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MEETING SUMMARY
Governor's Commission on Climate Change (GCCC)
Plenary Group (PG) Meeting #1
Montpelier, Vermont
September 7, 2006

Attending:

GCCC: Ernie Pomerleau, Elizabeth Courtney, Brian Searles, Don DeHayes

PG: Kyle Trombley, Carl Spangler, Neale Lunderville, Paul Cameron, Paul Comey, Dave Lane (for Steve Kerr), Jennifer Jenkins, Edward Mahoney, Jon Isham, Robert Dostis, Thomas Jagielski, Scott Johnstone, Michael Dworkin, Don Gilbert, Chris Killian, Ginny Lyons, James Moore, Shane Sweet (for Sean Cota), David O'Brien, Dale Rocheleau, William Sayre, David Hill, Lori Webster

DEC: Jeff Wennberg, Dick Valentinetti, Harold Garabedian, Jeff Merrell, Justin Johnson, Heidi Hales, Winslow Ladue, Doug Kievit-Kylar

CCS: Tom Peterson, Ken Colburn, Randy Strait, Robert McKinstry, Sivan Kartha

Others: Sandy Wilmot, Gina Campoli, Gary Flomenhoft, Tom Berry, Bob Paquin, Brian Keefe, Robert Kidd, Nick Sherman, Sylvia Knight, Debra Sachs, Riley Allen, Robert Ide, Alan Betts

Background documents: (all posted at www.vtclimatechange.us)

1. Notice and Agenda
2. Power Point Presentation
3. CCS Catalog of State Actions

Discussion and conclusions:

1. GCCC Chair Ernie Pomerleau opened the meeting by characterizing climate change as one of the primary issues facing Vermont, and that as such, it will require a comprehensive, solution-based dialogue. In order to assist the GCCC in meeting its charge from the Governor, the GCCC convened the Plenary Group process to have that dialogue across a broad representation of Vermont life and its economy.
2. Chairman Pomerleau welcomed the PG members and members of the public, and attendees went around the room with self-introductions.
3. Ken Colburn of CCS provided background information on the purpose, goals and logistics of the process that the Plenary Group will undertake using a slide

presentation available at

<http://www.vtclimatechange.us/ewebeditpro/items/O123F9324.pdf> .

4. Dr. Alan Betts, President of the Vermont Academy of Science and Engineering (VASE) presented a comprehensive primer on the science behind global warming, and how it relates specifically to Vermont.
5. Tom Peterson of CCS provided a review of the GCCC-PG process, including timing and schedule, process design and overall approach, roles and responsibilities, technical work group (TWG) efforts, and funding.
6. Governor James Douglas made an appearance to emphasize the importance of the issue of climate change to Vermont and to offer his personal appreciation to the members of the GCCC, the PG, and others in the room who have agreed to collaborate to develop a comprehensive set of GHG mitigation policy recommendations for Vermont.
7. Randy Strait of CCS presented the preliminary GHG inventory and forecast for each sector, emphasizing that several sectors (including the electricity and forestry sectors) will have substantial additional data added as the GCCC-PG process moves forward. Of particular note was the fact that the inventory prepared to date does not include GHG emissions associated with market purchases of electricity (i.e., electricity generated outside Vermont but consumed within the state). This creates, in effect, a “production-basis” approach. Because Vermont has such a small power generation sector, it’s important not to use the production-basis approach as the default approach in developing the State’s GHG inventory. Also, in its electricity purchases, Vermont has recently utilized significant low-carbon generation resources (e.g., nuclear, hydro, etc.); this may or may not be the case over the foreseeable future.
8. Several comments were made and questions raised by PG participants including:
 - a. PG members noted the predominance of transportation sector emissions in the State, indicating that GHG reductions from vehicles, fuels, and land use patterns would be critical to the PG’s success.
 - b. In the electrical sector, efficiency is one of the best ways to meet the looming supply gap in Vermont.
 - c. Members noted that Vermont may be a net GHG sink, but that the State still has both the opportunity and the responsibility to reduce GHG emissions significantly. Members concurred that while Vermont’s carbon sequestration may present public relations issues, it does not represent an argument for weakening the ambitiousness of the GCCC-PG process
 - d. Plenary Group members should use their own judgment in selecting Technical Working Group(s) (TWGs) in which to participate. It will be very valuable for each PG member to participate in the TWG which most closely aligns with his or her expertise, but participation in a TWG with which he or she is less familiar may also provide an important perspective.

- e. Concerning GHG reduction goals, several members recommended using the targets contained in the Governor's Executive Order and subsequent Act 168 as a starting point for the GCCC-PG's efforts.
9. Tom Peterson and Ken Colburn led a discussion reviewing categories of potential actions in the CCS Catalog of State Actions, noting that the TWGs would be asked to suggest additional items and to suggest new categories as needed. Tom also noted that the next GCCC-PG meeting would be devoted primarily to approving an updated catalog for the TWGs to work from in determining initial priorities of options for further analysis.
10. There was considerable enthusiasm and discussion following the presentations by CCS, especially in relation to the inventory and forecast. CCS and Plenary Group members agreed that detailed comments would be best incorporated in the discussions to be held in upcoming sector-specific TWG teleconference meetings.
11. Members of the public were invited to make comments and raise questions, and members of the GCCC-PG were invited to make any related announcements.
12. The meeting was adjourned.