

**Climate Pollution Reduction Grants – Planning  
Work Plan  
State of New Hampshire**

**Project Title:** Climate Pollution Reduction Grant

**Project Period:** 7/1/2023 – 6/30/2027

**Place of Performance:** State of NH

**Applicant Information:** New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), 29 Hazen Dr., P.O. Box 95, Concord, NH 03301-0095:

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**WORKPLAN SUMMARY:**

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) seeks Climate Pollution Reduction Grants (CPRG) Planning Grant funding to facilitate the development of a New Hampshire (NH) Priority Climate Action Plan (PCAP) and a NH Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP). Following the development and implementation of these plans, NHDES will utilize Planning Grant funding to monitor and report progress in a Status Update Report; all work will be completed within the four-year timeframe and \$3 million budget.

Planning Grant funding will staff three positions at NHDES within the Air Resources Division: a Grants Program Manager and a Climate Change Program Planner assigned to the Technical Services Bureau; and a Community Engagement Specialist in the Environmental Health Program. The first year of the grant only includes funding for the latter two positions described, as the Grants Program Manager position is funded by similar Clean Air Act funding during the first performance year of the CPRG. The roles of this position, if it is approved under the Clean Air Act grants, are for planning and preparation for implementing other Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provisions, such as the CPRG. The roles of this position will be similar under the CPRG funding.

Under direction from the Climate and Energy Program Manager and Environmental Health Program Administrator, these staff will be responsible for the Planning Grant funding scope of work. In addition, funds will be used to establish a contract with NH Listens, an organization poised to facilitate community engagement and to garner input from stakeholders through modalities including surveying, conducting key informant interviews, and facilitating focus groups and community sessions. Outreach and engagement efforts will be comprehensive and be focused statewide. Contract services are also anticipated to be utilized in the generation of GHG emissions inventories, GHG reduction calculations, benefits analysis, and workforce planning analysis. While a qualified vendor has not been selected to provide these services, all procurements funded under this grant will adhere to program guidance including 2 CFR Part 200 and the ["Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements."](#)

Efforts to develop a new PCAP and CCAP will build upon and complement previous work. The project team will review the existing [New Hampshire Climate Action Plan](#), which was prepared by the NH Climate Change Policy Task Force and NHDES in 2009. The review will include an assessment of progress and gaps. In addition, review of other state and federal plans will be conducted to identify common priority areas. Development of the PCAP will occur in the first year of funding. The PCAP will inform the development of the CCAP, which will be completed in the second year of funding. Extensive efforts will be made to coordinate with and garner input from a variety of stakeholders, including the state of New Hampshire Departments of Transportation, Energy, and Health and Human Services; New Hampshire municipalities and municipal partners; regional planning commissions; nonprofit organizations dedicated to promoting environmental

health and justice; nonprofit organizations dedicated to promoting clean and renewable energy sources; and community members. Utilization of tools such as the EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJScreen) and coordination with community partners will facilitate broader reach in community engagement activities, ensuring that the voices of potentially vulnerable populations are not only heard, but elevated.

### **RESPONSIBLE ENTITIES:**

**Lead Organization:** New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), Air Resources Division (ARD)

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### **Coordinating Entities:**

- University of New Hampshire, Carsey School of Public Policy, NH Listens.
- University of New Hampshire, Carsey School of Public Policy, UNH Survey Center.
- NH Center for Justice and Equity.
- New Hampshire regional planning commissions.

### **Anticipated Stakeholders:**

- New Hampshire Department of Energy (NHDOE).
- New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT).
- New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (NHDHHS).
- New Hampshire Municipal Association.
- New Hampshire Municipalities: City of Manchester, City of Nashua, others identified in planning.
- New Hampshire community-based organizations.
- New Hampshire residents, with a focus on engaging disadvantaged populations.

### **DELIVERABLES DEVELOPMENT PROCESS:**

Environmental justice (EJ) in NH highlights an inequitable distribution of environmental challenges skewed toward communities of color, urban communities and low-income communities. Engaging with vulnerable and underrepresented communities to develop climate resiliency is necessary as these communities have a unique lens on improving social wellbeing. Co-creating a statewide climate action plan with EJ communities not only prioritizes residents' ability to participate in decision making but also empowers and uplifts communities that have been previously excluded from these processes.

People in NH are connected and disconnected. According to the 2020 NH Civic Health index, NH ranks above average in terms of residents connecting with family and friends and talking to their loved ones about political, societal or local issues. NH residents rank high for people getting together with others in their neighborhood to do something positive for their community. Counter to these rankings, NH residents rank lower for interacting with neighbors in general, and they are less likely to talk to their neighbors about political, societal or local issues. NH also ranks low, 46th in the nation, for people interacting with someone of a different racial, ethnic, or cultural background. NH's demographics are increasingly racially and culturally diverse, especially among people under 18. These two findings along with the patterns of connectedness among NH residents show the importance for prioritizing bringing people together to focus on a revitalized climate plan that centers the lived experiences and knowledge from people most affected by environmental challenges.

With a focus on Environmental Justice principles, the project team will garner extensive community and stakeholder input in the development of the deliverables associated with this grant. Partnering with NH Listens will allow for leveraging of networks and relationships that the organization has built in their extensive statewide efforts (e.g., those built/sustained through the Leadership Learning Exchange for Equity and Race & Equity Series NH, among others from their community-engaged work), including the NH Center for Justice and Equity (NHCJE), the Carsey School's Center for Impact Finance and Center for Social Policy in Practice, and with the UNH Survey Center to engage shareholders who need to be engaged in planning. This includes bridging the gaps between under-represented populations and decision-making partners in communities identified for Environmental Justice needs.

The public/shareholder engagement activities will be designed in a way that can be replicated and sustained. Successful outreach strategies identified through this project will benefit NHDES' work in other program areas to build fair and innovative opportunities to work together with community partners and residents to facilitate planning informed with and by shareholder engagement. Efforts will focus on the local knowledge and lived experiences among often underrepresented communities in NH. The NHDES team will rely on support from NH Listens to guide engagement strategies in the development of the PCAP and the CCAP.

### **Key Deliverable #1: Priority Climate Action Plan:**

#### *PCAP Development Approach:*

Development and drafting of the PCAP will be led by the Climate Change Program Planner within the Climate and Energy Program and will begin with a review of the 2009 Climate Action Plan with an eye toward identifying priorities to carry forward, areas where there is opportunity for change and improvement, and potential gaps. In addition, existing climate change-related data will be reviewed with a goal of identifying areas to be addressed through the development and implementation of the PCAP.

The Community Engagement Specialist, with support from the NH Listens team, will coordinate, plan and facilitate stakeholder engagement sessions, including sessions with state, municipal and regional partners as well as with community-based organizations and community members (see description in coordination and engagement sections below). Summarized findings from the engagement sessions will inform the development of the PCAP, which will include all required elements (preliminary GHG inventory, quantified GHG reduction measures, low-income and disadvantaged communities' benefits analysis, and review of authority to implement).

The PCAP will be developed within the first year of funding, with finalization and adoption occurring on or before March 1, 2024. A schedule of engagement sessions and interim due dates and milestones will be developed by the core project team as described below in the section on interagency and intergovernmental coordination.

#### *PCAP Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination:*

NHDES has existing partnerships with other NH agencies including the NHDOE, NHDOT and NHDHHS. In addition, the agency has worked extensively with NH municipalities individually and in a coordinated way through the NH Municipal Association, and also with regional planning networks throughout the state. NH Listens has many existing connections and partnerships that have been developed through extensive statewide outreach and community engagement efforts as described previously; in addition, the UNH Survey Center has analytical insight on statewide public opinion through the already established [Granite State Poll](#). These existing partnerships will be leveraged and built on to promote input and adoption of the PCAP. The plan will be developed with the phrase "nothing about us without us" in mind; opportunities for input from a targeted spectrum of stakeholders will promote buy-in which will facilitate later implementation of efforts. Drafts and core components of the plan will be shared with stakeholders at various points throughout the development process to allow the opportunity for input to inform finalization.

The core team, which will include NHDES staff and NH Listens staff will meet monthly, with additional issue specific meetings and communication as needed. The team will create a shared workspace, utilizing tools such as Microsoft Teams and email for communication and planning, and to promote version control. A final timeline and schedule of meetings and deliverables will be created and agreed upon by core team members, and regular check-ins will promote adherence.

#### *PCAP Public and Stakeholder Engagement:*

As described previously, the NHDES team will benefit from the support of NH Listens. In addition to relying on existing networks, tools like the EPA EJScreen, will be used to identify populations for targeted outreach and communication. A more comprehensive detail of strategies is included in Attachment A. The Community Engagement Specialist at NHDES will work with NH Listens to employ strategies including:

- Convening of 2009 Climate Action Plan authors and contributors (or representatives of agencies and organizations listed as contributors)
- Cohort-based Learning Exchange Sessions and Coaching/Modeling for Public Engagement. Gathering a group of EJ Community shareholders and decision-making partners (e.g., connecting the pieces in the systems/structures, educational sessions about the impacts of greenhouse gases (GHG) in communities, participatory budgeting

sessions, etc.) to build local advisory/cohort among EJ communities with links to the nine regional planning commissions and 13 public health networks – among other partners that emerge. This will include regionally based engagement with community-based groups including local immigrant, refugee, indigenous, people of color, women, LGBTQ+ leaders, communities, businesses, organizations, etc.

- Development and implementation of statewide surveying tools that will utilize the already standing Granite State Poll cohort.

As stated previously, the plan will be developed with the phrase “nothing about us without us” in mind; opportunities for input from a broad spectrum of stakeholders will promote buy-in and recommendations developed within the plan will be made in consideration of identified community needs, challenges and wants. Distribution lists will be developed so that core components of the plan can be shared at various points throughout the development process as a check on the success of the program team’s response to feedback and to allow the opportunity for input to inform finalization.

## **Key Deliverable #2: Comprehensive Climate Action Plan:**

### *CCAP Development Approach:*

Development and drafting of the CCAP will involve extensive stakeholder engagement and input and will build on the PCAP. Plan development and drafting will be led by the Climate Change Program Planner; community engagement efforts will be coordinated and facilitated by the Community Engagement Specialist and the NH Listens team. The team will rely on partner expertise throughout the engagement process, guidance from the EPA, and use of resources such as the EPA GHG Inventory Data Explorer. Specifically, the team will look to the EPA, climate experts and academic partners within the state, and NHDES risk assessment staff for the calculation of metrics relative to GHG and co-pollutant reduction potential, costs, benefits, and other analyses that will promote clarity of the plan and a call to action to those reviewing and poised to implement the plan. In addition, the team will review resources and plans developed by and will communicate with partners from neighboring states with similar landscapes in terms of weather, industry and population (Northern New England: Maine, Vermont) to leverage and incorporate lessons learned and strategies that have promoted success.

The CCAP will include all required elements including: a GHG Inventory, GHG Emissions Projections based on past trends and any new data that may be available; GHG reduction targets; quantified reduction measures supported by sector level strategies; a statewide benefits analysis; benefits analysis for disadvantaged or disparate populations (informed by tools such as the EPA’s EJScreen and the NH Social Vulnerability Index); review of authority to implement at various sector levels; a review of funding available to support implementation; a recommendation of resources and funding to seek and/or leverage; and workforce planning analysis.

The planning process, including stakeholder engagement, will determine the organization of the plan and recommended strategies. NHDES anticipates that recommendations will be made at targeted sector levels to promote ownership and action and to ensure authority to implement.

The CCAP will be developed within the second year of funding, with finalization and adoption occurring on or before the fall of 2025. Consistent with the process for development of the PCAP, a schedule of engagement sessions and interim due dates and milestones will be developed by the core project team.

### *CCAP Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination:*

Strategies to promote and assure interagency and intergovernmental coordination will be consistent with those described previously in reference to the PCAP. The core project team will build upon networks, processes, and systems built and strengthened through the process of developing the PCAP. Development of the PCAP and CCAP will be an ongoing coordinated effort rather than a transition from one distinct effort to the next.

### *CCAP Public and Stakeholder Engagement:*

Consistent with the carry forward and building upon of strategies to foster interagency and intergovernmental coordination from the PCAP to CCAP phase of the project period, stakeholder engagement strategies will also be carried forward and built upon during the phase of developing the CCAP. Public and stakeholder engagement will occur in all regions of the state, with a focus on reaching low-income and disadvantaged communities, as defined by tools such as EPA’s EJScreen Tool. To assure accuracy in the reflection of stakeholder input and buy in from stakeholders, multiple

opportunities for review will be offered throughout the process. During the planning process, consideration will be given to dissemination of the final plan, including promotion and education to drive action. Lessons learned throughout the process about effective means for community and stakeholder engagement will be utilized in the promotion of the plan.

### **Key Deliverable #3: Status Report**

#### *Status Report Development Approach:*

The Status Report will be designed as a living document to retain reports of ongoing progress following CCAP development and will be submitted to the EPA by the fall of 2027. As such, the status report can serve as a blueprint for future efforts, capturing successes and challenges, along with documentation of how challenges encountered were addressed or overcome.

The status report will be updated on an ongoing basis following the development of the CCAP and will be submitted to the EPA at the close of the project period to report on the following:

- Implementation Status of GHG Reduction Measures.
- Updated Benefits Analysis for the full geographic scope and population covered by the plan.
- Updated Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities Benefits Analysis.
- Updated Review of Authority to Implement.
- Review of Intersection with Other Funding Availability.
- Updated Workforce Planning Analysis.
- Next Steps/Future Budget/Staffing Needs

#### *Status Report Interagency and Intergovernmental Coordination:*

With extensive interagency and intergovernmental coordination occurring during the development of the PCAP and CCAP, the groundwork will be laid for continued coordination to support gathering of information to facilitate documentation of progress in the Status Report. During the planning phase, NHDES and core project team members will seek agreement on ownership of various plan components, with the articulated expectation that plan partners will be accountable for providing regular updates to NHDES relative to adopted strategies.

#### *Status Report Public and Stakeholder Engagement:*

It is anticipated that through the planning process, engagement with community groups, including populations that are low-income or otherwise disadvantaged will lead to open lines of communication and community-based groups that will be sustained with support of the NH Center for Equity and Justice (Attachment A). In addition to reporting on quantifiable progress through above noted stakeholder engagement, the core team will seek qualitative feedback from engaged community members to better understand the perceived impact of implementation at the community level.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS, OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:**

There are a number of short and long-term environmental outputs and outcomes expected to be achieved under the CPRG planning grant performance period.

Anticipated outputs include, but may not be limited to:

- Development of a Priority Climate Action Plan.
- Development of a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan.
- Development of a Status Report at the end of the performance period.
- Data associated with the progress toward achievement of these measures will be documented on an ongoing basis and will be included in progress reports.
  - Number of core team planning meetings held.
  - Number of outreach activities conducted.
  - Number of engagement sessions held.
  - Number of community members present at engagement sessions.
  - Number of partner organizations engaged in planning process.

Anticipated long-term outcomes include:

- Improved communication across stakeholder groups committed to promoting climate pollution reduction.
- Establishment of community-based groups committed to promoting climate pollution reduction.
- Lifetime Reductions of both GHG and co-pollutants as a result of measures identified in the PCAP and CCAP.
- Annual Reductions of both GHG and co-pollutants as a result of measures identified in the PCAP and CCAP.
- Reductions of pollution specific to low-income and disadvantaged communities.
- Increases public awareness of the impact of both GHG and co-pollutants on health and quality of life.
- Strengthening of local employment opportunities, focusing especially on creating opportunities for members of underserved communities.

Schedule:

A schedule of milestones over the four-year grant performance period has been submitted as Attachment B.

## **REPORTING:**

The project team will work with federal partners at the EPA to develop an agreed-upon format for progress updates. It is anticipated that process-related updates will be delivered verbally during meetings with the Project Officer and documented in progress notes on a detailed workplan developed at the outset of the project period. While there is flexibility in format depending on EPA needs and preferences, it is anticipated that development of a project Gantt chart and logic model will aid in identification of and reporting of both process and outcome measures as detailed in the Environmental Results, Outputs and Outcomes section of this application.

In addition to above noted modes of reporting progress, quarterly reports will be submitted to the EPA. The report will cover progress, challenges and how challenges have been addressed, financial expenditures, preliminary data results, planned activities, and any changes in key personnel and contracts. Progress reports will be delivered no more than 30 days after the end of each calendar year quarter. (October 30, January 30, April 30, July 30...)

The Status Report will be filed within 90 days of the end of the performance period (September 28, 2027). The Status Report will include a detail of the implementation status for any of the quantified GHG reduction measures included in the CCAP. An updated analysis of actual savings or projected savings will be included, as well as recommended next steps for continued implementation.