

Scenic Vermont and the Working Landscape

Our first stop is the 320-acre **Tree Farm of Kevin and Elaine Hall** in Braintree. The Tree Farm boasts two sugarbushes and a state-of-the-art sugarcane. For you trivia buffs, Vermont led the US in production of maple syrup in 2009 with a total of 920,000 gallons – the most since 1947. This will be a short, relaxing walking tour.

From here we'll venture to **Quechee Gorge** where hundreds of thousands of visitors stop each year to take in the breathtaking views of the Ottauquechee River flowing 165 feet below. More adventurous visitors can follow a hiking trail to the bottom of Vermont's deepest gorge, formed by glacial activity more than 13,000 years ago. Specialty shops, restaurants and historical buildings are within walking distance of the State's most visited natural attraction.

We'll picnic at the State Park (lunch provided) before moving on to our next stop, **Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park**. Nestled among the rolling hills and pastures of eastern-central Vermont, the Park is the only national park to tell the story of conservation history and the evolving nature of land stewardship in America. In addition to the historic mansion and grounds, the Park is Vermont's Tree Farm #1, with a working landscape and sustainably managed forest. The Park has also earned Forest Stewardship Council "Smartwood" and Sustainable Forest Institute certification.

At the park, you will have your choice of three interpreter-led tours: Green Infrastructure Tour (1 hour); Mansion Tour (1 hour); or Forest Tour (2 hours). After your tour, you'll have "free time" to explore the Park, the adjacent Billings Farm and Museum (\$7.00 per person group rate), or historic Woodstock Village.

We'll return to White River Junction for dinner at the **Crossroads Restaurant** (included) and overnight at the **Comfort Inn**. Following a continental breakfast, we'll motor to the **President Calvin Calvin Coolidge State Historic Site**. Visit the homestead, the community church, cheese factory, one-room schoolhouse, and general store that have been carefully preserved, many with their original furnishings. Also visit the post and beam Wilder Horse Barn and Wilder Barn that host collections of horse-drawn vehicles and agricultural equipment used on a typical hillside farm at the turn of the 20th century.

There is minimal to moderate walking within the "village."

On to the Bridgewater Mill for a tour of the woodshop and pottery shed at **Shackleton Thomas**, specializing in fine handmade furniture, pottery, and accessories. Watch the artisans at work following time-honored techniques and extensive handwork. The woodshop utilizes green certified cherry hardwood in making the majority of its furniture. 3 floors, with freight elevator available.

End the day with a gondola ride to the summit of 4,325-foot **Killington Peak**, where a restaurant and observation deck affords views that stretch into five states and Canada.

Board the bus for a scenic ride back to Burlington in time to begin conference registration.