

# Summary of Draft Recommendations

Rural Resilience and Adaptation Subcommittee  
of the Vermont Climate Council

# Rural Resilience and Adaptation Subcommittee Members and Staff Support

- Catherine Dimitruk, Northwest RPC
- Erica Bornemann, VT Emergency Mgmt
- Lindsay Kurrle (designee: Chris Cochran), Agency of Commerce and Comm Dev
- Chad Farrell, Encore Renewable Energy
- Joe Flynn (designee: Joe Segale), VT Agency of Trans
- David Snedeker, Northeastern VT Dev Assoc
- Michael Burke, GMP
- Ann Lawless, NeighborWorks of Western Vermont
- Karen Horn, VLCT
- Jason Shafer (Liaison from the Science and Data Subcommittee), Northern VT U
- Anne Margolis, Public Service Dept
- Ben Rose, VT Emergency Mgmt
- Stephanie Smith, VT Emergency Mgmt
- Jens Hilke, Forest Parks and Recreation
- Bronwyn Cooke, Agency of Commerce and Comm Dev

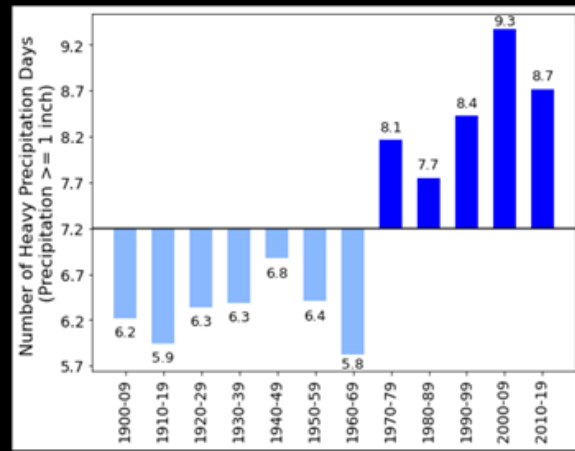
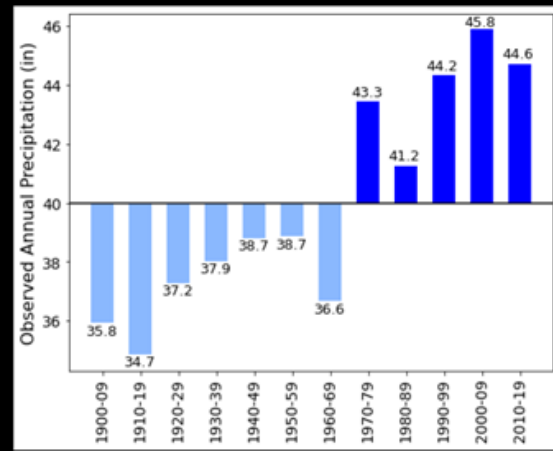


# Rural Resilience and Adaptation Subcommittee Focus

GWSA - Focus on the pressure that climate change adaptation will impose on **rural transportation, electricity, housing, emergency services, and communications infrastructure**, and the difficulty of rural communities in meeting the needs of its citizens.



## More water (and in bigger storms)

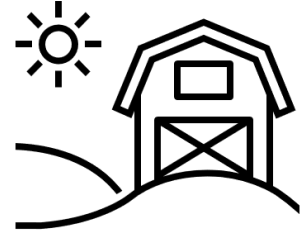


## GOAL:

Vermont's people, communities, ecosystems, and infrastructure are prepared for and increasingly resilient to the impacts of climate change

- **Adaptation:** reducing vulnerability and advancing resilience through planned and implemented enhancements to, or avoiding degradation of, natural and built systems and structures.
- **Resilience:** the capacity of individuals, communities, and natural and built systems to withstand and recover from climatic events, trends and disruptions.

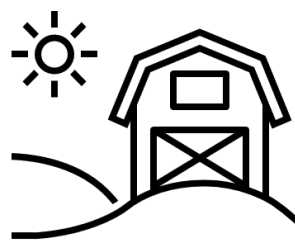
**Pathway #1 Capacity-** Increase local, regional, including community and civic networks (local volunteer efforts, non-government organizations, faith-based groups, etc.), and state agency capacity, for resilience planning and implementation, and address inequities of under-resourced communities.



## EXAMPLES

- Establish permanent statewide support for local and regional resilience, adaptation, preparedness, response, and recovery actions necessary to enhance overall rural resilience to hazards exacerbated by climate change.
- Provide tools and resources to help communities assess climate vulnerabilities, and identify changes and investments needed to break the cycle of repetitive loss, speed post disaster economic recovery and reduce the long-term financial burden of disasters on impacted communities, businesses, and individuals.

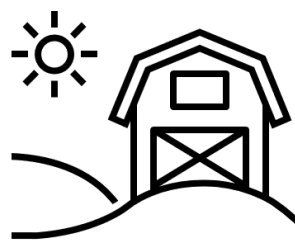
**Pathway #2 Infrastructure-** Proactively and strategically invest to enhance resilience in transportation, communications, water/wastewater, and energy infrastructure statewide.



## EXAMPLES

- Create a framework for identifying and evaluating climate resilience threats and impacts to energy and communications systems serving rural communities
- Increase the resilience of critical infrastructure to severe weather and other climate change threats by:
  - reducing vulnerabilities of specific facilities.
  - improving system efficiency, reliability and redundancies.

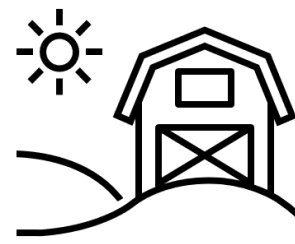
**Pathway #3 Fossil Fuel/Rural-** Support the reduction of municipal, school district, residential, university, and hospital fossil fuel use in rural areas through equitable best practices that address the unique challenges of rural communities.



## EXAMPLES

- Identify, develop and share best practices for reducing municipal, school district, residential, commercial, and industrial fossil fuel consumption.
- Expand access to programs that provide zero up-front cost options for weatherization and utility upgrades for homeowners and landlords.

**Pathway #4 Land Use-** Change Vermont's land-use policies so current and future land development will be adaptive and resilient to climate change impacts by promoting compact development, enhancing the capacity of natural and working lands, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

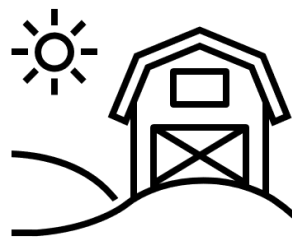


## EXAMPLES

- Improve coordination across agencies, departments, municipalities, boards, commissions and authorities to evaluate climate change impacts when considering and issuing permits, licenses, and other administrative approvals and decisions.
- Create a state Land Use Plan that guides development to growth areas, town centers and appropriate rural locations and limits development within ecologically sensitive / risk-prone areas.
- Establish a statewide conservation and buyout program for at risk properties.



**Pathway #5 Housing-** Ensure that all people have access to safe, accessible, energy efficient, and affordable housing in location-efficient, compact, and mixed-use neighborhood areas with diverse housing types and equitable access to jobs, services, schools, recreation and diverse transportation options.



## EXAMPLES

- Expand existing pilot program that supports a network of local builders in the design and building of small homes/accessory dwelling units (mother-in-law apartments) in communities with regulations welcoming housing.
- Create a rental registry and inspection program to improve housing quality and safety.
- Increase funding for community-based homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing.