The Animals and Restorative Justice Symposium will be hosted virtually on July 29, 2022. The symposium aims to explore the intersection between animal law and restorative justice. Researchers, activists, and practitioners will gather to discuss how restorative justice can be used as a tool to address harm caused by crimes against animals. The symposium seeks to enhance understanding of the role of restorative justice in animal law, particularly in the context of punitive and retributive approaches to crimes against animals.

Veronica Vito, Professor of Law and Director of the Center for Justice Reform at Vermont Law School, emphasizes the importance of this event. For VLS, the partnership provides the opportunity to make an impact close to home, while also serving as a model for how its educational programs can help inform and promote restorative justice approaches in animal law.

The symposium is one of several events organized by the National Center on Restorative Justice (NCORJ) this month. On July 26, a panel discussion titled "Beyond the Labels: Exploring the Relationship Between Animal Welfare, Justice, and Restorative Practice" will take place. This event is designed to facilitate dialogue between those involved in work surrounding restorative justice and restorative practices, as well as animal law scholars and activists. The discussion will focus on the potential for restorative justice to play a role in addressing harm caused by crimes against animals.

The symposium and the upcoming panel discussion are part of a broader initiative aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of restorative justice principles and practices. The organizers hope that these events will contribute to a growing interest in learning more about the ways that restorative responses could be integrated into animal law and policy-making.

This initiative is also in line with the goals of the National Institute for Restorative Justice (NIRJ), which is the largest organization dedicated to advancing restorative justice in the United States. The NIRJ aims to promote the implementation of restorative justice principles in various contexts, including criminal justice, education, and workplace settings. By hosting these events, Vermont Law School and the National Center on Restorative Justice are contributing to this broader effort to advance restorative justice principles and practices.