

HEALTH IN ALL POLICIES BEST AND INNOVATIVE PRACTICES



SUMMARY

Health in All Policies recognizes that health is determined not only by genetics, health care, and individual behaviors but by a complex set of social, economic and environmental factors. HiAP is a collaborative approach to engage all sectors and branches of government to ensure that the potential health consequences are identified and considered during decision-making processes.

THE GOAL OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document draws upon the best practices and innovative approaches in the natural resources sector that advance positive health outcomes.

The document describes current action in Vermont and outlines approaches for future planning to synergistically meet natural resource and health goals.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Respect. Protect. Enjoy. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources promotes the sustainable use of Vermont's natural resources, protects and improves the health of Vermont's people and ecosystems, and promotes sustainable outdoor recreation. Vermonters are proud of our state's beautiful natural resources. Parks, forests, wildlife, lakes, rivers; we have many opportunities for fun, physical activity, and improving mental health. The economic benefits of natural resources are also important to public health.

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Sector - NATURAL RESOURCES

MISSION

The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources promotes the sustainable use of Vermont's natural resources, protects and improves the health of Vermont's people and ecosystems, and promotes sustainable outdoor recreation.

VISION

To draw from and build upon Vermonters' shared ethic of responsibility for our natural environment, an ethic that encompasses a sense of place, community and quality of life, and an understanding that we are an integral part of the environment, and that we must all be responsible stewards for this and future generations.

BUDGET

SUSTAINABILITY

Across multiple programs, ANR's budget supports sustainability of environmental protection to support ecosystem services, and resilience in infrastructure that supports public health and safety.

**FORESTS, PARKS,
AND RECREATION**

Work across agencies and boards to include health considerations and goals in budgeting for the acquisition of lands.

Provide opportunities and spaces for Vermonters to have active lifestyles, access to the outdoors, and safe, and available places for recreation and physical activity for all users.

Promote and deploy tools to enable Vermonters to take reasonable precautions against the inherent risks of outdoor recreation such as melanoma, ticks, cyanobacteria etc.

Continue to support grant programs that maintain working forests and promote development of recreational opportunities and facilities that keep Vermonters and visitors outdoors.

**WATER
AND WASTE**

Maintain funding for comprehensive management of clean water (watershed management, drinking and groundwater, and recreational water uses).

Provide grants for municipalities to develop necessary water infrastructure (e.g., downtown development and growth and brownfield redevelopment).

Provide low or no-cost loans for necessary water infrastructure.

Direct funding towards projects and municipalities identified by an Interagency working group to support targeted planning and funding that efficiently delivers environmental and public safety improvements including funding for solid waste infrastructure and assisting with emerging contaminant costs.

**AIR QUALITY
AND EMISSIONS**

Maintain the capacity to conduct air quality monitoring, permitting and enforcement and emissions modeling and to develop air pollution emissions inventories that document progress in reducing statewide criteria and toxic air pollutants and greenhouse gases.

Continue to seek funding opportunities for incentive programs (e.g., wood stove change out programs) and other initiatives that reduce air emissions.

**CLIMATE
CHANGE**

Support State of Vermont investments in helping Vermonters save money and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Conduct environmental monitoring of climate change effects in air and water.

**FISH
AND WILDLIFE**

Continue to conduct statewide outdoor education and mandatory training programs that support health and well-being by encouraging outdoor recreation, immersion in nature, and the consumption of sustainably-harvested fish and wildlife.

Maintain the significant decline in hunting-related injuries by continuing to sponsor hunter education courses and promoting safe hunting practices.

Continue to invest significant staff time, training and resources into public health-related activities including: responding to potentially-diseased or otherwise dangerous wildlife; monitoring for new and existing wildlife diseases that may pose a risk to humans; and reducing the number of wildlife-vehicle collisions.

Continue to invest significant staff time, training and resources, primarily through State Game Wardens, into public safety-related activities including: search and rescue; snowmobile, boat and ATV enforcement; hunting incident investigation; road kill removal; general state law enforcement; and, when needed, providing assistance to other state and federal law enforcement agencies.

POLICY

SUSTAINABILITY

Consider health equity and environmental justice in natural resources procurement, contracts and policies.

Work across agencies within the aforementioned Interagency Initiative to promote Smart Growth, Complete Streets, Concentrated and Mixed-Use Development, Sustainability and other such policies that benefit health and are vital to economic development.

FORESTS, PARKS, AND RECREATION

Pursue policies that limit fragmentation of forests in order to protect and maintain healthy forest lands that support numerous health benefits and outcomes.

Work across agencies and boards to include health considerations and goals in state level land-use and long-range management plans.

Provide smoke and tobacco free spaces policies in State parks.

Make state parks, forests, and open green spaces accessible, safe and available as places of recreation and physical activity for all users.

Work with the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) to include health and health goals as a consideration and benefit in the growth and promotion of the industry.

WATER AND WASTE

Incorporate public safety and human health considerations in the implementation of best/recommended practices, establishment of new programs, and in ongoing clean water and site remediation funding actions including emerging contaminants.

Protect recreational and drinking water (public & private) quality as affected by storm water, chemical contamination, cyanobacteria and other known and emerging contaminants.

Coordinate with the Department of Health to communicate health risks associated with poor water quality and contaminated sites.

Coordinate with the Department of Health and all other affected agencies in the development of scientifically-based implementable human health criteria in relevant chapters of the Vermont Environmental Protection Rules.

Work collaboratively across agencies and with various stakeholders on clean water and waste management practices.

AIR QUALITY AND EMISSIONS

Promote the public and environmental health benefits of reducing emissions of air pollution, including criteria pollutants, air toxics, and greenhouse gases.

Continue to support and participate in state and regional planning efforts to reduce emissions of criteria air pollutants, air toxics, and greenhouse gas.

Encourage policies and actions that result in concurrent reductions in emissions of criteria air pollutants, air toxics, and greenhouse gases.

Continue to monitor, evaluate, and address wood heater impacts on air quality.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Support interagency work groups for climate change, land use, transportation, and energy issues that are crosscutting and where impacts and solutions have a significant impact on public health and equity.

Continue close coordination with the Department of Health Climate & Health Program on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and communication activities.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

Continue to conduct statewide outdoor education and mandatory training opportunities that support health and well-being by encouraging outdoor recreation, immersion in nature, and the consumption of sustainably harvested fish and wildlife.

Continue to administer rules and regulations that encourage the public use and enjoyment of fish and wildlife and their habitats.

Continue to consider wildlife-vehicle collisions in the establishment of wildlife population goals, and continue to work with Vermont Agency of Transportation to identify and address problem areas on state roads with the placement of wildlife passages and other mitigation efforts.

Continue to consider rabies and other wildlife-transmitted diseases in the establishment of wildlife population goals, and ensure that management, primarily through regulated trapping, addresses disease concerns.

Continue to direct staff time toward public health-related activities including: responding directly to potentially-diseased or otherwise dangerous wildlife incidents; monitoring for new and existing diseases that may be a risk to humans; and reducing wildlife vehicle collisions.

Continue to prioritize the importance of public safety-related activities in State Game Warden job duties.

Continue to emphasize outdoor recreation in the management and acquisition of department lands and access areas.

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PROGRAM

SUSTAINABILITY

Promote the development of sustainable communities (and the benefits to health) through partnerships, trainings, tools and toolboxes and citizen engagement.
Adopt integrated pest management for agriculture and outdoor use; support a four-tiered approach to outdoor pest control and minimize potential harm to people, property, and the environment.

FORESTS, PARKS, AND RECREATION

Continue programs that support healthy forests to maintain and enhance Vermont's working landscape, provide clean air and water, and support widespread recreational uses that draw Vermonters and visitors into forests.
Continue programs that encourage the use of state forests and parks (e.g., free entrance and the ParkRx pass program).
Partner with the health community to expand the ParkRx pass program to encourage the use of state forests and parks, and recreation areas to improve mental and physical health.
Promote the use of state forests, parks, and recreational places and their benefits to health through educational and promotional activities.
Identify and support the development of parks, gardens, green open space, and tree canopy especially in areas of the state and communities of greatest need. Raise awareness about the health benefits of trees, target efforts toward underserved communities, and promote green streets.
Partner with regional planning commissions, municipalities, land trusts and other conservation partners to improve access, awareness, and amenities at non-state parks and recreation sites, particularly in underserved and high-risk communities.
Encourage the use of park trails and health workbooks (a tool for planners, parks and recreational professionals, and health practitioners) to help create and maintain parks and trails that benefit public health and provide equitable access.
Address safety issues and concerns such as crime, vandalism, and proper management in trails, parks, and connecting streets and paths. Work across agencies to address safety issues (e.g., VTtrans, police).
Provide adequate physical access to state parks for everyone, regardless of user ability—parks should meet or exceed ADA standards and attract underserved populations.
Provide infrastructure within state parks that encourages physical activity such as ball fields (volleyball, basketball), fitness stations, skate parks, and open areas for running and unstructured play as well as amenities that are conducive to social gatherings.
Support worker safety and protection for forest economy workers

WATER AND WASTE

Provide technical and financial assistance to improve water quality (e.g., through reduced nutrient and sediment loadings to surface waters from agricultural sources).
Continue to implement and fund clean water and site remediation programs and provide tools (maps and trainings) to assist regions and municipalities in water management and protection, and in site management.
Administer regulatory programs that implement environmental and human health standards within authorizations and permits.
Continue Brownfields Economic Revitalization Alliance work to restore prior contaminated sites to useful green or developed spaces.
Provide assistance and training on water and environmental pollution prevention
Enforce water quality and waste management regulations that support human health whenever needed.
Conduct regular tap water testing and publicize results to make water consumption more appealing.
Implement a pilot program for targeted contaminant testing of drinking water in school settings.

AIR QUALITY AND EMISSIONS

Continue to monitor air quality across the state, and to provide air quality forecasts and alerts to notify the public of poor air quality days.
Support low-emissions vehicles and zero-emissions vehicles.
Enforce air quality regulations that support human health whenever needed.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Capture and provide information on climate change and associated trends (e.g., in the form of dashboards) to increase understanding about the health impacts of climate as well as strategies and actions for adaptation and mitigation.
Provide information and tools on climate science and solutions (actions) that are accessible and relevant for various stakeholders including the public.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

Continue to provide input on development projects through regulatory programs aimed at preserving fish and wildlife habitat and, in turn, outdoor and nature-related recreation.
Continue to provide input on development projects through regulatory programs aimed at reducing forest fragmentation, a key factor in Lyme disease.
Continue to conduct youth and adult hunting, fishing, and trapping education programs that emphasize health benefits and address safety issues related to recreational use of fish and wildlife resources.
Continue to provide outdoor recreational access on department land.
Continue to support Natural Heritage Program activities that promote non-hunting and fishing related public uses in the outdoors.
Continue to partner with United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services (APHIS – WS) and other organizations with wildlife disease surveillance and research.
Continue to support the APHIS – WS rabies hotline.
Continue to work with Vermont Department of Health to educate Vermonters about wildlife-related diseases that pose a threat to humans, including tickborne illnesses.