



Building Thriving Communities

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Gus Speth

Gus Speth served on the faculty of the Vermont Law School as Professor of Law from 2010 to 2015. He now serves as a Fellow at the Tellus Institute, the Democracy Collaborative and the Vermont Law School. He is Co-Chair of the Next System Project at the Democracy Collaborative. In 2009 he completed his decade-long tenure as Dean, Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. From 1993 to 1999, Gus Speth was Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and chair of the UN Development Group. Prior to his service at the UN, he was founder and president of the World Resources Institute; professor of law at Georgetown University; chairman of the U.S. Council on Environmental Quality (Carter Administration); and senior attorney and cofounder, Natural Resources Defense Council. Among his awards are the National Wildlife

About the Presenters:

Allen Armstrong is a retired mechanical engineer who has been educating about climate change since 2004. He holds engineering degrees from MIT and is a Climate Reality Project presenter and a member of Citizens Climate Lobby and the Portland Climate Action Team. He has two Australian grandsons, aged 8 and 5.

Amanda Beal - Maine Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Amanda is the past President & CEO of Maine Farmland Trust, and prior to that, MFT's Policy & Research Director. She also worked in the public health field, and for several years as an independent consultant on food systems-related projects for a number of fisheries, agriculture, and other food-focused organizations and businesses.

Beal has authored and co-authored numerous related papers and was a co-author of the publication: "A New England Food Vision: Healthy Food for All, Sustainable Farming and Fishing, Thriving Communities." She holds an M.S. from Tufts University, completing the Agriculture, Food & Environment program at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, and is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of New Hampshire in the Natural Resources and Earth Systems Science program.

Roberta Frampton Benefiel -- of Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador, NL, Canada. co-founded, Grand Riverkeeper Labrador (GRK), and has been the "Riverkeeper" since 2005. GRK is a member of the international organization Waterkeeper Alliance. Roberta volunteers on the Standing Committee of a grassroots citizen's organization called Labrador Land Protectors. (LLP); is a member of a Canadian environmental caucus on Environmental Assessment; and volunteers on a concerned citizens forestry watch committee. Ms. Frampton Benefiel is a graduate of Mt. Allison University in New Brunswick in 2002 with a BA in Environmental Studies.

Gayle Bowness -- a Nova Scotia native, has a BS in Marine Biology from Dalhousie University and an MS from Leslie University in Ecological Teaching and Learning. A Mainer for 16 years, she has worked at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute since 2005, and has created educational programs from watersheds to electricity efficiency. Gayle now focuses on sea level rise. Gayle and her 2 children in Cape Elizabeth enjoy exploring Maine's coastline.

Elise Brown -- Evergreen Home Performance

Elise is a partner in Evergreen Home Performance, a contracting company based in Rockland and Portland specializing in residential energy efficiency and comfort retrofits. She manages Customer Service, Marketing, and Employee Safety Training, and co-manages Human Resources and Business Management. Her other work experiences include Town of Liberty, Maine Emergency Management and service as a firefighter and EMT for both Liberty and the City of Portland.

Anne D. (Andy) Burt -- Sierra Club Maine Climate Action Advisory Team Activist

Andy Burt has nearly three decades of experience creating and directing grassroots programs for social and environmental justice in Maine. Her work and activism on climate change have led her over the past few years to develop a storytelling project and documentary films that examine the roots of personal climate activism and the emergence of local climate solutions across the state. She is using the films as tools to promote local action for solutions and advocacy for public policy.

Sergio Cahueque -- Environmental Health Strategy Center

At college Sergio had the opportunity to engage with Earth in Brackets, exploring the overlaps between environmental justice and social justice. He also attended meetings under the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change, where he collaborated with grassroots and policy-led, climate justice organizations.

After his experience with international environmental policy and inspired by the grassroots and popular movements in Latin America, Sergio went back to Guatemala to conduct ethnographic research for his undergraduate thesis. As an organizer Sergio is committed to creating spaces and providing tools for people to speak up and take action against social and environmental injustices. Sergio believes that to foster a healthy environment and a healthy and honest democracy we need to work from the bottom-up.

**Judith Colla -- Energy Subcommittee, Sustainable Hanover, NH; former Chair Sierra Club
New Hampshire, Upper Valley Group**

Raised in East Millinocket Maine, Judi has an AB from Princeton, and a doctorate in epidemiology from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. Active with the NH/VT bi-state Sierra Club group, she is a leader in promoting Hanover's Ready for 100 Campaign, with a goal to galvanize municipal political will to support an equitable and just transition to renewable energy. In May 2017 Hanover's citizens voted unanimously to commit to 100% renewable energy power by 2030, and heating/cooling and transportation by 2050. She co-chairs the Sustainable Hanover Energy Subcommittee to facilitate this transition.

**Susan Colvin -- Assistant Professor of Sustainable Fisheries, Unity College, Board member
Sebastcook Regional Land Trust**

Her research focuses on studying fishes and aquatic ecosystems along environmental gradients including stream type and size and anthropogenic influence. She recently presented at a senate science briefing on proposed changes to the Waters of the United States Rule (WOTUS). Dr. Colvin holds a Masters in Fisheries from Oregon State University and Ph.D. in Biological Sciences from Auburn University.

Steve Crowley -- Vermont Sierra Club

Steve Crowley is a long-time volunteer with the Vermont Sierra Club. Since the Clamshell Alliance's Seabrook campaign of the late 1970's, he's been involved in organizing and policy work, locally, regionally, and nationally, including chairing the Sierra Club's Smart Energy Solutions campaign, out of which sprang Cool Cities, Beyond Coal, and other familiar Sierra Club efforts. He was a leader in efforts to fight the purchase of power from Hydro-Quebec, and continues today to advocate for recognizing the enormous impacts of these large dams on people, ecosystems, and the climate system.

Ivan Fernandez -- Professor of Soil Science in the School of Forest Resources, Climate Institute, and School of Food and Agriculture, University of Maine

A Distinguished Maine Professor in 2007, CASE/Carnegie in Washington DC named him 2008 Professor of the Year for Maine, and he was named a fellow in the Soil Science Society of America in 2010. He has served on various U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Science Advisory Board committees since 2000. Ivan recently chaired a panel of the EPA Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC) that is evaluating the secondary National Ambient Air Quality Standards in the Clean Air Act for sulfur and nitrogen oxides, he represents the University of Maine in the USDA Northeast Climate Hub, and has been a lead in the Maine's Climate Future assessments in 2009 and 2015. As a soil scientist, his research program focuses on the biogeochemistry of ecosystems in a changing physical and chemical climate.

Denison Gallaudet -- Treasurer, Sierra Club Maine, Chair Cumberland Climate Action Team

Jim Gerritsen -- Organic Seed Potatoes, Wood Prairie Family Farm

Jim Gerritsen, his wife, Megan, and family have owned MOFGA-Certified Organic Wood Prairie Family Farm in Aroostook County for 43 years. They primarily grow organic Maine Certified Seed Potatoes and organic seed, and market their seed crops via their web and mail order business with customers in all 50 States. Gerritsen serves as President of the national farmer-controlled Organic Seed Growers and Trade Association (OSGATA) and served on MOFGA's Certification Committee for almost 25 years.

David Gibson -- Revision Energy

Gibson designs clean energy systems for ReVision Energy, and serves on the board of directors for the Belfast Co-op. He and his wife, Willow, live in an 1828 post and beam farmhouse they've transitioned to 100% renewable energy. Prior to moving back home to Maine, Gibson led efficiency programs statewide for the Nevada Governor's Office of Energy, and developed a standards-based energy efficiency curriculum for middle and high school students with the nonprofit organization Envirolution. He is a Certified Energy Manager and LEED Accredited Professional for Building Design and Construction.

Ellen Stern Griswold -- Maine Farmland Trust, Policy and Research Director

In that role, Griswold oversees all of MFT's municipal, state, and federal-level policy work, as well as research projects that both inform MFT's policy work and support the overall effectiveness of MFT's programs. She obtained her LL.M. in Food and Agriculture Law from Vermont Law School, her law degree from Georgetown University Law Center, and her BA in Public Policy from Brown University.

Duane Hanson -- Say No to NECEC

Sandra Howard- Director, Say NO to NECEC

Say No to NECEC is a non-profit organization, a grassroots group opposed to the 145-mile CMP corridor through Maine to bring electricity to Massachusetts. For over 20 years, Howard has worked in the Forks area as a Registered Maine Whitewater and Recreation Guide. During the academic year, she is an Associate Professor of Music, Coordinator of Music Education and Choirs of Music at Keene State College. Howard earned a BM in Music Education and MM in Vocal Performance from University of Maine and an Interdisciplinary PhD Music Education/Curriculum & Instruction from University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Alex Jackimovicz -- Electrical Engineer

Jackimovicz is a co-founder of the Alliance for Economic Democracy and an activist, spiritualist, and licensed master electrician living in Boothbay, Maine. He has volunteered as an organizer with a variety of social and economic justice campaigns and organizations, including the Maine People's Alliance, the Maine Small Business Coalition, and the Maine Fair Trade Campaign. Jackimovicz works to help promote a critical mass of connections among those engaged in various spheres of economic democracy movement work.

Christopher Johnson: Former Maine State Senator

Johnson supported and introduced pro energy efficiency and renewable energy policies. He made his career in Information Technology including nearly 15 years at Central Maine Power. He and his wife Valarie built an energy efficient home in Somerville roughly 34 years ago on which the recent heat pump based heat and hot water updates will soon be mostly solar powered. He advocates for smarter big picture energy technologies, policies, and investments for Maine wherever he can.

Doug Johnson -- Belfast Co-op

Johnson has been with the Belfast Co-op for nearly eight years, having the honor of serving as General Manager for the past three. After growing up in rural Pennsylvania he studied fine art and art history at a small liberal arts school in St. Augustine, FL. While there, he began working for an independent natural foods store, a professional choice that has shaped the rest of his career. After graduation, he moved back to Pennsylvania to work at the East End Food Co-op where he married and started a family. When the city wasn't working for their family anymore they came to Midcoast Maine, the best place in the country to raise kids, grow food, and support the co-op economy.

Tora Johnson -- Associate Professor, University of Maine at Machias, Director of the Geographic Information Systems Laboratory

Torah Johnson holds a PhD in human dimensions of natural resources from the University of Maine and teaches GIS and environmental studies at the University of Maine Machias. Dr. Johnson's current social and spatial science research focuses on supporting sustainable and prosperous rural communities in a changing world. Centering on dignity as a guiding principle, her work focuses on best practices for resolving conflict and engaging diverse people in productive decision making. She has collaborated with installation artists and sculptors on community-based and place-based installation art projects. Also a writer, her award-winning book, Entanglements: The Intertwined Fates of Whales and Fishermen, was released in 2005.

Muhidin Libah -- Executive Director of Somali Bantu Community

Libah graduated from the University of Southern Maine in the spring of 2014 BS in Natural Applied Science with a Biology Concentration and a Minor in Holistic Health. The Somali Bantu Community of Lewiston Maine is the third NGO Libah has Co-founded and he has consulted to 7 other nonprofit organizations across New England and New York. His academic has always been food production, food security and sustainability and I wrote my thesis on that topic. He manages and fundraises for eleven programs in the community. Additionally, he is a CNA, and provides medical translation. One of the programs he manages is farming program over the last two years has grown to 130 farmers. With a farming background, is able to teach my own community and has done similar work in Somalia for World Vision international.

Janis B. Petzel – Penobscot Bay Medical Center

Janis Petzel, MD DFAPA is a psychiatrist, educator, and columnist who focuses on the neuroscience of trauma and resilience in her clinical work. She has served as the president of the Maine Association of Psychiatric Physicians. Dr. Petzel has practiced in far-flung communities from Barrow, Alaska to Fort Kent, Maine, and serves on staff at Penobscot Bay Medical Center. She writes a mental health column, Island Mind, for the Islesboro Island News. She is an active member of PSR Maine's Climate Committee writing op-eds and testifying on bills related to climate change and health.

Bill Price -- Field Organizing Manager, Sierra Club

Bill Price was a resident of the southern West Virginia coalfields for more than thirty years. He experienced first-hand the impacts that occur when irresponsible coal mining methods bring economic and environmental devastation to low-income communities in the coal-producing region of Central Appalachia, and became active in the environmental movement in 2001 after his community was heavily damaged by flooding due to a Mountain Top Removal mine. In 2003, Price began working with the Sierra Club's Environmental Justice Program. As the Central Appalachian EJ Resource Coordinator, he worked in coal-producing areas of six states with members of grassroots organizations involved in various coal-related issues. Price has co-facilitated Dismantling Racism workshops throughout the Sierra Club and also offers training in Diversity and Leadership Development. He is a member of the Sierra Club's Equity Support team, and in December of 2017 began working as an organizing manager in the Southeast and Appalachian areas.

Chloe Maxmin -- Representative, Maine Legislative District #88

Edward McAbee, (Mac) MD -- Chair York Ready for 100 Team

Mac graduated from Bowdoin College and University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and practiced Family Medicine in Kittery for 36 years. While Mac is new to environmental activism, his concern about climate change motivated him to help organize with seven local residents establish the YorkReadyfor100% initiative.

Kathryn Miller -- Plant Ecologist, Inventory & Monitoring Program, National Park Service.

Miller leads a long-term forest monitoring program for 20 national parks from Virginia to Maine, along with freshwater wetland monitoring in Acadia National Park. She received her BS in Natural Resources from Northland College, MS in Ecology and Environmental Science at UMaine, and PhD in Biological Science from UMaine.

Michael Maines -- MainesCraft Homes + Renovations

After earning a BS in engineering, Maines worked as a carpenter and building designer at various companies and on his own for over twenty years. He now runs MainesCraft, a design/build company focusing on healthy, low-carbon homes and renovations in central and midcoast Maine. He is a certified Passivhaus Consultant, writes the Building Matters column for Fine Homebuilding magazine and the Building Science 101 column for Green & Healthy Maine Homes magazine, and moderates the BS + Beer building science discussion group in Liberty, Maine.

Troy Moon -- Sustainability Coordinator, City of Portland, Maine. Sierra Club Maine Activist and Green Sneakers Canvasser

Laura Sewall -- Lecturer in Environmental Studies. Bates College, Director Bates Morse Mountain Conservation in Phippsburg, ME

Sewall pioneered ecopsychology in the 1990's and taught ecopsychology at Prescott College for a decade. She holds a PhD in visual psychology from Brown University and is the author of Sight and Sensibility: The Ecopsychology of Perception, and of numerous articles and essays. Overall, her work has focused on our common and potential perception of the natural world—and our consequent environmental actions. Sewall is currently working on a manuscript entitled Not Yet Seen.

Brad Sherwood -- graduated from Michigan State University with a B.S. in Economics in 1982. He is an independent business owner and carpenter and was instrumental in organizing Waterville for Bernie, the Mid-Maine Progressive Forum, and the Mid-Maine Community Investment Initiative. After decades of observing the interplay between business, economics, and politics he advocates for changes in our economic and policy making systems. Sherwood has raised five children and lives with his partner in Waterville.

Rachel Smolker -- Biofuelwatch, Co-Director

At Biofuelwatch, Smolker works to raise awareness of the impacts of large scale bioenergy and more generally on climate, energy and land use issues. She works with a wide range of coalitions, from local grassroots campaigns to participation in the United Nations conventions on climate and biodiversity. She has a Ph.D. in biology from the University of Michigan, has been at the forefront of opposition to a fracked gas pipeline in Vermont, is on the steering committee of the Campaign to Stop GE Trees, and is a board member of the Global Forest Coalition.

Richard Thomas -- Maine General Medical Center

Thomas is a clinical psychologist at Maine General Medical Center in Waterville. He has been a climate activist for the past 20 years, working with several groups including the Citizens' Climate Lobby, Sustain Mid Maine and 350 Central Maine and now with the Sierra Club. He is particularly interested in exploring the reasons people may ignore climate change, and in ways to empower those who aren't ignoring it.

Shri Verrill -- Habitat Restoration Project Manager, Downeast Salmon Federation

Verrill, a wetland scientist, grew up in the foothills of Western Maine and recently earned a Masters of Science degree in Biology with expertise in salt marsh and estuarine ecology. She has served as a volunteer on the board for the Society for Ecological Restoration New England Chapter in multiple roles, on the Legislative Committee for the Maine Association of Wetland Scientists and as a lobbyist with the Natural Resource Council of Maine and the Sierra Club to advocate for sustenance and subsistence living rights. She has worked with the Maine Natural Areas Program as a Field Ecologist/Botanist, with Casco Bay Estuary Partnership as a Salt Marsh Technician, and taught Marine Biology Lab for non-majors in the Department of Biological Science at the University of Southern Maine during grad school.

Scott Vlaun -- Center for an Ecology-Based Economy (CEBE), Executive Director (Founding)
A climate action organization founded in 2013 in Norway, Maine, CEBE is dedicated to developing resilient local food systems, community-based renewable energy, public, electric, and human-powered transport, and affordable, efficient housing. Vlaun is a longstanding member of the Fare Share Food Co-op and is currently in a training program with the Cooperative Development Institute to foster a cooperative economy in western Maine. Scott practices and teaches permaculture design both in Maine and at the Maharishi University in Fairfield Iowa, where he is an adjunct faculty member in the Sustainable Living Department. He also writes and photographs for publication, worked for years as market gardener, and is an avid skier and cyclist.

Matt Wagner – InSource Renewables, Co-owner, Say No to NECEC
Matt Wagner is a resident of Knox Maine, and a former resident of The Forks. Matt holds a BA in Environmental Studies from Unity College, has had a nearly lifelong interest in renewable energy, and is a co-owner of InSource Renewables in Pittsfield Maine. He is also a founder and Board Member of "Say NO to NECEC" a grassroots organization committed to protecting Maine's Boundary Mountains from transmission lines and associated wind developments.

Jesse Watson -- Midcoast Permaculture Design is a permaculture designer, teacher and builder living and working in Rockland Maine. He operates Midcoast Permaculture Design, serving residential, farm and institutional clients. He helps facilitate permaculture design certificate (PDC) courses with The Resilience Hub and MOFGA. He now serves on the board of directors the Permaculture Association of the Northeast. He was instrumental in passing a locally binding food sovereignty ordinance in his town in May 2018 and likes to envision forest gardens in every backyard with reinvigorated and interdependent home economies.

Paul Weiss -- Assured Solar Energy, Sierra Club Maine Energy and Transportation Activist. For 3 decades Weiss has worked in the sciences in the biotechnology industry as a Research and Development Scientist and in Technical Sales. Weiss spent a decade in the field of Public Health/Healthcare Emergency Preparedness as the Director and President of Emergency Preparedness at the Southern Maine Regional Resource Center. He has worked with the Sierra Club on Energy and Transportation. Weiss has extensive knowledge of climate change science, and its effects on both the planet and people. He also has great experience with solutions to climate change including resiliency and technical energy and transportation solutions.

Vaughn Woodruff -- President, InSource Renewables
Vaughn is founder of InSource Renewables, a renewable energy contracting firm based in Pittsfield. InSource Renewables has been involved in three community led Solarize projects - Solarize Freeport, Solarize Mid Maine, and Greater Bangor Solarize. In addition, Woodruff serves as a technical consultant for Solarize Mass, an effort by the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center to support the implementation of solarize projects across Massachusetts. Woodruff is a graduate of the University of Maine and involved in multiple efforts to catalyze rural economic development in Maine.

Barry Woods -- ReVision Energy, Director, Electric Vehicle Innovation

Woods provides sales, marketing and business development expertise to assist companies and consumers in making the right decisions when it comes to charging infrastructure and related energy technology. ReVision has installed hundreds of level two EV chargers and several large DCFC placements throughout New England, resulting from diverse partnerships with Chargepoint, Greenlots, EVgo, Flo and Tesla. Woods is a director on the board with Plug In America, the only independent US-based non-profit who is the voice of EV drivers. He is a graduate of Bowdoin College and Lewis & Clark Law School.

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