



**Sustainable
Libraries
Initiative**

Equitable & Climate-Smart Programming for Every Library

Hazel Onsrud, Margaret Woodruff, & Katherine Moss

sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org



Hello, Everyone.



**Sustainable
Libraries
Initiative**



Hazel Onsrud
Adult Services Librarian
Curtis Memorial Library
Brunswick, Maine



Margaret Woodruff
Director
Charlotte Public Library
Charlotte, Vermont



Katherine Moss
Senior Librarian
New York State Department of
Environmental Conservation
Research Library
Albany, NY





**Sustainable
Libraries
Initiative**

<https://www.sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org/>





Table of Contents



- Introductions
- Small Libraries – Big Impacts
 - Curtis Memorial Library
 - Charlotte Library
 - NYSDEC Research Library
- Next Steps





Objective

For this chat, we're going to focus on our programming that involves some things that every library has:

- Space
- Waste
- Few funds
- Patrons who eat



Please reach out if you're looking for more or different ideas on other topics involving climate justice, and climate change mitigation and adaptation. We have those too! If we all share more, we can do more.





Library Programming

Key Principles for Sustainable Library Programs

- Focus on local impact, global ideals
- Zero waste (or getting there)
- Be unique to your community's needs and wants
- Do your best, but don't expect perfection every time
- Good humor and respect





Curtis Memorial Library

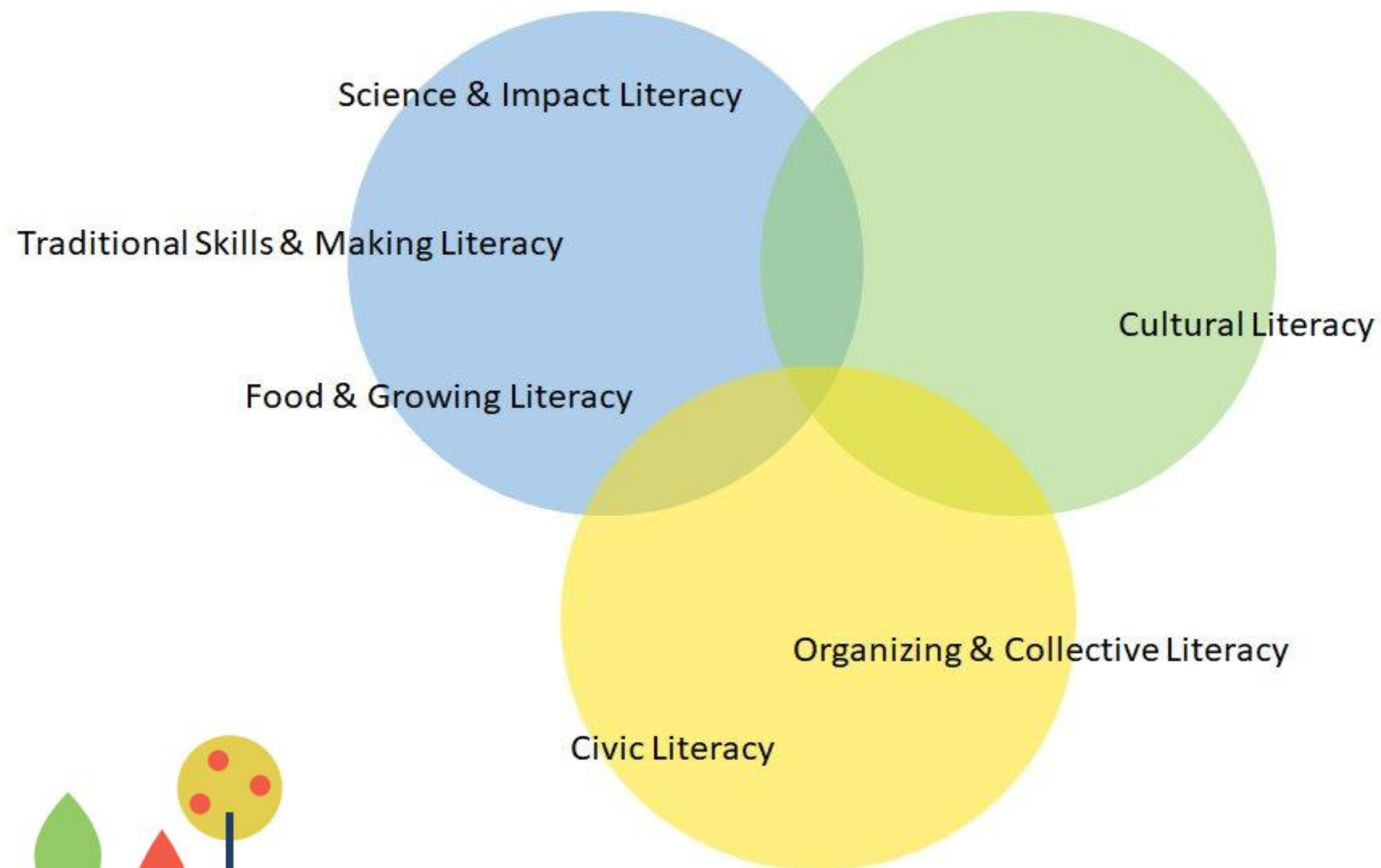
We serve a population of about 25,000 and see 800 people a day.





Curtis Memorial Library

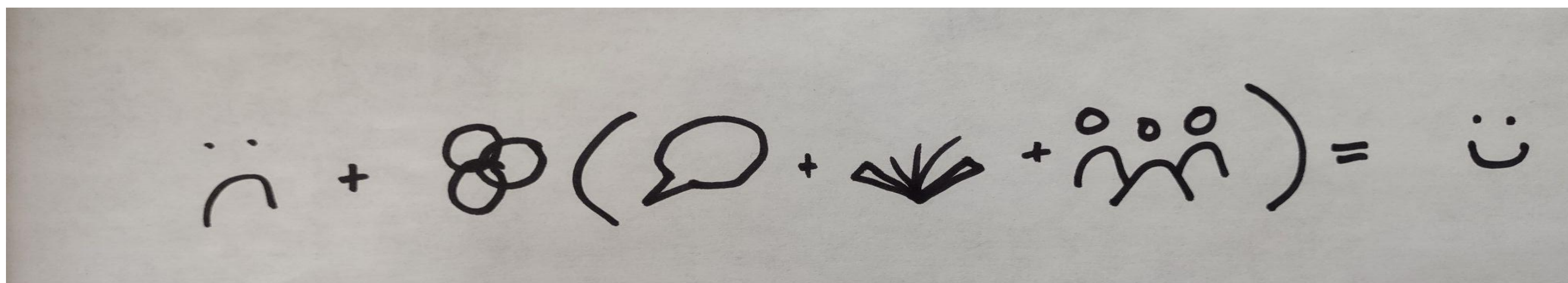
Our community is wonderful, but it has several missing literacies.





Curtis Memorial Library

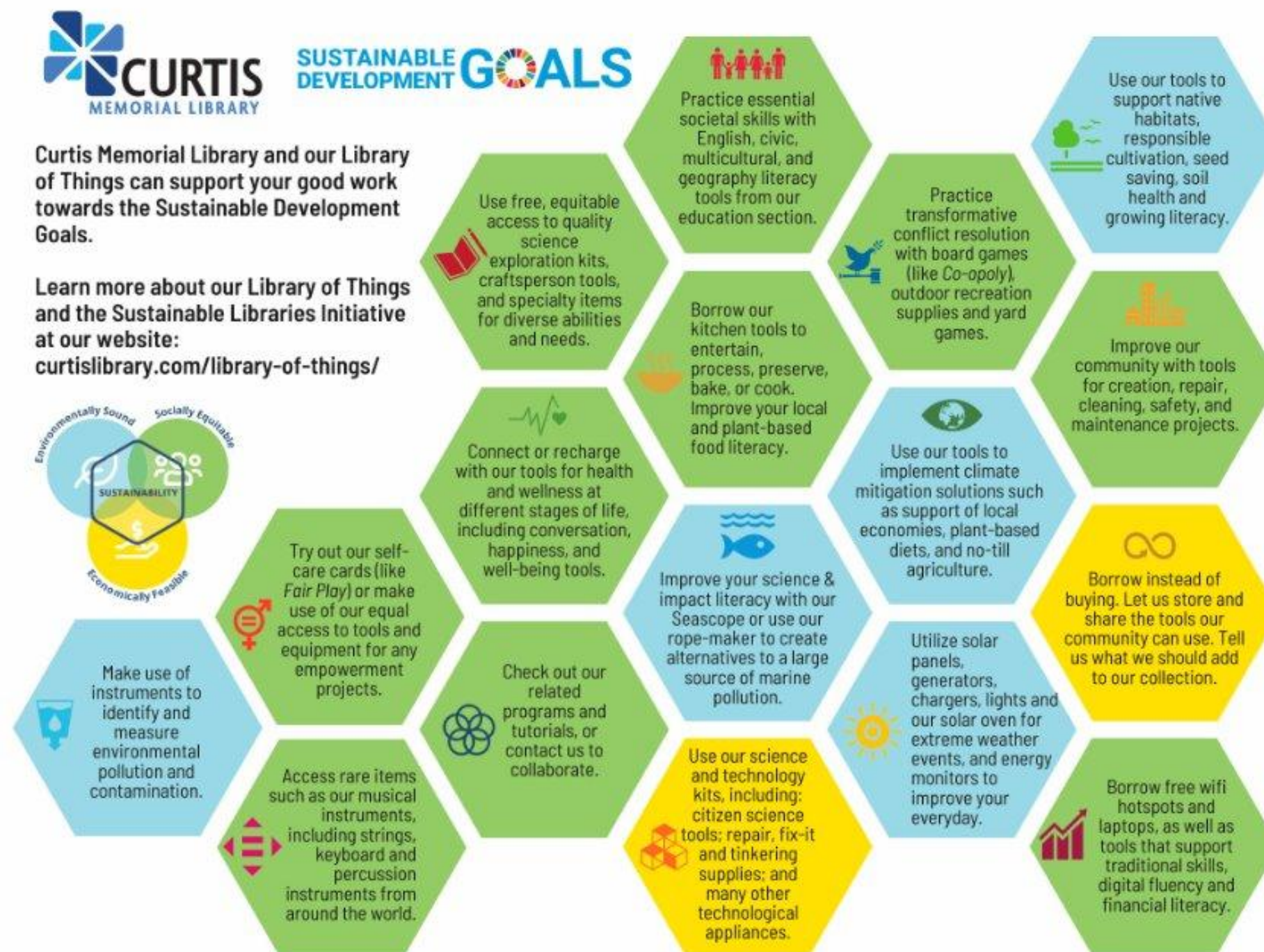
We created programming to address these community needs.





Curtis Memorial Library

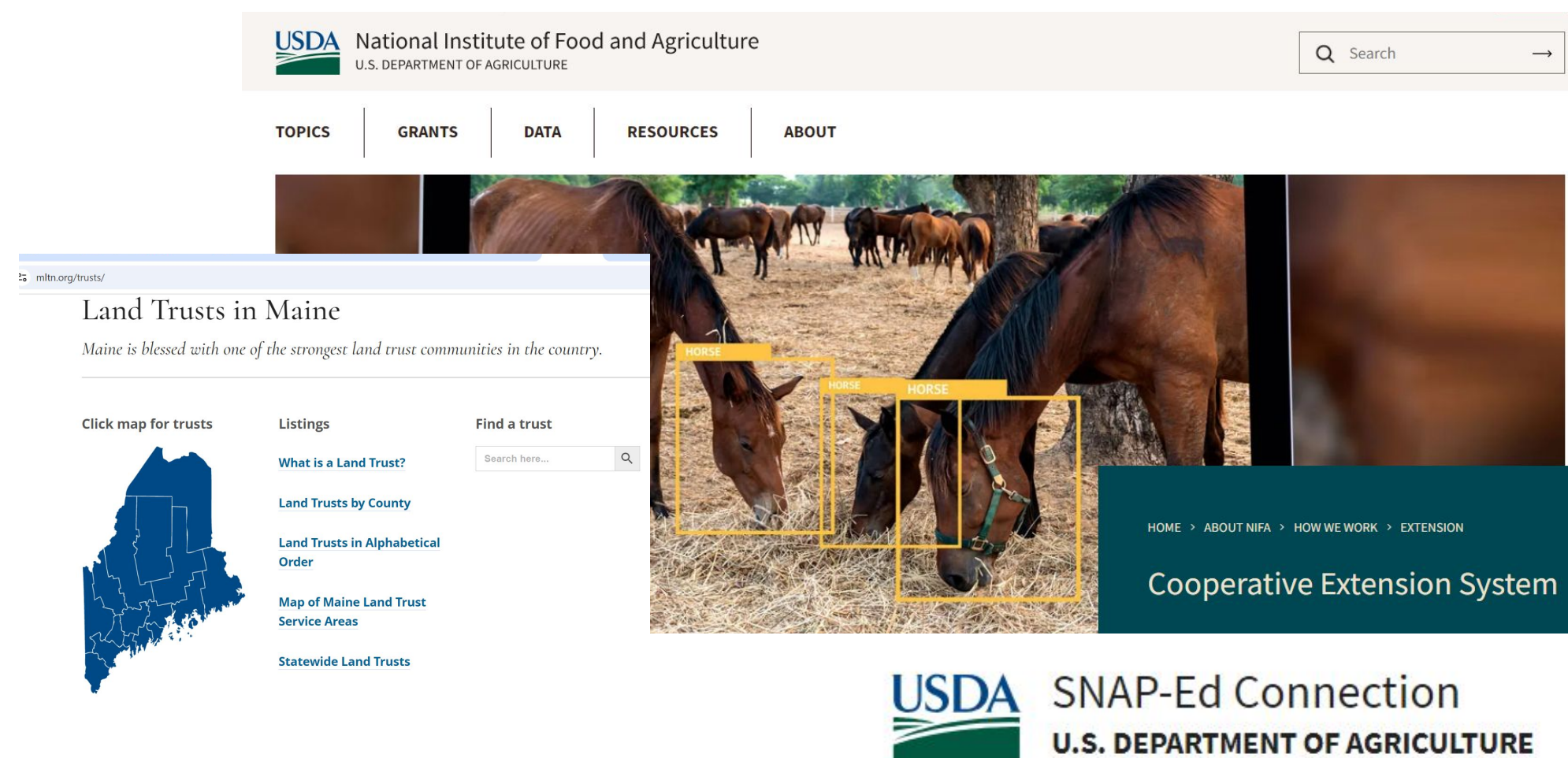
We purchase many resources for our community programs, including books and things.





Curtis Memorial Library

We partner with many community organizations to put on every program. This ensures engaged stakeholders for our resources and events.





Curtis Memorial

Library

Tackling Food and Growing Literacies

- Gleaning give aways
- Beyond 211 and basic books
- Food screening at hospitals
- Culturally appropriate food and tools
- Local cookbook
- Community kitchen
- Activities at meals with art van, games etc.
- Unique diets and health requirements
- Variety of multicultural tools
- Farmers market and grocery store tours
- SNAP-Ed and translation





You Can Too!

- **Learn about your communities' needs and partner with local organizations working to address them.**
- **Create anytime programming, shared regional programming, and partner-based series**
- **Establish a Library of Things**
 - Sign up to the Library of Things mutual aid group
<https://groups.google.com/g/lotmutualaid>
- **Join the SLI to share with your like-minded peers and save time, money and effort.**





Charlotte Library



Charlotte, Vermont
Population: 3800
Library Built: 1997
Expansion Complete:
2020
Net-Zero Building
Member, Vermont
Sustainable Libraries
Working Group





Charlotte Library Sustainability Challenges

- **Weather**



- **Conservation**



- **Food for Community**





Stormwater: 8 inches of rain!



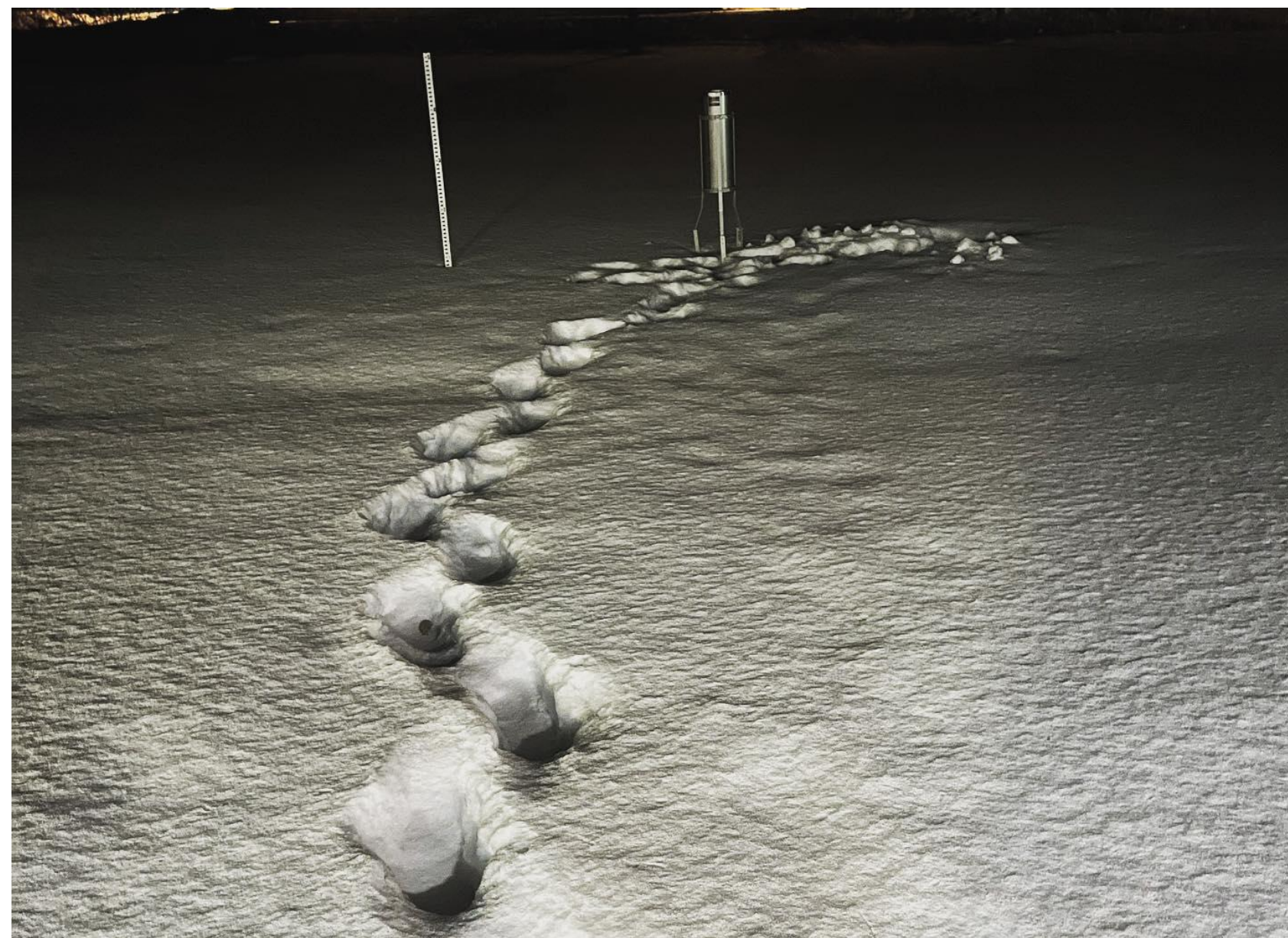


Charlotte Library: Weather Station

NOAA Weather Reporting Station

The Charlotte Library has served as the second official reporting station in our county, after the Burlington airport. We report precipitation levels, snowfall, as well as extreme weather events.

Local NOAA staff provide related programming for all ages.



Emergency Preparedness



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

LET'S BE READY TOGETHER

October 12 @ 7pm:

Register to join us:

<https://bit.ly/3jDISBx>

- Pick up your playbook and copy of "Ready Together" here!
- Enter to win this emergency radio!





Charlotte Library: Rain Garden

A **rain garden** is a depressed area in the landscape that collects rainwater from a roof, driveway or street and allows it to soak into the ground. Our rain garden offsets the impermeable surface of our building. The plant list features local, native varieties that thrive in wet conditions.





Charlotte Library: Rain Barrels

Rain barrels were added to the gutters, to capture roof runoff and to water gardens and flower beds, thereby keeping additional water on site. Some of the areas (sidewalk and end rooftops) simply flow into vegetated areas (“disconnection”) instead of being piped or sent directly to drainage swales.





Charlotte Library:

Pollinator Welcome Garden



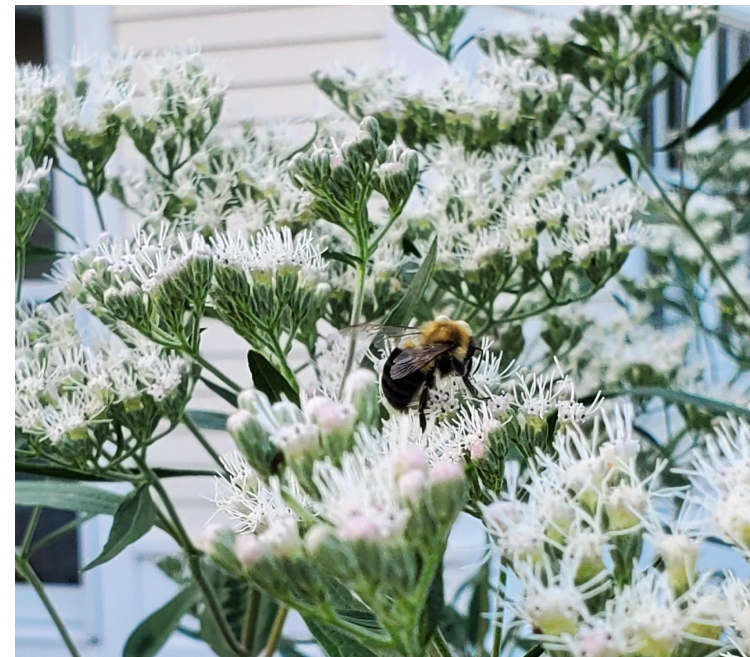
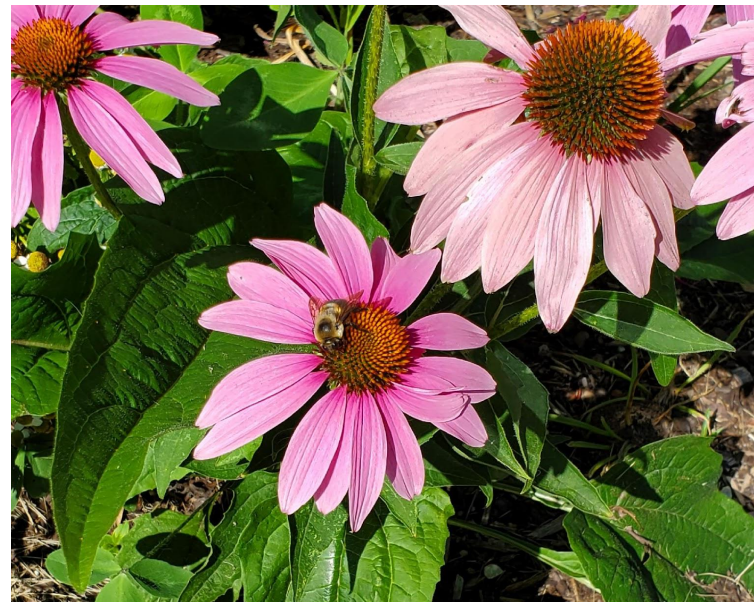
The garden that greets our community serves more than one purpose:

- Welcoming visitors & patrons to the library
- Helping to provide sufficient food to reverse the decline of pollinators, and to provide habitat for butterflies and moths.





Charlotte Library: Pollinator Welcome Garden



Visitors of all shapes and sizes

- Butterflies
- Bees
- BioBlitz Program:

A bioblitz is a communal effort to record as many species within a designated location and time period as possible.

Share Info (and Plants!)





Charlotte Library: Food Garden



- Part of Slow Food USA Plant-a-Seed Program
- Regular Contributor to Community Food Shelf
- Inspiration for Neighbors



Charlotte Library: Seed Library





Charlotte Library: Food Literacy

“Food literacy” as understanding the impact of your food choices on your health, the environment, and our economy.





Charlotte Library: Food Literacy

Charlie Cart Cooking:

What is a Charlie Cart?

A portable, compact mobile kitchen, along with all the tools, lessons, recipes and support needed to build a comprehensive food education program.

This allows us to:

- Explore local foods
- Learn safe & healthy cooking options
- Share love of food & cooking with others





Charlotte Library: Food Literacy

Sample Programs

- Parking Lot COVID Canning Workshop: Preparing & Canning Dilly Beans
- Applesauce with Town Green Apples: As Local As It Gets
- Say No to Food Waste: Disco Soup Celebration





You Can Too!



Establish a Rain Garden Project

- <https://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/soak-rain-rain-gardens>

Join the Pollinator Pathway

- <https://www.pollinator-pathway.org/>

Become a NOAA Weather Partner

- <https://www.weather.gov/coop/overview>





You Can Too!



Start a Recycling Program

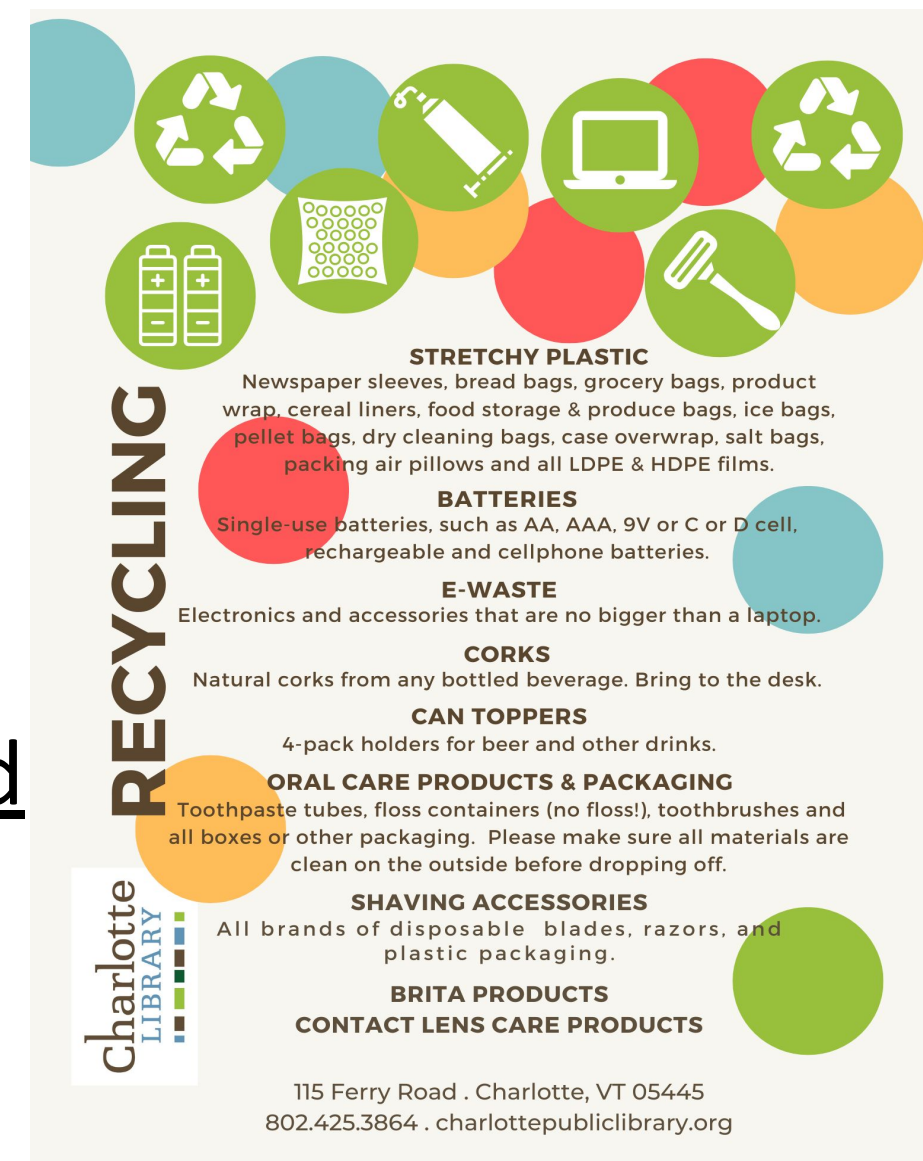
- <https://www.terracycle.com/en-US>
- <https://nextrex.com/>

Foster a Food Garden

- <https://seedmoney.org/about/>
- <https://slowfoodusa.org/plant-a-seed>

Fund a Food Literacy Program

- <https://www.nnlm.gov/funding/rfa>





How we share



**Sustainable
Libraries
Initiative**

Please consider joining our rich ecosystem. You can get involved in a number of ways. We participate in the:

- Sustainable Libraries Initiative
- the SLI Certification Program
- MECollab
- Small and Rural Libraries
- Blue Marble Librarians
- Concord Climate Corner Newsletter
- Concord Free Public Library & Sustainability
- Vermont Sustainable Libraries Working Group





NYSDEC Research Library

The DEC Research Library was established in 1998 to store, categorize, and offer centralized access to the information resources utilized by DEC staff. We collect materials to support the scientific, regulatory, and technical work of the agency. We serve 3,000 DEC staff across New York State. Members of the public may visit by appointment.

The current collection contains approximately 16,000 titles. We collect books and reports in the fields of chemistry, biology, botany, zoology, environmental technology, public health, engineering, toxicology, geology, environmental policy, environmental justice, climate change, communications, and professional development for DEC staff. We have periodicals as well, and we subscribe to Elsevier's ScienceDirect, Ebscohost Environment Complete, Westlaw, and HeinOnline. We also have New York State and Federal Government Documents related to the environment, as well as legal materials and maps. This collection is arranged according to the Library of Congress classification system. The library is used by our staff across New York State.





NYSDEC Research Library: Seed Library



DEC Library provides a small cabinet so staff may share vegetable, flower, or herb seeds on a “first-come-first-go” basis. While it is primarily used by staff in the central office, staff members in the Regions have contributed and requested seeds.

Seed envelopes and books with instructions about collecting seeds from plants are provided. The Library encourages the donation of native NYS plant seeds. NYS invasive species are prohibited.

In the future I’d like to host a seed starting workshop for staff in the central office. I’d also like to host a “crop swap” in the fall

SEED LIBRARY

1. "Borrow" seeds from us
2. Plant and grow, enjoy!
3. Save some seeds from your harvest
4. Give seeds back to the seed library in a labeled envelope
5. You can also donate leftover commercial seeds less than 3 years old
6. All seeds are free, take what you need
7. Please don't take more than you need
8. Herbs, vegetables, and flowers welcome
9. Heirloom, native, and pollinator plants are encouraged.
10. No invasive species, please
11. Ask us if you'd like advice about growing your seeds
12. Have fun! :)





NYSDEC Research Library:

Climate Adaptation Discussion Group

- Poll the group at the first meeting. Ask members what they hope to get from the group and if they have any concerns. Ask what types of materials and topics they would like to discuss.
- Virtual or in-person?
- Expect that this topic will bring up some difficult emotions. Be willing to talk about these and make it a safe space so people will share.
- Consider sources other than books to discuss (podcasts, movies etc.)
- Be open to letting the group take its own direction





NYSDEC Research Library:

Climate Adaptation Discussion Group: Topics we've discussed so far

- Drilled Podcast (Season 3)
- Weathered PBS series
- How to Avoid a Climate Disaster: The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need by Bill Gates
- The Blue Machine: How the Ocean Works by Helen Czerski
- Climate Denier's Playbook Podcast
- Repair Revolution: How Fixers Are Transforming Our Throwaway Culture by John Wackman and Elizabeth Knight
- Choose your own adventure! (Everyone picks a book to read and tells the group about it. I picked "What If We Get It Right?" by Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson).



NYSDEC Research Library: Friends of the Pine Bush Photo Exhibit

July - Sept 2024



Photographs by: Jerry Deutch (Left), Carol McCord (Middle) & Dean Bouton (Right)



NYSDEC Research Library:

Friends of the Pine Bush Photo Exhibit



[Pine Bush Perspectives Traveling Show](#)

Each visitor views the preserve from a unique vantage point worthy of celebrating and sharing. The Albany Pine Bush Preserve accepts yearly submissions for the Pine Bush Perspectives juried photo exhibit at the Discovery Center. This event engages the pine bush community in a unique way.

The Friends of the Pine Bush Community have selected photographs from previous Pine Bush Perspectives exhibits for this traveling show.

The photos represent the biological diversity of the preserve as well as the diversity and focus of the photographers. Each of the photographs in the show gives us a unique perspective of this inland pine barrens.



You Can Too!



- [SeedLibraryNetwork.org – Getting Started](http://SeedLibraryNetwork.org)
- [Cool Beans! Newsletter](#)
- [Up Beet! Seed Libraries Forum](#)
- [Farmer's Almanac: Seed Libraries at Public Libraries Are Growing](#)

“Seeds are a commons. Seed libraries are a means of keeping seeds in the hands of the people. The saving of local seeds helps us to maintain and celebrate food, place, and culture.” –UpBeat!



You Can Too!



ALA Book Discussion Group Quick Start Guide



NYSDEC Library Books About Climate Change



Yale Program on Climate Change Communications:
Attaining Meaningful Outcomes from Conversations on Climate



Talk Climate: Handouts



United Nations: Communicating Climate Change



You Can Too!



Art Exhibit: Where To Start?

Community Engagement:

Reaching out to local environmental community groups and organizations to identify artists who might be interested in exhibiting at the library.

Traveling Exhibits:

Inquiring about borrowing traveling art exhibitions from museums or other institutions.

Networking:

Building relationships with local artists, galleries, art centers, and art educators through attending events, joining art organizations, and participating in community activities..

Curatorial Partnerships:

Collaborating with local curators or art historians to develop themed exhibitions, potentially drawing from the library's special collections. Consider a nature focus.

Open Calls:

Issuing open calls for artists to submit proposals for exhibitions, often with sustainability themes aligned with the library's focus.





You Can Too!



Art Exhibit: Considerations

Space Availability:

Assessing the library's available display space and determining the scale and type of artwork that can be accommodated. Are there restrictions on hammering nails into walls?

Exhibition Themes:

Selecting themes that resonate with the community and align with the library's mission and collection. Consider themes of climate change, sustainability and nature/outdoors.

Loan Agreements:

Establishing clear loan agreements with artists or lenders including insurance, handling procedures, and exhibition dates. Ask about the value of the art. Will you need additional insurance in case something happens to art while on exhibit?

Accessibility:

Ensuring exhibits are accessible to all patrons, including people with disabilities.

Marketing and Promotion:

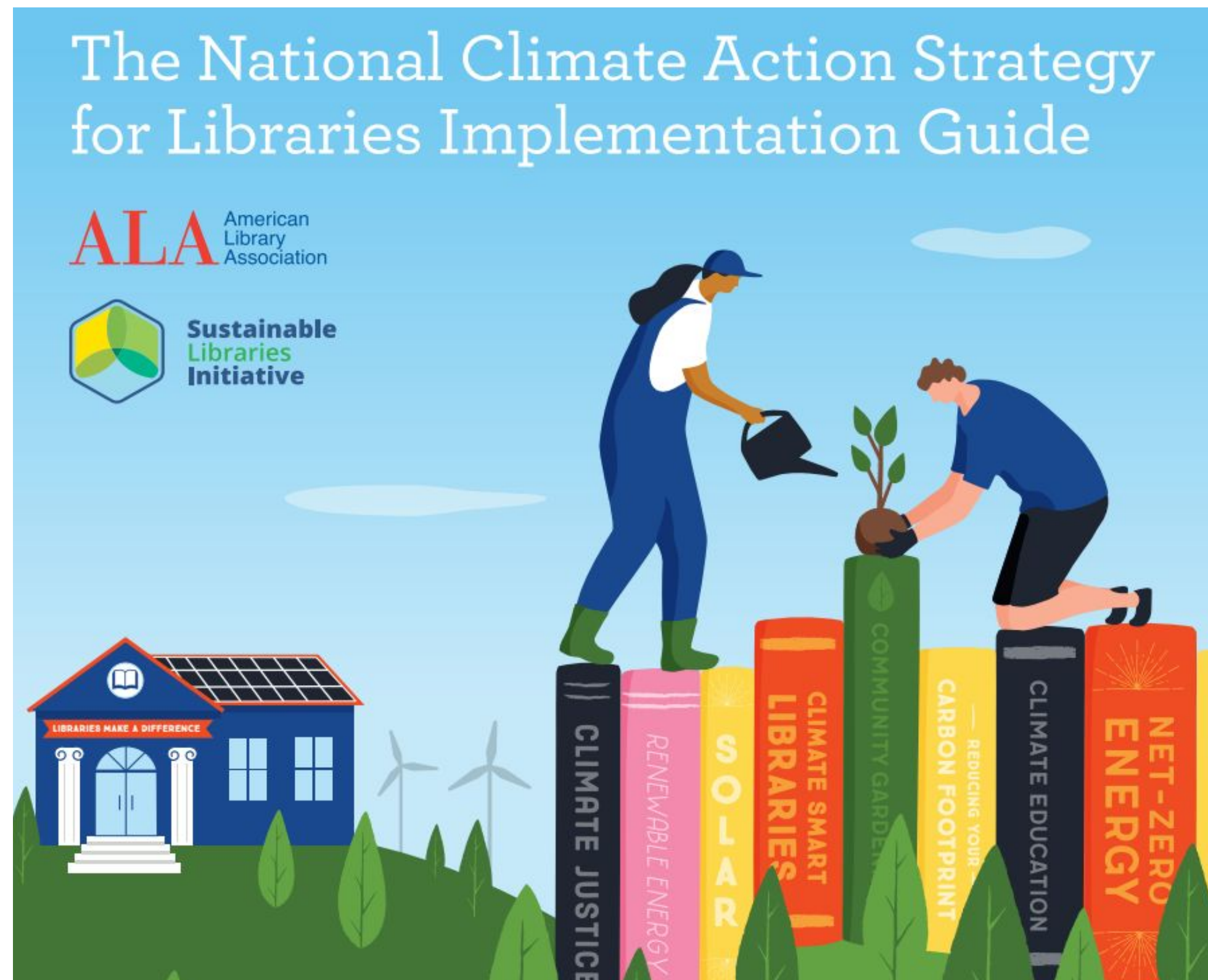
Effectively promoting the exhibit through library website, social media, flyers, and community outreach.



Resources

Please consider joining our rich ecosystem.

- [National Climate Action Strategy for Libraries](#)
- [ALA Sustainability and Libraries LibGuide](#)
-





Thank You!

Questions?

Contact us:

➔ Email: Margaret margaret@charlottepubliclibrary.org

Hazel hazel@curtislibrary.com

Kate: Katherine.Moss@dec.ny.gov

➔ Email: sliaadmin@suffolknet.org

Or visit <https://www.sustainablelibrariesinitiative.org>

➔ Connect With us on Social Media



Resource
Guide
Right
Here!



<https://bit.ly/415nZ5j>