

Earth Day

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As Chief Luther Standing Bear once said, "The world was a library and its books were the stones, leaves, grass, brooks, and the birds and animals that shared, alike with us, the storms and blessings of the earth. We learned what the student of nature ever learns and that was to feel beauty." While this is not a local quote, it is still relevant and empowering to Vermont. Vermont's environment makes me feel untroubled. It brings a sense of peacefulness to my mind and a break from developed technology.

To me, this state is a wonder, and I feel very fortunate to have access to fresh air and land. I swim in the immense indigo water of Lake Champlain in the summer. Likewise, I ski the rolling Green Mountains, in which the peaks bring me glee and heartfelt happiness. Not having these opportunities would bring a deep sadness to me and many other Vermonters. What makes this little state so spectacular is our environment, and we need to keep it healthy and pristine.

The environment is therapeutic when it comes to mental health. Vermont's nature and our ecosystems make many people feel relaxed and allow a quick breath in between busy schedules. It has been scientifically proven that spending time outdoors can help with disorders such as anxiety and depression. As mental health is a big problem in our world today, Vermont's ecosystems are a natural remedy for such problems. Not having a green environment would be a drastic change.

According to a study recently done by the University of Vermont, in the past thirty years, our temperature increased by 20 Fahrenheit. That might not seem like a lot now, but over time that is a big change. The study also found that at the rate we are going, by 2080, the ski season will have been shortened by two weeks- to 1 month. Those statistics stick with me as I am a ski racer who skis any chance I get. Skiing makes me very happy, and if I had that opportunity shortened, it would be dreadful. That change would drastically alter Vermont, but not in a good way. If we want Vermont's outdoor recreation to stay how it is, we need to make changes to our lifestyle. It is possible to turn this around, but we have to start before it is too late.

April 22nd is a very important day for our planet. Earth day is one of the most celebrated holidays with over a billion people celebrating. It is a day to give back to our planet. It is a day for gratitude, caring, and discussing ways to help our planet. You can help by picking up trash, biking to school, composting, planting a tree, or cleaning up your outdoor space. There are so many ways to help, and they don't have to be big; because little things will help contribute to a big problem.

Our state is very clean compared to most. But if we keep our ways of life how they are right now, that is going to change. Our lakes are getting dirtier, animals going extinct, trash on the side of roads, and pollution in our air. Earth

day is promising, hopeful, like a light at the end of the tunnel. We can turn this massive problem around, and it just has to start with little deeds here and there.

Earth Day was first celebrated in 1970 when a Wisconsin senator organized an environmental awareness demonstration nationally to talk about our Earth's issues. This led to rallies all around the country that eventually led to the U.S government generating the Environmental Protection Agency. Earth Day is now celebrated by more than 140 countries all around the world (National Geographic Kids).

Earth day is a specific day to make a change. But we can not go about our lives just helping our earth one day a year and polluting it the other 364 days in a year. Earth day brings in about a billion supporters each year; with that support working for a better future, our planet can pivot and make a difference.

My dad works to bring clean energy to many families and towns. Naturally, my house is mostly run by our backyard solar panel, electric car, and our heat. But not all families are as fortunate as mine to have clean energy access. As a country, I believe we need to work on driving our prices down on renewable energy. Having a green household is very difficult in our current state of being. My family works towards being more environmentally friendly, but it is very difficult and pricey for most families. We need to find a way to make clean energy affordable and easy for individuals and families to adapt their houses to clean energy. Our state and country need to build more wind turbines, solar panels, hydro dams, and other clean energy sources. Having more renewable energy and availability to these sources would hopefully drive the price down of having a carbon-neutral household.

At this point, we understand the problem but need a solution. Many scientists and others have dedicated their lives to solving Climate Change. This problem is not a sickness with a natural remedy or medicine. But an opportunity and hope for the future. As I stated earlier, there is no one simple solution to this global issue. But little steps we can take as individuals to make a big difference. This is why I believe there is hope for the future if we take one step at a time.

Sources:

[National Geographic Kids](#)