



Northfield Mountain

RECREATION & ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER

Fall 2011

Phone: (800) 859-2960

www.firstlightpower.com/northfield

Solar Project at Northfield

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Those that have passed by Northfield Mountain on Route 63 the last couple of months no doubt noticed increased activity in the open field adjacent to our entrance. What exactly is going on? Well, we are proud to announce that by the end of November Northfield will be home to a 2 megawatt (MW) solar farm, one of the largest solar installations in New England.

The Green Community Act (GCA) that passed the Massachusetts legislature in 2008 paved the way for this project. By expanding on the already existing Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) to provide increased incentives for solar projects, the bill helps ensure an increase in renewable energy development in the Commonwealth.

The Northfield Solar Project will produce Massachusetts Solar Renewable Energy Credits which must be purchased by utilities and other organizations to help them comply with the RPS or other business objectives. A Solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) represents 1



Boom truck installing solar panel bases.

megawatt hour of electricity generated from a solar energy source. The sales of those SRECs to interested customers will be managed by FirstLight Power Resources' affiliate GDF SUEZ Energy Resources. All revenues generated by this SREC program will be invested by the Massachusetts Division of Energy Resources to promote other in-state renewable initiatives.

In addition to its energy and environmental benefits, the Northfield Solar Project is an economic plus for the local

community. During the 6 months it will take to complete the project, the work will create 40 local construction jobs.

As of this writing, grading and ground preparation is taking place, with solar panels starting to be erected in the fall. To provide an idea of what the project will look like when completed, there will be 18,000 photovoltaic panels that are 32.5 feet by 8.0 feet, mounted at a 30 degree tilt on three helical (spiral) footing pipes erected to a height of approximately 10 feet above the finish grade. All in all, there will be about 30 rows of panels covering approximately 11 acres.

This is the first utility scale solar installation for any of our companies in North America. Developing renewable projects like this is part of IPR-GDF SUEZ's commitment both in the United States and globally to provide power in an environmentally sound manner and FirstLight is proud to lead the way.

Visitor Center Schedule:

- **Through October 16** – Wednesday through Sunday
- **October 19 to November 20** --Lounge and Restrooms open Wednesday through Saturday.
- **After November 20** Schedule varies, call for open hours.
- **Center Holidays** —
- **Open:** Columbus Day— Oct. 10.
- **Closed:** Labor Day — September 5, Veteran's Day — Nov. 11



Ride your horse on our trails until early November.

Trails

Northfield Mountain trails are superb for autumn explorations. They will remain open seven days a week for hiking until we get four inches of snow. However, since weather conditions, muddy trails and special events sometimes cause trail closures, it's a good idea to check current trail conditions online at

www.FirstLightPower.com/northfield or by calling (800) 859-2960.

Mountain biking:

Twenty-five miles of double-track trails and three-state views make Northfield a beautiful place to ride. A helmet and tires at least 1 1/2 inches wide are required. Trails are closed to mountain bikes November 12 until May 2012.

Horseback riding:

Riders love our 25 miles of mostly wooded carriage width trails. Check in at the Center for parking and trail information. We require all riders to clean up the area around their trailers. Trails are closed to horses November 7 until May 2012.

Dog walking:

If you bring your dog along to enjoy the trails and recreation facilities, please make sure it remains on a leash at all times. Leashes are required by town ordinances at all facilities. We also require dog walkers to clean up after their pets. Thank you for keeping our properties clean and welcoming to all users.

Hunting:

Hunting is permitted on most of the Northfield Mountain trail system in accordance with Massachusetts Fish and Wildlife regulations. **Hunting is not allowed in Massachusetts on Sundays, so this is the perfect day to hike, bike or ride during hunting season.**

DEER SEASONS:

Shotgun
November 28 —December 10

Primitive Firearms
December 12—31

BLACK BEAR SEASONS:

September 6—24
November 7—26

Trail Conditions:

<http://www.firstlightpower.com/northfield/>
or 800-859-2960.

Pavilion & Yurt Rentals

Pavilion

A lovely 70-seat pavilion is available for rental at River-view Picnic Area, adjacent to the riverboat launch in Northfield. It's a great spot for wedding parties, company outings, and reunions with large grills, electricity and tables sheltered beneath a post-and-beam structure.

A pavilion rental and riverboat charter turn your party into a memorable occasion. Rental Fee: \$200 plus \$100 refundable cleanup deposit.

Yurt

Looking for a unique meeting space or terrific site to hold your child's birthday celebration? Try Northfield Mountain's unusually cozy yurt. This round, canvas-covered structure, with rustic tables and chairs will hold up to 40 people. It is lighted, and has electrical outlets, as well as a pellet stove to keep guests comfortable. Located behind the Visitor Center adjacent to the pond and Northfield's

trails, the yurt is available during business hours. Rental Fee: \$100 plus \$100 refundable cleanup



The Yurt is a warm place on a cool autumn day.

Quinnetukut II Riverboat

The French King Gorge is one of the most scenic stretches of the Connecticut River in Massachusetts. Climb aboard the charming 60-seat Quinnetukut II Riverboat and enjoy a relaxing and informative journey down New England's great river. This 12-mile narrated cruise takes one-and-a-half hours.

Riverboat Charters:

The Quinnetukut II is available for private charters. If you are looking for a unique outing for a social occasion or family event, let us schedule a cruise through the magnificent French King Gorge. Prices begin at just \$375, cruises can be scheduled to meet your needs, and we can recommend caterers for on-board snacking

Friday Packages: Charter and Pavilion Rental, \$525.

Riverboat Schedule

Departing Riverview Picnic Area

Through October 16
Friday through Sunday
11:00 a.m. 1:15 p.m.
3:00 p.m.

Riverboat Holidays
Open:
Columbus Day Oct. 10

Ticket Fees

Adult \$12.00
Senior (55 and older)..\$11.00
Child (14 and under)...\$6.00
Group (15 or more) ... \$10.00
School Group.....\$6.00

Reservations strongly recommended by calling:

(800) 859-2960.

School Cruises

Come aboard this fall for a true Connecticut River experience. Learn about New England's greatest river on our one hour school cruises, which focus on the geology, natural and cultural history of the river.

Scenic riverside picnic tables and restrooms are available from the boat departure site.

These boats fill up quickly, so please call early to make your reservation.

Group Size: up to 60 (includes adults)

10/1 student/adult ratio

Available: Fridays from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Sept. 23, 30, Oct. 7 & 14

Fee: \$6/student. One free adult chaperon for every 10 students.



The Riverboat passes under the scenic French King Bridge

High Water Warning

Weather conditions or river flows may require riverboat cruise cancellations. Last minute decisions are sometimes required, so passengers should call (800)-859-2950 to confirm cruise departures before traveling.

Camping and Picnicking

Munn's Ferry Boat Camping Area

Campers may access the campground *by boat only*.

Reservations are required.

Munn's is open from Memorial Day weekend to Columbus Day. Camping is limited to two nights (except for three day holiday weekends). Tent sites are \$22 per night and the Adirondack shelter is \$30 per night.

Potable water is not available on site.

Phone: 413 863-9300

Picnic areas:

Looking for a beautiful picnic area on the banks of the Connecticut River? Why not try Unity Park next to the Fishway in Turners Falls, Barton Cove Campground off Route 2 in Gill, or Riverview Picnic Area near the Northfield Mountain Visitor Center? All have picnic tables and charcoal hibachis open on a first come, first served basis. Areas are open free of charge and remain open until dusk.



Relax along the Connecticut River during a mid-day picnic.

Fall School Programs: Environmental Education



Experience the wonders of nature on a fun field trip.

Please join us this fall for one of the many field trip opportunities offered for schools and organized groups. Our goal is to provide quality learning experiences that are both educational and engaging, using the outdoors as the classroom. Please note that our fee waiver policy sets aside limited funds for individual students.

Please call (413) 659-4462 to schedule a program this fall. Most programs are offered from mid-September through October on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

All environmental school programs support the Massachusetts Science Frameworks. For more information contact Kim Noyes, School Environmental Program Coordinator: (413) 659-4462.

Beyond the Schoolyard

From migrating birds to dispersing seeds to colorful leaves, fall is a busy time of year in the natural world. Designed specifically for young children, this outdoor program explores fall as a season of change. The fields and forests become the classroom as children discover shapes, colors, and textures in nature.

Hands-on activities, creative dramatics and sensory exploration take place in a safe and playful environment.

Grades Pre-K and K

Time Allowance: 1 hour Pre-K; 1¼ hour K

Group Size: 22 (groups up to 33 available on limited days) 6/1 student/adult chaperon ratio

Fee: \$5/student; minimum \$50/group

Science and Technology Standards Applicable:

*Earth Science (PreK-K) #1
Life Science (PreK-K) #1, #6 #7 #8*

Please call (413) 659-4462 to schedule a program for your class this fall.

Woodchucks, Warblers and Whirligigs



Pine Warbler/ USFWS

What is happening in the animal world during the fall? From insects underfoot to birds overhead, there's activity everywhere as animals prepare for winter. This outdoor program is filled with activities and games that help children discover for themselves what is happening during this special time of year. The focus is on observation skills as stu-

dents search for wildlife clues and examine, live and up-close, the fascinating world of insects in an autumn field (weather permitting.) Curriculum materials are provided.

Grades 1 and 2

Time Allowance: 1¼ hours

Group Size: 25 (groups up to 40 on limited days)

10/1 student/adult chaperon ratio

Fee: \$6/student; minimum \$60/class

Science and Technology Standards Applicable:

*Earth Science (Grades 1-2) #1 #3
Life Science (Grades 1-2) #1 #3 #6 #7 #8*

Availability: Sept. 22-Oct.14

From Seeds to Soil

Plants and soils are the focus of this hands-on, investigative program that offers students the opportunity to explore natural cycles. Students will learn about adaptations in the plant world that enable survival from year to year. In addition, nutrient recycling, and interdependence will be studied as students observe what is happening right under their

feet. The characters in this on-going drama include: mushrooms, seeds, insects, rotten logs, leaf litter, bizarre invertebrates and soil. This outdoor program explores the different and crucial roles played by these often overlooked forest inhabitants. Curriculum materials provided.

Grades 4 and above

Time Allowance: 2 hours

Group Size: 25 (groups up to 40 on limited days)

10/1 student/adult chaperon ratio

Fee: \$6/student; minimum \$60/class

Science and Technology Standards Applicable:

Earth Science (Grades 4-5)

#4 #5 Life Science (Grades 4-5) #1 #3 #8 #9



Shelf mushrooms adorn a tree deep in the woods.

Trees are Terrific

Using the forest as a classroom, this program will immerse students in the world of trees. Topics include forest ecology, seasonal changes, structure, function and importance to humans. Students will have the opportunity to sharpen their observation skills as they explore life in and around a tree. They will participate in a variety of games and activities and reflect upon

their experience through writing and drawing. Curriculum materials provided.

Grades 4 and above

Time Allowance: 2 hours

Group Size: 25 (groups up to 40 on limited days)

10/1 student/adult chaperon ratio

Fee: \$6/student; minimum \$60/class

Science and Technology Standards Applicable:

Life Science (Grades 4-5) #1 #2 #3 #9 #11

The Quinnetukut II Riverboat Cruises for schools are offered on Fridays through October 14th. Please see page 3 for details.

Incredible Insects

Join us and explore the six and eight-legged wonders that abound in our fields. Students will have the opportunity to examine, live and up-close, the fascinating world of insects in an autumn field (weather permitting.) Students will collect, observe, draw and release insects and spiders. A variety of activities will introduce the amazing adapta-

tions, life cycles and ecology of one of the most successful groups of animals on earth— incredible insects. Curriculum materials provided.

Grades 2 and 3

Time Allowance: 2 hours

Group Size: 25 (groups up to 40 on limited days)

10/1 student/adult chaperon ratio

Fee: \$6/student; minimum \$60/class

Science and Technology Standards Applicable:

Earth Science (Grade 2) #1

#3, Life Science (Grade 2)

#1 #2 #3 #6 #7 #8 (Grade

3) #1 #3 #4 #7

Availability: Sept. 22-Oct. 14



Katydid/USFWS



Get up and close with fish of the Connecticut River.

Parting of the Seas: The Canal Draw Down at Turners Falls

Go down into the bottom of a working river and gain unique insights into both the structure of the river and the animals that live there. The annual dewatering of the Turners Falls Canal allows for maintenance on the Cabot Power Station and the two miles of canal

walls. Participants with buckets and boots collect mudpuppies, young sea lamprey, eels and other fish, plus invertebrates like dragonfly nymphs that live in the canal. Creatures are then released in the main stem of the river with the help of Silvio O. Conte Fish

Lab Biologists. This is an opportunity to see and hold species that you may have only seen on television.

Sat., Sept. 10; 1 – 4 p.m.

For ages 7 and older

Fee: FREE

Pre-registration required

Autumn Afternoon Paddle

Join Visitor Center Manager Bill Gabriel for this six mile trip from Riverview Picnic Area in Northfield to Barton Cove in Gill, MA. Experienced paddlers will enjoy the scenic French King Gorge and Bridge, and the possibil-

ity of bald eagles perched or soaring as the group paddles below. Canoes or kayaks are available for rental or participants can bring their own. Program meets at the Barton Cove campground office. Bring water, snacks,

shoes that can get muddy and a change of clothes to leave in the car (just in case!) *Sat., Sept. 17; 2– 5:30 p.m.*

For ages 12 and older

Fee: Free with own Kayak, \$25 with kayak rental

Program Reservations

Call (413) 659-3714
or (800) 859-2960

Valley Views and Foliage Hike

We have packed it all into this 6½ mile hike along the M&M trail – beautiful views of the Millers River Valley, three state views at Northfield's mountain-top overlook, the scenic Rose Ledges, and early fall foliage – all on a predominantly downhill hike! Beginning on Moun-

tain Road in Erving, we'll hike the M&M trail connecting with Northfield's trails and descending to the Visitors Center. Wear hiking shoes, dress for the weather and bring water and a hearty trail lunch. Participants should be able to hike six miles over hilly terrain

with total climbs of approximately 700 feet. Heavy rain cancels.

Sat., Sept. 24; 10a.m. – 4 p.m.

For ages 12 and older

Fee: FREE

Pre-registration required

Connecticut River Source to Sea Cleanup

Get involved in the 15th year of the Cleanup! Last year 158 volunteers in Eastern Franklin County filled three 30-yard dumpsters in addition to 125 tires, 15 mattresses, 1,500 pounds of scrap metal, 5 couches, and 7 televisions which were collected from the Montague Plains and along rivers and streams in Montague, Gill

and East Deerfield. Individuals or groups work as teams to make the watershed a cleaner place on sites that run the gamut from fishing trash to illegal dumping. School groups schedule cleanups the week preceding the 1st. Co-sponsors: CT River Watershed Council, Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Cen-

ter, Northfield Mount Hermon School and FirstLight Power.

Sat., Oct. 1; 9 a.m. – 12 noon

For ages 7 and older

Fee: FREE

Meets at Great Falls Discovery Center, Turners Falls, MA.



Franklin County Technical School Students help in clean up efforts.

Woods-World...Let's Build Our Own!

A magical afternoon of imaginative play rooted in the natural world. We begin with Alice McLerran's Roxaboxen, about the rediscovery of a long remembered backyard world designed and run by children. Participants then walk to a special spot on the Mountain where

natural materials and our own creativity will be used to build "woods-world". Will we discover wild nibbles to snack on as we build, or maybe find slippery salamanders? Come find out! Please bring your favorite trail snack and a bottle of water. Heavy rain cancels.

Sat., Oct. 15; 2 – 4:30 p.m.

For ages 5 to 9

Fee: **FREE**

Pre-registration required



Roxaboxen by Alice McLerran

Halloween Celebration around the Campfire with Roger Tincknell

This 25+ year-old celebration of Halloween through songs, stories and dance is led by internationally known and locally loved singer/songwriter Roger Tincknell. Roger is a two-time Parents' Choice Award-winning recording artist with numerous CDs for children and adults. Imagine a group of young witches, fairies and aliens in the glow of the firelight

spellbound by a slightly spooky story – or waltzing around in small family groups to Roger's beautiful music and you can get some sense of the delight this evening brings. Wholesome snacks also served. Dress **WARMLY** and bring flashlights and blankets or chairs for seating. Program meets behind Visitor Center. In case of poor weather, the

program will be held inside the cozy yurt.

Sat., Oct. 29;

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

For all ages

Fee: **FREE**

"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."

Albert Einstein

Moose: Life History, Ecology and Current Research

Join us for a fascinating evening exploring moose in Massachusetts. Dr. Stephen DeStefano, one of the foremost experts on moose in the Northeast, will share highlights from his current research focusing on their habitat use, distribution and movements. Steve will discuss how he and his graduate students tag area moose and use high tech equipment to monitor their movements throughout central and western Massachusetts. The current population estimate is over 1,000 moose in Massachusetts! This is a great opportunity to learn more

about the largest mammal of our Massachusetts' forests and how it uses the landscape. This free program is co-sponsored with the Athol Bird and Nature Club.

Stephen DeStefano is Leader of the Massachusetts Cooperative Research Unit and a research professor at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. He directs a program of research, education and service focused on fish and wildlife ecology, as well as human-wildlife interactions and the impact of human activities on wildlife populations. His work has numerous implications for

wildlife management and conservation biology.

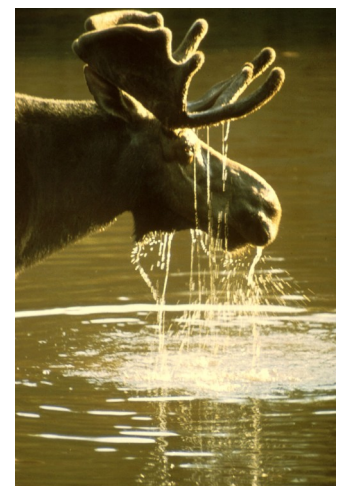
Wed., Nov. 2;

7 – 8:30 p.m.

For ages 12 and older

Fee: **FREE**

No Pre-registration required.



Moose/USFWS

Western Massachusetts High School Cross Country Championships



On your mark, get set, go!

Come watch the top teams from Western Massachusetts high schools compete for a place at the State Cross Country Championships. This event includes the

teams from Divisions I and II schools running on Northfield Mountain's challenging 3.1 mile course. Great spectator viewing! Food concession on hand.

Sat., Nov. 12

Start times:

11 a.m., 11:40 a.m.,

12:20 p.m., 1 p.m.

After the Leaves Hike

November ushers in the leafless hiking season and its beautiful views of ridges and valleys covered with slender gray trunks and thick green pines. This hike begins and ends at the Northfield Mountain Visitor Center and hikers will enjoy three state views at the mountain-top overlook. The group will

descend through Fuller's Pasture as the sun sets behind the hills of Gill. This 4½ mile hike contains elevation changes of 800 feet. Please wear sturdy hiking shoes, dress for the weather and bring water and a hearty trail snack. Heavy rain cancels.

Sat., Nov. 19;

12:30-4:30 p.m.

For ages 12 and older

Fee: FREE

Pre-registration required

"How beautifully leaves grow old. How full of light and color are their last days."

John Burroughs

Special Day in Northfield—Recycled Wrapping Paper

Carve a potato for printing and use it to make your own recycled wrapping paper. Or, use old calendars to make artsy envelopes. Other green wrapping techniques will be shared at "Art and Soul," a groovy gift store chock-full of great kids toys and locally

made crafts, cards and other creative and beautiful presents. Trolley and horse rides, delicious snacks, musical performances and more all scattered throughout the town of Northfield round out this Special Day.

Sat., Dec. 10;

12:30-4:30 p.m.

For ages 12 and older

Fee: FREE

Solstice Headlamp Hike

A holiday celebration for hike lovers, this romp will be on the carriage width ski trails at Northfield. Our headlamps will light the way on this longest night of the year as we share solstice facts and quotes from literary lovers of the night. A visit to a mid-mountain campfire and shared cider and snacks will sweeten this night as we turn toward the sun.

Thur., Dec. 22; 6-9 p.m.

For ages 12 and older

Fee: FREE

Pre-registration required

FirstLight
Power Resources
GDF SUEZ



Trees stand leafless in December.

Northfield Mountain
99 Millers Falls Rd.
Northfield, MA 01360

1-800-859-2960