

# Youth Environmental Summit (YES!)



## 2020 Workshops Descriptions

### **Taking Action on Energy/Climate Projects: How YOUth Can and Do Make a Difference on Energy/Climate in Vermont, and How You Can Too!**

Join this workshop if you are interested in learning more about how to TAKE ACTION on ENERGY/CLIMATE in your school or community. We will look at Vermont's big picture on energy and check out some examples of youth led projects in Vermont. We will then get you started in thinking about what you might need to start your own project or Green Team to get energy/climate projects done in your school or community. We will then give you some tools and contacts to help get your energy action project started.

Presenter: Mariah Keagy, Vermont Energy Education Program

### **Who is Responsible for Environmental Legislation?**

Learn what local, state, national and world groups legislate on environmental science and how you can work with them. Get to know the players so you can add your voice to the effort!

Presenter: KL Plano-Farber, student and Maryland 4-H member

### **The Power of Poop!**

Poo is not taboo; it is an untapped resource for energy, conservation, and food security! Developing innovative ideas for small-scale, multi-species farms to ensure food security for over 9 billion humans requires 60% increased food productivity; protecting and conserving our natural environment will be critical moving forward. With over 900 million acres of farmland across the United States, modern agriculture must develop manure management plans to effectively utilize animal waste while protecting critical water resources. As a result of this workshop, participants will learn the following:

- The importance of a manure management plan - learn about and how to implement a plan
- Manure as a conservation tool - how your manure/pile can be used to protect waterways and conserve vegetation
- Alternative manure uses - not only for energy, but how manure is used around the world!

Presenter: Rebecca McCafferty, Penn State Extension – Delaware County 4-H

### **Introducing Regeneration Corps: Community Organizing, Ecological Farming, and Racial Justice for a High School Diploma**

Regeneration Corps is a newly launched learning collaboration between high school-aged students in Vermont and leading organizations in resilience and agriculture. This partnership is supporting the academic needs of students while preparing them for a stable, just transition through acute challenges of our time. Students who participate in Regeneration Corps can satisfy many graduation requirements through Flexible Pathways, while pursuing personal interests and participating in hands-on agricultural projects. In this workshop we will connect the dots between healthy farming, social/racial/environmental justice, food sovereignty, and community organizing and provide information for students interested in participating in this program or bringing it to their area.

Presenter: Emma Paradis, Regeneration Corps

### **Plants on the Move: The Growing Problem of Invasive Species**

Do you ever wonder where some of the plants you see around your school and backyard come from? Some of these plants have been introduced from other continents and have been spreading throughout the landscape causing changes to the local ecosystems. In this workshop, you will learn some of the common plant invasive species in the Champlain Valley and what they are doing to Vermont ecosystem. You will also learn about some activities that you can do to remove invasive species in your area and how to participate in finding and reporting invasive species in your neighborhood.

Presenter: Jane Molofsky, Department of Plant Biology, University of Vermont

### **The Future of Wastewater and Drinking Water in a Changing World**

You depend upon it every day for your health, and the health of the environment around you, but have you ever really taken the time to wonder where your water comes from and where does it go? Most people flush and forget it or collect a glass of water at the tap and never give it a second thought. This workshop will go over the importance of wastewater and drinking water protection, treatment, the threats faced with climate change, as well as how to get into this essential field for human and environmental health.

Presenter: Cristin Ashmankas, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation

### **Leave No Trace with Vermont Land Trust**

What are some actions that can help us take good care of the lands we love? In this workshop, we will dive into the seven principles of Leave No Trace (LNT). We will also discuss how LNT's principles can help us understand more about land conservation and stewardship.

Presenter: Katherine Hancock, Vermont Land Trust

### **How to Throw a Zero Waste Event**

Are you throwing a small event for a couple hundred people? Or are you planning for a couple thousand? Regardless of the size, there are always ways you can reduce waste while inspiring attendees to engage in zero waste behaviors. Join Marina McCoy, a Zero Waste & Recycling Expert and Founder/CEO of Waste Free Earth, to learn how to identify key waste contributors, work with all stakeholders for the event, integrate reusable systems, and learn to empower others to incorporate zero waste behaviors within their daily life.

Presenter: Marina McCoy, Waste Free Earth

### **The Climate Crisis and its Solutions: Truth in Ten**

This workshop will explain the impacts of climate change, ranging from health to jobs to racial inequalities and then show the steps needed to overcome both these symptoms and the real issue at the root of it.

Presenter: Sylvia Burkman, student & Climate Reality Project

### **Your Vote is Your Voice!**

This presentation will be explaining the importance of voting for young people. It will cover how to vote in Vermont this year, why voting matters, and how to get young Vermonters engaged in the democratic process. Included will be engagement ideas for both people who are of voting age as well as youth who cannot yet vote.

Presenter: Jake Van Wolvelear, VPIRG

### **The Radical Forest Manager**

This presentation is about the role that forests and forestry play in our world, and especially in the context of a changing climate and social and environmental justice. The presentation will also describe steps one can take to be a "radical" forest manager.

Presenter: Ethan Tapper, Chittenden County Forester, VT Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation

### **TRY for the Environment – Become a Teen Teacher!**

TRY stands for Teens Reaching Youth and is an environmental leadership opportunity for students in grades 7-12. It is an environmental education program taught by teens and designed to increase environmental literacy and responsibility in younger youth. TRY for the Environment connects young people to real-world environmental problems by allowing them to be key change agents contributing to real-world solutions. Come to this session to learn about changes to the TRY program for the 2020-2021 school year and how you can become an environmental education teacher to younger students in your community!

Presenter: Lauren Traister, UVM Extension 4-H Program

### **Seasonal Climate Change in Vermont: My Work with the Data**

This presentation will explain how temperature and precipitation levels affect the Vermont forest products supply chain and how I was a research assistant for a climate change study done by Steve Bick (Northeast Forests, LLC), Alison Berry (Woodland Resources, LLC) and Al Steele (USFS Eastern Region State and Private Forestry), which helped come to this conclusion.

Presenter: Fern Bick, student and intern

### **Restoring Wetlands in Vermont: Ecological Design for Habitat and Water Quality**

This session will begin by discussing wetlands and the ecosystem services they provide. Then, participants will study an example of a wetland restoration project completed by Vermont Land Trust, and have a chance to design their own restoration project, using maps and a variety of data layers including soils, geology, and land cover.

Presenter: Allaire Diamond, Vermont Land Trust

### **The Banana Industry**

A history of the problematic Banana industry, its effects on not only the environment, but social and racial impacts too. The presentation will leave you with next steps on how to be a champion of ethically sourced produce!

Presenter: Aris Garcia, Peace & Justice Center

### **The Challenges of Youth Organizing and How to Overcome Them**

Now perhaps more so than ever, it is important that we, the youth of our world, stand up for what we believe in. Rising water levels, mass extinctions, extreme natural disasters, and institutional inequalities show that we still have so much to fight for. But although organizing is necessary, it is not easy. This workshop is for anyone, whether you consider yourself an activist or not, to learn new skills to overcome challenges you might face as a young person seeking to improve your community.

Presenter: Veronica Lindstrom, student, Burlington High School

### **Bug Houses: What, Why, and How?**

We will present a bug house we made, teach participants how to make their own, and explain why they are beneficial.

Presenter: Abernathy Bunting, student, South Burlington High School

### **Racial Justice & Climate Justice**

How are racial justice and climate justice connected? In this workshop, we'll spend some time together exploring how the conditions that allow the exploitation of people also allow for the exploitation of the planet -- and talk about meaningful solutions to build a climate movement that are rooted in racial justice. Come and meet Champlain Valley Union High School students who are members of their school's Environmental Action Club, Racial Alliance Committee, and Social Justice Group to hear how equity and environmental issues intersect and how we are working together at our school to foster positive change.

Presenters: Elsa LindenMeyr, Greta Powers, Sunthoshini Premasankar, and Carolina Sicotte, students, Champlain Valley Union High School

### **Climate Education Now!**

With our planet's rapidly changing climate, it is certain that our future will be wildly different from what is being experienced today. This reality makes climate education more imperative than ever to ensure that we, as students, are prepared to lead the transforming world we live in. Join Champlain Valley Union student leaders as they discuss how they dramatically increased the climate education at their school. In this presentation, learn how their EnACT club moved from a declaration of necessary change to the implementation of multiple climate-specific courses. We will guide you through our process of student-led change, detailing our process, goals, and the roadblocks we encountered. Finally, hear stories of the success of these classes at CVU, and learn how to make more climate education a reality at your school.

Presenters: Ellie Ramirez-Richer and Ethan Lisle, students, Champlain Valley Union High School

### **Becoming a Citizen Scientist Using iNaturalist**

This workshop will teach participants about the crowd-sourced citizen science app iNaturalist and will include: a basic overview of citizen science, how iNaturalist is used to monitor biodiversity, different aspects of the website available for users, and the basics of uploading the first observation.

Presenter: ECO Americorps member, Vermont Center for Ecostudies

### **Soak Up the Storm: Understanding Stormwater and Green Infrastructure**

Learn about the role surfaces play in water movement during storm events. Explore how impervious and pervious surfaces slow or speed up the movement of stormwater. Students will view different stormwater simulations and model various green stormwater infrastructure practices.

Presenters: Caroline Blake and Ashley Eaton, UVM Extension Watershed Alliance

### **Sustainable Practices Through Community Partnerships**

Team Dynamix 802's Green Team has partnered with a variety of local, national, and global organizations to foster an increasing awareness of climate change and the sustainable practices that can change future outcomes. Come learn about what we have done!

Presenters: Students at Main Street Middle School

### **Recycling Your Way to a More Sustainable Lifestyle at Home and in School**

Recycling, a practice we can engage in practically every day, can be an important piece of living a more sustainable lifestyle, whether you are at home or in school. This presentation will cover the dos and don'ts of "blue bin" recycling in Vermont for metals, glass, paper products, and plastics, and why it is important, from an ecological, economic, and humanistic standpoint, to not only engage in recycling, but to get it right! You'll also learn what recyclables from VT may be recycled into, and what you can do to enhance recycling practices at school and at home.

Presenter: John Jose, Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District

### **Food Scrap Collection at Schools—Get Started or Step It Up**

The world of waste is exciting and empowering because every person can make a difference that matters. Come learn about the power of collective action and how you and your school can protect the environment and your community by improving your school's compost collection system. This year is an especially good time to improve the classroom collection systems, which will continue to be useful even when lunch returns to the cafeteria. Build soil! Reduce greenhouse gases! Our combined efforts add up.

Presenters: Alyssa Eiklor and Emma Stuhl, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Solid Waste Program

### **Waste Reduction Starts at Home—Do Good, Save Money, and Have Fun**

Looking for ways to make a difference from home? Try out some relatively easy, fun, and sometimes delicious strategies to reduce waste at home. Learn how to figure out what's getting wasted and how to replace single-use items (that fill the trash can) with reusables, improve your compost & recycling, and get other people on board. We'll share some of our favorite tips, like carrying around a "zero waste" kit, ways to keep food from going bad (so you have time to eat it), and how to figure out if you can fix something instead of replacing it. Individual efforts add up—reducing waste conserves water and energy, reduces greenhouse gas emissions, and helps protect habitats and ecosystems.

Presenters: Alyssa Eiklor and Emma Stuhl, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, Solid Waste Program

### **Electricity and Climate Change**

This workshop will provide an overview of the generation and delivery of electricity and externalities associated with electricity generation, transmission, and usage. We will focus on renewable power generation technologies that support sustainability, the reduction of greenhouse gasses, and are scalable in Vermont. We will close with a discussion on how all Vermonters directly impact the daily total amount of power generated and ways we can reduce our emissions footprint through efficiency, electrification, and conservation initiatives.

Presenters: Michael Lazorchak, Stowe Electric Department, and students from Stowe

### **Signs of the Seasons with Audubon Vermont**

Have you ever noticed the leaves turning in Fall or the migration of birds in the Winter? Then you've made phenological observations! Phenology is the study of life cycle events of plants and birds and how they are impacted by climate change. In this workshop you will become a community scientist! You'll be introduced to the National Phenology Network and their data collection app, Nature's Notebook. The goal is to get you outside to record your phenological observations where you live and contribute to a national database!

Presenter: Sarah Hooghuis, Audubon Vermont