

# What Does 30x30 Mean for Vermont?

BY THE GUILFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Imagine for a moment that every creature on Earth got one wish. What would your one wish be? And what might be the one wish of a maple tree? A mushroom? A salmon? A salamander? Let us agree for a moment that every creature might share the same single wish: to survive.

These creatures represent an infinitesimal fraction of life on the planet and happen to be ones that we humans can see and recognize; millions more are invisible to us, and yet every one is a part of Earth's vast ecosystem. For a very long time, all of them have found ways to survive and interact so that all may live and thrive—if not individually, then as a species.

Sadly this is no longer true.

Humans have discovered too late that the vast web of life we as a species have taken for granted and used as we pleased is more fragile and complex than we thought and is now endangered everywhere. Fortunately, we have also discovered that Earth excels at healing itself—but in order to do so, must be given room and time to repair the damage. Unfortunately we can't all go away and wait until it gets better. We wish to survive along with all the other inhabitants of this planet that we cherish.

The good news is that climate scientists know how to help give Earth the time and space it needs to heal. The author E.O. Wilson names it "Half-Earth"—a call to protect half the Earth's land and sea in order to manage sufficient habitat to reverse species extinction and ensure the long-term health of our planet.

Half of the Earth and sea is a lot, but we can make a start: 30x30

is a global initiative to conserve at least 30 percent of the earth's land, water, and oceans by 2030. The United States, along with more than 70 other countries, embraced this goal last year when President Biden signed an executive order to conserve 30 percent of U.S. land, water and oceans by 2030. In March the Vermont House gave preliminary approval for the state to join this worldwide 30x30 goal in bill H.606. Other bills under consideration promote inclusion of old forests in Vermont's Current Use Program and amend Act 250 to promote housing in "smart growth areas," maintaining and conserving intact forests.

Vermont is a significant part of the Northeastern Forest that extends from Eastern Canada through the New England states. An urgent need climate scientists agree on is to preserve intact forests rich in biodiversity that allow species to migrate as the climate changes. By concentrating housing development in areas that are already populated and reducing road building and development in forested areas, we help create regions where Earth can heal itself, and continue

to filter water, recycle nutrients, and limit global warming by storing large amounts of carbon: ecosystem services that all creatures depend on for survival.

For the sake of our children, and theirs, and all the creatures Earth shelters, can we and the State of Vermont work together on ways to help the planet heal? Stay tuned in our next installment for ideas about how individuals and groups of citizens in Guilford can participate.

"An increasing body of evidence demonstrates that climatic risks to people can be lowered by strengthening nature, meaning that we invest in protecting nature and rebuilding ecosystems to benefit both people and biodiversity." – From The 2022 Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)]

## Making Things, continued

by that name.

"(Taper-walled yurts) are not my design in any way," Mike says. They are a product of Bill's ingenuity.

With great respect for Bill, Mike carries on the tradition of Bill's construction style, but also of his willingness to experiment, to have fun trying out ways of making things.

"He'd just try different things and see what happens," Mike remembers.

Another important part of Bill's legacy is that it celebrates people coming together with their different backgrounds and skills to work on a project.

"Everybody's part of the story (of creating a beautiful structure)," Nika adds.

Mike doesn't confine himself to building just yurts. On the day of this interview he was unloading some materials from his car

that he and a friend had been using to build ladderback chairs, with only hand tools. Mike loves the slow, quiet process of carving and shaping the chairs.

"There's very little dust," Mike remark and smiles, "And the shavings make good kindling."

For more information about upcoming workshops, go to the workshops page of Mike's website: dickinsonsreachyurts.com.

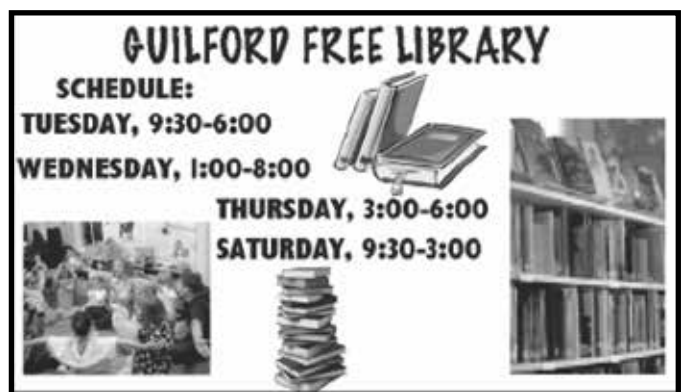


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