

The Global Warming Solutions Act and the Vermont Climate Action Plan



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Global Warming Solutions Act (GWSA), Act 153 of 2020:

- Enacted: September 23, 2020
- First meeting of the Vermont Climate Council: November 20, 2020
- Subcommittees Began Meeting in February, 2021
 - Cross-Sector Mitigation, Rural Resilience and Adaptation, Agriculture and Ecosystems, Just Transitions and Science and Data
- Initial Climate Action Plan adopted: December 1, 2021

The Vermont Climate Action Plan

- Aims to cut climate pollution 40% below 1990 levels by 2030
 - ◆ approximately half of 2005 levels
- Prioritize those who are most affected
- Shaped by five subcommittees
 - ◆ with public input
 - ◆ in coordination with CEP
- Updated at least every 4 years
- Implementation section to inform decision-making
- Framework for measuring progress

GWSA Charge to the Climate Council

1. **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions** from the transportation, building, regulated utility, industrial, commercial, and agricultural sectors;
2. Encourage smart growth and related strategies;
3. **Achieve long-term sequestration and storage of carbon** and promote best management practices to achieve climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience on natural [and] working lands;
4. **Achieve net zero emissions by 2050 across all sectors;**
5. Reduce energy burdens for rural and marginalized communities;
6. Limit the use of chemicals, substances, or products that contribute to climate change; and
7. **Build and encourage climate adaptation and resilience** of Vermont communities and natural systems.

Equity Lens: Guiding Principles for a Just Transition

A framework for the Climate Council and subcommittees to evaluate, adjust and prioritize recommendations based on how they will impact Vermont's impacted and frontline communities.

01

Ensuring inclusive, transparent, and innovative engagement

02

Creating accountable & restorative recommendations

03

Moving at the speed of trust

04

Incorporating solidarity to create inclusionary spaces

05

Prioritizing the most impacted first

06

Developing supports for workers, families, and communities

Five Impact Areas



Cutting Climate Pollution

Reducing emissions from transportation, buildings, energy and products.



Capturing Carbon

Removing carbon from the air and storing it in soil or plants.



Resilient Working and Natural Lands

Preparing farms, forests and ecosystems for climate change.



Cross-Cutting Solutions

Investing in communities and workforce development.



Vital Communities

Protecting people and infrastructure from climate impacts.

What Will You Find in the CAP?

- The GWSA established a suite of ambitious goals and requirements
- VCC developed a broad and far-reaching set of recommendations
- Initial Climate Action Plan identifies:
 - 26 pathways
 - Written broadly; high-level
 - 64 strategies
 - Statements of measurable activity
 - 234 specific action steps
 - Operational tasks

The image shows the cover of a report titled "INITIAL VERMONT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN". The cover has a white background with a blue header bar at the top and a large blue rectangular area at the bottom. The title is centered in blue text. At the bottom right of the blue area, there is small white text that reads "Vermont Climate Council" and "DECEMBER 2021".

INITIAL VERMONT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Vermont Climate Council
DECEMBER 2021

With the CAP Adopted, What Happens Now?

Vermont Climate Council

- Develop strategies for transportation sector GHG emissions reductions
- Make recommendations for utilization of ARPA funds to Legislature and the Governor
- Request budget to support further technical analyses/study
- Prioritize work needed to build equity into climate action and ensure a just transition

ANR

- Complete Pathways Analysis
- Initiate rulemaking re: CA Clean Car & Truck standards
- Components of public engagement
- Remaining Statutory obligations

JFO

- Prepare “...an analysis of the economic, budgetary, and fiscal costs and benefits of the Plan...”

Legislature

Essentially a hand-off back to for timely action

GWSA Work in 2022

- **Climate Toolkit Development**
 - Recommend tools for municipalities to assess their climate emergency preparedness, evaluate their financial capacity to address infrastructure resilience, and prioritize investment in that infrastructure. This will include a broad approach, including public health, frontline and impacted communities and how it can support a just transition, and how to reach rural communities.
- **Develop Measuring Progress Reporting Tool**
 - This tool should speak to how to measure and assess progress related to emissions reductions, the effectiveness of specific programs and initiatives, the effects of climate change on climate, wildlife, natural resources and existing resilience of the State's communities, infrastructure, and economy and progress towards improving resilience to adapt to the current and anticipated effects of climate change.
- **Develop the Municipal Vulnerability Index (MVI) Tool**
 - The MVI will, at a minimum, include factors measuring a municipality's population, average age, employment, and grand list trends; active public and civic organizations; and distance from emergency services and shelter.

ANR's GWSA Work in 2022

- Public Engagement
 - Undertake public engagement and outreach around the initial Climate Action Plan, focused on creating the necessary structure for long-term engagement.
- Climate Action Office
 - 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.
 - Includes a position envisioned entitled Community Resilience Specialist bringing added capacity to support community resilience in the face of climate change and will take an “all-hazards” approach which will include public health.
 - Proposal also envisions an advisory board with participation from VDH so communication will be strengthened.