

Sam Hooper, Owner, Vermont Glove  
1/17 VOBA testimony / Importance of Outdoor economy

### Company history, growth, and investments

For the record, I'm Sam Hooper of Brookfield / Randolph. I own a small manufacturing business called Vermont Glove. We have been stitching gloves by hand in Randolph since 1920. Formerly known as Green Mountain Glove, I took over ownership of the business from third generation Kurt Haupt in 2018. Over the last 7 years our reputation for making the highest quality gloves for powerline workers and other specialty trades has spilled over into the consumer and outdoor industry. While we still sell gloves to powerline workers hanging off poles from here to the west coast (including every electrical utility company in Vermont), I saw an opportunity to market the brand and our quality to backyard hobbyists and outdoor enthusiasts. We are proud of the significant growth we have grinded to achieve over the these handful of years, from nearly closing the doors in 2017 to creating meaningful jobs at liveable wages in our community.

We have invested in our 100 year old factory to run on 100% renewable energy; both reducing our carbon footprint and significantly decreasing our operating costs. We have invested in workforce housing to enable us to recruit from elsewhere and to retain employees in Randolph. We did this by transitioning a 200 year old defunct residential care facility into a highly energy efficient 10-unit apartment building for both Vermont Glove employees and community members in need of dignified affordable housing. We measure the success of our values driven business by the impact it has on our community, the climate, and our employees.

### Resurgence, leadership, and impact

As an entrepreneur I am extremely proud to be part of a group of Vermont businesses who are championing the resurgence of the textile industry here and reinvigorating our place in the outdoor recreation industry and economy. Vermont is considered a birthplace of the outdoor industry world. It's loaded with great brands both big and small, industry pioneers, amazing athletes, and exceptional conservation goals and achievements. People and states across the country look to Vermont as THE example of how to do it; as a moral compass on how to nourish growth but limit impact and how to prioritize access and equity for all people.

To continue to do it right takes hard work, communication, and smart investment. For me Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance has fostered a space for collaboration and innovation, provided access to new markets and opportunities, and created a coalition

where companies and organizations can band together to take on some of the most complex issues facing Vermont; from housing to workforce development and from land stewardship to childcare. Our team at Vermont Glove loves to live, work and play in this state. Furthermore, we love that the state values us and that our industry provides value to the state.

## Operating textile manufacturing and circular economy businesses

Johnson Woolen Mills  
Skida Headwear and Accessories  
Darn Tough and Wide Open Socks  
Burton  
Queen City Dry Goods and Footwear  
Vermont Flannel  
Class 4 Designs  
Thuja  
Alliecaps  
US Sherpa  
tove wear  
BirdieBlue  
Alpine Luddites  
Fourbital Factory / 4t2d  
Red House Bags  
Bergamot and Amor  
Portabrace  
Slow Process  
Commando  
Hootie Hoo  
Vermont teddy bear  
Gordini  
Kaden Apparel  
Ski The East  
Mola  
Turtle Fur  
Ministry of Culture  
Paradis Sport  
JenGreenDesigns  
Lupine Outerwear  
Waxwing Bag Co.  
Buggies Bags  
Fifth Season Canvas