

RURAL COMMUNITIES COUNCIL

Position Statements

Topic: Climate Change and Climate Action

Fall 2021



Climate Change

The PEI Provincial government's coordination of the **Climate Change Action Plan** and associated activities are endorsed by the Rural Communities Council. Rural islanders seek to foster a strong partnership with the Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Change to ensure rural communities, including Municipalities are well represented, informed and empowered. An action plan addressing the unique needs for rural communities specifically, is a recommended next step for the Provincial Government to provide.



Public Awareness

Public Awareness is the key driver of behavior change for climate action requirements that are urgently needed within PEI. The Rural Communities Council supports the need for rural communities to be equally aware of climate action as they are in relation to other civic duties that the island is known for. Rural industries and rural communities alike could be the leaders in climate change strategy with coordination through Provincial government policy and leadership.



Affordability

Affordability in relation to climate action is a key driver of change for many Islanders. The Rural Communities Council is encouraged by the many programs available but wants to ensure awareness is increasing as evidenced in utilization and program participation metrics. Some of the impactful opportunities for change the Council supports include programs that are inclusive of lower and moderate-income levels (*some recent examples are heat pump rebates and availability of rural transit at a reduce fare*).



Rural PEI

Rural PEI is uniquely positioned for climate change action. The Rural Communities Council supports the strategic leadership of the Provincial government's Climate Change Action Plan as a foundational policy directive, and challenges other NGOs to participate by showing evidence of awareness and metrics that support changes made. Rural islanders are poised to be leaders in making an impact to all Islanders.



Seeing the dedication of this Council lead to the evolution of practical and effective communication strategies is exemplary. We encourage other stakeholder groups to find alignment with the Rural Communities Council and the Department of Fisheries and Communities on these important position statements.

*Hon. Jamie Fox,
Minister of Fisheries and Communities*

As Co-Chairs of the Rural Communities Council, we are pleased to offer ongoing engagement and discussion around climate change challenges to further amplify the varied lived experiences of rural PEI.

*Co-Chair Elmer MacDonald
and Co-Chair Gerry Gallant.*

The Department of Communities and Fisheries will continue to evaluate existing and new policy with a climate change lens. We thank the Rural Communities Council for shinning a spotlight on the unique needs of rural islanders in relation to climate action and encourage strong partnerships and collaborations around these themes and calls to action.

*Bob Creed,
Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Communities*