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DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY
Vermont Governor's Commission on Climate Change – Plenary Group (GCCC-PG)
Agriculture, Forestry & Waste Resource Management (AFW)
Technical Work Group
Call #6, March 1, 2007

Attendance:

1. TWG Members: Paula Calabrese, Jennifer Jenkins, Phil Benedict, Debra Sachs, William Sayre, Netaka White, Elizabeth Courtney
2. Public: None
3. CCS: Steve Roe, Katie Bickel
4. VTDEC: Harold Garabedian

Background documents:

(all posted at http://www.vtclimatechange.us/Agriculture_Forestry.cfm)

1. Agenda
2. Power Point Presentation to the AFW TWG
3. AFW Policy Options Document
4. Summary Notes from Call #5

Discussion and conclusions:

1. CCS reviewed draft summary from last call. No changes were needed to the summary.
2. CCS referred to the policy options document posted to the website. At this point, four straw proposals have been drafted and were discussed first. For each of these options, the TWG volunteers explained the draft goals, timing, related background and the TWG members asked clarifying questions, made suggestions, and offered potential resources for more information.
3. AFW-3: Seen as a good starting point with three goals targeting manure management; GHG benefits of each were discussed and additional resources noted (i.e., Highfields Institute, Composting Association of Vermont).
4. AFW-9. Goal to increase baseline diversion (recycling) rate. The goal level as clarified, to get to 50% diversion rate by 2020 (as opposed to increasing the rate by 50%).
5. AFW-10. Discussed viability of programs, and avoiding a “one-size fits all” approach by tailoring programs. Distinction between minimization and diversion. Minimization is part of this option; diversion is part of AFW 10.
6. AFW-11. The TWG added clean water treatment plants to the option. The name of the option will be modified to reflect the change. Wastewater treatment plant personnel were consulted to establish feasible and realistic goal levels. Additional resources suggested:



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Burlington Electric, Efficiency Vermont. CCS requested sharing of additional data that might be useful for quantification.

7. Material for two more options (AFW 4 and 12) was submitted but did not make the deadline for incorporation. These were discussed next.
8. AFW-4. Title was changed by replacing the word “Preserve” with “Protect”. In addition, the description was expanded. The term “Preserve” was replaced because it connotes that land is no longer active and this option includes promoting working lands. The goals listed are a starting point and the volunteers are seeking information on baseline levels, and will further consider goal levels and timing. It was noted that Implementation mechanism may overlap with other options: AFW-5 Forest Management and AFW-8, are both looking at leveraging the current use valuation (UVA) program. There is a legislative bill under consideration regarding the UVA Program, which may present an opportunity to expand the program.
9. AFW-12. It was decided to use the term petrodiesel to describe fossil diesel. It was noted by CCS that the approach of the policy option is restricted to cellulosic ethanol. CCS noted that other states have included both starch-based and cellulosic ethanol in their options. The role for forest biomass and crop biomass was noted and the potential link to AFW-3 (Manure Management) was also noted, as methane from digesters can be used power photobioreactors and gasification technology can be used to develop liquid fuels from biomass. AFW-12 was distinguished from AFW-6, which is related to forest bioenergy production, because it targets liquid fuel production. AFW-12 will be renamed to emphasize this. The goals reflect enhancing baseline levels by increasing capacity and new technology adoption (e.g., algae feedstocks for biodiesel). Some concerns raised about the potential to produce enough soybeans and corn in VT to increase biodiesel and starch-based ethanol production, which is why the focus on algal feedstocks and cellulosic ethanol was viewed as important.
10. The discussion turned to addressing the other options that are not as far along, with the aim of roughing out parameters for discussion. AFW-1. It was requested that student group at UVM develop baseline information. One TWG member offered that VT has actually lost a lot of local production capacity over the years. Community supported Ag and Local farmers markets have been increasing and these programs could be enhanced. Potential resource on baseline information: Center for Sustainable Agriculture.
11. AFW-2. In progress, lead volunteer not on the phone to discuss.
12. AFW-5 and other forestry options. There has been some initial discussion and some concern about how to structure the goals as the members are somewhat uncomfortable with developing goals without more information.
13. CCS will set up a subgroup call for the forestry options next week to continue crafting those options in preparation for next steps.
14. Options without parameters need to be developed quickly so they can be reviewed before the next PG meeting. CCS will have to develop a default if nothing is produced by the volunteers.



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Next Steps:

15. Next PG meeting is on 3/22, at which CCS will present for PG approval the full set of straw proposals. CCS will post the final draft on 3/15 (one week prior). TWG members were asked to send additional information for the straw proposals to CCS by 3/9.
16. Due to limited time, the Inventory and Forecast was not discussed. Time will be allotted on the next TWG call to review questions and comments from the TWG.
17. Next TWG meeting: April 10, 1 to 3 p.m.