



October 2018

Green Mountain Conservation Camp

Building Communities at GMCC

By Alison Thomas, Education Manager

People often go into wild places to seek solitude. The opposite happens at Green Mountain Conservation Camp (GMCC). Camp is a place where people come together. Campers work in teams to build shelters, paddle canoes, and lead each other blindfolded through the forest. Staff come from all over the country to teach and learn with the campers. Wardens, biologists, and foresters oversee ranges and trapping courses, as well as wildlife management activities. Being outdoors is the foundational part of GMCC that brings people from all different backgrounds and experiences together to learn about Vermont's natural resources. These experiences happen regardless of the clothing campers wear, the gear they have, or past outdoor adventures they have experienced, because none of that matters at camp. When kids are at GMCC, they are all campers together learning and playing.

The importance of building community is invaluable for all people, especially youth trying to navigate their way through the world. The community bond is especially profound when it extends beyond the campers, junior counselors, and staff, and includes the ecosystems that make Buck Lake and Edward F. Kehoe camps so memorable for people and important for Vermont's wildlife.

At GMCC, people become part of a bond strong enough to last a lifetime, all while exploring ways to celebrate and conserve the natural systems that make Vermont so special.

Whether you are a current or past camper, are a parent or guardian, former staff member, or a GMCC enthusiast, we are all a part of the GMCC community. This connection is something to be celebrated as we strive to conserve Vermont's wild habitats for wildlife and people.



Buck Lake campers work together making a shelter.



Basic Session Campers = 520
Advanced Session Campers = 236
Boys Attending = 538
Girls Attending = 217
Hunter Combo Certifications = 485

Trapper Certifications = 94
Waterfowl Certifications = 74
Advanced Backpacking = 69
Sponsored Campers = 245

Work Weekends 2018: Volunteers and Staff Working Together

Edward F. Kehoe Updates [May 11-12]

Twenty-five volunteers, two Game Wardens, and two Outreach Division staff helped with prepping Kehoe this spring. Some projects were new while others were long-overdue upgrades! Volunteers and staff sanded and stained nature trail signs, cut and split several hazardous trees, deep-cleaned cabins, raked around buildings, weeded the wildlife garden, sealed the floors of the trapper cabin, planted grass seed around the newly renovated bathhouse, fixed doors, and replaced the shooting blocks on the ranges.



Former camper and now Junior Counselor at Buck Lake and Kehoe, Paul Becker, along with three other volunteers, including his father, took down, sanded, painted, and restained the nature trail signs.



Wardens Gravelle and Circe taught Trapper Education to Advanced Session campers in the new lean-to built by Rutland High School Stafford Tech students. The benches inside were built during work weekend by a volunteer, making it a great classroom space.

Buck Lake Updates [May 19-20]

It was a record year at Buck Lake, with 36 volunteers on Saturday and seven on Sunday, five of whom were Game Wardens, and three Outreach Division staff. Twenty-five students from the Burke Mountain Academy made up the Saturday crew and helped deep-clean, installed a drainage culvert, raked, and painted. A volunteer arborist felled 26 hazardous trees in one day! Also accomplished was sanding the entrance sign, repairs to the woodshed, and unloading waterfront and range gear.



A new drainage culvert helped avoid a Buck Lake Road washout all season.



On Saturday, few remained to spend a chilly evening at Buck Lake. Not everyone was ready for a photo...



Working at GMCC

Are you interested in wildlife conservation, working outdoors, and educating youth? Jumpstart your career in conservation while gaining valuable experience.

Positions include:

- Camp Director
- Assistant Director
- Natural Resources Instructor
- Natural Resources Instructor - Medical Coordinator

Positions are posted in early January.

For details and to apply in early January, click [HERE](#).

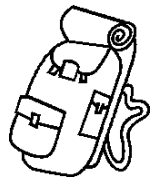
Interviews begin in February, and positions are filled on an ongoing basis.

Questions, contact:

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Education Manager
(802) 371-9975

Wild Times at GMCC

A week at GMCC is a whirlwind of activity. There is no shortage of fun with new and old friends in cabins, during classes, and around the campfire.



Buck Lake campers dig into a soil symposium with wildlife biologist, Jon Kart.



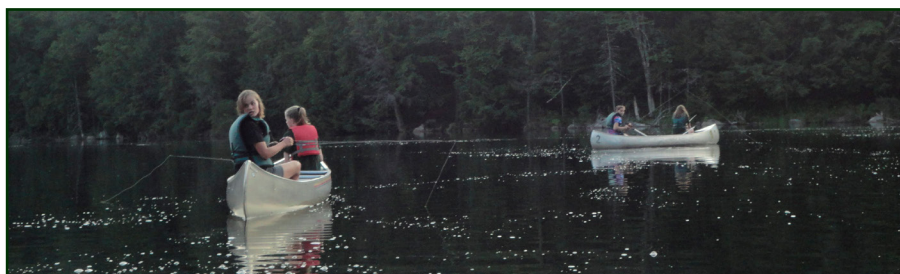
Fancy jumps into Buck Lake after a long hike are always a good idea.



Kehoe campers watch the sunset on Lake Bomoseen during an evening paddle.



Kehoe Advanced Session campers make bowdrills in a class led by the Director, Megan McKeighan.



Buck Lake campers fishing at dusk.

Wildlife Management & Outdoor Education Techniques for Educators

One-Week Field Course

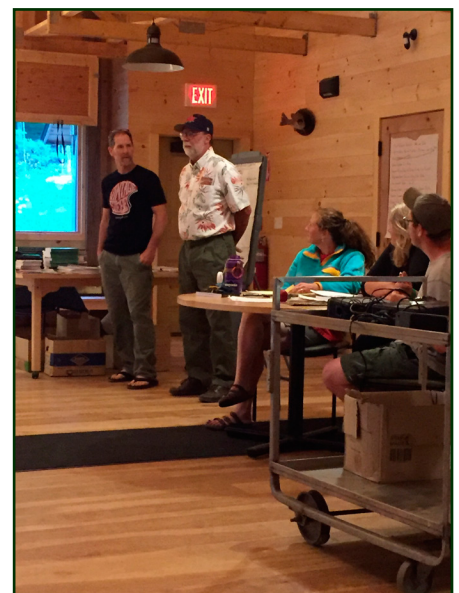
Since 1986, the Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department has offered a course that allows educators to go to summer camp, receive professional development, and participate in hands-on learning opportunities about wildlife management. Participants receive 3 graduate-level credits from Castleton University, and earn up to 60 hours of continuing education credits!

This is a one-week course held in mid-July for formal and non-formal educators of all disciplines and grade levels. Educators interested in integrating environmental topics into their curriculum and programs can learn about Vermont's wildlife and fisheries from professional biologists, foresters and educators through hands-on activities.

Contact Ali Thomas, Alison.Thomas@vermont.gov for more information.



Learning with professionals in the field while having fun!



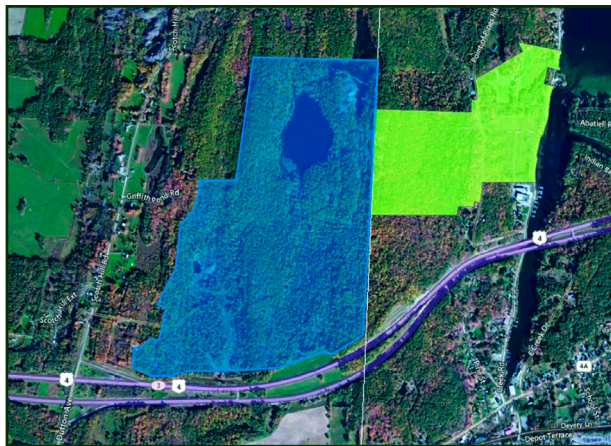
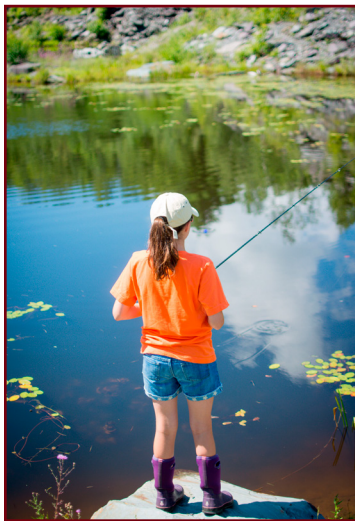
Green Mountain Conservation Camp Endowment Fund: *Introducing the Bonsawino Wildlife Management Area*

The Green Mountain Conservation Camp Endowment Fund is a 501 C 3 non-profit that secures funds for existing GMCC programs, provides maintenance and equipment to the camp facilities, and expands educational opportunities.

Most recently, the fund was leveraged to acquire 281 acres of woods and wetlands abutting Kehoe Camp, now forever conserved as a Wildlife Management Area.

It's purchases like this that make the fund so important.

The Green Mountain Conservation Camp Endowment Fund Needs Your Support.



Bonsawino WMA (281 acres) is highlighted in blue with GMCC Kehoe property in green.



Consider strengthening the fund with your donation.

With your help, we can provide many more generations with the invaluable education offered at Green Mountain Conservation Camps.

Donate today by clicking on or visiting vtfishandwildlife.com/donate

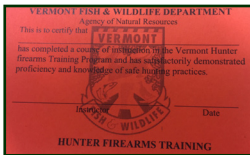
Hunter Education

By Nicole Meier,
Outreach & Information Specialist

Although most campers finish their week at camp with their hunter/bowhunter or trapper education certifications, most of the campers have not hunted before and may not take it up after camp, and that's okay.

Hunter and bowhunter education can empower campers, whether or not they excel in a traditional classroom environment. Being outside learning hands-on skills, practicing safe firearms handling, talking through ethics and understanding conservation are all part of the hunter education experience at camp.

Helping campers become confident being in the woods with firearms and bows is a building block of their empowerment. Even if these campers never hunt, they leave camp understanding the responsibility and maturity that goes with handling firearms, and the conservation that is supported when hunters go afield.



Interested in how our ranges are run?
Click [HERE](#) for a video.



Fish I.D.



.20 gauge shotguns



Tying flies



Crossbows

Let's Go Fishing

By Corey Hart,
LGF Program Coordinator

Fishing is more than just casting a line and hoping to get a fish to nibble the bait. It's about breathing-in fresh air and connecting to natural resources. It's also about studying ecosystems and reading the land and water. Every camper who attends GMCC has fun participating in Let's Go Fishing activities. Campers learn knot tying, aquatic ecology, fisheries management, fly casting, regulations, basic tackle, and fly tying.

During their first night of camp, campers go fishing in Green Lake, where they soon discover that Green Lake is a field and they are fishing for plastic fish. Everyone has a blast, and this lesson teaches basic casting skills while also reinforcing fish identification and regulations. Later in the week, they tie on a hook and try their luck on the water, and many of the campers catch their first fish.

GMCC prepares campers with skills to fish, but we need you to help them practice this healthy activity. Participate in LGF programs all year, and maybe you'll find a new hobby that also supports habitat conservation!

Click [Let's Go Fishing](#) for more info.

THANK YOU...

To the campers, parents and guardians, GMCC staff, Fish & Wildlife staff, Forest, Parks & Recreation staff, and sponsors who made this summer a wonderful outdoor learning adventure for so many children!

Newsletter Photo Credits: Tom Rogers, Ali Thomas, GMCC Staff and JCs



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