mission of achieving Vermont's climate and energy commitments in ways that create a more just, thriving, and sustainable future for Vermonters.

Each Summer Intern will develop and carry out a defined research, writing, and/or social media project directly related to the ongoing work of EAN. Applicants are encouraged to review the EAN website and the 2019 Annual Progress Report and are encouraged to propose your key areas of interest and one or more possible projects for your internship.

Applications must be submitted to Christine Donovan at ctdonovan@aol.com by Friday, April 9 at 5 pm.

[Find program details here.](#)

Clean Energy Group Seeks Project Director



CleanEnergyGroup
Innovation in Finance, Technology & Policy

Clean Energy Group (CEG) seeks a Project Director to coordinate and manage specific projects that are carried out by Clean Energy Group; communicate with diverse project participants and external stakeholders; engage in research and analysis on clean energy policies and markets to support a range of projects; and provide information, advise and consulting services.

The Project Director will devote considerable attention to solar PV, battery storage, and energy resilience with a focus on supporting clean energy development in low-income communities and communities of color but will also work on projects involving other technologies.

Interested in applying? [Learn more at their website here.](#)

13th Annual Wild & Scenic Film Festival - April 8th at 6:30

Don't miss VNRC's Wild & Scenic Film Festival, an inspiring and informative event showcasing a smattering of films framing some of the most pressing issues – and opportunities – of our time. [Get your tickets today!](#)

This is VNRC's 13th year hosting the Wild & Scenic Film Festival in Vermont and the second year holding the event virtually. Once again, you can enjoy the films from the safety and comfort of your home.

Admission is free but we are asking for donations to help defray the cost of bringing these incredible movies to you. A donation of \$10 or more enters you into a raffle to win items from sponsors like Kleen Kanteen, Ben and Jerry's, Lake Champlain, and many others!



[Read about this year's films here](#), which explore efforts to protect public lands, preserve biodiversity, promote environmental justice, and conquer outdoor challenges.

Donate

Connect With Us:

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(Unsubscribing is not supported in previews)