



## Working Group Introduction/August Update Video Transcript

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All right. Hello, everyone. Thank you so much for taking the time to watch this. My name is Sarah Saydun. I'm a climate planner with Linnean, a group that's supporting the City of Bangor, the Town of Orono, and BACTS in Penobscot Climate Action. So just here to give you an update on the project.

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Briefly, a timeline that led up to our work together: in early 2021, the City of Bangor and the Town of Orono, started talking with BACTS about developing a climate action and adaptation plan. From those conversations, they decided to take a regional approach to address the area's interconnected climate issues and maximize benefits. In 2022, we launched Phase I. A team of consultants, including myself, were hired to support many of the technical aspects of the project, including the greenhouse gas emissions inventory, the regional vulnerability assessment, and development of some technical climate action strategies, which we'll get into in a moment. We completed Phase I at the end of 2022. And in early 2023, we launched Phase II, which is really focused on taking the information that we compiled in phase one, bringing it to community and residents in the region and co-developing climate action strategies with community members. A note about funding: project funding is a combination of BACTS planning funds, the state's community action grant, and contributions from the City of Bangor as well.

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To give you a bird's eye view of what the team looks like, our project management team are folks from BACTS, folks from the City of Bangor and the Town of Orono. The consultant team is a mix of folks supporting the technical aspects, as I said, and we also have an advisory committee that is comprised of community advocates, town staff, regional experts on climate and planning, who are kind of overseeing the project overall.

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So what happened in Phase I? Phase I was meant to determine the environmental impacts that the region currently has, what's at risk in the region, in the face of a changing climate, what systems are already resilient. And all of this together sets the foundation of information with which we can develop data-driven mitigation and adaptation approaches for the region. And so it was comprised of two parts: the greenhouse gas emissions inventory, which identified trends in greenhouse gas emissions to inform mitigation and adaptation strategies, as I mentioned, and identified emissions per capita by source and by sector. This is outlined in detail in our climate vulnerability assessment and greenhouse gas emission report, which is on our website, [penobscotclimateaction.org](https://penobscotclimateaction.org), under the Reports and Resources tab. And if you're interested, you can dig into a lot of the data that resulted from, from this investigation. The climate vulnerability assessment really looked at three large categories of information: what is actually changing due to our changing climate; what is at risk do these changes; and what foundation can we build on, what resources already exist, to strengthen the region in the face of these challenges. And so we pulled on data from latest climate projections for Maine and Central Maine through Maine's Climate Council and the Office of the State Climatologist and others. We also conducted interviews with regional stakeholders. And we found on a bird's eye view, we found that the biggest changes to be concerned about are rising



temperatures, extreme precipitation and

flooding, and sea level rise. There was an emphasis in our research on the health impacts that these changes will have especially on vulnerable populations, like seniors and people with disabilities. Extreme precipitation and flooding will lead to a disruption and is already leading to disruptions in transportation, infrastructure, and the ability to access essential services, and there are consequences for

small businesses and the local economy as well. And, as I mentioned, the Penobscot River is tidally influenced, which exposes the adjacent areas to sea level rise, and corresponding storm surge. Again, you can read about this in much more detail on our website and the report that's published on our website at [penobscotclimateaction.org/reportsandresources](https://penobscotclimateaction.org/reportsandresources) or you can just navigate to the "Reports and Resources" page. But we also found that there is a strong existing foundation for building resilience in the region. There are several community-based organizations, municipal staff members, council members, residents and advocacy groups that are all already doing really excellent work to address these challenges. And there's a lot we can do to kind of bolster that work through this process.

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And so what are we hoping to achieve? What are we hoping comes out of the end of Phase II? So, there are two high level deliverables that we're working on. The first is a summary report, one summary report that outlines specific strategies that can be easily and quickly implemented to address local issues, drawdown greenhouse gas emissions adapt to the impacts of climate change, and build resilience region wide. And so the summary report really sets that regional vision. The toolkits will drill down to the immediate actions that are targeted towards specific communities, specific sites, identifies windows of opportunity for implementation, funding streams, champions of the work, build capacity for momentum, once the reports are released. So again, the summary reports kind of set the large regional vision and the toolkits will be, are seen as being concrete tools that specific communities in the region can use towards their own goals and priorities. This is just what some examples of what the toolkits could look like. But the gist is that they're going to be short, easy to read graphic and support near term specific action in each of the specific communities in the region.

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To give you all a sense of our timeline for Phase II, this is a simplified schedule. As I've mentioned before, we launched Phase II in March, and spent several months connecting with community members through individual interviews, meetings, small focus groups, surveys, and advisory committee meetings to set priorities and principles that are guiding the development of the strategies that will ultimately be in the toolkits. We are now in August, kind of smack in the middle of the solution co-creation phase, where we have, through the information that we've gathered through the vulnerability assessment and the beginning of the community process, we've drafted a set of strategies that we will now bring to working group members later this week, to make sure that community feedback is integrated into the decisions and design of the strategies themselves. And they'll make the community feedback actionable, grounded in local priorities and experiences, and work that's already being done in the region.

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The working group, I'll get into this in a moment but alongside the working groups, we will be developing mitigation and adaptation strategies through the end of the fall and into early winter of 2023. Once we have the toolkits finalized and ready to go in early 2024, we will also be conducting a series of



implementation workshops to really build capacity in the region to move the strategies forward. So the toolkits don't sit on a shelf, collecting dust.

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We've heard so far from the community process -- as I mentioned through surveys through pop ups through meetings with town staff with community members, with the advisory committee -- we've identified transparency, collaboration, action and equity as the kind of guiding principles that we'll be coming back to again and again as we develop the mitigation and adaptation strategies. We also heard that priorities in the region include: access to transportation; to housing; environmental conservation; supporting workforce development and small businesses; supporting vulnerable populations, such as seniors and people with disabilities; and reducing emissions as we work towards a more resilient future.

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BACTS: VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION AND ADAPTATION PLAN

The next steps are to take the priorities and principles that were developed in the first stage of our community process, and have them inform the work that we do to bring these strategies to life. And the working groups are tasked with developing the climate action toolkits for the top 10 priority climate action strategies that emerge from this process. And the topics on which they'll be working emerged from the community process and the priorities that folks have already expressed as being really live in the region. So we'll be working at the intersections of climate and: housing; transportation; environment and quality of life; local economies and livelihoods; and health. Each working group will be identifying a series of strategies that support climate action in the region and work towards those priorities. They will be tasked to identify, develop, and prioritize climate strategies will meet three times between August and October. The first meeting will be on August 10. And all five working groups will attend the same three meetings, but we'll split up into working groups for their breakout sessions to really dig into the nuts and bolts of each of the strategies for their specific topic area.

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And that kind of brings us up to where we're at so far in the process. The next steps include continuing to develop climate action strategies through the working group meetings that will take place in September and October. The surveys and pop ups will continue to inform our revisions of the strategies based on data that we can collect from residents across the region that have many different experiences, backgrounds and needs. We'll move into developing the toolkit in the fall and then on to implementation workshops in early 2024. So I've mentioned our website several times, [penobscotclimateaction.org](https://penobscotclimateaction.org) Please keep up to date with our progress through our website. You can sign up for email updates, you can keep track of the work that we're doing with the working groups, you can respond to surveys and as I've already mentioned, read through the reports from Phase I. Again, thank you so much for taking the time to watch through this video and we'll be in touch soon.