

## Science and Data Subcommittee of the Vermont Climate Council

### FY24 Budget proposal

*Items listed in order of their priority:*

#### Ongoing work related to the Life-cycle GHG Inventory (Category: Analysis of CAP) - \$150K

Recognizing that there may be additional resources needed for development and analysis of some of the more complicated or unique elements of the Life-cycle Inventory associated with energy use in Vermont, the subcommittee recommends that one-time and on-going funding be planned for in FY24 and beyond. For example, development of emission factors for biofuels in the thermal sector, and electricity generation from nuclear and hydro power, is likely to be a new area of analysis that may require additional resources beyond the existing contract. (\$125K)

Also, once the lifecycle analysis is completed, periodic updates and revised analysis will likely be useful to inform policy development and future amendments to the Climate Action Plan. The subcommittee recommends that funding be available for ANR to support staff within the Climate Action Office to do this periodic work. This staff person could also perform updates and amendments to other analyses that are supplemental to in-boundary Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory. (\$25K, annually)

#### Supplemental Agricultural Emissions analysis (Category: Analysis of CAP) - \$100K

While ANR recently received funding from the US Climate Alliance to support investigation into tools and methods for accurately estimating net and gross greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural land use and practices, additional funding may be needed to complete this work and implement any recommendations made by the contractor performing the initial investigation. The subcommittee recommends that additional funds be appropriated in FY24 to complete this work to ensure that it is most useful when serving as a tool parallel to the existing Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, which accounts for emissions on a gross basis.

#### Utilizing behavioral & decision-making sciences to inform Climate Action Plan implementation and development (Categories: Public Engagement/General Organizing) - \$300K

The subcommittee recognizes that the Climate Council would benefit from a better understanding of, and the ability to utilize, behavioral and decision-making sciences in development of policies and initiatives in the Climate Action Plan. Integrating insights from behavioral science can strengthen policy and increase the likelihood of desired outcomes. This understanding is reflective and contributory to the work and budget proposals put forward by other subcommittees, including the Just Transitions Subcommittee. This could include data collection to measure public awareness of: climate change and the likely impacts to Vermont, the GWSA requirements, the Climate Council and its work, the recommendations of the Climate Action Plan; and support for: the level of funding required to implement the Climate Action Plan, and the actions in the Climate Action Plan that are necessary to reduce emissions and support adaptation. Data collection in this instance should not be one-way communication but should be used as a tool to establish relationships with communities and partner

with organizations to build trust and facilitate a productive dialogue. Following this data collection, the Council could support measuring what forms of communication and outreach can most effectively reach and engage Vermonters on climate-change related issues. By using the understanding and insights gained from these data collection, outreach and education efforts in a circular feedback loop, would better inform the ongoing implementation of the CAP and its future development.

Additional funds could be allocated to contract with a behavioral scientist and policy expert to bring the most current research on human behavior and decision-making to policy recommendations. Policy-making tools that might be leveraged include incentives, social norms, using intuitive metrics, framing and many others.

Note that the amount proposed to be allocated to this effort should be adjusted to reflect the opportunities to build upon or support the budget proposals of the Just Transitions Subcommittee related to direct engagement with community members, communications and marketing, translation services, and generational engagement.

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