



Dear {{Salutation or 'Local Energy Leaders'}},

Save the date! We're organizing another VECAN Spring Summit! Please join us on **Saturday, June 1st in South Royalton at the Vermont Law and Graduate School** for the 2024 annual, **in-person** VECAN gathering.

We've spent the winter hosting a series of educational webinars on many timely topics and issues [that you can check out here](#). The Spring Summit is all about conversation, collaboration and community – connecting local leaders with each other and partners hoping to support important grassroots work. We'd love to know what conversations you'd like to have and topics you'd like to cover. [Please share your ideas in this survey!](#)

We hope this Summit will just be the start of important conversations and collaborations and it's always fun to get together and talk about energy and climate.

RESOURCES & INFO

Thermal Energy Network Toolkit

To build a sustainable energy future, we need a diverse portfolio of solutions. Harnessing, moving, and sharing the heat we already have in Thermal Energy Networks (TENS) can help us decarbonize our buildings more efficiently, equitably, and affordably. [Check out our new Thermal Energy Network Toolkit](#) and the [VECAN webinar where we moved step by step through the toolkit](#). From getting started to technical deep dives this toolkit can help your town to become the next Vermont community to create Thermal Energy Networks.

Energy Action Network's Energy Data Dashboards

Data is a key part of planning your town's energy plans. Energy Action Network has two new interactive dashboards, one for local energy progress tracking and one for statewide GHG emissions tracking. These dashboards can show how your specific town is doing with heat pump implementation, weatherization, electric vehicles and so much more. [You can check out both dashboards here](#) and [a webinar on how to use the dashboards here](#).

Climate Catalysts Leadership Program

The Vermont Council on Rural Development (VCRD) is now accepting applications for the next round of Climate Catalysts Leaders. This year the cohort will focus on new and emerging leaders from a variety of large and small communities who care deeply and want to take community action to reduce energy use and lessen climate impacts in their communities. The [Climate Catalysts Leadership Program](#) applications will be open until Monday April 15th at 5 pm. [Learn more about the curriculum and program schedule and apply today!](#)

Community Capacity Building Mini-Grants Deadline May 31st

These grants fund municipal efforts for capacity building and active participation in energy resilience initiatives, specific to MERP and beyond. Municipalities may conduct community education and outreach regarding Vermont's climate policies and incentives to cut energy costs, lower greenhouse gas emissions, and improve energy resilience in municipally owned buildings. These grants can also be used to identify potential candidate buildings for MERP's free Energy Resilience Assessments and Implementation Grants of up to \$500,000. [The MERP mini-grants close May 31st so don't delay, apply today!](#)

Communities Sparking Investment in Transformative Energy (CSITE)

DOE's Office of State and Community Energy Programs (SCEP) has released FOA-0003229: Communities Sparking Investment in Transformative Energy (CSITE). This FOA supports the administration goals by supporting programs and projects at the local level that reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions, save customers money, create local jobs, improve air quality, combat climate change, and focus benefits on disadvantaged communities.

This funding opportunity provides an anticipated \$18 million for local governments and federally recognized Indian Tribes to implement municipally- or Tribal-led high-impact clean energy projects in disadvantaged communities, energy communities, small- and medium-sized jurisdictions, and Tribal communities. DOE retains the right to make partial awards and to reallocate funds in the event of under subscription, ineligibility, and/or increased program funds.

The Prime Applicant must be local governments or Tribal governments representing ANY of the following kinds of communities: 1. Disadvantaged communities 2. Energy communities 3. Small- and medium-sized jurisdictions. **No Concept Paper:** This FOA is

open directly to full application which is due on 5/31/2024. To apply to this FOA, applicants must register with and submit application materials through Infrastructure Exchange at <https://infrastructure-exchange.energy.gov/Default.aspx>, SCEP's online application portal.

EVENTS



VECAN Webinar: Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program

Join VECAN and Vermont Housing Finance Agency for a webinar on the Weatherization Repayment Assistance Program (WRAP). As we know, important and needed investments, like weatherization, often come with upfront costs but can reduce energy costs significantly over time. This program is intended to help mitigate some of the upfront cost challenges by providing customers an easy, affordable way to pay back home weatherization upgrades over time – not all at once. Learn about the benefits of WRAP, who in your community qualifies, and how you can help community members take part in the program. We'll hear from Mia Watson, the Special Programs Manager at VHFA. [Register HERE!](#)

Vermont Youth Lobby Day

The Vermont Youth Lobby is hosting its second Lobby Day of 2024 at the Vermont Statehouse on **March 29th**. Youth Lobby has been an important, youth-led collaborative of Vermont students, collaborating to advance social change and climate action. Their impact has been significant in Vermont state policy conversations. If you are a student or know of young Vermonters who might be interested in learning more about and attending this in-State House event, please put March 29th on your radar. At Lobby Day, youth leaders will have the opportunity to speak with their representatives, sit-in on committee meetings, attend and speak at a press conference, and learn more about policy work. Youths can [RSVP Here](#).



The poster features a light green and yellow background with decorative floral elements in the corners. At the top center is the VNRC logo, which includes a stylized leaf and the text "VNRC VERMONT NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL". Below this, the word "PRESENTS" is written in a smaller font. The main title "WILD & SCENIC" is in large, bold, black letters, with "FILM FESTIVAL" in a smaller font to its right. A small globe icon with "SYRCLS" on it is positioned to the left of the main title. Below the title, the tagline "where activism gets inspired" is written in a smaller font. Two event locations are listed: "Burlington Main Street Landing April 18, 2024" and "Woodstock Town Hall Theatre April 4, 2024". At the bottom, the text "TICKETS ON SALE NOW!" is written in large, bold, green letters, flanked by two ticket stub graphics that say "TICKET".



A horizontal banner with a green background containing logos for sponsors. From left to right: "THANK YOU! to our generous sponsors!" in white text; the National Life Group logo (a triangle); the Lake Champlain Chocolates logo (a horse); the Zero Gravity logo (a circular seal); and the Ben & Jerry's logo (a red and white banner).

Wild and Scenic Film Festival – Woodstock

Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC) invites you to the Woodstock Town Hall Theatre on **Thursday, April 4th**, for the debut screening of their [2024 Wild and Scenic Film Festival](#). Sponsored by Ben & Jerry's, Lake Champlain Chocolates, National Life Group, and Zero Gravity, the festival features inspiring short films about environmental issues facing communities around the globe. All proceeds from the event will support VNRC's work across Vermont. For [ticket info](#), auction links and more, visit www.vnrc.org/wsff2024



Vermont Conversation Voters: Community Forum on Climate & Energy in Barre

Join VCV for an informative and engaging public forum where you can connect with your state legislators and gain valuable insights into crucial environmental legislation currently under consideration. VCV is pleased to be bringing Sen. Anne Watson (D/P-Washington) and Rep. Jonathan Williams (D-Barre City) to Barre for this special event on April 4th at 5:30pm at Aldrich Public Library. Your presence and input are vital as we work together to shape the future of our community's environmental policies. [Don't miss this opportunity to be informed and make your voice heard!](#)

Inundation District Film Screening and Q&A with David Abel

Don't miss an opportunity to connect with award-winning reporter and filmmaker David Abel and watch his 2023 film *Inundation District* on **Friday April 5th at 6:30pm**. In a time of rising seas and intensifying storms, Boston, one of the world's wealthiest, most-educated cities made a fateful decision to spend billions of dollars erecting a new district along its coast — on landfill, at sea level. Unlike other places imperiled by climate change, this neighborhood of glass towers housing some of the world's largest companies was built well after scientists began warning of the threats, including many at its renowned universities. The city, which already has more high-tide flooding than nearly any other in the United States, called its new quarter the Innovation District. But with seas rising inexorably, and at an accelerating rate, others are calling the neighborhood by a different name: Inundation District.

Following the film, there will be a Q&A with award-winning reporter, documentary filmmaker, and professor of journalism, David Abel. Free Event. [Register Here!](#)

ENERGIZE Upper Valley FREE Workshops

Join us at the Energize UV Free Workshops on Saturday April 6th at Hartford Town Hall. Register for one or all the workshops. Don't delay. There is a limit of 20 people per

workshop.

10:00-12:00 Home Heat Transfer: How does insulation and air sealing save energy and money while keeping our homes warmer? Come and explore the hands-on science of heat and look at consumer options with VEEP (Vermont Energy Education Program) and a local energy expert.

12:00-1:00 Lunch with Energy Experts.

1:00-3:00 Home Electrification: How will electrifying your home be better for your wallet, and for the environment? What areas of your home can you electrify? What can we gain through efficiency?

A hands-on workshop including a look at consumer options with VEEP (Vermont Energy Education Program) and a local energy expert.

To register: <http://tinyurl.com/energizeuv>



Vermont Conservation Voters: Community Forum on the Climate & Environment in Rutland

Join VCV for an informative and engaging public forum where you can connect with your state legislators and gain valuable insights into crucial environmental legislation currently under consideration. VCV is pleased to be bringing Rep. William Notte (D-Rutland, RUT-7) and Rep. Mike Rice (D-Dorset, BEN-RUT) to Wallingford for this special event on **April 7th at 1pm at Sweet Birch Bakery**. Your presence and input are vital as we work together to shape the future of our community's environmental policies. [Don't miss this opportunity to be informed and make your voice heard!](#)



Wild and Scenic Film Festival, Burlington

Vermont Natural Resources Council (VNRC) invites you to the Main Street Landing on **Thursday, April 18th**, for the debut screening of their [2024 Wild and Scenic Film Festival](#). Sponsored by Ben & Jerry's, Lake Champlain Chocolates, National Life Group, and Zero Gravity, the festival features inspiring short films about environmental issues facing communities around the globe. All proceeds from the event will support VNRC's work across Vermont. For [ticket info](#), auction links and more, visit www.vnrc.org/wsff2024

Webinar Series: Local Motion's Complete Streets Winter Webinar Series

This winter, Local Motion is hosting a sequence of webinars aimed at assisting advocates and communities in advancing efforts to enhance walking and biking infrastructure. The next series event is on **April 18th from 6-7pm** with **Low-Cost Traffic Calming Techniques and Walk/Bike Solutions for Rural Vermont**. In this webinar, learn about lower-cost infrastructure that can be used to slow car speeds and make rapid, effective improvements for walking, biking, and rolling. This will include some ideas for more rural streets and roads. You might even find one or two ideas where you get to "pick all three." Learn more about the [Local Motion Winter Webinar Series](#) or you can [Register Here](#) for the April 18th webinar.

Reflections on Flood Resilience and Recovery

May 1 | 10-11:30 AM | Virtual

After 10 months of recovery: how are our communities doing, what resources are serving us well, what opportunities are opening up? Join Vermont Council on Rural Development's Vermont Community Leadership Network for a panel of local, state, and federal leaders dealing with the daily ins and outs of Flood Recovery in Vermont will help us reflect on what we've been able to accomplish, what best practices and resources we can draw on at this point, and what the next phase of recovery and rebuilding may look like. [Register Here.](#)

Thank you for all you do!

Dan Fingas, Climate Action Coordinator

Get Involved

[Events](#)

[Join or Start an Energy Committee](#)

[Find & Connect with Other Energy Committees](#)

Newsletter Archive

Missed a previous month's newsletter? Check them all out in our [newsletter archive!](#)

Committee Changes?

Help us keep our network up to date! Email changes in committee leadership or contact info to info@vecan.net.

About Us

[VECAN](#) is a network of statewide Vermont organizations helping communities statewide 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.

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 emailing info@vecan.net.



{{Disclaimer}}

Vermont Natural Resources Council

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