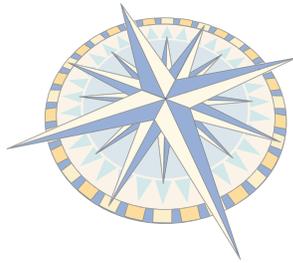


## Roadmap to Environmental Literacy for Vermont

# The Road to Action

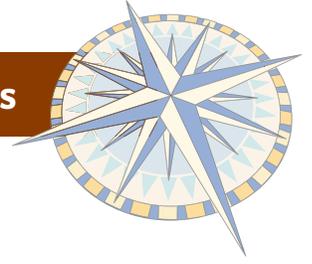


The last portion of each of our public dialogues consisted of participants imagining the ways in which we can move from the environmental projects and initiatives currently happening in their communities to the visions of environmental literacy that they discussed at the beginning of the dialogues. The complete lists of participant visions can be found in the minutes to each public dialogue (<http://www.environmentalliteracyvt.org/index.php?id=32>). Again, we were impressed with the thoughtful discussion and ideas generated by the dialogue participants.

The following pages describe ideas that are based on suggestions shared by the public during the wrap-up of each meeting. Here we've chosen to highlight actions that are clear, doable, creative and specific. Some suggestions were repeated at several dialogues, and we've highlighted several of these popular ideas as well. The complete lists of participant suggestions can be found in the minutes to each dialogue session (<http://www.environmentalliteracyvt.org/index.php?id=32>).

The suggestions that we gathered during the public dialogues will inform Vermont's k-12 environmental literacy plan. However, recognizing that environmental literacy is a lifelong goal, we also want to acknowledge the topics and ideas that young and old alike can learn more about as together we progress toward sustainability. Dialogue participants' suggestions included action steps that can be done on a large scale by many people, actions that can be performed by individuals, and everything in between, and that's how we've organized them here. First we present some of the big ideas for large groups like state government officials and policy makers to consider. Next we focus on our communities, with suggestions for schools, businesses, community agencies, neighbors and the like. Vermont's State-Wide Environmental Education Programs alliance (SWEEP), co-host of the dialogue process, hopes to put some of the suggestions listed in this section into action. Finally, we highlight some ideas for ways in which you and your family can move toward sustainability at home and in your own lives. After all, it's an individual's willingness to take action that ultimately makes a difference. It's clear from the many creative ideas dialogue participants shared that Vermont will continue down the road toward environmental literacy.

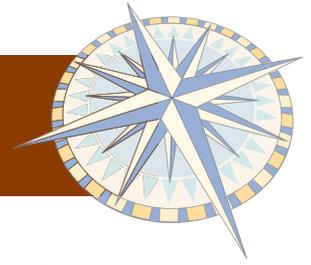
## ACTION STEPS FOR: Policy Makers & Government Agencies



- Administer carbon credits for individuals with municipal initiatives. For example, ride your bike to work for 5 years, and you earn a solar panel.
- Create a town fund to offer loans to homes or businesses for renewable energy or efficiency projects, perhaps paid back with a surcharge to property tax.
- Design public buildings as models for LEED architecture.
- Insure that the steps of critical thinking are embedded in education curriculum.
- Link multi-town school budgets to afford more environmental education, community projects, etc.
- Adopt environmental literacy standards in schools, K-12.
- Consider both cost effectiveness and the environment in the bidding process for government contracts.
- Shift funding so that local and sustainable products are the more affordable choice.
- Label both food and packaging with where it came from.
- Pass “living streets” legislation – roads for all means of transport.
- Fund statewide sustainability initiatives through a stamp or sticker for non-consumptive use of wildlife and habitat like bird watching or canoeing.
- Incentivize sustainable environmental behavior through economic, education and tax credits.
- Award tax credits for in-fill development to make downtowns both sustainable and vibrant.



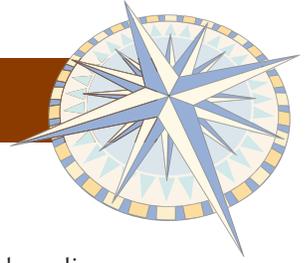
## ACTION STEPS FOR: COMMUNITIES, BUSINESSES, NON-PROFITS & SCHOOLS



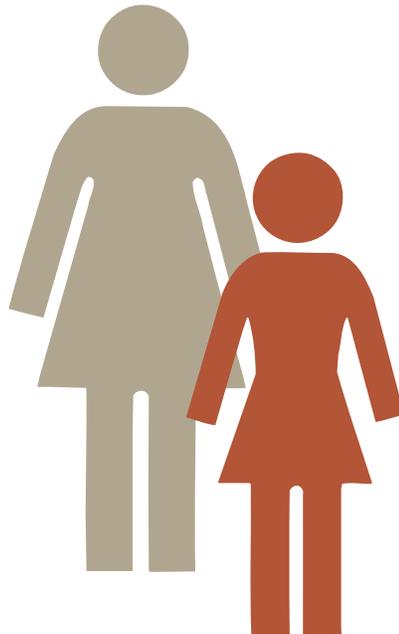
- Develop regional community asset maps for local organizations and businesses to collaborate and form partnerships.
- Link businesses and associations to share resources, buy in bulk, buy locally.
- Provide a space (actual or virtual) to exchange ideas, information and resources. Create a booklet/website to let folks know what's available. Create a shared calendar.
- Integrate life-long learning and education opportunities throughout the community.
- Expand the model of connecting content specialists with schools/teachers to address the needs of the community.
- Install more bike racks.
- Purchase and share a biodiesel bus between non-profit organizations to use for school field trips.
- Integrate school transportation with public transportation.
- Design products to reduce waste and recapture resources.
- Write job descriptions and contracts to include sustainability and environmental responsibilities.
- Promote healthier populations by constructing bike and pedestrian paths.
- Engage more people in the town planning process through door-to-door public education efforts.
- Create a town-wide guide that identifies skills and occupations of neighbors to encourage local employment and community service opportunities.
- Support institutional food services in using local food and composting.
- Establish more community gardens.
- Create one document with many local organizations' annual reports to celebrate all the good work in communities.
- Offer gardening and outdoor education as part of the school day, so kids learn and play in natural settings.



## ACTION STEPS FOR: INDIVIDUALS



- Encourage peer-to-peer sharing to help people learn how to use technology, social media and social marketing.
- Share through Public Service Announcements on radio and TV sustainability tips that individuals can do.
- Shower together to save water.
- Expand opportunities for green tourism – sustainable logging, farm visits, other natural resources, etc.
- Coordinate interdisciplinary service learning projects.
- Identify good environmental literacy stories, contacts and personalities for the media to cover – to help humanize the understanding of “green.” The “green” image or lifestyle could be presented with positive stories.
- Organize community-wide workshops on canning and drying food, healthy cooking and composting/gardening.
- Think beyond our children’s children’s children’s children...



[BACK](#)