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UNH Scientists: NH Climate Plan Key Link To Regional Carbon Reduction

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DURHAM, N.H. - The New Hampshire Climate Action Plan, which was released yesterday by Governor John Lynch, is both an important step for the state and a key link to a long-term, regionwide reduction in carbon emissions, according to University of New Hampshire scientists who played a crucial role in crafting the climate plan.

"This plan represents a concrete step towards a low-carbon society in New Hampshire. Our challenge now is to integrate this with climate action plans from other New England states to develop collaborative action across the entire region," says Cameron Wake of the UNH Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans, and Space.

Wake served on the governor's Climate Change Policy Task Force, which was charged with drafting the climate plan, and led the UNH analysis done by Carbon Solutions New England (CSNE) -- a public-private partnership working to promote collective action to achieve a low-carbon society.

CSNE conducted integrated analysis on potential carbon emissions reductions and the economic benefits resulting from those reductions. The analysis provided the foundation for selecting the 67 recommendations presented in the state's climate plan. George Hurtt, Ross Gittell, Matt Frades, and Matt Magnusson of UNH also worked on the CSNE analysis, which was funded by the NH Charitable Foundation.

Notes Commissioner Tom Burack of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and chair of the task force, "The deliberations of the task force were supported by detailed, transparent analysis provided by Carbon Solutions New England that demonstrated not only the potential for these actions to substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but also the potential to provide a significant economic benefit to the entire state economy."

Over time, implementation of the newly crafted climate plan will reduce state expenditures on energy and increase the development of in-state sources of energy from renewable and low-emitting resources, both of which will spur economic growth and result in billions of dollars of economic benefits by 2025.

Yesterday, Governor Lynch also announced the formation of the New Hampshire Energy and Climate Collaborative that will guide and track implementation of the plan.

CSNE will continue to analyze and further refine the plan by working with the climate collaborative. In addition, Taylor Eighmy, UNH interim vice president for research, will serve as one of the members of the collaborative representing the non-profit sector.

Says Wake, "We want to build on the success we've seen here in New Hampshire and do this across New England. There is so much that is truly regional in nature - electricity generation and use, transportation, the integrated economy - and we need to make sure we reach our carbon emission reduction goals working together as a region."

This morning, Wake will join Burack to discuss the new Climate Action Plan on New Hampshire Public Radio's "The Exchange." The program airs at 9 a.m. (www.nhpr.org).

For more information on Carbon Solutions New England visit www.carbonsolutionsne.org.

The University of New Hampshire, founded in 1866, is a world-class public research university with the feel of a New England liberal arts college. A land, sea and space-grant university, UNH is the state's flagship public institution, enrolling 11,800 undergraduate and 2,400 graduate students.

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