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## Whaleback festival brings 'green theme' to film and art

New event begins today in Portsmouth

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Richard Anderson talks about saving the farm that's been part of his family since 1643.

Jerry Monkman photo

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PORTSMOUTH — A different kind of film festival is coming to the city this weekend.

The Whaleback Environmental Film & Art Festival starts today. The weekend long event comes from the Red Eft Project, a Portsmouth-based nonprofit fostering conservation and environmental protection through research, education and opportunities to explore and connect with nature.

For three days at locations all around the city, the Whaleback Festival will showcase independent films and art projects with themes like getting back to nature, family farming, land protection, climate change and what to do with those problematic plastic shopping bags.

Dyanna Innes Smith, president of Red Eft Project, said excitement about the festival is already beginning to mount.

"This is the first year of what we hope will be an annual event," she said. "It's a little different than some other film festivals with its green theme."

The festival is named after the iconic lighthouse that marks the entrance to Portsmouth Harbor. Much like Whaleback Lighthouse, Smith said the festival seeks to illuminate and draw in stories and imagery celebrating our environmental culture.

The event kicks off Friday night with a launch party featuring local filmmaker Jerry Monkman screening his short film "The Anderson Farm." Smith said the evening culminates with the feature documentary "Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for our Time."

"These are films you can't really get from Netflix," Smith said. "We are essentially the Northeast premiere of this film. It's beautiful."

In addition to showcasing filmmakers, Smith said the festival will also highlight a handful of artists telling their stories through installations scattered around the downtown.

Smith said visitors can take part in a Haiku scavenger hunt with Portsmouth eco-artist Tim Gaudreau, who is placing a series of 10 signs along a trail from Market Square to Little Harbour School with images and codes that, once scanned by a smart phone, reveal a hidden message and a clue to the next Haiku.

Another exciting exhibit, according to Smith, is a new collaboration from artists Julianne Gadoury and Kathryn Cellerini called Ecosystem of Dukkah, a grouping of paper forms preserved in bees wax, at the base of a cherry tree below City Hall on Junkins Avenue.

The festival is being held in conjunction with the fourth annual Portsmouth Sustainability Fair on Saturday, bringing film and artwork to Little Harbour School from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

While the events are being run independently of each other, Smith said they were timed to offer many similarly themed events on the same weekend.

The film festival culminates on Sunday evening with a double feature and wrap party hosted by the Portsmouth Brewery from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in its downstairs Jimmy LaPanza Lounge. The wrap up party features two Vermont filmmakers screening their films and the announcement of the People's Choice Award.

### Go & Do

Whaleback Environmental Film & Art Festival

When: Friday-Sunday, May 13-15

Tickets: Buy online or at the door for a suggested donation of \$12. Also available is an all-inclusive VIP Festival Pass for \$20.

Online: [www.whaleback.org](http://www.whaleback.org)