

Updating New Hampshire's Climate Action Plan

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

local people, local priorities, and local solutions!

Online via Zoom

JANUARY 24, 2024

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM



**University of
New Hampshire**

Carsey School of Public Policy



Welcome – Thank you for being here!

New Hampshire Listens is working on behalf of the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) to [design and facilitate community engagement](#)—an essential component of NH's Priority and Comprehensive Climate Action Plans

We are here today to hear from you!



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A FEW REMINDERS...

We have formatted today to gather input from you and our time will move quickly.



- Mute in large group
- If possible, cameras ON during small group breakouts.
- You are welcome to listen.
- Use chat for responses and resources
- *Message Mikayla - NH Listens for tech assistance*
- Group Agreements:
 - Listen to others and share air time.
 - Participate and be as fully present as you can.
 - Respect each other and our brief time together.

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

local people, local priorities, and local solutions!



Your near-term, implement-ready priorities could become funded projects!

Between **December 2023 and early February 2024**, join a community conversation to learn and talk together about local priorities and possibilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

- Air pollution affects us ALL in our homes, at work, where we and our families learn, and where we play.
- These conversations are focused on talking about local issues and potential solutions.
- The State of New Hampshire needs to hear from local community members interested in, and already working on, air pollution reductions.
- Your input will inform NH's Priority Climate Action Plan, implementation proposals, and future plans.

[See registration links HERE](#)



Today's Agenda:

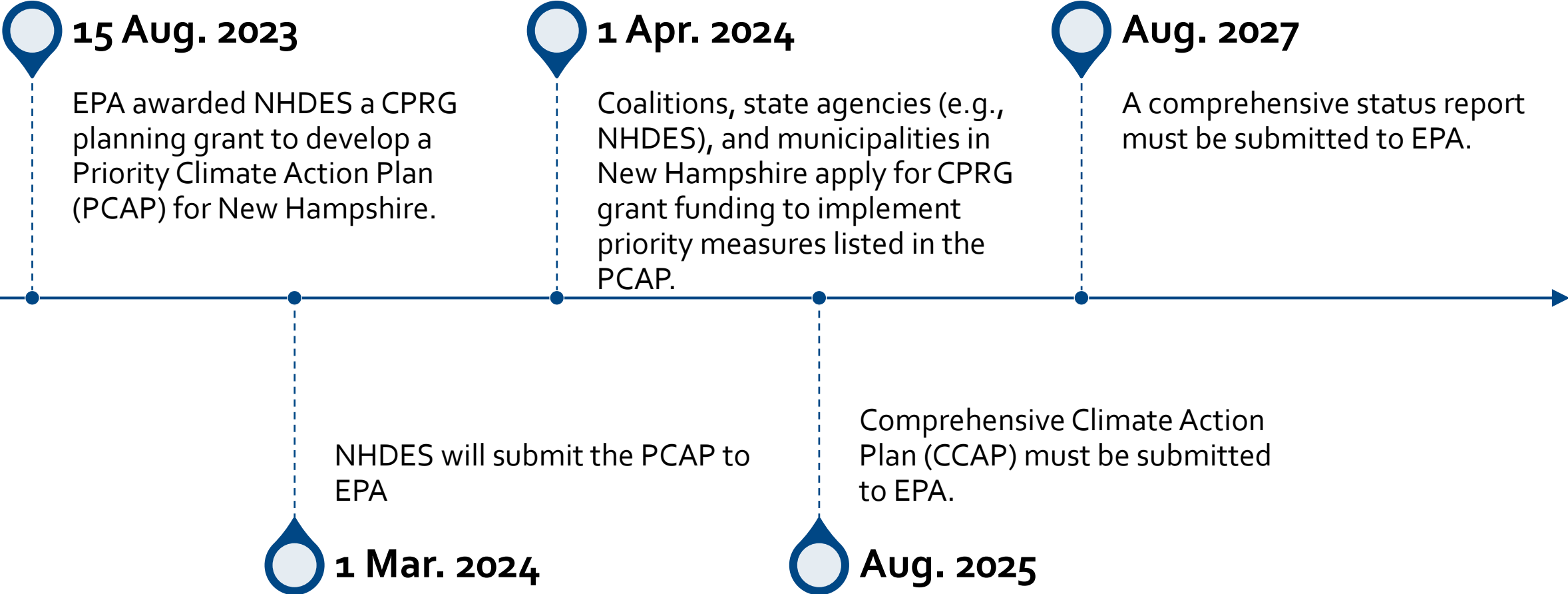
- **Grounding:** Project overview and timeline reminder
- **Spotlight:** Implementation grant goals
- **Spotlight:** NH's identified disadvantaged communities
- **Share:** What we're hearing from in-person community events
- **Small Group:** What's happening in your community and what is important for NH DES to know?
- **Wrap up and what's next**
- **Q & A 7:55 PM**
- **Close 8:00 PM**



Updating NH's Climate Action Plan - An opportunity for New Hampshire:

- NH was granted federal funding in August to update NH's Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The four-year program runs **2023 - 2027**.
- Community engagement is an essential component to update NH's Climate Action Plan
- NH will identify priority projects by (*March 1, 2024*) to apply for implementation funds available from the federal government (*April 1, 2024*) to move projects forward here in NH!

Over the course of the four-year program running to 2027:



Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency seeks to achieve three broad objectives:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions while supporting the creation of good jobs and lowering energy costs for families.
- Empower community-driven solutions in neighborhoods overburdened from pollution and impacts of climate change by directly seeking input from those communities.
- Deliver cleaner air by reducing harmful air pollution in places where people live, work, play, and go to school.





Updating NH's Climate Action Plan

These plans are part of [the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant \(CPRG\) funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.](#)

They lead to implementation funding that will support **community-engaged projects** with an effort to focus on [Justice 40 investments](#) among the sectors of air pollution and greenhouse gas reductions.

If you have specific questions about the grant funding, **reach out to the NHDES CPRG Team. Share your thoughts with the team:**
cprg@des.nh.gov

Implementation Grant Goals

- EPA anticipates approximately 30 to 115 grants under this; range \$2 to \$500 million each
- We seek your help identifying the ***near-term, high-priority, implement ready*** projects in NH to apply for federal funding this spring
- Focused on:
 - Projects, not policy
 - Emissions reduction
 - Implementation ready

<https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/about-cprg-implementation-grants>

Goals include:

- Implement ambitious measures that will achieve significant reductions by 2030 and beyond;
- Pursue measures that will achieve substantial community benefits by reducing air pollutants, particularly in low-income and disadvantaged communities;
- Complement other funding sources to maximize GHG reductions and community benefits;
- Pursue innovative policies and programs that are replicable and can be “scaled up” across multiple jurisdictions.



A key component to each climate plan is including investments linked to the federal Justice40 Initiative

“the Federal Government has made it a goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution”

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/>

What is a disadvantaged community? (US EPA)

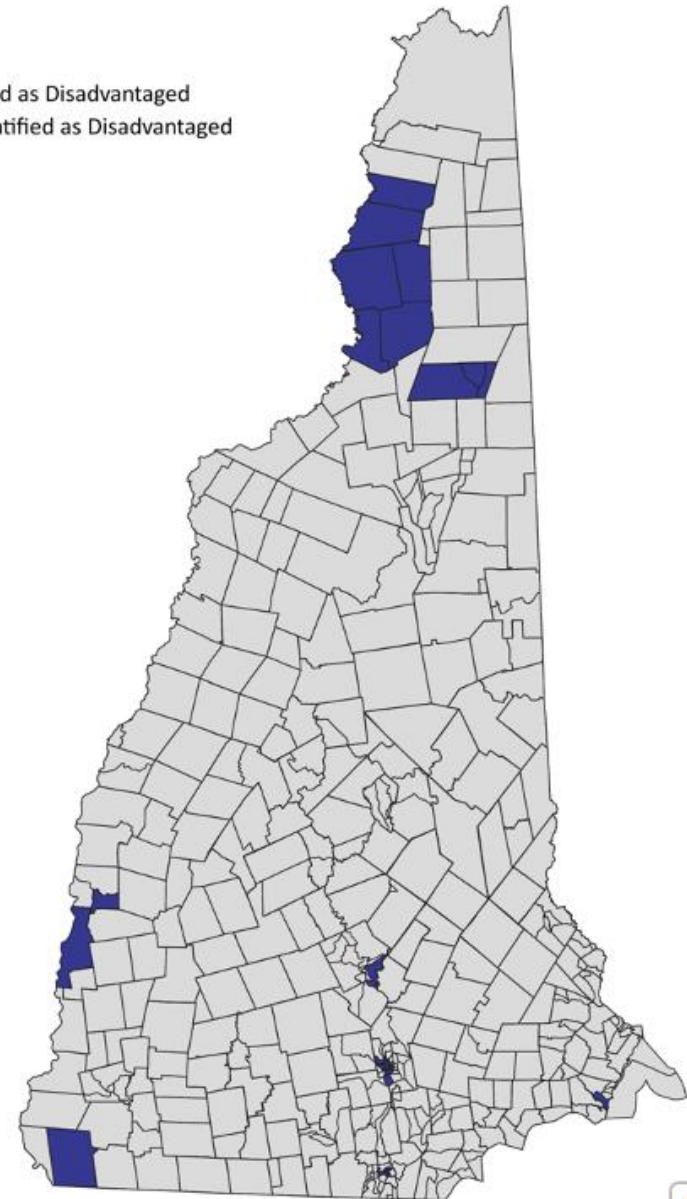
A community is highlighted as disadvantaged on the CEJST map if it is in a census tract that is:

- at or above the threshold for one or more environmental, climate, or other burdens,
- at or above the threshold for an associated socioeconomic burden,
- completely surrounded by disadvantaged communities and is at or above the 50% percentile for low income is also considered disadvantaged.

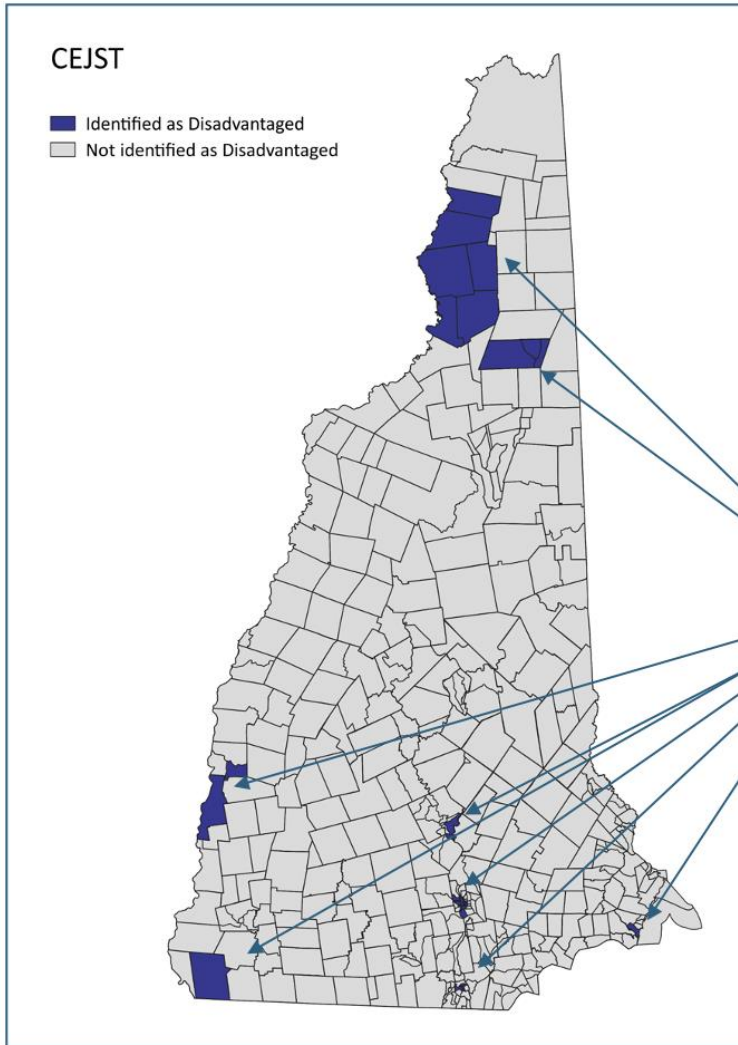
Source: [Methodology & data - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool \(geoplatform.gov\)](https://www.epa.gov/geoplatform/methodology-and-data-climate-economic-justice-screening-tool)

CEJST

- Identified as Disadvantaged
- Not identified as Disadvantaged



What is a disadvantaged community? Cont. (US EPA)



A community is highlighted as disadvantaged on the CEJST map if it is in a census tract that is: (1) at or above the threshold for one or more environmental, climate, or other burdens, and (2) at or above the threshold for an associated socioeconomic burden.

In addition, a census tract that is completely surrounded by disadvantaged communities and is at or above the 50% percentile for low income is also considered disadvantaged. There are also communities indicated in grey here that are in need, the blue show the most disadvantaged in terms of the categories of burden highlighted above.

Source: [Methodology & data - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool \(geoplatform.gov\)](https://www.geoplatform.gov/Methodology-and-data-Climate-and-Economic-Justice-Screening-Tool)

Using CEJST mapper for NH:

- 8 clusters of census tracts identified as holding the most indicators of need in terms of climate pollution reduction.
- 25 census tracts identified in total
- Number of thresholds exceeded = 1 to 12 per tract (127 total)
- Thresholds exceeded in 21 of the 31 federal categories
- NH Listens and NH DES have scheduled in-person community engagement events in communities in each of these clusters as well as 3 statewide on-line events.

Categories of Burdens

Burden	Thresholds = Factors Considered (federal datasets) in addition to Low Income
Climate Change	Expected Agriculture Loss Rate, Expected Building Loss Rate, Expected Population Loss Rate, Projected Flood Risk, Projected Wildfire Risk
Energy	Energy Cost, PM2.5 in the Air
Health	Asthma, Diabetes, Heart Disease, Low Life Expectancy
Housing	Historic Underinvestment, Housing Cost, Lack of Green Space, Lack of Indoor Plumbing, Lead Paint
Legacy Pollution	proximity to Abandoned Mine Lands, Formerly Used Defense Sites, Hazardous Waste Facilities, Superfund Sites, Risk Management Plan Facilities
Transportation	Diesel Particulate Matter Exposure, Transportation Barriers, Traffic Proximity & Volume,
Waste and Wastewater	Underground Storage Tanks & Releases, Wastewater Discharge
Workforce Development	Linguistic Isolation, Low Median Income, Poverty, Unemployment, Education Level (high school diploma)
Burden	Thresholds = Factors Considered (federal datasets) in addition to Low Income

Categories of Burdens found in NH Census Tracts

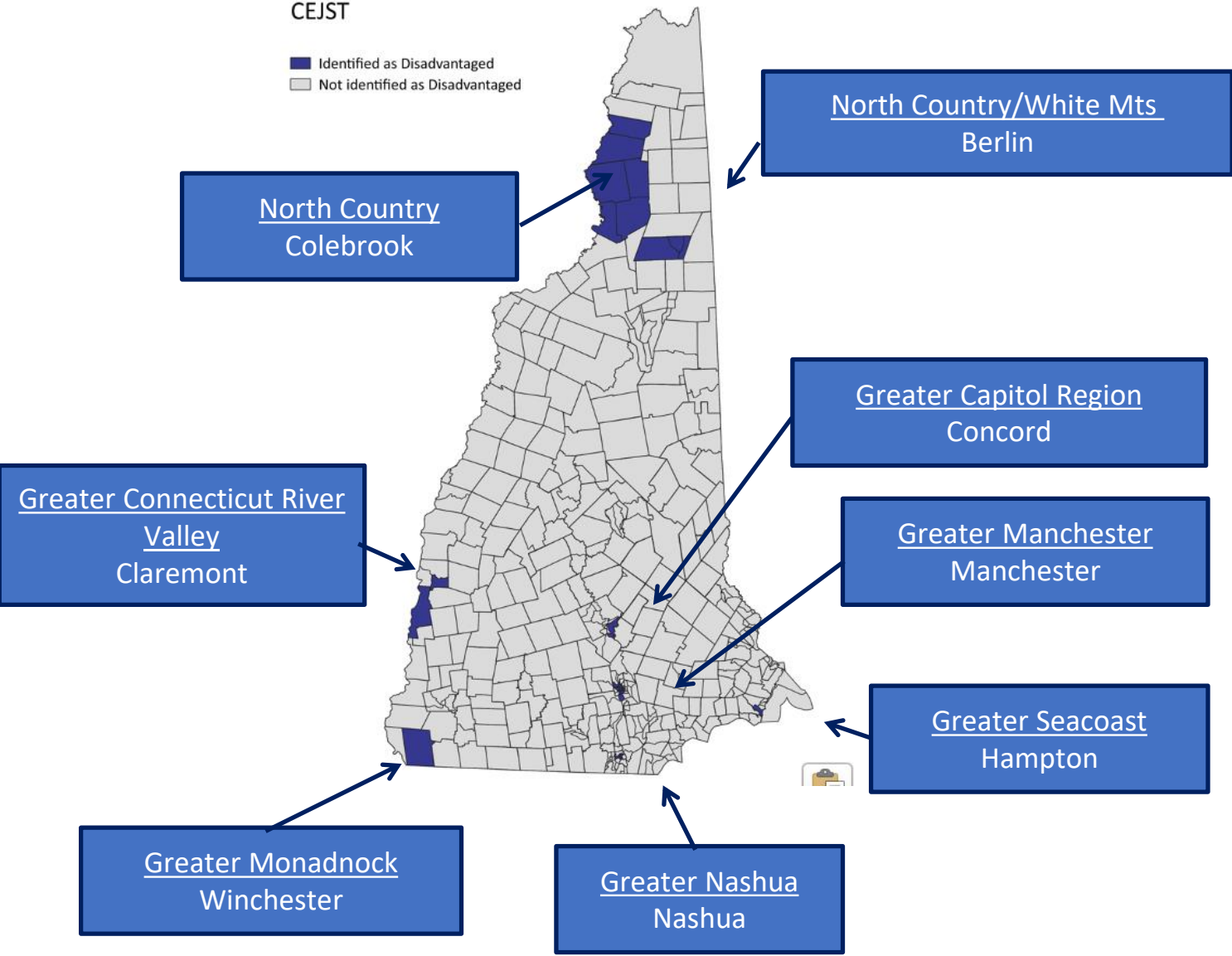
Burden	Factors Considered (federal datasets) in addition to Low Income
Climate Change	Expected Agriculture Loss Rate, Expected Building Loss Rate , Expected Population Loss Rate, Projected Flood Risk*, Projected Wildfire Risk*
Energy	Energy Cost, PM2.5 in the Air
Health	Asthma, Diabetes , Heart Disease, Low Life Expectancy
Housing	Housing Cost, Lead Paint, Historic Underinvestment*, Lack of Green Space*, Lack of Indoor Plumbing*
Legacy Pollution	proximity to Hazardous Waste Facilities, Superfund Sites, Risk Management Plan Facilities, Abandoned Mine Lands*, Formerly Used Defense Sites*
Transportation	Diesel Particulate Matter Exposure , Traffic Proximity & Volume, Transportation Barriers*
Waste and Wastewater	Wastewater Discharge , Underground Storage Tanks & Releases*
Workforce Development	Linguistic Isolation, Low Median Income, Poverty, Unemployment, Education Level (high school diploma)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * = new federal datasets strikeouts = thresholds not exceeded in NH census tracts

NH Listens / NHDES Community Engagement



CEJST

- Identified as Disadvantaged
- Not identified as Disadvantaged



In-person events remaining

- Claremont – Thursday, Jan 25, 5:30pm
- Winchester - Thursday, Jan 25, 6pm
- Berlin – Wednesday, Jan 31, 5pm
- Manchester – Thursday, Feb 1, 5pm
- Concord – Monday, February 12, 5pm

Statewide online community conversations

December 6 | 4:30 PM
January 9 | 5 PM
January 24 | 6:30 PM

Statewide Cross-Sector Stakeholder Meetings

November 30, 2023 | 2:30 PM
January 11, 2024 | 3:30 PM
February 8, 2024 | 3 PM

What we're hearing from in person community engagement events



What priority projects will reduce emissions where you live, work, learn, and play?

Themes:

- Recognizing ongoing efforts and how to include them in NH's statewide plan
- Promoting education and awareness to generate community buy-in
- Focus on equitable allocation of resources

Workforce Development
Infrastructure Changes
Education and Outreach
Focus on Communities in Need
And Much more!

Greenhouse Gas Sectors

- Transportation
- Electricity generation and/or use and Industry
- Commercial and residential buildings
- Natural and working lands and Agriculture
- Waste and materials management and Wastewater



Small Group Breakouts



Directions

- Zoom magic will bring you to a breakout
- One, 45 min. facilitated session
- Facilitator will guide you through questions
- We want to hear from everyone!
- Group agreements - Share airtime please!

Focus questions:

1. What's going on in your community related to reducing climate pollution?
2. What's missing from the projects gathered so far? What else needs to be added?
3. What are three important takeaways from this conversation that NH DES should know as NH's Climate Action Plans are created?

Small Groups Notes – Slides 19-27

These are raw notes taken by facilitators during the session and later themed and summarized in the online community engagement report. Not all notes meet the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant or Priority Climate Action Plan Criteria. They are to inform the NHDES team as they write the plans using a community-engaged approach.



Small Group 1 Notes - What's going on in your community related to reducing climate pollution?

- **Claremont** has redone their streetlights to reduce energy expenditure
- **Manchester** has created bike lanes, ongoing efforts to remove them; Queen City Bike Collective efforts to provide bicycles and providing bike education
- **Goffstown** is developing multi-family units, potential traffic concern
- **Lebanon** is in Phase III of installing solar on municipal buildings; in June will install landfill gas to energy and EV charging for city vehicles and is open to local partners; city council passed a zoning amendment that requires MUDs to include EV charging, applies to commercial developments; city adopted a policy that fleets purchases moving forward must be electric (with some exceptions)
- **Durham** is putting together a Climate Action Plan; local middle school has been built with solar and energy efficiency; housing and busing issues causes longer commutes for students; city resolved to removed a dam (uptake carbon); no fast-charging stations nearby; not safe to bike
- **Concord** may have committed to a Sustainability Plan; new developments continues to be an issues, ex. new middle school was moved to East Side (near Broken Ground) rather than local, accessible downtown area near high school; not bike friendly; Interfaith Sustainability Groups

Small Group 1 Notes - What's missing from the projects gathered so far (slides 29-33)? What else needs to be added?

- Bigger gains would be to shift focus on weatherization (i.e. heat pumps) and transportation
- Innovative technology of existing tech (heat pumps are noisy, people live in close quarters)
- Walkable communities, ensuring that new housing allows people to live where they works and can access essential services by walking
- Focusing on energy efficiency, NH operates on clean energy (like nuclear), so focusing on efficiency is the next step/priority
- “Maine Won’t Wait” - NH needs to catch up with New England peers
- Missing political will, those who control the State House and holds back efforts for climate efforts; need more people to voice support for the things we know work and what neighboring states are currently doing
- Data analysis that shows up how we are doing compared to the 2009 Climate Action Plan, want to figure out what we should be applying for
- Coordination and clarification on obtaining the funds; how can people/orgs/agencies be best prepared/oriented
- Workforce training, providing incentives through school programs to compensate students
- Public transportation infrastructure is lacking, even between larger cities in the state, which makes us car dependent
- Partnerships with churches that do not have weatherization efforts installed in their buildings

Small Group 1 Notes - What are three important takeaways from this conversation that NH DES should know as the Priority and Comprehensive Climate Action Plans are created?

- Outreach and education to bring awareness of what is possible in NH.
- Working with NH Saves, New England states on a regional effort to address and combat climate change, energy efficiency, workforce development
- Transportation in New Hampshire is a large source of emissions, focus on transportation alternatives.

Small Group 2 Notes - What's going on in your community related to reducing climate pollution?

Local Projects

- Municipal Solar Array (Sandwich)
- Forest Preservation (Sandwich)
- Localism (Sandwich)- shorter transport distances for goods, etc.
- Municipal level Climate Action Plan (Portsmouth) - building efficiency, ordinances, transportation options, waste management/ and reduction recycling, community power
- Municipal Climate Action Plan (Nashua) - livable dashboards, walkability, improved public transportation system/equipment, EV infrastructure, other things like Portsmouth
- Land Conservation near village centers (Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust) (Bath) to make towns more walkable and have recreation opportunities in town (places you don't have to drive to)
- Tree plantings, including wetlands buffers, wildlife habitat (ACT and UNH extension)
- Tree planting program at schools through UNH (Nashua)

Needs

- Reliable public transportation to urban areas like Boston (Merrimack, Manchester, Concord)

Concerns

- High asthma rates in NH - emissions from transportation is a leading cause

Small Group 2 Notes - What's missing from the projects gathered so far (slides 29-33)? What else needs to be added?

What else is needed?

- Promoting Climate Education in schools
- Education on Plant Based eating
- Ways to encourage electric landscaping equipment
- Dealing with single use plastic - bans, bottle deposits,...
- Waste policies aligned with neighboring states so we're not the regions dumping ground

Barriers

- Use rebates rather than Tax Incentives. Most low/middle class households don't qualify for the tax breaks.
- Electrification of farm equipment - no tractors on the market. Choices are either too small or very large and automated. Need the "Goldy Locks" EV tractor

Other partners

- Natural Resources Conservation Services (NCRS) has Climate Adaptation grants

Small Group 2 Notes - What are three important takeaways from this conversation that NH DES should know as the Priority and Comprehensive Climate Action Plans are created?

- Local Problems vs. Regional Impacts. Example: Merrimack Generating Plant (Coal) - while Bow may not be disadvantaged, it negatively impacts air quality for residents in Bow - they take on the burden pollution from this electricity generation for all of New England. Impacts people with Asthma in the rest of the area/state
- NH as a “waste dump” for all of New England. NH waste management laws/rules don’t align with neighboring states.
- Protect our natural environment and waterways. Add vegetation buffers. Environmentally responsible development

Small Group 3 Notes - What's going on in your community related to reducing climate pollution?

- **The Bow Power Plant still in operation-** Concord, Pembroke, and Allenstown being affected, and asthma rates are of concern. Also affecting the Merrimack river and disadvantaged communities. Emits more in one hour while only contributing less than one percent of NH power. Can it be redeveloped into clean energy?
- **Loudon, NH-** Going to the dump and seeing all of the trash. Lack of recycling is an issue because people are motivated by monetary incentive rather than environmental incentive.
- **Concord, NH-** Too much of the recycling bin needing to be thrown away because people are recycling incorrectly. Community members feeling hopeless and there is a disconnect between impacts of climate change on health, while they think only the weather is being affected.
- **Northfield, NH-** Merrimack river getting funding for cleaning up pollution.
- Making sure communities that face Justice40 challenges are considered - for instance, Franklin, NH and other communities in the middle of the state have needs to be addressed.

Small Group 3 Notes - What's missing from the projects gathered so far (slides 29-33)? What else needs to be added?

- Park and ride under solar panels, so that cars are covered and there are alternative ways to generate electricity
- Net metering for mitigation
- Chichester, Pittsfield waste station tried to install solar panels, but the state hoops made it so that they could not do it. We need some help reducing the barriers to implementation in communities for things like this
- Repurpose the Bow Power Plant as an alternative energy space, or parking lots as well.
- Anything to encourage geothermal because spaces like churches do not get stipend to use it; makes it costly to heat building.
- Hospitals, schools, and libraries benefits - incentivizing reusable energy
- More public awareness and transparency on weatherization and how switching to alternative energy choices can be incentivized
- Equitability on funding the projects can sometimes cause inequitable funding in schools
- Heat islands in more urban areas such as Manchester, NH need to be paid attention to more
- Concerns around cutting down trees on private properties
- Native planting to help support biodiversity

Small Group 3 Notes - What are three important takeaways from this conversation that NH DES should know as the Priority and Comprehensive Climate Action Plans are created?

- Needs to be transparent, simple communication about how these efforts are going to affect community members' lives.
- Creating comprehensive climate education to help students understand the effects of the climate on themselves and their environment
- Energy costs are of concern to residents

We Heard from You and Others Statewide!

The next five slides are from the brainstormed actions collected during engagement events. The content listed are several examples of eligible projects to inform your conversations:

- Focused Greenhouse Gas reduction by Sector
- Near-term
- Implementable



TRANSPORTATION Examples

- Bulk purchase of electric vehicle supply equipment for towns and other municipal and local entities (e.g. public schools)
- Build more public electric vehicle charging stations; address EVSE needs of renters (i.e. community charging)
- General funding opportunities for public transportation, including bus transit
- Infrastructure for low emission transit, like bike lanes and rail trails
- Incentives to deploy electric charging infrastructure for commercial medium- and heavy-duty zero-emission vehicles
- Electric school bus program
- Electrification of light-duty, municipal fleets

ELECTRICITY GENERATION & INDUSTRY Examples

- Install solar farms, as part of community power and storage systems
- Community Solar: Small and medium size community solar projects; community microgrids
- Small, local scale transmission upgrades across our grid
- Monitor heat loss and air quality on buildings and homes
- Provide electric vehicle charging stations, particularly in town and city centers
- Incentives for landlords to install electric vehicle charging stations and weatherization efforts, like solar and window replacement for rental units
- Support accessible bike-friendly routes
- Install geothermal heat pump-infrastructure in public buildings and schools

COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS - Examples

- Incentives for building efficiency measures, like heat pumps, and weatherization
- Create opportunities for renters to secure effective approaches to heating, home energy, and EV charging; support work with landlords and tenants
- Solar on schools combined with infrastructure upgrades, like roof replacements
- Industry training for contractors, HVAC professionals*
- Increased assistance for multifamily dwelling conversions/similar smaller footprint living
- Funding for audits, like blower door tests, in residential single- and multi-unit dwellings
- Workforce development and training, including paid apprenticeships in weatherization; build out contractor capacity*
- Funding for EE enabling upgrades

NATURAL AND WORKING LANDS & AGRICULTURE - Examples

- Plant and maintain trees and plants in urban areas
- Provide access to cleaner transportation options and electrified farm equipment
- Incentivize sustainable forest practice
- Technical and financial support for community net zero efforts
- Small district heating and cooling
- Preserve wetlands and forests
- Support and promote net-zero energy in public buildings as a community approach
- Support green space: plant trees, utilize ecosystem services to reduce, capture carbon, etc.
- Maximize carbon storage and sequestration capabilities of forests
- Funding for land conservation

WASTE AND MATERIALS MANAGEMENT & WASTEWATER Examples

- Incentives for anaerobic digesters to recycle waste for energy back to grid
- Updating and replacing aging infrastructure to improve efficiency
- Incentives for anaerobic digesters of organic waste like food, water, ag byproducts
- Decarbonize and electrify buildings, including residential buildings
- Incentives and/or cost support for solar energy for town offices, schools, and homes
- Shifting to more efficient lighting, and other electrical uses
- Waste reduction and reuse (i.e., preventing waste from being generated in the first place)
- Recycling and waste diversion (i.e., avoiding disposal of items in a landfill or incinerator)

Large Group Discussion

What are three important takeaways from this conversation that NH DES should know as NH's Climate Action Plans are created?

All of the ideas and priorities captured during today's meeting and small groups will inform NH's Priority and Comprehensive Climate Action Plans (PCAP and CCAP)



Join us for community conversations local people, local priorities, and local solutions!

[Register for any of the dates and times below for online community conversations.](#)

Person Remaining - each 1.5 hours

[Register for the Greater Connecticut River Valley Conversation](#)

Thursday, January 25 | 5:30 PM | Claremont, NH

[Register for the Greater Monadnock Conversation](#)

Thursday, January 25 | 6 PM | Winchester, NH

[Register for the first North Country Region Conversation](#)

Wednesday, January 31 | 5 PM | Berlin, NH

[Register for the Greater Manchester Conversation](#)

Thursday, February 1 | 5 PM | Manchester, NH

[Register for the Concord and Greater Capitol Region Conversation](#)

Monday, February 12 | 5 PM | Concord, NH



INVITE US to YOUR MEETINGS, GROUPS etc.

We are ready to come to you as we move toward the Comprehensive Climate Action Planning Process.

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Thank you!



[Keep Learning about the Process](#)

Review the [Notice of Request for Public Comment: Draft Priority Measures for New Hampshire's Priority Climate Action Plan](#)

Community Engagement continues as a key piece of this work through the entire grant timeline

- Send comments and ideas to the NHDES CPRG team: cprg@des.nh.gov
- [Provide Additional Feedback Post-Event](#)
- Invite us to your meetings, workgroups etc. We are keeping a list and strategizing for future engagement
- [Learn more about engagement and see registration links for events](#)