

Maine Won't Wait: A Four-Year Plan for Climate Action
 Equity Subcommittee Recommendations Related to Each Action Area
 October 2021, V3

Version note: These recommendations contain edits and suggestions arising from the Equity Subcommittee's discussion at their meeting on September 23, 2021. They build substantively on V2 of their recommendations, available [here](#).

Cross Cutting Equity Recommendations	
Action Area from Maine Won't Wait	Equity SC recommendation
<p>Establish a new Equity Subcommittee of the Maine Climate Council to set clear equity outcomes for proposed actions, monitor progress and make recommendations to ensure that programs and benefits reach the intended populations and communities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The state, through its climate communications and equity work, should seek to foster a sense of shared ownership and shared prosperity in the climate transition. 2. (Procedural Equity) All state policy, program, and other decision-making processes should seek to enable equitable participation from vulnerable and historically underserved communities. Enabling equitable participation might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paying vulnerable community members for their time - Providing wrap around services, such as transportation and childcare - Increasing access to all programs in languages other than English - Producing "plain language" guides which help explain particular decisions or decision making processes - Including representative participants of impacted groups in program co-design processes - Utilizing existing social networks to engage communities in state decision making - Adjusting meeting times and locations to enable participation by diverse populations 3. The state should develop an optional financial literacy program to offer to individuals and small businesses who receive state grants and rebates. 4. The State should establish a working group to further coordinate the provision of comprehensive social services to every vulnerable household in Maine, including weatherization services. The working group should consider the adoption of a comprehensive "Crisis to Thrive" scale and the adoption of a centralized database to enable coordinated provision of services.

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	<p>The state should additionally develop a one-stop intake process for the coordinated provision of social services, including heating and weatherization services.</p>
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Equity Recommendations: Transportation Sector MWW Strategy A: Embrace the Future of Transportation in Maine	
To view Version 1 of these transportation recommendations, plus notes from working sessions, please see this document .	
Action Area from Maine Won't Wait	Equity SC recommendation
1. Accelerate Maine's transition to Electric Vehicles (EVs)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The state should explore opportunities to make light duty vehicle ownership affordable for low income disadvantaged Mainers. Specific suggestions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assess the feasibility of a loan loss reserve program pilot for qualified-low income customers buying high efficiency vehicles or ZEV/PHEVs (DOT, EMT). - Assess the feasibility of providing a rebate/feebate for, or reduction of, the excise tax levied on new and used electric and plug-in vehicles for qualified low-income vehicle owners (BMV). - EMT, in partnership with GOPIF and DHHS, should consider expanding access for low-income Mainers across all clean transportation and clean heating incentive programs to include any household or individual participating in any state or federal means-tested program. - EMT should study additional barriers for low income and disadvantaged Mainers to access clean vehicle rebates. 2. The state should increase access to EV charging in or adjacent to tenant-occupied spaces, including low-income housing and senior citizen housing. This might include offering a targeted grant program for landlords/tenants, exploring opportunities for EV ready building codes in all rental housing, and studying utility make ready programs or rate design as a source of funding for these improvements. 3. The Department of Education, DEP, DOT, and local school districts, should study and recommend clean vehicle alternatives for the

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	<p>school bus fleet in the state. Clean vehicle incentives should prioritize funding in disadvantaged school districts.</p>
<p>2. Increase fuel efficiency and alternative fuels</p>	<p>4. The state should, in collaboration with its partners, consider opportunities to pilot an incentive program for qualified low-income households to scrap the lowest efficiency vehicles and replace those vehicles with newer, high efficiency vehicles or ZEV/PHEVs.</p>



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Action Area	Equity SC recommendation
3. Reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT)	<p>5. The state and its partners should evaluate ways to incentivize the use of shared and active transportation, such as transit and shared rides as well as bikeshare programs. Options might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maine DOT, in partnership with DHHS, DOL, DECD and others, should pilot innovative clean transit programs in disadvantaged communities (ie: non-drivers, disabled, older Mainers, people in recovery). - DOT, EMT, and other state agencies should consider developing a targeted e-bike pilot for vulnerable and low income Mainers. - Maine DOT should update the Maine Complete Streets policy to further incentivize a switch to active transportation and transit, while addressing existing safety concerns associated with the use of non-car transportation. The state should provide support to communities to conduct active transportation studies. - Through its process to update Maine's Strategic Vision of Transit, Maine DOT should study opportunities for shared vehicle/rides using existing state operated transportation infrastructure. Maine DOT should also investigate additional types of trips that Mainers would like to be able to take using transit, as well as the barriers and challenges facing non drivers, including working with DHHS to understand health considerations for those who aren't driving. - Maine DOT should study the total cost of operations for electric ferries, and its impact on future customer prices. - Maine DOT should establish public educational content about public health, shared rides, and transit to address rider hesitancy <p>6. The state should encourage employers to maintain remote access capabilities, and should provide associated funding to those low-income Mainers who have the ability to work remotely but not the necessary broadband, technology, infrastructure, or space; this may include piloting public shared working spaces and access to childcare services</p>
Other Recommendations	7. BMV should study the potential to increase access to licensing services for undocumented and underdocumented Mainers (transportation access).

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Summary of data needs and future research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- How far do Mainers travel to recreate (to work, to live, etc)? Are there opportunities to invest in local recreational opportunities (e.g., local rec centers), working locations, etc particularly in rural communities, which would increase economic vitality and reduce driving?- How do we account for systems of reciprocity in total cost of vehicle ownership analysis?
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Equity Recommendations: Buildings Sector Strategy B: Modernize Maine's Buildings: Energy Efficient, Smart and Cost-Effective Homes and Businesses	
To view Version 1 of these buildings/energy efficiency recommendations, plus notes from working sessions, please see this document .	
Action Area	Equity SC recommendation
1. Transition to cleaner heating and cooling systems and efficient appliances	1. The state, working with EMT, Maine Housing, and others, should consider developing pilot programs and incentives targeted at the adoption of clean building, heating, and renewable energy solutions by landlords, particularly in rural and low-income communities. 2. The state should ensure that heating assistance eligible residents can transfer heating assistance payments from fossil sources to electricity bills when participating in heat pump installations. The potential for increased electric bills is a significant barrier for those considering electrifying.
2. Accelerate efficiency improvements to existing buildings	3. The state, in partnership with MHSA, CAP agencies, EMT, tribal communities, and others, should conduct an assessment to identify those communities and individuals with the poorest, least healthy, least efficient housing stock in the state. The state should prioritize the allocation of resources for building upgrades and weatherization services for those communities/housing structures determined most vulnerable. 4. The state, in partnership with tribal communities, should identify vulnerable homeowners who are at increased risk of losing their homes due to inability to access weatherization/home retrofit services or other energy benefits, such as owners of older (20+ year) mobile homes and structurally unfit older homes. The state should conduct a thorough review of state/federally funded programs such as weatherization, CHIP – Central Heating Improvement Program, mobile home replacement and others to assess what opportunities might exist to adjust program guidelines which allow those homeowners to be rehomed in safe and efficient housing or to maintain existing housing for these individuals where possible and cost effective. Special attention should be paid to consideration for allowances to retrofit larger properties for zoned heating/living, changeover of heating systems to alternative energy options, and the opportunity to expand the number of mobile home replacements by broadening program guidelines and expanding funding. The state should develop programs. 5. Recognizing that some low-income and otherwise marginalized Maine people whom are eligible for weatherization assistance or energy bill

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	<p>assistance including LIHEAP are currently not receiving it; and that the coordinated provision of weatherization services in households which receive energy bill assistance can decrease the overall energy burden of the household and reduce reliance on subsidies, the state, in partnership with EMT, OPA, MSHA, and other partners, should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Publish a baseline assessment of the number of homes which need weatherization assistance, and should develop a plan/coordinated resources to ensure that all households which receive heating and other energy bill assistance have access to retrofit, weatherization and other energy demand reduction services. b. Identify and address access barriers in vulnerable populations who are eligible for LIHEAP or other energy benefits but who are not currently accessing those benefits. Barriers might include linguistic isolation, literacy, and challenges related to understanding the application process, amongst others. c. assess opportunities for improvement in the administration of LIHEAP funding, including barriers to total expenditure of funds each year. These barriers might include access to contractors, and the ability to fund year-round administrative positions in CAP agencies, amongst others. <p>6. All rebates which are offered for cleaner heating, transportation, or related goods and services should be offered point of sale, vs mail-in/reimbursement. Capital expenses are a barrier to the participation of low-income Mainers.</p>
<p>3. Advance the design and construction of new buildings</p>	<p>7. The state should collaborate with municipalities across the state to provide increased access to (and coordination of) shared services for building code development and enforcement, as well as increased training opportunities for builders/contractors, architects/designers, and local officials.</p>
<p>5. "Lead by Example" in publicly funded buildings</p>	<p>8. Maine Housing should incentivize the construction and renovation of affordable and available housing which meets the standards or Enterprise Green Community, Passive House, or comparable standards.</p> <p>9. The state of Maine should conduct a comprehensive housing assessment to identify the number of unhoused or inadequately housed Maine people, including those in structurally unfit homes, to help determine necessary investment in housing stock across the state.</p> <p>10. Maine Housing should coordinate with other state agencies and partners who provide access to funding for, and educational resources</p>

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	<p>about, clean energy technologies and services, in order to adopt those technologies and services in affordable housing developments and to market those opportunities within their housed communities.</p>
Other recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">11. GEO should conduct a study on the potential for gentrification and displacement and associated price impacts when improving houses, and policy options for managing this and other unintended consequences.12. Prioritize engagement in frontline communities to increase awareness of financing and rebate options and increase technical assistance for energy burden reduction initiatives.

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Equity Recommendations: Energy Sector Strategy C: Reduce Carbon Emissions in Maine's Energy and Industrial Sectors through Clean Energy Innovation	
To view Version 1 of these energy/industrial sector recommendations, plus notes from working sessions, please see this document .	
Action Area	Equity SC recommendation
1. Ensure adequate affordable clean energy supply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Program design for new clean energy programs, as well as energy-related stakeholder groups, must include representatives of LMI communities and the participation of frontline communities. 2. Communities that host large scale renewable projects should receive clean energy benefits, as identified by the community, from those projects. GEO should publish guidance to help municipalities and frontline industries directly impacted by this development access consistent and equitable community benefits; this guidance should include a mechanism for racial and equity analyses. Note that this requires considering inherent bias in cost benefit analyses. 3. The state should work with utilities to explore opt-out models for renewable energy project participation, where those models would provide a cleaner and less expensive electricity mix to consumers (ie, subscription community solar models). 4. GEO should continue to work with the legislature, the PUC, utilities, and Efficiency Maine Trust to assess the viability of on-bill financing programs to allow homeowners to borrow money for energy upgrades and make repayments over time via the utility bill. 5.  6. GOPIF, in collaboration with DEP and the PUC (along with other agencies) should add an equity assessment review to existing review standards for all projects that require a new Site Location or Development Act permit, as well as permitting processes for new energy infrastructure at the PUC. 7. The PUC should examine emerging best practices for incorporating equity into community solar and other community-owned distributed energy programs, including the Community Renewable program (P.L. 2015 ch. 232) and clean energy procurements under Chapter 477.

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	<p>8. DEP, in partnership with other state departments, should work with the legislature and with other northeastern states to study opportunities and challenges associated with PV and offshore wind decommissioning, including both battery disposal and the development of secondary markets in Maine. These studies should explicitly consider location of, and impacts from, potential future disposal facilities within marginalized communities and communities of color.</p>
<p>Other Recommendations</p>	<p>9. The Governor's Office of Policy Innovation and the Future in collaboration with the Maine Public Utilities Commission, the Office of the Public Advocate, MaineHousing and other partners, should conduct a comprehensive assessment of energy burden across Maine. This assessment should identify actions which reduce energy burden for the most vulnerable Mainers, both through the revision of existing programs and in the adoption of new programs and proposals, and should establish measurable targets for reduction of energy burden over time.</p> <p>10. The newly established <u>Clean Energy and Sustainability Accelerator</u> should consider incorporating LMI incentives (or similar mechanisms, including asset-tied financing) that lower barriers to access, particularly in tenant occupied housing.. The Accelerator should additionally explore partnerships with community service organizations, such as MaineHousing and CAPs, to coordinate services and programs.</p>
<p>Summary of data needs and future research</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there an opportunity for the Office of the Public Advocate to serve additional vulnerable or disadvantaged populations? - Is electric system reliability inequitably distributed? Are costs associated with system reliability improvements equitably distributed? - Does Northern Maine experience unique challenges related to energy cost, reliability, access to energy-related economic opportunities or other energy services?

**Equity Recommendations: Energy Sector/Natural and Working Lands and Waters
 Strategy D: Grow Maine's Clean Energy Economy and Protect Our Natural Resource Industries**

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Action Area	Equity SC recommendation
<p>1. Support the ability of Maine's natural resource economies to adapt to climate change impacts and new market opportunities.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The state should study the current demographic makeup of Maine's natural heritage industry workers, and should identify opportunities and drivers of change to increase diversity within this industry. 2. The state should study the barriers to new Mainers and other vulnerable individuals who wish to enter heritage industries, including lack of access to capital and immigration/visa requirements which limit ability to relocate with family members, as well as unique skills they may bring to the field. The state should pilot programs to address these barriers. 3. The state should study how climate driven uncertainty will continue to impact the fishing industry, and should identify current and additional opportunities for diversification (aquaculture, seaweed, shellfish, etc) within this industry for those workers at risk of losing their jobs/livelihoods. 4. The state should prioritize economic development investments in economic diversification of natural heritage industries in the most vulnerable communities first, with a focus on increasing diverse (people of color, women) participation in these industries. 5. The state should make resources available to natural heritage industries to pursue value added environmentally friendly certifications, such as B Corps and Certified Organic, as well as democratic ownership structures such as cooperatives. 6. In partnership with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension and the private sector, as well as with the Resolve To End Hunger in Maine by 2030, the state should explore agricultural opportunities associated with growing new crops sustainably in a changing Maine climate. 7. The State should continue to provide incentives for, and should pilot, clean technology and clean fuels transition in natural heritage industries, particularly for those small businesses and self-employed individuals at the margin. Pilots should seek to facilitate peer-to-peer learning.



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<p>2. Clean energy jobs and businesses in Maine</p>	<p>8. In partnership with the Department of Labor, DECD, private industry, and others, the state should develop a comprehensive approach to just transition, including adopting a comprehensive definition and prioritizing workforce retraining initiatives, especially in those industries and communities most threatened by climate change. These retraining programs must be developed in close collaboration with impacted communities and industries.</p> <p>9. The state should document the current diversity of clean energy sector workers, and opportunities to increase access to these jobs for underserved communities. Clean energy workforce training opportunities should seek to recruit women and people of color, and should be accessible to Mainers from across the state. These programs should decrease barriers to entry for vulnerable Mainers, through the provision of wrap around services, payment for training opportunities, and other opportunities.</p> <p>10. The state, in partnership with CTEs, community colleges, and other training partners, should conduct a statewide study of workforce availability to meet current and projected needs for energy assessments, audits, and weatherization technicians. This study should assess any projected workforce shortages across the state and should recommend training programs/pathways and other mechanisms designed to increase access to well-paying jobs in these fields for historically disadvantaged or underemployed Mainers.</p> <p>11. GOPIF and GEO should partner with DOL to provide info on clean energy career and job training opportunities to unemployed/underemployed Mainers.</p> <p>12. The state should explore barriers to entry into clean energy careers related to licensure, and should align with best practices informed by both industry partners and other states/jurisdictions.</p> <p>13. GOPIF should consider opportunities to increase job training opportunities for auto mechanics in disadvantaged communities, prioritizing programs with EV readiness training.</p>
<p>3. Shovel-Ready infrastructure projects</p>	<p>14. The state should compile a list of vulnerable infrastructure identified through prior planning processes, and develop a plan for assessing this infrastructure for climate vulnerability as well as funding infrastructure resilience upgrades. When determining which infrastructure to upgrade first, the state should prioritize infrastructure which is both critical and identified as important to the host community.</p>

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Equity Recommendations: Natural and Working Lands and Waters
Strategy E: Protect Maine's Environment and Working Lands and Waters, Promote Natural Climate Solutions and Increase Carbon Sequestration

To view Version 1 of these natural and working lands and waters sector recommendations, plus notes from working sessions, please see [this document](#).

Action Area	Equity SC recommendation
1. Protect natural and working lands and waters	1. The state should explore the distribution of green space and access to it, especially in historically disadvantaged communities. This should include assessing the diversity of visitorship at state owned parks and other sites, access to working and recreational waterfronts, and equitable participation in the Land for Maine's Future program. 2. Working together with tribal representatives, the state's natural resource agencies should continue to explore opportunities for repatriation, cooperative ownership or management of land with tribal nations 3. The state should incorporate equity considerations into grant scoring for all natural-space related grants, such as criteria which prioritize use of funding for street trees in town centers and urban areas, particularly in low income or otherwise disadvantaged communities.
2. Develop new incentives to increase carbon storage	4. Working with the University of Maine and other partners, the state should study potential opportunities and challenges associated with carbon pricing mechanisms (ie carbon tax, fee, etc) for Maine-based industries, particularly natural heritage industries and others heavily dependent on high-carbon fuels and/or highly vulnerable to climate changes.
4. Improve monitoring to understand and manage the response to climate change	5. The State should encourage just principles for climate, environmental, and socioeconomic data collection and ownership through the climate research and monitoring hub and in state agency climate research/monitoring work, and should prioritize community participatory approaches in data collection which ensure transparency and build trust. Data principles might include but not be limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Disaggregation of data by age, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, geography, and other sociodemographic factors 6. The State should encourage the collection of climate and environmental data at scales relevant to Mainers and encourage the sharing of data in an accessible way, for example through the

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	<p>establishment of a coastal and marine information exchange.</p> <p>7. Finally, the state's climate data platform should value and honor the role of traditional environmental knowledge, especially from tribal nations.</p> <p>8.</p>
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ESC recommendation: Engaging Maine People and Communities and Resilient Infrastructure Strategy F: Build Healthy and Resilient Communities	
To view Version 1 of these engaging the public and infrastructure resilience recommendations, plus notes from working sessions, please see this document .	
Action Area	Equity SC recommendation
1. Empower local and regional community resilience efforts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All local climate vulnerability analyses should include robust opportunities for public engagement and education, at all stages in the process. 2. The state should support development of climate resilience planning guidance for communities, and should provide assistance to communities to run these planning processes. This guidance should include the development of a consolidated list of organizations that provide resources for community resilience and climate action. Guides and process assistance should be made available in languages other than English. 3. State climate vulnerability funding programs should establish equity metrics to ensure that equitable amounts of funding and other assistance reach communities across Maine. At a minimum, to establish such metrics, state climate vulnerability funding programs should track program participation data by age, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, geography, and other sociodemographic factors. 4. Citizen climate action groups should be supported and empowered to facilitate access to sources of funding/assistance, especially in communities with limited municipal leadership on this issue. 5. 

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<p>4. Public health monitoring, education, and prevention</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">6. The state's natural hazard emergency alert system should take into account variability in people's ability to respond, and should offer a menu of options for risk reduction. The state should increase information about accessing this program in vulnerable communities.7. The Maine CDC should study the opportunity to use community health readiness assessments to assess ability to adapt or respond to climate vulnerability.8. The state should provide access to free psychological resilience resources geared towards addressing climate-driven trauma.9. The MECDC, in partnership with Maine DEP, should develop guidance for evaluating multi-pollutant cumulative impact in mixed-use zones.10. GOPIF should work with DEP, MECDC, the University of Maine, and other partners to explore opportunities to gather increasingly local air quality data across Maine communities; and to provide additional information about the relationship between pollutant exposure and health impact.11. Maine DEP should encourage idling restrictions and promulgate model municipal policy in densely populated urban and village areas, and in other areas determined to experience disproportionate exposure to and harm from transportation emissions (schools, hospitals, etc). Maine DEP should also study opportunities for increased enforcement and education related to existing initiatives.12. The state should study health impacts from fossil fuel combustion in natural heritage industry workers, as well as workers in other industries whom are disproportionately exposed to or dependent on fossil fuels; and should identify opportunities, including through the use of biodiesel, to address these exposures.13. The state should study health outcomes in low income or rural communities primarily dependent on fossil fuel combustion for heating.14. The state should study health impacts associated with environmental siting decisions in communities (ie native people near paper mills, PFAS exposure in dairy industry, etc).
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ESC recommendation: Engaging Maine People and Communities and Resilient Infrastructure Strategy G: Invest in Climate-Ready Infrastructure	
Action Area	Equity SC recommendation
1. Assess climate vulnerability and provide climate-ready design guidance	1. The state should assess the climate vulnerability of groundwater systems and wells, particularly where there exists potential exposure to increased rates of salinization. The state should propose solutions for any vulnerable areas identified.
2. State Infrastructure Adaptation Fund & predevelopment assistance	<p>2. The state should identify priority communities for piloting the infrastructure adaptation fund, as well as prioritization criteria to apply to competing projects and other proposals. Consideration should be given to factors including climate vulnerability and risk, but also sociodemographic factors, income level, planning and engineering capacity, and cultural/historic significance of infrastructure, amongst other factors.</p> <p>3. In addition to providing project funding, the state's infrastructure adaptation fund should either fund, or package existing sources of funding for, risk assessment, planning, and engineering design, particularly in communities with limited resources.</p> <p>4. The state should help municipalities raise long term funding for long-term infrastructure projects</p> <p>5. The state should explore the development of a menu of resilient infrastructure project recommendations, as well as expand on existing centralized lists of vendors to provide vulnerability assessment, planning, design, and construction services.</p> <p>6. The state should consider mandating a climate risk disclosure requirement for certain investments.</p>

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ESC recommendation: Engaging Maine People and Communities and Resilient Infrastructure Strategy H: Engage with Maine People and Communities about Climate Impacts and Program Opportunities	
Action Area	Equity SC recommendation
1. Raise awareness about climate change impacts and opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Climate engagement opportunities designed/offered/incentivized by the state and its partners should be accessible across all forms of media, and should be delivered through trusted partners to reach vulnerable populations. In designing and offering programs to reach vulnerable populations (ie, neighborhoods with low literacy, high linguistic isolation, high elderly or youth populations, etc), the state should work in close partnership with on-the-ground organizations. 2. The state should explore opportunities to use its climate engagement/communications to build psychological resilience to climate change/variability.
3. Start the "Maine Climate Corps" for climate-related workforce development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Volunteer Maine should incorporate equity into plans for the Maine Climate Corps program. Equitable measures might include multilingual or otherwise targeted outreach, as well as provision of wrap-around services to ensure equitable participation, as well as focused recruitment of corps members from disadvantaged/vulnerable communities.