

News from the Forest

Winter 2007

*Announcing the
2007 Addison County Conservation Congress*

Fueling Our Community: Building Local, Sustainable Energy Solutions

April 28, 2007 9am - 3:30pm

Mount Abraham Union High School, Bristol

\$10 donation suggested. Students \$5. Lunch available for \$7, benefiting Future Farmers of America with keynote address by Scudder Parker, former Director of the Energy Efficiency Division of the Vermont Department of Public Service and 2006 gubernatorial candidate.

Come one, come all! Join Vermont Family Forests, local organizations, businesses, and community members for a lively day of information-sharing on cultivating community-based, sustainable energy solutions. Learn about local efforts to move beyond fossil fuels and build energy self-sufficiency, and discuss ways to build on successes.

Keynote speaker Scudder Parker, who brings years of experience in energy efficiency and planning to our event, will provide the context for the day's discussions. Participants can then choose from six morning concurrent sessions, largely focused on optimizing local energy efficiency, led by an outstanding array of individuals who

have donated their time and expertise to this event.

Following a lunch featuring locally grown foods prepared by Future Farmers of America students, afternoon concurrent sessions will focus on cultivating local energy sources. Ron Slabaugh of the Addison County Relocalization Network will facilitate the closing session, during which we'll bring together the day's learnings. It's going to be a great day, made possible by the generous support of the Fieldstone Foundation and Vermont Community Foundation. We hope to see you there!

For a schedule of the day's events, visit our website at www.familyforests.org or call 453-7728.

Morning Concurrent Sessions

- * Exploring Transportation Alternatives
- * Maximizing Woodburning Efficiency: Emerging Technologies
- * Community Energy Planning
- * Optimizing Home Energy Efficiency
- * Mount Abraham Union High School Wood Gasification Heating System: Tour & Discussion
- * Confronting Global Climate Change

Afternoon Concurrent Sessions

- * Vermonters Making it Happen: Current Renewable Energy Sources in Home and Office Use
- * Agriculture-based Energy Sources
- * Sustaining Forests as Wood Energy Demands Rise
- * Sustainable Hydropower in VT: Back to the Future
- * Mount Abraham Union High School Wood Gasification Heating System: Tour & Discussion
- * Screening of *An Inconvenient Truth*

VERMONT FAMILY FORESTS™

Vermont Family Forests™ is a non-profit education organization whose mission is to conserve the health of the forest community and, when appropriate, to promote the careful cultivation of local family forests for community benefit. We accomplish this mission through public education, forest certification, and research and demonstration projects.

News From the Forest is published quarterly by Vermont Family Forests™. To subscribe to *News from the Forest*, please email us at info@familyforests.org or call 453-7728. Call visit our website, www.familyforests.org for more information on VFF's programs.

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Other Upcoming Events

Game of Logging Chainsaw Training, Levels I-II

Dates:

Level I: Thursday, April 26, 2007
(rain date, Thursday, May 3, 2007)

Level II: Thursday, May 3, 2007
(rain date, Thursday, May 10, 2007)

Time: 8:00am-4:00pm

Cost: \$150 per workshop level, full payment in advance required.

Limit: 10 participants per level

Location: The Waterworks property, Bristol

The spring Game of Logging training courses are filling rapidly. Sign up soon!

The Game of Logging training program combines Scandinavian logging techniques with the latest systems for working safely around trees. *We can't overstate the value of these training courses. We've had participants who have used chainsaws for 30 years prior to taking GOL Level I say that the course changed the way they work in the woods.* Visit our website (events page), www.familyforests.org, for more information and to download a registration form, or call Vermont Family Forests at 453-7728.



Beltane Community Forest Festival

Date: Tuesday, May 1, 2007

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Location: The Waterworks property, Bristol

*Come all ye lads and lassies
Join in the festive scene
Come dance around the maypole
That will stand upon the green.*

Join us on the beautiful shores of Norton Brook reservoir to celebrate springtime, forests, and community. Come raise the Maypole and join in a potluck dinner, May pole dance, music and good cheer by a lake-side bonfire.

Better known as May Day, Beltane celebrates the height of spring and the return of greenery and abundance to our northern world. Mid-way between the spring equinox and the summer solstice, May 1st also marks the beginning of solar summer, the three months in the Northern Hemisphere with the most daylight hours. The name Beltane comes from the Irish Gaelic "Bealtaine" or the Scottish Gaelic "Bealtuinn," meaning "Bel-fire", the fire of the Celtic god of light .

Bring your children, your friends, a dish to share, an instrument if you like, a flashlight in case you stay past dark, and celebrate spring! This is a rain or shine event. Cosponsored by Vermont Family Forests and The Watershed Center.



Community-supported Forestry Firewood Project

Driven by climbing fossil fuel prices, concerns about global climate change, and peak oil, Vermonters are increasingly interested in alternatives to fossil fuels, including wood for home heating. It's a sensible choice in our forested landscape, one that can boost our local economy and reduce our dependence on imported fuels. Vermont Family Forests's raison d'être is to conserve local forest health, so we want to make sure that the harvesting of that fuelwood occurs in a way that thinks beyond "getting the wood out" and safeguards the health of Vermont's forests.

Modeled after the highly successful Community-Supported Agriculture movement, our Community-Supported Forestry Firewood Program will connect customers who care about forest health and want to act upon that concern with firewood from landowners who are practicing exemplary forest management, verified through Vermont Family Forests's certification program.

Last fall, a team of Middlebury College students offered their help and insights to the project, creating an on-line survey to assess the current woodburning habits of fuelwood customers and to gauge the level of interest among customers, forest landowners, and firewood processors in the concept of marketing certified, Family Forest® firewood. We were amazed by the volume of survey responses and were gratified to see that interest in the Community-supported Forestry Firewood Project is very strong. We encourage you to review the survey results on our website.

It became clear to us that, in order for this project to succeed, we need to create a business model that meets the needs of loggers and firewood processors. In late January, we met with seven local firewood processors to hear their thoughts about how the Firewood Project might work, to identify potential constraints, and discuss ways to mitigate them. Many important points emerged. Most firewood processors would like help with firewood marketing. They are interested in developing mutually beneficial relationships between customers and processors, and they're interested in collaborative value-adding.

With the feedback from that enormously helpful meeting, we will be developing a business plan for the project, which we hope to complete by the spring. We'll keep you posted as this exciting project unfolds.

The Results are In!

Heartfelt thanks to all of you who completed our on-line firewood survey—we had 216 respondents! All survey respondents were entered into a drawing, the winner of which receives a two-hour forest consultation with David Brynn, VFF's executive director. Congratulations to Peg Rood of Lincoln, who won that drawing.

An energetic and creative team of Middlebury College students conducted the survey for us. **You can view their findings on our website** "Research and Demonstration" page. Two of their many findings:

*Of the 144 forestland owners who responded to the survey, 77% produce their own firewood.

* 33% of surveyed fuelwood users purchase their wood, and 95% of these are interested in buying wood from carefully tended forests.

We stand at a threshold in energy consumption. For a window of time, we have the opportunity to prepare for a post-oil future and create a considered, holistic vision of a sustainable local energy economy. In our region, this economy will, appropriately, include wood biomass. Now is our chance to "get it right," to conceive a relationship with wood energy that is anchored in SELF-sufficiency: Sustainable, Efficient, Local, and Fair.

The Community-supported Forestry Firewood Project is funded by a generous grant from the Vermont Community Foundation.

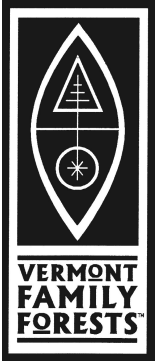
Conservation, Craftsmanship, & Beauty: Family Forest® Flooring

Collaboration among Vermont Family Forests, Vermont Land Trust, and small woodlot owners has yielded beautiful, highly crafted results—Family Forest® hardwood strip flooring—sending more value back to the forest and forest stewards and helping keep local forests healthy, beautiful, and productive.

Planet Hardwood of St. George is marketing our Family Forest® flooring and has approximately 15,000 square feet of flooring for sale in many hardwood species. Stop by Vermont Family Forests or Planet Hardwood to view a sample.

For sales information, contact Planet Hardwood 802-482-4404 or peter@planethardwood.com.





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News Briefs from the Forest

A New, Green Home for the Green Mountain Club

Four years after fire destroyed their Waterbury headquarters, the Green Mountain Club is poised to rebuild. Vermont Family Forests is working with GMC to provide certified timber for their new headquarters. Working in prime, frozen winter conditions, logger Bill Torrey is cutting white pine and hemlock from two Bristol forests in VFF's certified forest pool, owned by Rick and Sandy Desorda and Ron and Karen McEachen. Redstart Forestry in Orange County will provide additional certified hemlock for the project. The new headquarters will house an exhibit telling the story of the collaborative process and community-supported forestry that yielded the building's framing.

Certified Ecoforestry Update

We're delighted to welcome Kinny Perot into the Vermont Family Forests certified forest pool. Andy Carlo, of Fountain Forestry, prepared the certified management plan and map for Kinny's forests in Waitsfield and Warren. In January, VFF met with sisters from the Green Mountain Monastery to discuss ecological management of their Greenboro forestland. Inspired by the teachings of theolo-

gian and ecological philosopher, Thomas Berry, the sisters are consulting with VFF to develop an ecological approach to their forest management.

Conservation Beyond the Grave

One innovative way for land-owning conservation organizations to earn revenue is to offer the opportunity for people to inter the remains or scatter the ashes of a loved one on the conserved property. A team of University of Vermont students are conducting a study to explore the opportunities and constraints of this idea, using the Waterworks Property in Bristol, one of VFF's certified forests, as a test case.

Seasonal Workers in the Northern Forest

Nationally, seasonal workers make up over 50% of the forest work force. Vermont Family Forests is applying for grant funds for a study entitled, "The Role of Seasonal Forest Workers in the Conservation and Use of the Once and Future Northern Forest." This study will assess the historical and present-day role of seasonal forest workers in forest restoration, conservation, and sustainable harvest. It will also identify opportunities and constraints associated with employing local and immigrant seasonal forest workers in forest conservation and biomass harvest.