



**White River
Natural
Resources
Conservation
District**

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Vermont Public Banking Congress Agenda

Register Here: <https://www.whiterivernrcd.org/2026-08-04-vermont-public-banking-congress>

August 4–5, 2026

Hosted by the White River Natural Resources Conservation District

Tuesday, August 4

12:00–4:00 PM

Farm Resiliency Bus Tour

Depart from Lake Morey Resort (Fairlee, VT)

Visit 4 Upper Valley farms to explore:

- Climate resilience and disaster recovery
- Conservation investments
- Financing challenges facing Vermont farmers
- Comparisons with challenges and solutions in North Dakota

Featured Farms:

Root 5 Farm, 4 Corners Farm, Ekolott Farm, Harkdale Farm

5:30–8:30 PM

Farmer Dinner & Discussion @ Lake Morey Resort

5:30 – Welcome & Networking

6:00 – From the Populist Movement to Today: A brief history of public banking, agriculture, and why this conversation matters now.

6:15 – How the Bank of North Dakota Supports Agriculture

Featuring Don Morgan, President, Bank of North Dakota

Topics include:

- Disaster recovery

- Beginning farmer financing
- Partnership lending
- Rural economic development
- Lessons for Vermont

7:00 – Dinner

7:15 – Dinner Discussions

Discussion prompts:

- What financing barriers are Vermont farmers facing?
- What should a Vermont public bank prioritize?

8:00 – Report Back & Closing Reflections

8:30 – Close

Wednesday, August 5

Vermont Public Banking Congress @ Vermont Law & Graduate School Chase Community Center South Royalton, VT

8:00–9:00

Registration & Breakfast

9:00

Welcome, Introduction from Jennifer Byrne, White River NRCD

- Purpose of the Congress
- Congress Attendee Introductions

9:20

What is Money?

w/ Christine Desan, Leo Gottlieb Professor of Law at Harvard Law School

9:35

Public Banking 101, Don Morgan, President of the Bank of North Dakota

- ❖ Featuring a practical overview of:
 - What a public bank is
 - How it works
 - How it differs from commercial banking
 - How North Dakota benefits

10:30

Q&A

10:50

Break

11:00

Panel Discussion - The Vermont Opportunity

Facilitator:

- ❖ Julie Davenson, Director, NOFA-NH & Leadership for Ecozoic Fellow, UVM

Panelists:

- ❖ Alphecca Muttardy, Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank
- ❖ Christine Desan, Professor, Harvard Law School
- ❖ Don Morgan, President, Bank of North Dakota
- ❖ Rep. Esme Cole, Vermont House of Representatives, Windsor-6 District
- ❖ Walt McRee, President, Public Banking Institute

11:30

Question & Answer, Group Discussion

12:00

Lunch courtesy of Vermont Law and Graduate School's Center for Agriculture and Food Systems

Prompts (to consider during lunch):

- What opportunity should a Vermont public bank prioritize?
- What is the biggest barrier or next step to making that opportunity a reality?

1:00

Unconference-style Working Sessions (Participants co-create small groups)

2:15

Break

2:30

Congress Report Back

Each group presents Key opportunities, Identified next steps, Legislative priorities, Other

3:00

Closing Congress Circle

1-2 minutes each: Reflect on today's conversations and share whatever feels most important to you; something you've learned, something that surprised or challenged you, a question you're still holding, or a possibility you now see for Vermont. As you look ahead, what future do you hope we're building, and what do you think needs to happen to move us in that direction?

4:00

Conclude

5:00–8:00 PM

Public Banking Symposium

Dinner, Drinks, Dance, and Discussion @ Fable Farm, East Barnard, VT

An informal evening of food, conversation, networking, and collaboration.

Food and drinks available for \$

Possible discussion topics:

- Public banking movement
- Emerging finance technologies and cryptocurrencies
- Next steps for Vermont

Thank you to our Co-Sponsors!

★ NOFA-VT

★ NOFA-NH

★ CT River Watershed Farmers Alliance

★ Vermont Law and Graduate School Center for Agriculture and Food Systems