



Vermont Interfaith Power & Light
A faith-based response to global warming

Green Mountains, Blue Water

Earth Care News - November 2021

Native American Heritage Month



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts



Build Back Better Act Needs Our Support Now

Among the benefits VT IPL derives from belonging to the national IPL network are policy insights and advocacy expertise on national legislation. Last weekend, the U.S. House of

Representatives voted to pass the \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure bill. While there are some positive components in that bill, it also provides money for highway expansion and nuclear reactors. It's far less than the transformative climate action we need and provides only nominal emissions cuts overall. That's why we must keep the pressure on Congress to pass the "Build Back Better" Act, a climate bill, through the reconciliation process. This is our best chance to secure significant investments in clean energy, climate justice, and clean vehicles in time to avoid catastrophic climate change. No matter where we think our representatives are on this bill, let's continue to tell them that climate is a moral issue which people of faith and conscience want to be addressed. Build Back Better will be the most significant U.S. action taken on climate protection and a historic move toward environmental justice. It will:

- Invest billions to expand clean electricity through tax credits for solar & wind;
- Speed the shift to electric vehicles through tax credits & a national EV charging network;
- Create a Civilian Climate Corps to put Americans to work in jobs that will reduce emissions & make communities more climate resilient;
- Limit methane pollution from oil & gas through a fee on polluters; and
- Remove every lead pipe so that all have lead-free drinking water.

Please use this link to [contact your representatives.](#)



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

COP26 - A Moral Clarion Call

There's so much that can be shared about COP26, the U.N. Climate Change Conference that's wrapping up in Glasgow. We've been fortunate that IPL has been posting daily reports, blogs, and interviews direct from Glasgow which we've been

sharing on VTIP's Facebook page along with other select stories. The following is by IPL President Rev. Susan Hendershot:

"Yesterday, I sat in the U.S. Center at COP26, listening to a group of U.S. Senators on the topic of Congress' Role in Enhancing U.S. Climate Leadership and Ambition. Given the work that IPL does in advocating for policy change in the U.S., this seemed like a good use of my time. There were nine Senators participating in this panel discussion, broken into two groups. There is one Senator whose words have not left my mind; that is Senator Markey of Massachusetts. When asked a question about population migration, he responded that we must remember that 40% of greenhouse gas emissions historically are from the U.S. 'This is a moral issue,' he said. 'People are dying, babies are dying.' He went on to ask the question, 'Who is a refugee?' He said that under current definitions, climate migrants do not qualify as having refugee status. 'We need to change the definition of who is a refugee. We have to let them in, because we did this to them.' Senator Markey called this a 'moral clarion call'. His passion, his words, spoke to me of someone with deep moral and ethical convictions, and I won't forget how he defined this issue."



Last week, Rev. Hendershot delivered a petition from 5,000 people of faith and conscience to a senior advisor of U.S. Special Climate Envoy John Kerry. She has also shared daily dispatches from COP26 and participated in multiple interviews - thank you Rev. Hendershot! Many are on [VTIPL's Facebook page.](#)



72 Faith Institutions Divest from Fossil Fuels pre-COP26

Five days before the United Nation's 26th Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, faith institutions around the world united for the largest-ever joint divestment announcement. In total,

72 faith institutions from six continents with more than \$4.2 billion of combined assets under management announced their commitment to divest from fossil fuels. The institutions' prophetic actions follow the recent call from Pope Francis and other faith leaders to global governments to address the "unprecedented ecological crisis". [Read full story](#)

COP26 Lacks Sufficient Indigenous Representation – Rep. Grijalva

U.S. House Natural Resources Committee Chair Raúl M. Grijalva issued this statement that we'd like to share, especially as it's Native American Heritage Month: "The United Nations are, in some ways, repeating the same tragic mistakes that created the climate crisis to begin with," Grijalva said. "Climate change is the direct result of industrialized nations exploiting our world's natural resources and violently stealing land from Indigenous and poor peoples. It's difficult to clean up the mess we created while the global vaccine apartheid and the high cost of travel prevent the full participation of those same Indigenous and poor communities. My own participation in Scotland will be centered on increasing their representation and promoting Indigenous conservation methods, which often have the greatest record of success."

A recent study in *Ecology and Society*, "Indigenous and local communities key to successful nature conservation", documents success rates of Indigenous land and water conservation strategies globally suggesting that policy lessons should be drawn from Indigenous communities. "Conservation led by Indigenous Peoples and local communities, based on their own knowledge and tenure systems, is far more likely to deliver positive outcomes for nature....conservation very often fails because it excludes and undervalues local knowledge and this often infringes on rights and cultural diversity along the way." [Access Study.](#)



Ugandan Youth Activist Shows Another Side of COP26

(from NPR story, 11/10/21)

Author of the book, *A Bigger Picture*, Vanessa Nakate says COP26 is sidelining the nations most affected by climate change. In a recent NPR interview, Nakate reminded us that the climate crisis increases inequality, yet ultimately,

“We are all facing the same storm. We are all Africa”. While so much financing focuses on adaptation, Nakate said, it’s not enough. “We cannot adapt for starvation...” She also emphasized how women & girls are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis especially in places like her country and on the African continent where women are at the frontlines often responsible for providing families with food, water, and firewood. [Full story.](#)

VT State Climatologist Speaks in Glasgow

(from VTDigger article, 11/1/2021)

“Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, Vermont’s state climatologist, took to the virtual stage at COP26, the global United Nations climate summit...to talk about the current state of climate science....several hours after President Joe Biden told those gathered that ‘climate change is already ravaging the world,’ a panel of seven scientists...including Dupigny-Giroux, provided context about the science used to study climate change. Dupigny-Giroux, a professor at the University of Vermont and the current president of the American Association of State Climatologists...explained in an educational panel how the scientific process is used to make climate predictions, compare the modern climate with other periods of geologic time, and respond to climate change. “ [Read full article.](#) Dupigny-Giroux co-authored the Vermont Climate Assessment and is a member of the Vermont Climate Council which is drafting its initial 2021 Climate Action Plan due December 1. Our friends at VPIRG state, “While there are many more small and large steps Vermont must take to tackle the climate crisis...we believe there are five fundamental priorities: transforming

transportation; environmental Justice; heating & cooling our buildings; expanding a renewable, resilient, local energy system; and implementing a suite of smart growth policies." Read more on the [VPIRG website](#).

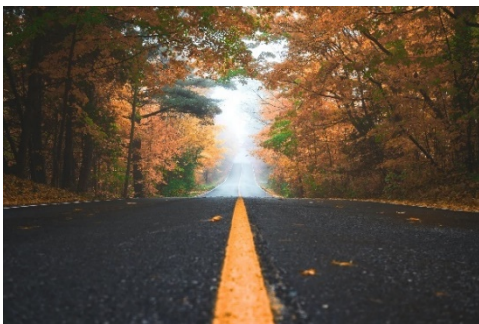


Photo from Living in the Anthropocene exhibit, Carnegie Museum of Natural History

Capitalism is killing the planet-it's time to stop buying into our own destruction

Here's an excerpt from a recent article by George Monbiot in The Guardian. "There is a myth about human beings that withstands all evidence. It's that we always put our survival first. This is true of other species. When confronted by an impending threat, such as winter, they

invest great resources into avoiding or withstanding it: migrating or hibernating, for example. Humans are a different matter. When faced with an impending or chronic threat, such as climate or ecological breakdown, we seem to go out of our way to compromise our survival. We convince ourselves that it's not so serious, or even that it isn't happening. We double down on destruction, swapping our ordinary cars for SUVs, jetting to Oblivia on a long-haul flight, burning it all up in a final frenzy. In the back of our minds, there's a voice whispering, 'If it were really so serious, someone would stop us.' If we attend to these issues at all, we do so in ways that are petty, tokenistic, comically ill-matched to the scale of our predicament. It is impossible to discern, in our response to what we know, the primacy of our survival instinct." [Read full article](#).



Investing in an Affordable, Reliable, Clean Transportation Future

On Friday, November 12, at 12 pm, join Vermont Business for Social Responsibility and Energy Action Network for a webinar exploring how our state can transform our transportation system to reduce

pollution, lower energy burdens for vulnerable Vermonters, promote public health, and spur local economic development. Fossil-fueled transportation makes up 40% of Vermont's greenhouse gas emissions. The Transportation & Climate Initiative Program (TCI-P) would reduce our region's pollution from on-road transportation while providing Vermont with at least \$19 million annually to invest in clean transportation solutions. [Register.](#)

Sierra Club Vermont Legislative Training - November 18

The Sierra Club of Vermont has once again hired Action Circles' Amy Shollenberger to host a Vermont Legislative Training on Thursday, November 18, from 5-6:30 p.m. Having an activist community that understands the political process helps us pass meaningful legislation. Open to all with [RSVP.](#)

**MISSION:
JOY**
FINDING HAPPINESS
IN TROUBLED TIMES



***Mission: JOY* IPL Film Features The Dalai Lama & Archbishop Tutu**

As a token of our gratitude to our community, we are pleased to offer access to view this fabulous film from November 19-December 2 with IPL registration. “Deeply moving and laugh-out-loud funny, *Mission: JOY* is a documentary with unprecedented access to the unlikely friendship of two international icons who transcend religion: His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Tutu....these self-described mischievous brothers give a master class in how to create joy in a world that was never easy for them. They offer neuroscience-backed wisdom to help us live with more joy. Inspired by the New York Times bestseller, *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*, the film shares exchanges between these Nobel Peace Prize winners that led to that book.” VTIPL hopes to be sharing the film soon in a virtual community screening and conversation. [Register.](#)

VTIPL Calls on Walmart to Install Solar on Roofs, Parking

VTIPL joined many other organizations in signing a letter by Environment America calling on Walmart to install solar panels on its store roofs and parking lots. From the letter: “Businesses can and should play a key role in reducing global warming pollution by transitioning to 100 percent renewable energy. We are excited by Walmart’s current commitments of zero emissions by 2040 and 100 percent renewable energy by 2035....given its tremendous potential and the benefits of on-site solar production, we are urging you to expand Walmart’s commitment....to put solar wherever viable, including rooftops and parking lots, on its over 5,000 United States locations by 2035.”

[View letter & signatories.](#)



VECAN 14th Annual Conference December 4-9

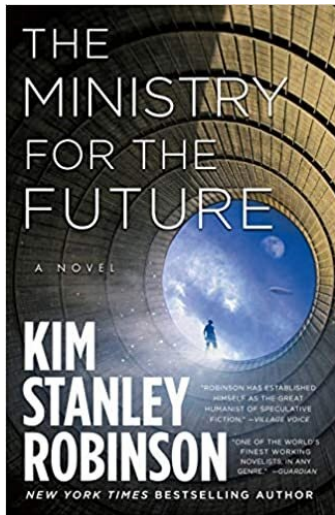
Vermont Energy and Climate Action Network (VECAN) will hold its annual conference next month beginning Saturday, December 4, from 9am-12pm, then from Monday, December 6-Thursday, December 9, from 12pm-1pm. Workshops will focus on climate justice, creating resilient

communities, tools for energy committees, and an overview of the federal, state, and local context for climate action. [Register.](#)

VTIPL Upcoming Programs & *Limits to Growth* Conference - Stay Tuned!

Vermont Interfaith Power & Light will soon be announcing virtual programs to stay connected with our members in the late fall and winter. We are also thrilled to share the first details about a VTIPL in-person conference in Spring 2022. The Conference theme will be *Limits to Growth* featuring a keynote address by UVM professor Dr. Jon Erickson, along with workshop sessions. The Conference will be dedicated to the memory of Donella Meadows, lead

author of the groundbreaking book, *The Limits to Growth*. The 50th anniversary of the book's publication is 2022.



Book review *Ministry for the Future* Review by
VTIPL Board Member Betsy Hardy

“The Kim Stanley Robinson novel, *Ministry for the Future*, set in the near future (~ mid 2020's through 2040's), helps readers envision a possible path to curb the climate crisis. It tells of tremendous efforts worldwide to reduce carbon emissions. By the book's end, clear progress is being made. Large, transformational changes happen in the book, and really could happen in the future if strong action is taken and if pressure is applied in the right places. I believe being able

to envision a path through the climate crisis to a positive future is important for keeping people engaged in finding solutions and not giving up hope. *Ministry for the Future* has a storyline, but it took me a little while to catch onto. Interwoven with the storyline are other brief stories that tell about what's happening around the world are interwoven. Published in 2020, the book is now in paperback. If you read it and like it, please recommend it to others!”

If you have a book review you'd like to share or a letter-to-the editor about an issue of concern, please send them to [VTIPL](#). Thanks!

[Donate Now](#)

We hope you and your families enjoy a happy and healthy Thanksgiving.
Thank you so much for your interest in and support of our work!



Photo courtesy Donna C. Roberts



©2021 Vermont Interfaith Power and Light | PO Box 3095, Burlington, Vermont 05408



[Web Version](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by
GoDaddy Email Marketing®