

**Rural Resilience and Adaptation Subcommittee
of the Vermont Climate Council
5/10/24 Meeting - Minutes**

Location: Meeting was recorded and posted [online here](#)
Subcommittee Members present: Andrea Wright, David Deen, Alice Peal, Marian Wolz, Mike Burke, Eric Forand, Dahlia Cohn, Dr. Mark Levine, Scott McCormick, Bronwyn Cooke, Ann Lawless, Paula Melton, Jay Shafer
State Agency Staff Present: Ben Rose, Anne Margolis, Jared Ulmer, Carloine Paske for Stephanie Smith, Otis Ellms-Munroe
Minutes by: Sue Plant

11:02 PM Welcome/Agenda Overview – David Deen, RRA Co-Chair

- Introductions
- Agenda Overview – Andrea Wight, RRA Co-Chair (11:40 posted in the chat)
- Review and approval of [April 12, 2024](#) meeting minutes (12:19)
Andrea Wright made motion to approve, seconded by Marian Wolz, Motion carried

11:07 PM Climate Change in Vermont Presentation Dr. Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux and Dr. Jay Shafer, Science & Data Subcommittee Members
Presented an overview of the extreme weather hazards and the climate future in Vermont. Detailed past declarations and the storms they were related to.

Notes from the chat:

Marian Wolz - Lesley-Ann, do you know the timeframe for the update to the Climate Resilience Toolkit you mentioned? That update sounds like it could be really helpful for this subcommittee to identify needs for rural VT communities.

Michael Burke, GMP - Hearing the conversation on wind, not sure everyone knows but VT has experienced 3 high tropical force wind/hurricane force wind events just since Jan. 9th. they are Jan. 9th, Jan 12th and April 3rd.

Ben Rose, VEM - Yes, true, Mike! FEMA agreed to roll Jan. 12 into the same federal disaster incident as Jan. 9 ("DR-4770, Jan. 9-13, 2024).

It was humbling, as we worked on the 2023 SHMP to recognize that our hazard assessment in the 2018 plan had totally whiffed on what turned out to be the most costly hazard during that 5-year interval: pandemic.

Dr. L-A. Dupigny-Giroux - The updates to the Climate Resilience Toolkit was part of the discussion at the National Academy's meeting about Climate Services

last month. David Herring is the lead on this, and I can reach out to him for a timeline if you'd like.

It would be great to crowdsource all of these anecdotal observations and statistics about recent storms. They would be invaluable for Jay and me to dive deeper into for building up our mapping. Thanks everyone!!

- 11:30 PM State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP) Presentation Caroline Paske, VEM
Caroline explained the SHMP and the implementation for municipalities, resources available such as funding, tools, technical assistance, and regulations, the impacts to Vermonters and how the state plan applies to various hazards. She compared the Climate Action Plan (CAP) to the State Hazard Mitigation Plan and detailed some of the overlap between the two plans. Outlined the steps taken to obtain the 43 priority actions, based on feasibility and impact. State partners worked together to assemble the top 10 priorities from the list.
- 12:14 PM Resilience Implementation Strategy Introduction (RIS) Presentation Marian Wolz, CAO Subcommittee (ended 12:19)
A high-level overview of the Resilience Implementation Strategy was presented, outlining state government initiatives and work which is broken into 3 stages; April-November 2024 Inventorying plans, programs, policies, and funding. Identify gaps and establish statewide climate resilience vision informed by Vermonters.
September-April 2025 Identify metric for tracking the progress on climate resilience. Categorize and prioritize gaps and identify measures to fill the gaps.
March-July 2025 Understanding the costs, recommend changes to existing programs, processes, and policies, in order to close gaps.
- 12:20 PM Public comment - None
- 12:05 PM Progress Report Review, Reflections, and Gap Analysis Marian Wolz, CAO and Andrea Wright, RRA Co-Chair
Reviewed actions made by the Climate Action Plan and the progress made, to help subcommittees identify areas to work on. Priority ranking systems were high, medium, and low. The Council will be developing new criteria to assist in prioritizing actions for subcommittees.
Are there particular items from the last Climate Action Plan that need refinement?
Are there focus areas that were not on there at all?
Health was mentioned as a gap that would need to be addressed in the next CAP.

12:30 AM Questions, Comments, Reflections on Presentations David Deen, RRA Co-Chair
David Deen - It is terrifying to look at the scope.
Scott McCormick – It might be useful to “sub” prioritize to have the most impact in order to implement the plan.
Andrea Wright – We have maybe 10 meetings to get this done and it feels like a lot of work to be done. We may have to have a survey to see the overlap in our subcommittee and other subcommittees. To what levels do we want to whittle down the categories in order to focus our work.
Mike Burke – I agree, we should focus on actionable items.

Notes from the chat:

Anne Margolis, VT Public Service Dept. - We do have strategies that accomplish both mitigation and adaptation, e.g., weatherization (reduces fossil fuel use and helps homes & inhabitants cope with heat). Perhaps worth focused work with cross-sector to make sure at least one or the other is covering.

Mark.Levine - This is a very challenging timeline!

12:54 PM Work Plan Status and Input Working group members Subcommittee
Reviewed Draft Work Plan – Andrea Wright, Co-Chair

12:50 PM Recap and Next Steps David Deen, RRA Co-Chair

Have Ben Rose at a future meeting to discuss hazard mitigation and climate adaptation referencing the \$600M flood we had last summer, and steps taken.

We need to collect input from the subcommittee before the next meeting, should be reviewed and prioritized as to who we’ll hear from at future meetings due to time constraints.

Next meeting tentatively scheduled for Friday, June 14th at 11:00 AM – Andrea or Marian will send out a poll to see if we can get a consensus on the date and time.

1:03 PM Adjourn