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**From:** Sharon Plumb <sharon+vermonttgc.org@ccsend.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 29, 2023 6:34 AM  
**Subject:** VTGC Trail Assessments & August 2023 updates





**YOUR VOICE FOR RECREATION, TRAILS AND CONSERVATION  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PUBLIC LAND MANAGERS**

## Become A Member

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### Dear Friends,

I hope this finds you and your families safe after these challenging weeks. Our hearts go out to all who have been impacted by the recent floodings. We are in awe: as we witness such a catastrophe, we have also seen Vermonters at their best. We have seen neighbors coming together to support each other, resources freely shared, and community engagement at every level. We also know how important trails are for people's well being, especially during times of hardship.

VTGC will do all we can to serve the trails community throughout the coming months. We will provide you with up-to-date information available resources, and advocate for financial and legislative support. **A critical piece of this advocacy work is hearing from you. We are actively seeking information about how the recent storms and associated flooding impacted trails so that we can work to secure funding and other assistance for trail organizations. Please take the time to tell your trail organization's story using [this spreadsheet](#) - by August 7. You don't need to be a VTGC member to contribute, and you don't have to know the damage to every inch of your trails. Input requested by August 7th. We are also dedicating an hour of our August Board meeting to a Flood Response and Recovery Roundtable for all interested trail organizations - more information below.**

Times like these have also underscores the value of personal connections, and networking and continued professional development is an important aspect of our work. September isn't far off and we hope you can take time to register for the upcoming [Trails Symposium](#) at the Killington Grand Hotel 9/27-28. VTGC, and the Vermont Recreation & Parks Association (VRPA) have pulled together a fantastic agenda, with the Symposium included as part of the 80th VT Conference on Recreation. The Trails Symposium adds an outdoor recreation angle to the municipal parks and recreation focus, while also providing a fabulous opportunity to network and share ideas. Vermont's very own Mirna Valerio will be the keynote speaker, sharing her experience as an educator, coach, ultramarathoner, cyclist and skier, DEI practitioner, and author of the memoir, *A Beautiful Work in Progress*, about her experiences as a larger woman in a world of thinner endurance athletes. This is a don't miss event for all trail and outdoor rec professionals.

We hope to see you there!

Abby Long, Executive Director, Kingdom Trails Association & Treasurer, VTGC Board

Sharon Plumb, VTGC Program Manager

Nick Bennette, VTGC Board Co-Chair and VMBA Executive Director

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## HELP FUND TRAIL REPAIR: TRAIL IMPACT ESTIMATES NEEDED BY AUGUST 7

VTGC needs your help advocating for funding and legislative support to repair Vermont's trail infrastructure impacted by the recent flood events. We are asking all organizations in Vermont that steward trails to help us tell the story. Were your trails washed out? Parking lots destroyed? Bridges and culverts damaged? Have you deployed volunteers for repair and reallocated limited funds and staff or volunteer time to recovery efforts? **Please populate this spreadsheet with your organization's information by August 7th.** VTGC will consolidate this information and communicate our collective need to the State, working closely with VT-FPR. The more we can paint a full picture of how the flood has damaged trails and our organizations collectively, the better chance we have at securing support for us all. Not finished assessing the damage? Don't have any or much damage? No problem. **Our goal for the moment is to generate a ballpark sense of the impacts and we want to hear from everyone.** Have a bigger story to tell than fits in a spreadsheet? Send photos and anecdotes to [sharon@vermonttgc.org](mailto:sharon@vermonttgc.org)



**FUNDING**

- The [Vermont Community Loan Fund's TRAILS](#) Loan Program: financing is available to businesses and organizations that provide services or goods that enable, support or are adjacent to Vermont's outdoor recreation industry
- Right now, FPR is pursuing more information on possible opportunities for tapping into FEMA support for recreational trails. Presently, recreation nonprofits are NOT eligible for FEMA funds, though municipalities may apply for recreational infrastructure impacts, including trails.
- FEMA currently has 330 people on the ground in Vermont and they have been setting up [Multi-Agency Centers \(MARC\)s](#) around the state. These centers are a single location where public and private organizations come together to provide assistance to those affected by disaster. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has also set up Recovery Centers in Washington County at the Vermont Chamber of Commerce and in Windsor County at the Engel & Völkers Okemo Building. You can find more information on ACCD's Flood Recovery Resource Center.
- The [US Small Business Administration](#) is offering low-interest loans in affected areas.
- [Vermont Community Foundation Flood Response Recovery Fund](#) has raised more than \$2.5 million for flood relief. The fund will be used in three phases including: Phase 1: Immediate Response, Relief Phase 2: Building Back Communities, and Phase 3: Community and Watershed Resilience. To date, more than \$1 million has been granted.
- The [Main Street Recovery Fund](#) provides \$2,500-\$10,000 grants for businesses to obtain immediate bridge assistance.
- [Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative \(VOREC\)](#) Flood Recovery Resources website has a consolidated list of useful links
- [Common Good Vermont](#) has an excellent Nonprofit Flood Response & Recovery Information page with resources and information
- [Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance \(VOBA\)](#) has a resource page specific to flood resources aimed at supporting affected businesses and communities.
- The Department of Buildings and General Services (BGS) has announced that the [Building Communities Grants Program](#) has been funded for FY2024. These grants are for construction and capital improvements to support and strengthen Vermont towns and regions. \$300,000 is available for Recreational Facilities and another \$300,000 for Regional Economic Development grants, with additional funds available for Human Services and Educational Facilities. Head to the [BGS website](#) for application criteria. **The grant deadline is September 10.**

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## NETWORKING & SKILL BUILDING EVENTS

## VTGC Monthly Board Meeting - August 10

Interested in what we do? Come to a Board meeting and find out. All members are welcome. Board meetings are held the second Thursday of the month from **10-noon**. Here's the [zoom link](#) for the **August 10 meeting**. This month, we'll discuss trail-related flood assessment and recovery efforts, upcoming membership projects, hear updates from FPR, and discuss ongoing legislative efforts regarding trails. **We are also dedicating the second half of our Meeting (11-noon) to a Flood Response and Recovery Roundtable for all VTGC member organizations. Please come and share your questions, needs, and ideas.** Contact [sharon@vermonttgc.org](mailto:sharon@vermonttgc.org) for more information.

## 80th Vermont Conference on Recreation and Trails Symposium

The [Trails Symposium](#) is coming up! Join us September 27 & 28 at [Killington Grand Resort Hotel, September 27 & 28](#). Here's a taste of trails-related workshops. [Register for one or both days before 8/25 to get the early bird discount.](#)

### WEDNESDAY

#### **Outdoor Recreation Development: Looking Back + Planning Ahead**

*Morgan Easton, President, Ridgeline Outdoor Collective | Angus McCusker, Executive Director, Ridgeline Outdoor Collective | Zac Freeman, Owner, Apex Trailworks*

#### **Striking A Balance: Planning + Designing Network Capacity**

*Drew Pollack-Bruce, Senior Recreation Planner, SE Group | Abby Long, Executive Director, Kingdom Trails Association*

#### **Universally Accessible Trail Design & Construction**

*Josh Ryan, Principal, Timber & Stone*

#### **Regional Collaboration for Sustainable Mt. Biking**

*Maura Adams, Director of Community Investment, Northern Forest Center | Lil Ide, Director of Communications, Kingdom Trails Association*

#### **Trail Cache- Insights into Building and Maintaining Community Trails**

*Luke O'Brien, Forest Recreation*

### THURSDAY

#### **A Roadmap to VT's Outdoor Recreation Economy**

*Jackie Dagger, Program Manager, Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative, VT Agency of Natural Resources*

#### **Planning Together; Trails & Wetlands Can Co-exist**

*Zapata Courage, District Wetland Ecologist, VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation | Shannon Morrison, District Wetland Ecologist, VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation*

#### **Connecting Parks + Trails Through Design**

*Elena Juodisius, Landscape Designer, SE Group | Kelly Stoecklein, Landscape Designer, SE Group*

#### **Trail Maintenance**

*Grady Vigneau, Trails Manager, Stowe Trails Partnership*

#### **The Power of Collaboration to Create Accessibility**

*Specialist, VT Dept. of Forests, Parks & Recreation*

**Trails: We Get What We Plan For (Together)**

Mariah Keagy, Trail Designer & Planner, Sinuosity LLC | Nick Bennette, Executive Director, Vermont Mountain Bike Association

**Get GNARLY (Gateway + Natural Amenity Region Initiative)**

*Tara Hetz, GNAR Initiative University of Utah.*

*Kelly Starr, Executive Director, Adaptive Sports | CJ Scott, Trails Director, Kingdom Trails Association*

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## ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENT RESOURCES

- Assessment work to understand damages is underway on State land. ANR is using this Forestry Field Assessment form and members are welcome to use it for their purposes. Please note: it is specific to FEMA and it is not yet known to what extent, if at all, FEMA will cover damages on private lands.
- VAST has put out the word to volunteers to document damage. They would like clubs to report trail damage using [this form](#).
- The Solocator app ([solocator.com](http://solocator.com)) is a useful tool for documenting storm damage. It allows you to take photos of damaged trail sections with your phone and then attach them to assessment forms. The app automatically assigns a GPS point to each photo for reference.
- Trail managers on public lands have found pages 58 & 59 of this [FEMA guidebook](#) helpful when developing spreadsheets and other forms for documentation. You should also be working closely with the land manager, who will be the assistance applicant.



## JOBS & CAREER PATHWAYS

- GMC is [hiring](#) backcountry caretakers, trail crew members, and a development coordinator.
- Kingdom Trails is hiring a [Welcome Center Ambassador](#)
- Local Motion is hiring a [Safe Routes to School Coordinator](#).
- VYCC is hiring for [fall positions](#): crew leaders, crew members, and more.
- Vermont State University is launching its [Sustainable Trail Building Certificate — one-year program](#) and [Trail Building and Stewardship for Non-Motorized Multi-Use Trails Boot Camp](#) this year. Apply now!
- Level up your medical training and lead safe trail crews with a [SOLO Wilderness First Aid Certification](#) at GMC Headquarters in Waterbury, Saturday, August 19-20, 2023 | 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.

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**We'll help YOU Spread YOUR news**



Have trails-related news, events, or job postings? Let us help you get the word out. Send a blurb with all of the details and links to [sharon@vermonttgc.org](mailto:sharon@vermonttgc.org) by the **15th of every month.**

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