



**Global Warming Solutions Act, H. 688
Testimony from the Vermont Sierra Club
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Vermont Chapter of the Sierra Club

- **National: 4.5 million members & supporters**
- **Vermont:**
 - **Chapter since 1993**
 - **3200 members**
 - **Volunteer leadership, elected by members**
 - **Montpelier staff**

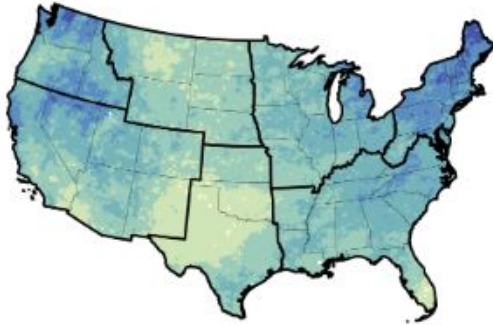


- **Basic Choices**
- **Net zero, 80%, offsets**
- **Greenhouse Gas Inventory**
- **Nature-Based Adaptation**
- **Climate Council**

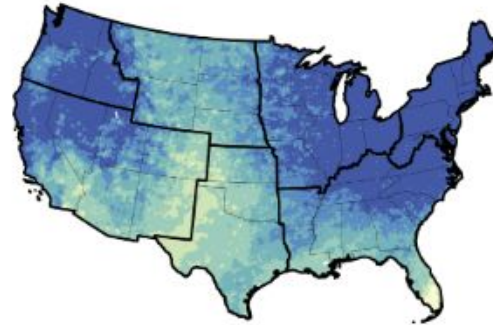
The Reason We're Here

Projected Change in Total Annual Precipitation
Falling in the Heaviest 1% of Events by Late 21st Century

Lower Scenario (RCP4.5)



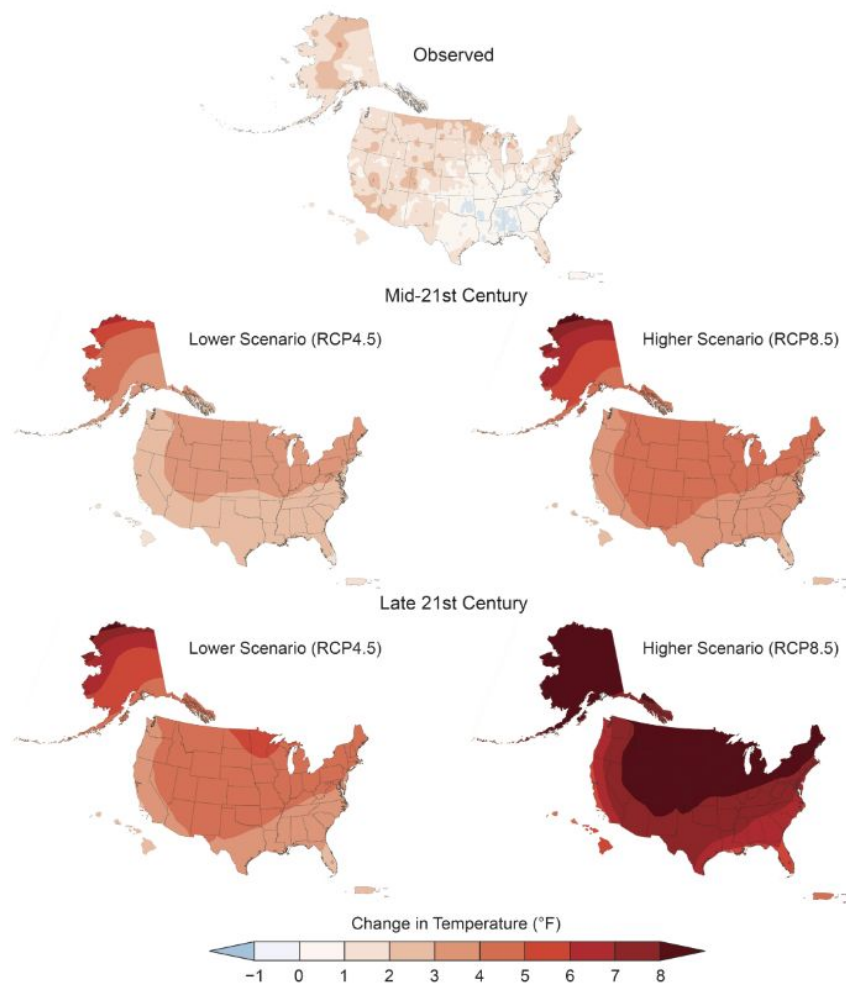
Higher Scenario (RCP8.5)



Change (%)



MODELED TEMPERATURE CHANGE



Strengths of H. 688

- 1. Adherence to Paris agreement and IPCC 1.5C Pathway***
- 2. Clarifies the Intention of the GWSA**
- 3. Incorporates Adaptation and Resilience**
- 4. Climate Council**
 - a. Engagement of a broad spectrum of concerned Vermonters**
 - b. Charged with clarifying an action plan**
- 5. Clear Charge for Agency Rulemaking**
- 6. Deadlines for action**
- 7. Clear but limited opportunities for citizens to engage in enforcement**

Reduction Goals and Offsets

- **Some confusion about “not less than 80% by 2050”**
- **Is the goal really “net zero,” but up to X% offsets?**
- **Issues with offsets**
 - **Real, additional, enforceable, language helps**
 - **Slippery to manage**
 - **Potential for unintended consequences**
- **Recommend a goal of net zero, with as much as 10% achieved through alternative reduction methods.**
- **IPCC calls for reductions Beyond Net Zero.**

Vermont Greenhouse Gas Inventory

- 1. Lynchpin of accountability system**
- 2. Will serve us over the next 30 years and beyond**
- 3. Rulemaking: “May” vs. “Shall”**
- 4. Improvements needed**
 - a. Timing**
 - b. Resources**
 - c. Overlooked GHG sources**
 - i. Methane, fugitive emissions**
 - ii. Biomass, especially for electricity**
 - iii. Large Hydro: lost carbon sinks, reservoir emissions**
- 5. Recommend Fast-Tracking Rulemaking**

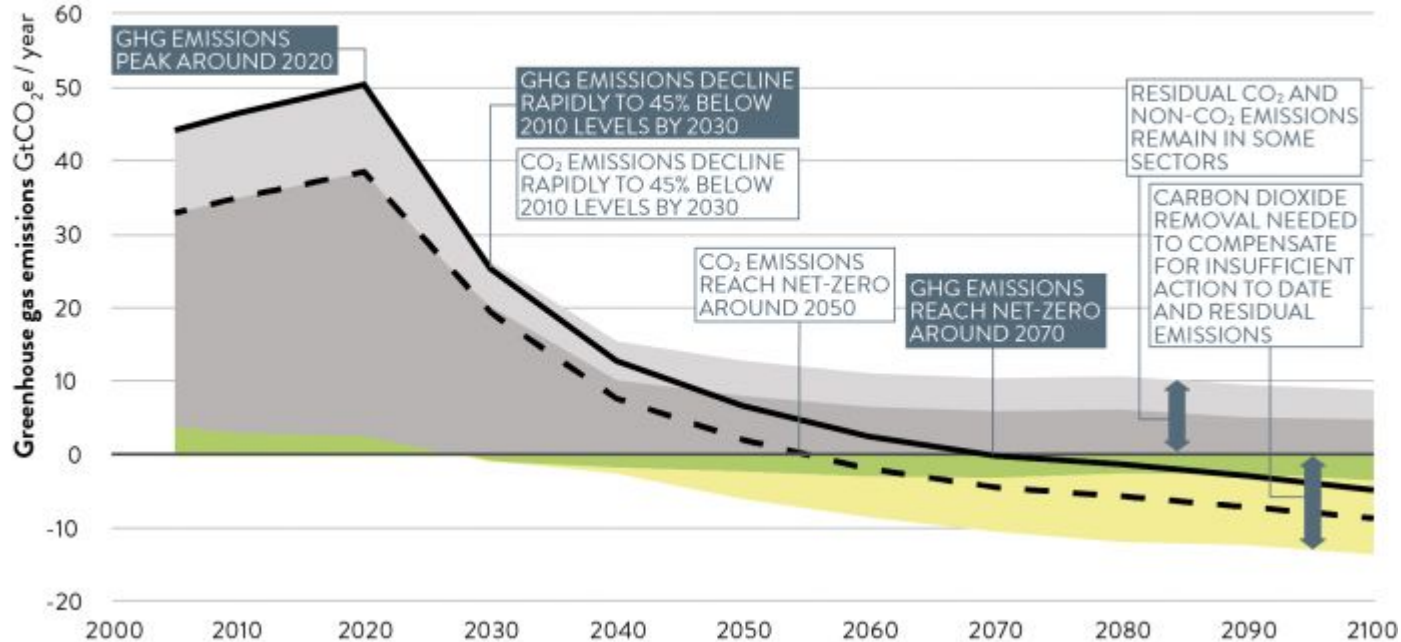
Nature Based Adaptation

- 1. Important Adaptation Concerns**
 - a. Ecosystem Support**
 - b. Agricultural Adaptation**
 - c. Food Supply**
 - d. Co-Benefits, Nature Based Sequestration**
 - i. Beyond Net Zero**
- 2. Add to the Council/Plan charge, plus 4th subcommittee**

BEYOND NET ZERO

PEAK AND RAPID DECLINE TO BELOW NET-ZERO

Key global benchmarks for Paris Agreement compatible 1.5°C emissions pathways



Climate Council

- **Regional Planner with experience in resilience.**
- **Individual with experience in climate education and social transformation.**
- **Individual with expertise regarding health concerns raised by a changing climate.**
- **Individual with expertise regarding the mental health challenges of climate change, including those impacting climate change refugees who relocate to our state.**
- **One person representing farming, with understanding of soil carbon as well as adaptation demands**
- **One person representing the forest sector, with understanding of forest carbon, sustainable forestry, and the needs of the working forest industry.**
- **Individual with an understanding of the impacts of climate change and needs for adaptation with regard to natural communities**
- **An individual representing small business, industrial, and independent energy producers**
- **An expert in finance and investment, public/private partnerships**

Climate Council 2.0

Climate Council
7 Agency, 8-14 Citizens

Subcommittees

- 2+ Council
- 2 Agency staff
- Up to 8 additional citizens

Cross Sector Mitigation

Rural Resiliency and Adaptation

Just Transition

Ecosystems and Agriculture

Other Programs Will Do the Heavy Lifting

- **GWSA should be no excuse to delay implementation of many obviously valuable investments**
- **Vermont Green New Deal**
- **Strengthen renewable standard, TCI, modernize Efficiency Vermont**
- **Increased support to drive the markets**
- **The sooner we dive in, the more effective we will be and the less expensive action will be.**

Questions?