

# PRIORITIZING SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

## Strong and Vibrant Communities

### Climate Action Office



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- **WHAT:** As part of the Governor’s Climate Change Mitigation Package, the Administration is proposing the creation of a Climate Action Office.
  - **WHY:** The policies, programs and tools needed to implement climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience strategies will require a long-term intergovernmental structure to coordinate and manage this statewide effort. The Vermont Office of Climate Action will coordinate and lead in the implementation of state-led climate initiatives, as well as the monitoring, assessment and tracking of climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience activities necessary to evaluate progress over time in achieving the requirements of the GWSA.
  - **WHO:** The Vermont Office of Climate Action will be a division within the Agency of Natural Resources Central Office, organized into three sections:
    1. Mitigation, Adaptation, and Technical Analysis:
      - Inventory and track effectiveness of all climate initiatives;
      - Evaluate the greenhouse gas impact of existing policies and new policy proposals;
      - Prepare the annual *Vermont Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory and Forecast* reports;
      - Build on existing economic impact analyses of climate change policies and identify opportunities to improve efficacy and cost-effectiveness.
    2. Support On-going Implementation of the GWSA:
      - Coordinate interagency team to develop and implement state-led climate initiatives;
      - Provide administrative, technical and legal assistance to the Vermont Climate Council, consistent with the requirements of the GWSA;
      - Lead annual reporting to the Executive and Legislative branches on the Council’s activities and the State’s progress towards meeting the GHG emission reduction requirements of the GWSA;
      - Contract for support services to develop and implement future version of the Climate Action Plan;
      - Coordinate and collaborate with other states, the federal government, and other jurisdictions to maximize the impact, efficacy and cost-effectiveness of climate action initiatives.
    3. Community and Stakeholder Engagement:
      - Carry forward communications and engagement with Vermonters to support program design of various state-led climate initiatives ensure all residents of the State benefit fairly and equitably;

- Specifically seek to engage with:
  - Those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including low-income communities, indigenous peoples, and black and other communities;
  - Those in industries or with jobs that will be impacted by public policies supporting decarbonization.
- **HOW:** A mix of existing and new positions will be used to form the Vermont Office of Climate Action and support this ongoing work. These include:
  - Climate Office Director (existing)
  - GHG Mitigation Specialist (existing)
  - GHG Emissions Analyst (existing)
  - Community Resilience Specialist (existing)
  - Natural and Working Lands Resilience Specialist (new)
  - Data Manager (new)
  - Community Engagement and Reporting lead (new)
  - Economic and Policy Analyst (new)
- The Vermont Office of Climate Action will also have an advisory board that meets regularly and includes the following governmental agencies:
  - PSD
  - AOT
  - ANR
  - VEM
  - AAFM
  - BGS
  - AHS (DCF and VDH)
  - ACCD
  - State Climatologist
- **FUNDING:** \$650,000 of General Fund base is included in the Governor's FY23 recommended budget.

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