

MEETING THE REGION'S CLIMATE CHALLENGE

Issue 2, January 2021



GPCOG's 2021 New Member Offerings

New Year, new goals! Our sustainability priorities this year focus on supporting municipalities in achieving healthier, cleaner communities.

1. Assist municipalities with quick actions that reduce emissions and build resilience.

Providing technical assistance and support to help facilitate short and medium-term sustainability projects.

2. Support long-term climate action planning and implementation.

Our **Municipal Climate Action Planning Program** is designed to help towns and cities integrate climate goals into existing planning and to support actions to meet those goals.

3. Facilitate regional coordination and collaboration.

Join our new monthly ***Sustainability Professionals Roundtable!*** GPCOG will convene municipal staff, share resources and experiences, and facilitate regional collaboration. Look for more information in a few weeks!

Deep Dive: Municipal Climate Action Planning

What is Climate Action Planning?

Climate action planning sets a course for municipalities and provides a structure to track and report on activities that are improving livability, enhancing the economy and protecting residents. Below is an overview of GPCOG's climate action

Best Practice : Addressing equity in climate action planning

Minority and disadvantaged communities are often more burdened by climate hazards and environmental impacts. Accurately assessing community risk requires understanding how certain people and groups are more vulnerable to

planning process.

Building on the work done at the state and regional level, GPCOG is developing free resources for members in early stages of climate action planning. These include:

1. A method for measuring local emissions
2. A framework for assessing local vulnerability
3. A detailed assessment of regional climate hazards

GPCOG will share these resources with members throughout the year.

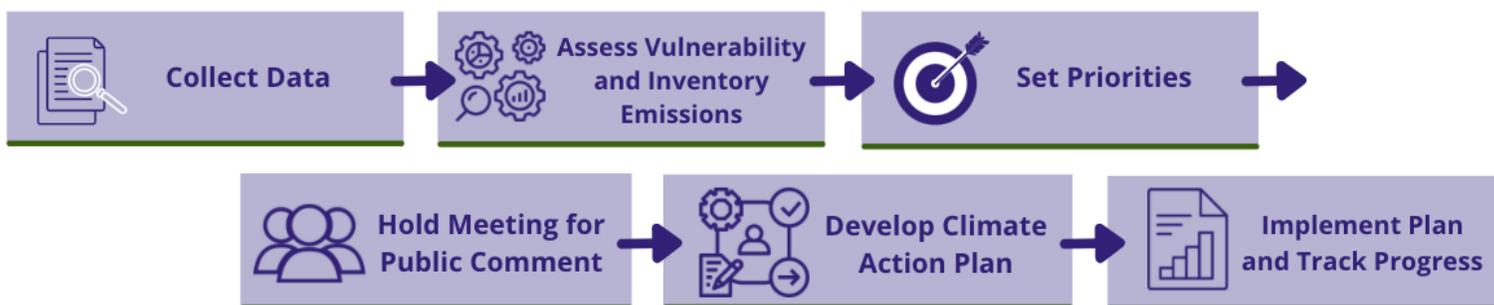
the harms of climate change than others. GPCOG is developing guidance to help towns create equitable climate action plans. To start to learn more, here is a [great resource](#).



Charlotte Nutt, an intern with the Maine Geological Survey, transports oyster shells for an experimental coastal erosion project in Brunswick.

GPCOG's Climate Action Planning Member Service

For those ready to dive deeper, GPCOG has created a customizable service that partners with you at every phase of the process. Whether your town is just starting off or already deep into implementation, GPCOG can help.



If you are interested in participating, please complete [this brief survey](#). Or contact Sara Mills-Knapp, Sustainability Program Manager, at smills-knapp@gpcog.org.

Regional Spotlight:
Cumberland

Partner Spotlight:
Gulf of Maine Research Institute

The Town of Cumberland's Lands and Conservation Commission established a Climate Action Plan Sub-Committee to conduct research, engage with local stakeholders, and develop a climate action plan for adoption by their Town Council and School Board.

Cumberland completed a town emissions inventory that took into account forested lands as carbon sinks, and launched a town climate survey to collect opinions on priorities from residents.

"Sustainable Cumberland" is the theme of our climate action plan. It builds on our legacy of conservation and forest stewardship that has resulted in a natural asset of over 3,000 acres of open and forested land—close to 25% of the Town's total land area. Along with mitigation efforts such as our landfill solar farm, the plan proposes setting aside a forest carbon reserve, making land available to support local farmers and planting trees on public land and easements.

—Cumberland Climate Action Plan Sub-Committee

Gulf of Maine Research Institute pioneers collaborative solutions to global marine and coastal challenges. GMRI's new Climate Center is focused on solutions to local, regional, and global challenges related to climate change. GPCOG is excited to bring this expertise to members. GMRI's long history of engaging coastal communities will be a valuable addition to the program.

GMRI will provide technical expertise and research support to communities enrolled in the program.



**Gulf of Maine
Research Institute**

Science. Education. Community.

Upcoming Opportunity for Island Communities

The Island Institute and US Department of Energy/National Renewable Energy Laboratory are partnering to provide unbridged and bridged island communities with free technical assistance for projects to increase their energy resilience. Contact the Island Institute's Emma Wendt to discuss this program. **Applications for 2021 are due by February 15.**