

Summary Notes from Maine Climate Council October 31, 2024

Overview

The Maine Climate Council held met on October 31, 2024 from 9am – 11am to discuss and as a Council, sign off on the core content of the updated Climate Action Plan. The meeting was held virtually on Zoom. 39 people attended the meeting.

Agenda Items included:

- Review revisions that incorporate input from the previous meeting.
- Review final modeling results and associated targets.
- Confirm councilors' support for the updated content.

See full meeting video here: <https://youtu.be/XpF06iE-wWc>

See slides here: <https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/2024-10/10.31.24%20MCC%20meeting%20slides.pdf>

See Maine Won't Wait Draft here:

<https://www.maine.gov/future/sites/maine.gov.future/files/2024-10/1.Maine%20Wont%20Wait%20Full%20Draft%20for%20MCC.pdf>

Below are high-level summary notes from the meeting.

Welcome

Maine Climate Council Co-Chairs Hannah Pingree, Director of the Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future and Commissioner Melanie Loyzim, Department of Environmental Protection, opened the meeting. Hannah reviewed revisions made to the document since October 23rd. These include:

- **Throughout:** Edits for clarity, conciseness, and active language
- **New chapters added:** Climate Impacts, Goals, and Implementation chapters, including updated targets and metrics based on the latest modeling
- **Implementation:** Recommendation to develop a long-term funding plan and investment strategy to support implementation of Maine Won't Wait
- **Strategy A - Transportation:** Added reference to MaineDOT's ongoing efforts to improve rail, described specific modeling efforts to address transportation infrastructure most at risk
- **Strategy B - Buildings:** Updated language on building code adoption to clarify the timeline for adopting each code cycle, added recommendation to evaluate thermal energy networks
- **Strategy C - Clean Energy:** Further strengthened language about reliability, energy costs, and the impact of these strategies

- **Strategy D - Jobs:** Added more detail on K-12 and higher education pathways to clean energy careers
- **Strategy E - Natural and Working Lands and Waters:** Described broader need for land conservation funding beyond Land for Maine’s Future program, revised language to reflect size and impact of fisheries in Maine communities
- **Strategy F - Resilience:** Added bullets on public health following disasters and vector-borne disease monitoring, revised land use language, combined materials management recommendations
- **Strategy G - Engage with Maine People:** Language edits to highlight importance of action in schools (Strategy G and throughout)

Results of Modeling and Targets for Emissions Reduction

- The Council looked at updated targets for emissions reductions. The emissions modeling process explored targets across scenarios targets for 2030 and 2050 and provided additional and revised targets for the Council to consider for the 2024 plan. The 2024 targets are ambitious, include specific targets to ensure that the benefits of climate action reach all Maine people, and aim to be realistic and achievable.

Confirming Agreement on the Climate Action Plan

The Council reviewed revisions and made final suggestions for changes to the text. These were:

- Include clear messaging on progress made to date on meeting climate goals.
- Update building code language.
- Recognize work already underway on 3D bio-based building.
 - Add mention of 3D home printing, possibly in a call-out box.
- Highlight available federal funding opportunities.
- Thermal networks: Add a clause in the mention of thermal networks about sequencing of implementation decisions.
- Examples of concern for pests and forest health such as spruce budworm.
- Add in specific mention of older adults in climate action.
- Strengthen language in Introduction on youth and older Mainers and public education.
- Add language about identifying funding sources to section on farmland conversation program.
 - Establish a new farmland conservation state program that establishes... “and identifies funding sources.”
 - Ensure that this section mentions “no net loss of Maine farmland.”
- Active transportation – correct label is “Priority Corridors.” Delete the word ‘high’.
- Highlight importance of pre- weatherization work in Resilience section.
- Create call-out boxes on the work of the materials management and land use task forces.

- Add sentences on the impacts of climate on invasive species and pests – land and water.

Next Steps and Adjourn

- The above changes will be added to the draft. After further edits, the draft will be finalized as a Climate Plan.
- The Council will meet again to launch the Climate Action Plan on November 21, 2024.
- Maine Climate Council co-chairs expressed deep gratitude to all Councilors, staff and members of the public for their hard work contributing to this process over the past year.