

<p>The Cross-Sector Mitigation Subcommittee drafts strategies and actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as required by the Global Warming Solutions Act. During the Climate Action Plan Update, th...</p>	<p>The Rural Resilience & Adaptation Subcommittee addresses the impacts of climate change on rural Vermont communities. During the Climate Action Plan Update, they will focus on:</p> <p>1) establishing m...</p>
	<p>Ongoing communications, establishing expanded connections with every community and measuring the engagement of those connections</p>
	<p>Support for local food access Public transportation options for small communities</p>
	<p>Accessibility and accommodation products within the product itself so accessibility products and accessories can work efficiently with fixed products that cannot be accessible for any environment moving forward thank you</p>

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Tout and provide links to the local success stories! Enable local CROs teams in statute, and create an annual day for CROing, similar to Green-up Day but focused on local resilience action projects and community celebration. CROs.org is alive and well, with new co-directors, and has great tools for local Community Resilience teams to be launched, engage their town in IDing gaps they want to work on via a Community Resilience Self-Assessment. Hartford is a great CROs story, resulting in a staff climate officer and launching Senator Becca White (first CROs committee, then Selectbd, then Rep...). We need more towns encouraged to do something similar. Other successes like Thetford HEAT and Craftsbury's Resilience Hub. We need great example Resilience sections for our town plans.

Think about how the arts could be involved to help engage people's hearts

-Burlington Light Rail (BLR) scoping study

-Dedicated bus lanes, increased frequency

-NY/VT hydrogen energy partnership through Plug Power (Albany)

-shifting away from car dependence,

-dense, diverse housing in urban centers

-transit connectivity (AmTrak, GMT)

Focusing on true low- or no-emission energy sources, and NOT relying on biofuels of any kind (liquid biofuels, biomass, RNG, green hydrogen) to meet clean energy goals. Continuing to burn things for energy will not improve public health or make meaningful contributions to emission reductions.

Instead, prioritize low-emission local energy solutions such as weatherization, community solar and wind, and non-combustion thermal energy networks.

These solutions MUST be affordable and accessible to all people, and not increase the energy burden to low-income Vermonters.

Implement strategies that allow rural Vermonters to get around without relying on the use of a personal vehicle.

We must close all fossil-fuel burning peaker plants and eliminate the use of biofuels. We can't keep burning things and think that will fix this crisis. McNeil must close.

Prioritize low-emission local energy solutions such as weatherization, community solar and wind, and non-combustion thermal energy networks. Make these solutions affordable and accessible to all Vermonters.

Provide electricity ratepayer protection to low- and middle-income Vermonters in order to ensure a just transition as we "electrify everything."

Invest in affordable, clean-energy rural and urban public transit systems to reduce the use of resource-intensive individual cars

We need clean public transit!

Sustain Vermont's carbon sinks and ecological resilience by protecting biodiversity, including all existing public land.

Finding ways to enable rural communities to take ownership over their energy generation--through community solar, for example, and thermal networks--seems like an important point of emphasis.

I would love to see more emphasis on eliminating biofuels from Vermont's energy profile. We simply need to stop burning things. I live in Burlington, where the McNeil plant operates, which pumps a huge amount of greenhouse gases (not to mention unhealthy air pollution) into the atmosphere.

i also think it's crucial to mitigate the costs of our energy transition for people who cannot afford to pay more. The legislature this session has directed the PUC to begin drawing up plans for ratepayer protection, for example, for low-income families. These kinds of measures must be pursued aggressively, both for the sake of climate justice and to maintain public support for climate policies and avoid costly political setbacks.

So many town officials and community volunteers are maxed out right now. Having templates to use or concrete examples to adapt to one's community would be most helpful

Consider institution roles (schools, large employers, municipalities, etc)

Although flooding has received attention much more attention and action is needed. Vermont remains at risk from flooding, contaminated water, and impassible sections of roads that limit access to vulnerable communities. Help is needed to move people and infrastructure out of flood prone areas and restore a landscape that is better able to store excess water. Some communities continue to try to build in flood prone areas (e.g., Hinesburg) and many dispersed homes are in vulnerable locations.

We need to stop incentivizing combustion of any kind. Even if you believe that burning biomass is better than oil for heating, it isn't what we should be prioritizing and incentivizing. We need to put all of the incentives behind uncontroversial truly low-emissions and renewable solutions.

Residential and small business solar installations have been drastically decreasing as the net-metered program has changed...not in the favor of supporting installations by this sector. We are in the installation and repair business in this sector and are VERY discouraged by the increase in the pay-back period every time the PUC has made the credit structure worse for our clientele. These reductions have made it so that low and moderate income families cannot afford to better their carbon footprint and realize the financial benefits of owning their own solar system and making their power where they live. It is now more out of reach than it has ever been...and getting more so on 8/1/24 with the changes that are coming that day.

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can do is site housing close to services and site services close to housing and ensure walkability/rollability between housing and services. Let's use the infrastructure we already have, offer more services at school campuses, use school buses for community transit, make it possible to live in VT without a personal vehicle. increase the budget of community housing trusts to keep housing affordable and community oriented, dedicate more state funding to rehab and improve the existing housing stock, ban whole-house short term rentals (only allow short term rentals of rooms / cabin / camps that cannot serve as long term housing), increase taxes on out of state owners. also, solid waste in VT doesn't get the attention it deserves -- there are huge inefficiencies with multiple trash haulers covering the same service routes and then driving all the way to Newport, and many items that still have life end up in the landfill because they sit on the side of the road in a free pile in the rain. It would be great to have more local

plan for a managed retreat from floodplains with buyouts and remediation, help improve drainage and surface water management as rainfall events become more intense, increase regulations around streambanks to restore riparian vegetation to slow water and stabilize banks (increase buffer area for all surface waters), help homes in floodplains transition off of oil to prevent oil spills when flooding, require permeable pavement where possible, eliminate impermeable surfaces wherever possible

Missing: Consider how to address solutions/technologies that do not reduce emissions and require burning fuels such as wood pellets & biomass.

Most important: #3

For the thermal & electricity sectors:

--Consider the role thermal energy networks can play in our towns in terms of decarbonizing buildings at the community scale, using heat we already have in our built environment and from underground, and mitigating demands on our electric grid.

--Then recommend broadly implementing these networks in Vermont communities to increase resilience, diversify thermal energy sources, provide heating & cooling to affordable housing & energy burdened communities in particular, and keep energy dollars local.

Thermal energy networks should be among solutions considered for making energy systems more resilient.

Is the Climate Action Plan targeting schools? The districts seem to fall outside scrutiny as they are a separate entity from the towns.

Financial support for entities looking to create new sources of clean energy such as wind, solar, and Geothermal networks and battery storage to reduce peak energy costs.

They are all important

Rural public transportation system utilizing rail, buses vans, etc.

A & D I believe are the most important.

Tackling transportation and thermal strategies is imperative, including ensuring a policy or regulatory approach for each that will ensure progress, leverage federal funding and more. This committee must also consider cross cutting strategies and solutions (like workforce, consumer engagement and education, considering many of these issues will require different kinds of individual decisions and investments, very different from the status quo and more). A focus on the economics will also be important. A broad understanding and calibration of the cost of the status quo as well as opportunities to reduce upfront costs of cleaner energy solutions (e.g. maximizing federal funding and identifying and recommending financing solutions) will also be important.

These are important topics. A focus on engaging communities in the resilience and adaptation strategies will also be important, considering the costs are coming down hard on communities, businesses and households. What kinds of priorities are communities considering and how can this effort complement and support them?

MA's MVP model for local resilience
Access to equitable and sustainable transit and rural areas (think on demand micro transit with electric vehicles) – Vermont rural communities have no options other than cars to access vital resources and with climate change more and more Vermont are going to be transportation vulnerable as the price of gas and a car increases this is going to hit we're Vermonters hardest who often have the least resources within walking distance and have to drive the farthest

I think the reduction of fossil fuel usage is important, but the focus should be extended beyond the transportation sector to address the utilities as well. Additionally, I think there needs to be a focus on corporate emissions as well to truly target the root of the issue in Vermont. I personally feel that all of these agendas are important, but especially number 3. As it doesn't seem like there will be much pressure applied for quick solutions to our fossil fuel infrastructure's persistence, it's incredibly important to prioritize the needs of our low income communities of color who disproportionately feel the affects of the climate crisis.

I think "impacts" may encompass this, but the broadness of the term may also allow a lack of focus on real issues. I think there especially needs to be a focus on the agricultural land resilience because of how much of that land bolsters our community's health, nutrition, and economic security. Considering the floods last summer and the impact on land, this needs to be a real priority in our rural areas.

Localizing control of energy production through mini grids and networks to decentralize power and distribution. Enhances resilience by reducing reliance on statewide utility systems.

Most of the work needed to really fix all of the facets of climate change are best done through systemic improvements - carefully implementing improvements that should ideally interoperate smoothly. It is a massive challenge. Here are some simple ideas.

High priority actions

- thermal energy networks/ground source heat pumps – provide energy that is extremely efficient, clean, invisible, silent. These systems will take time to deploy and are not cost effective for all circumstances. However they are highly compatible with

Vermont’s community development standards and goals.

- Good systems are likely to include seasonal storage of heat and cold (heat from refrigeration systems, cooling from sidewalk ice melting, ...)

- biochar – facilitates processing of organic wastes, sequesters carbon for hundreds of years, soaks up water surges from intense precipitation events (mitigating floods) and feeds it back to

Although I enthusiastically endorse good use of quantitative goals and metrics, they can be overused and misused. There is great value in disciplined thinking about these, but they can be used to assert more top-down control, which can be very harmful.

In addition to cascading and compounding impacts, similar attention should be given to cascading and compounding solutions (in other words, multisolving). One great example of multisolving that I think could be very important is neighborhood hubs - places that people can walk to to access services and amenities, to reduce our reliance on cars, to improve people's health (by walking and not driving), to strengthen communities, ...

Primary interest: #3 - Impacts and opportunities of strategies and actions to support vulnerable communities and low-income Vermonters.

2(B) - help smaller communities with climate adaptation and resilience.

I think we need to be aware of our people with disabilities including deaf people as well so they can be informed about this.

Transportation solutions for rural as well as urban communities is a priority. Electrify school buses and use these for transport loops outside of school hours. Invest in more Level 3 chargers in rural locations.

Building codes are needed for residential construction. All contractors should be trained and certified. Provide incentives to get participation. Set realistic timing for training - after that have penalties for non-compliance. Not just for new construction but for > 20% renovation as well. We need to address the existing building stock as well as the new building. Folks cannot afford to move house so are just adding to their existing home, which, oftentimes is not up to standard, let alone high performance construction.

Landlords need to be held accountable for their buildings. Renters are having to cope with terrible living conditions and pay the bills. We need a registry of

There needs to be a transition to regenerative organic farming. Incentives and policies to help this transition are essential.

Helping smaller communities with basic infrastructure for climate resilience is critical - witness the ongoing floods. Basic culvert updates. Stream and river bank conservation. Land use policies that restrict building or cultivation of land in flood zones.

Support energy conservation with more weatherization incentives and grants in rural communities. Also help transition off burning things for energy - BIG push on community solar and storage.

Consider and think about, please:
Transportation and buildings
-- Biofuels will make a transition to electricity less costly.
-- Life-cycle emissions matter; some biofuels have LOWER life-cycle emissions than electricity.

B, C, and D are missing a verb, so it's hard to answer.

On land-use policy, consider the resilience of our food supply. During the pandemic, local food and ordering a box of food from a farm ("community-supported agriculture") became a huge thing. Land-use policy should be expanded from carrots ("growth centers") to sticks (ban "rural residential" zoning with minimum lot sizes, for starters). Land with farmable soils is getting broken into smaller and smaller parcels, jeopardizing agriculture's role in resilience.

#1 is most important because it impacts our 100 home subdivision if trucks are allowed along our Town Highway.

B and C need stricter standards with enforcement to protect Vermonters who live here. Climate change mitigation standards.

#1 and #2 are most important. Encouraging transition to electric commercial lawn care equipment would significantly reduce GHGs.

#2 is at the top. Proactively review every culvert at road-stream intersections for potential of washouts and increase culvert sizes.

1) Make sure you're looking at "negamiles" with land-use and building code updates. Make sure you're looking at microtransit at the community scale.

2) Get **really** serious about geothermal/ground-source heat pumps and thermal networks; include govt, commercial, institutional, and industrial buildings. Work on tax incentives.

3) Current definitions of low-income leave out way too many people.

Think big, think long-term. Help small communities get ready for more extreme weather, more climate migrants in the next 20 years, smart and scalable water/sewer projects, adaptation-smart zoning, building code updates and tax incentives (battery storage, rooftop optimization!), nature-based solutions, progress toward food security

I don't know if you are tackling biochar, but it clearly involves multiple sectors. Its manufacture sequesters carbon and reduces waste generation, and its use reduces nutrient pollution, sequesters ground water such that it reduces the impacts of precipitation extremes (both too little and too much) and it increases soil fertility. Not bad. Mostly the challenge is the cost of manufacture, which should be solvable.

I believe that Vermont is too quick to dismiss wildfire. Admittedly it is not a problem now and things would have to change significantly for it to become a problem. However since many serious analysts believe we are on track for 4C temperature rise before heating peaks, we are foolish to dismiss the threat.

Fortunately the fixes seem to be relatively easy, especially if we get an early start on this potential problem.

I believe that neighborhood hubs would like fall to this group (although it is also cross-sector. Many important services and amenities can and should be delivered at the neighborhood scale. Emergency services should always be walkable - which means neighborhood scale and scope. If you are already delivering emergency services at the neighborhood scale, it makes sense to package as many services and amenities into a hub as possible, which should greatly increase walkability.

Seems that picking the most important here is a fool's errand -- all are important -- each in its own way. Public education is vitally important.

Resilience is a very broad concept. See the Resilient Design Institute website -- started by Alex Wilson. Very informative.

on Town Highways

Stop trying to put truck routes on Town Highways bisecting established bedroom neighborhoods that are zoned as R2! People living along or adjacent to Town Highways expect State Highways or interstate highways to allow freight travel, not residential town highways. Industrial Parks that choose to build adjacent to residential areas need to provide their own ingress and egress for freight, not disturb and damage the health of nearby residents living along Town highway!

Most towns in Chittenden County position their freight manufacturing companies miles away from medium residential zones areas. They instead place these industries close to the interstate highway where freight trucks belong. Please strengthen statute 23, 1042 Restrictions on Town Highways and oversee Essex Town to follow criteria #4, Not criteria #1 which says, state highways do not want the truck traffic. We chose Town Highway living for that reason, knowing trucks use

Implementation of fines of some sort for those not complying.

Most important, in my opinion, is land use and land use policy and its policing.

M. Susan Knightes

A greater focus on improving public transportation, accessible sidewalks and bike lanes, and building denser downtowns.

The Agriculture & Ecosystems Subcommittee seeks to increase Vermont's natural, agricultural, and forestry lands' resilience to climate change as well as their ability to remove carbon from the atm...

The Climate Action Plan Update will incorporate engagement and public input along the way. The methods for engagement include:
-Meeting people where they are by attending community events and havi...

A strategy for in town meeting in every town in Vermont to discuss the CAP

Accessibility and accommodation products accessories would be helpful when doing ecosystems and ecological systems throughout the state of Vermont products may be accessibility or have access need or accommodation needs for that product to work efficiently

Plain language easy to understand documentation glossary summary and with design picture graphs to detail the message

relating to the Vermont energy act of 2012. (2011, No. 170 (Adj. Sess.), § 14.) required: No later than September 1, 2013, the secretary of natural resources shall adopt rules pursuant to Sec. 14 of this act, 10 V.S.A. § 582(g) (greenhouse gas accounting). Yet, as of today, over a decade later, no such rules have been adopted. Without these rules, ANR has claimed by fiat that burning wood is carbon neutral and this position has been adopted by DPS, the various consultants working the the LCA, the clean heat standard, the PUC. All cite ANR and the faulty GHG inventory to embed this carbon neutral position into policy decisions. ANR has misapplied IPCC guidelines and Burlington Electric now cites ANR's misapplication of IPCC to use a sector level accounting system for single point source. This must end. ANR must establish rules that inform 10 VSA 582(g), especially rules regarding counting emissions from biogenic sources as the statute requires. The climate council needs to acknowledge

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Lots of competing interests - highlight areas of common ground in determining recommended actions

you're doing a good job

-Wildlife bridges like in Banff, Alberta,
and the future Wallis Annerberg
Wildlife Crossing in Agoura Hills, CA.
Protecting wetlands to increase flood
resilience.

Implement a program to pay farmers
to install solar panels and wind on their
land that is grazed by animals. Ensure
Vermont's clean water goals are
consistent with Climate Action Plan
strategies because many nature-based
solutions to water quality concerns
have climate and flood-resiliency co-
benefits.

Biofuels (including RNG and biomass) are not actual solutions. For farmers who want to do "clean" energy, on-site generators are ecologically better than RNG pipelines. We must continue to protect all existing public land. Support agricultural transitions from monocrop to polycrop plots.

Can you publish public comment opportunities in FPF? Maybe I missed it but could be cool.

There has been a lot of research now on the successful use of citizen juries and deliberative polls to elicit citizen engagement and achieve a more informed public guidance. The UK has done this extensively around climate change, for example. This might be worth pursuing.

Reach out to local committees and commissions to get their help in setting up local events where "experts" can come in with info but follow through if appropriate can be done at the local level/.

Consider complimentary (non-carbon) benefits in prioritization

Surveys should educate respondents about particular topics before proceeding with questions

It could be helpful to engage people in beneficial actions even if small in scale (working in concert with the land to assist resilience. This could promote awareness and be collectively helpful.

I think you are doing a good job trying to reach people. People engage in different ways. I am not sure what the right balance is between raising awareness and encouraging engagement. Some of us may be hesitant to weigh in at a public meeting but more comfortable filling out a survey. Multiple choice might help some respond more compared to a blank area for comment.

I think it's important for the sub-committee to explicitly have a goal of YIMBYism (Yes in my back yard!). There has to be a consideration that even if a given project might have some in-state negative environmental effects, if the alternative is a worse environmental effect elsewhere, we should accept the potential costs of it. Of course we should still seek to protect agriculture and ecosystems here, but we can't ignore the costs that our choices have on places outside of our borders.

Making renewable energy projects a viable option in lieu of using our green spaces for food production, natural systems & forests is a horrible option when we have so many viable roof surfaces and small residential properties that can be put to use for renewables. The 15 kW tier level for solar systems for homeowners is unreasonable with all of our increased energizing of our lives (electric vehicles, heat pumps, electric ranges and clothes driers, etc.). Making systems sized over 15 kW permitting more reasonable to homeowners on small parcels would be helpful. Making the net-metered program better and more viable for these property owners would as well. Making large scale solar an option in any way is NOT an option for the better of our state.

Making all of the above REALLY VERY known with a lot of notice would be wonderful. All too often these options are not known until it's either too late or with a short notice that makes them hard to attend.

move agriculture out of floodplains - will continue to flood with contaminated water. restore floodplain forests and habitat. food production will likely continue to be increasingly difficult with chaotic weather and may need to shift to more indoor growing. support diversified operations that emulate / protect natural systems and create / conserve habitat. get creative about reducing food waste from groceries / restaurants / schools etc. since 2020 Act 148, lots of VTers are composting poorly in their backyards, setting up conflict with wildlife and introducing nutrients and pathogens to the environment. consider community composting solutions.

post the list of events where the Climate Action Plan folks will be? create a form to request attendance of CAO at community event? lol just saw below, but may be good to have a simple form with just that prompt

The Forestry Service needs to become STEWARDS of the forests, not working for the forest product industry. We need every tree to sequester CO2 and our approach to using the woods must change as we protect these trees. These seem sufficient

A focus on small scale more regenerative agriculture and all the economic, climate, public health and ecosystem services it can offer will be important.

It seems there's been a lot more effort on public engagement which is appreciated. These seem like the right approaches, with survey efforts offering more of an opportunity.

I think public comment is incredible important and the ability for those who do not have technology to do so is as well. If there are any non-digital ways for information about community conversations to be shared around the state, I strongly encourage the Council to seize those opportunities.

Preserve and maintain health silvaculture as a carbon sequestration strategy. Eliminate biomass electric production.

Define "stakeholder" to emphasize general public, not for profit and academic experts.

I think biochar and good soil health practices may be key to all of this. I would like to make a plug here for my own work on soil health that I updated at the recent VORS conference. It is a small bioreactor to create Johnson-Su compost (basically a tweak on common basement vermicomposting systems that should produce much higher quality compost.

Ongoing visioning sessions around the state. I think there is great value in proactively envisioning how to succeed in responding to climate change while improving our lives. This creates a different mindset to problem-solving. Problem-solving approaches are great, but different mindsets can come up with different (and potentially better) solutions.

I think you've covered all the basis - a step further would be a door-to-door campaign, but that might be over kill.

It would. be nice if I could be updated about this so I can inform the Deaf community as well

Support 30 x 2030 and 50 x 2050 - make it happen with an active pathway. Look for ways to have multiple uses on the land - solar panels over hay fields, wind turbines above natural forests, for example.

Community roadshow and attending community events are important. Inviting folks who respond to this survey to attend focus groups - hear from those who are actively commenting/interested. Tap into local energy committee and see how they can help provide input and be used as a distribution channel for key communications (not just relying on VECAN and RPCs)

Consider: while it's only a minor improvement, consider the role farming-friendly solar projects could have in resolving some of the tension between food (and feed) production and renewable energy. Some 3,500 acres of ground-mounted solar are likely to be added to the 2,000 acres already in place. Almost none of this solar is hosting farming of any kind. (Pollinator-friendly solar might be a thing, it's hard to tell without some sorely lacking transparency.)

Nothing to add; of the methods above, I like meeting people where they are and the public comment periods.

2. Residents health, safety and quality of life shouldn't be compromised when you're trying to balance competing land use goals. If Saxon Hill is a recreation destination, freight manufacturing industry placed here doesn't mix well and is a competing land use. Climate mitigation is imperative to protect residents using the park.

Targeted surveys are great because many can participate.

Both are equally important. Definitely eliminate producing electricity by burning wood unless the waste heat is captured to displace fossil fuel heating.

Reject the idea that we need to locate *lots* of renewable energy facilities in farms and greenfields -- until we have widespread geothermal/thermal networks, rooftop optimization, and battery storage to manage peak electricity demands. Look at using precharged biochar along all state highways to sequester carbon. Develop strategies to diversify food production to both build crop resilience and reduce distance-transportation needs. Make every effort, and then some, to protect natural systems.

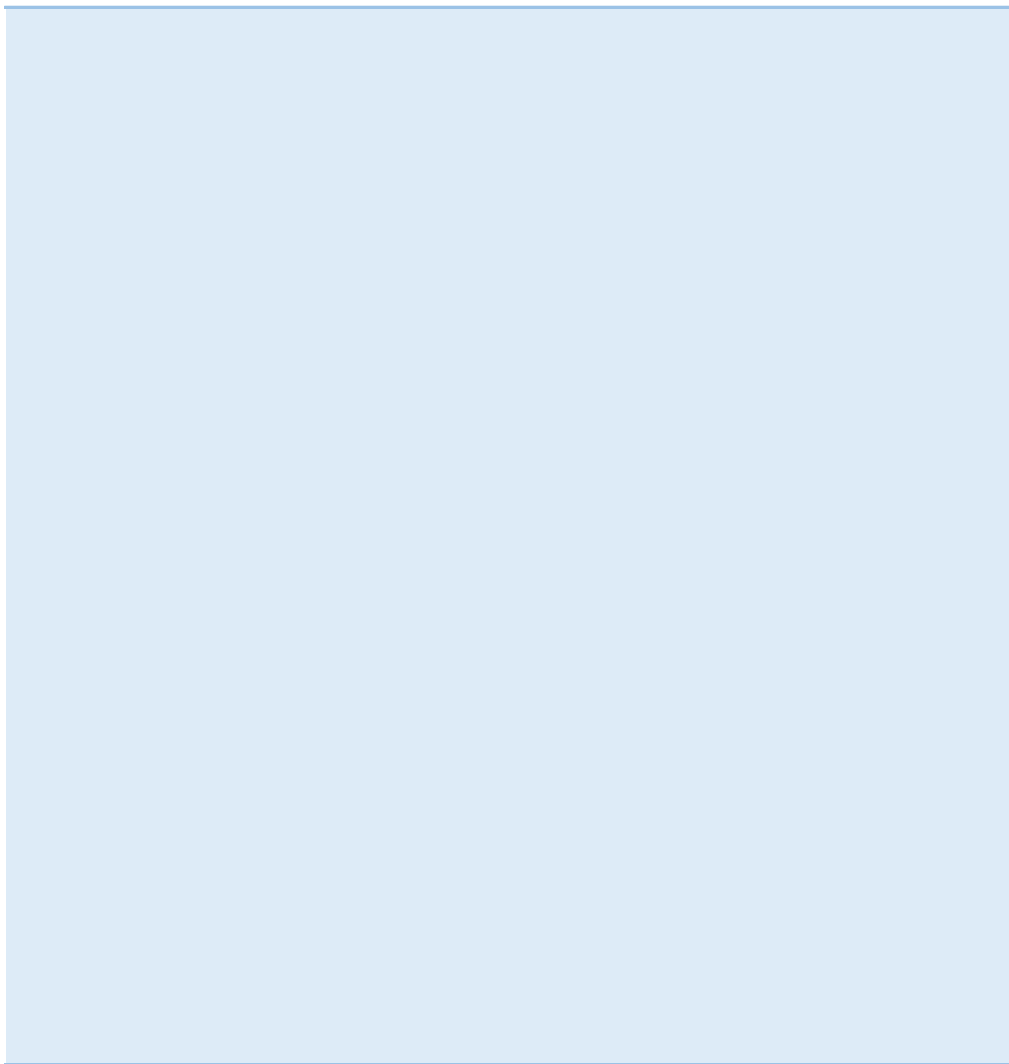
Reach out to municipal climate and energy committees to strengthen community engagement. Take a Scenario Planning approach to encourage robust, "no-regrets" decisions and to help folks understand the "systems" character (rather than "silo" or short-term character) of your decisions.

Biochar. See above. BTW, the recent work coming out of the Cornell biochar research facility is quite interesting.

It is possible that you could provide multiple benefits by doing outreach in conjunction with climate and energy committees. It gets more face-to-face contact with citizens and might also serve to support participation in and initiatives by local committees.

Role of organic ag and ways to get more conversions to organic

Public education is critical.



Tough decision here but I believe that the most important would be a balance of goals.

Looks good

Expanding trainings, opportunities, and support for agroforestry, agrivoltaics, and regenerative agriculture.

I think it would be beneficial to reach out to Climate and Energy Committees in different cities/towns throughout Vermont to hear what is important to them and what challenges they face.