



2008 Key Issue Identification Form

Instructions: Each county, program area and specialists as a whole are to identify key issues that their programming activities currently address, or should address. For each issue, craft a 2-3 sentence issue statement that outlines, in brief, what the issue at hand is and why it is important or relevant. The issue statements should be crafted based on objective data, as well as input from Specialists, County Educators, Advisory Councils, and input from other key stakeholders.

1. In a few words, please come up with a **title** that succinctly defines the issue:

Energy Conservation and Sustainable Energy

2. Please describe the issue in 2-3 sentences (i.e. craft an issue statement that describes what the issue at hand is and why it is a significant issue):

In an era of volatile global economic expansion and its subsequent impacts on the earth's environment, energy supplies and costs have become an emerging and crucial issue for the United States and New Hampshire residents. The continued reliance on fossil fuels, predominantly from foreign suppliers, for residential energy consumption will only perpetuate the economic instability and resulting climate change. An important solution to these problems is initiating behavior change on the part of U.S. consumers to reduce their energy consumption and adopt sustainable sources of energy.

3. In 2-3 sentences, please describe what the public value for Extension to address this issue is/would be. (The term public value refers to not only the value of our outreach activities to community *participants*, but, more importantly, the value of these activities to those who do not *directly* benefit from these activities. The purpose of the Public Value approach is to secure support for activities with strong public value and identify those activities that do not have strong public value. The following is an example of a public value statement that addresses the issue of loss of rural landscape to development and other growth-related pressures.)

In order to sustain the quality of life, New Hampshire residents must protect it's natural resources, reduce it's reliance on foreign energy sources, and provide sustainable sources of energy for it's economic activity. Despite the complexity of global economic growth and the human factors contributing to it, simple changes in consumer behavior can make a significant impact on energy consumption. Using less energy produces cost savings to both homeowners and businesses, which improves our economic competitiveness. Using local and renewable sources of energy lessens our dependence on volatile global markets for fossil fuels. Reducing consumption of fossil fuels will reduce the probability of global climate change and the potential for devastating consequence on the environment.

4. Identify and summarize key data that help make the case that this is a key issue (key data might include demographic trend data, University priorities, issues identified in plans/policies of other agencies and organizations, stakeholder input, etc.).

The U.S. is the world's largest consumer of fossil fuels. Petroleum and coal consumption alone represent 62 percent of U.S. energy consumption (National Energy Information Center (NEIC)). The nation uses 20.6 million barrels of oil a day (2005 statistics). Approximately 60 percent of the petroleum consumed in 2006 comes from foreign countries. As a result of its reliance on fossil fuels the U.S. is the world's leading emitter of greenhouse gases (25 percent of global carbon dioxide emissions - NEIC).

In New Hampshire, energy consumption from all sources tripled between the years 1960 and 2005 (112.3 trillion BTU/yr to 335.4 trillion Btu/yr) according to U.S. Department of Energy statistics. Total annual energy expenditures increased from \$317.6 million in 1970 to \$4,581 million in 2005 (nominal values). In the period from 1998 to 2005 total annual energy expenditures jumped by \$2 billion. The corresponding increase in greenhouse gas pollutants is just as dramatic. Gross greenhouse gas emissions increased 48 percent between 1990 and 2004, with the largest increases occurring since 1995 (NH DES statistics). Approximately 68 percent of greenhouse gas emissions are generated by the transportation and the electrical-generation sectors.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a co-recipient for the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, states in its most recent report (2007) that "Changes in lifestyle and behavior patterns can contribute to climate change mitigation across all sectors". The draft New Hampshire Climate Change Action Plan also identifies the residential sector as an integral component of the state's strategy to reduce New Hampshire's greenhouse gas emissions

5. How does/would addressing this issue tie into UNH Cooperative Extension's Mission?

UNH Cooperative Extension (UNHCE) has a proven track record in educational outreach aimed at behavior change. For 93 years, we have worked with New Hampshire residents of all ages and income levels. Our outreach activities reach into every community within the state across broad audiences with diverse programs using a variety of methods. The need to provide unbiased, researched based information on energy conservation to New Hampshire's residents has never been greater. Voluntary adoption of energy efficiency strategies and renewable energy resources through informed decision making will have far reaching benefits for New Hampshire's economy, communities, and natural resources.

6. What Extension programs/activities, if any, currently address this issue? For each, please succinctly describe how the program/activity addresses the issue.

UNHCE already provides some forms of energy education to many of the audiences we serve, albeit in a spotty and fragmented manner. A cohesive, targeted outreach effort on

the subject using many of the resources already in place could have tremendous impacts. In 2008 UNHCE commenced the Energy Answers Project to help fill the void. The initial goal of Energy Answers Project is to train Master Gardeners to answer energy conservation related calls from NH residents at the Family, Home & Garden Education Center. The next phase of the project hopes to expand the outreach efforts of these volunteers through a volunteer network called Energy Navigators. Energy Answers also hopes to collaborate and integrate with existing energy information providers in order to effectively utilize resources.

7. What other organizations/agencies are currently addressing this issue?

There are a multitude of organization and agencies attempting to address this important and complex issue, including the NH Office of Energy and Planning (OEP), NH Department of Environmental Services (DES), NH Public Utilities Commission, Clean Air – Cool Planet, the Jordan Institute, NH Carbon Challenge, NH Residential Energy Performance Association, NH Sustainable Energy Association, NH Community Action Programs, as well as a number of private companies, citizen groups, communities and utilities. Many of the organizations recognize the value of UNH Cooperative Extension’s educational outreach expertise and how to integrate it into energy conservation education (Energy Answers Focus Groups). The Energy Answers project is already recognized in the draft NH Climate Change Action Plan under “Develop an Overarching Education and Outreach Plan”. It states: "Invest and enhance existing educational programs that are working (e.g. New Hampshire Carbon Challenge, Clean-Air Cool Planet, Local Energy Committees, UNH Cooperative Extension Energy Answers program)."

8. If Extension does not currently address this issue, how might we address this issue in the future? (Consider staff capacity, financial resources, volunteer capacity, and potential partnerships with other agencies/organizations, etc.).

UNH Cooperative Extension currently lacks a full time staff coordinator to implement the Energy Answers project, build volunteer capacity, collaborate with other agencies/organizations and build staff capacity in energy related programming. The Energy Answers project also hopes to recruit content related personnel to help implement and provide programmatic support. The project also hopes to implement a social science examination of key behavior change messages along with a social marketing campaign and follow-up evaluation. There are a number of collaborating organizations, such as the Carbon Challenge, which will be assisting with these efforts.

Please Complete and Email to Lisa Townson by October 23, 2008

Form Submitted by: Tim Fleury

Date: March 24, 2009

Representing: Forestry and Wildlife Program Area/Energy Answers Team