

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Summary | February 22, 2008

OVERARCHING THEME:

Participants expressed great concern for the concept of global climate change and prevention of greenhouse gasses.

OUTCOMES SYNOPSIS:

Topic	Regional Workshops	Deliberative Poll	On-Line Conferences
Methodology and logistics	<p>Regional workshops were held in five locations throughout the state (St. Johnsbury, South Burlington, Montpelier, Springfield and Rutland) based on feedback from the advisory committee.</p> <p>The agenda consisted of a presentation, Q&A Panel, Key Pad polling, and an open mic session.</p> <p>Over 800 people registered; there were 650 participants and 175 observers.</p>	<p>The Deliberative Polling event was held at UVM in Burlington, Vermont over the weekend of November 4th and 5th of 2007.</p> <p>The methodology enlists randomly selected people to participate and learn about the choices through deliberation, competing various polls.</p> <p>152 participants.</p>	<p>On Line conferences were held asynchronously; meaning participants could log in and participate at their leisure.</p> <p>This process was facilitated by DPS. The poll used was similar to the one in the regional workshops.</p> <p>12 conferences for different groups were hosted.</p> <p>75 people participated.</p>
Environmental Concerns <i>(High Priority)</i>	<p>Participants indicated a strong concern for the environment, especially pollution and gas emissions.</p>	<p>Attendees expressed a desire to minimize pollutants, use power that does not run out, and reduce CO₂.</p>	<p>Participants related that they were concerned about pollutants, greenhouse gases, and sustainability.</p>
Resource Prioritization	<p>Highest Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Energy Efficiency ▪ Wind ▪ Hydro <p>Lowest Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coal ▪ Oil ▪ Nuclear 	<p>Highest Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hydro ▪ Wind ▪ Solar <p>Lowest Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oil ▪ Coal 	<p>Highest Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hydro ▪ Wind ▪ Efficiency <p>Lowest Priorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nuclear ▪ Solar ▪ Coal
Energy Efficiency <i>(High Priority)</i>	<p>Participants expressed a strong desire for an increase in funds for efficiency measures (82%); a majority also believed Vermont should meet new demands through efficiency (68%)</p>	<p>The vast majority of participants (84%), after deliberation, believed that funding for efficiency should be increased, vs. buying or generating power.</p>	<p>Participants indicated a preference (53%) for increased spending on efficiency measures. About 2/3's of the participants thought efficiency could be used in lieu of new generation.</p>
Renewables <i>(High Priority)</i>	<p>94% believed that Vermont should obtain its energy from renewable sources of energy; 84% believed that there should be a minimum percentage sold to come from renewables.</p>	<p>There was overwhelming support, which increased post deliberation, to support renewables. 98% of participants desired increases.</p>	<p>23% thought the current levels of renewables was acceptable, while 72% believed that Vermont should increase the amount of renewables used.</p>
Renewables: Wood <i>(Support)</i>	<p>While wood ranked 5th overall in resource prioritization, many</p>	<p>Wood was tied with nuclear in resource prioritization, with</p>	<p>Wood was a relatively innocuous topic in the on-line conferences. It was</p>

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Wood, Cont...	discussions regarded wood as an attractive, larger source of generation.	greater support post deliberation. It was also viewed as more environmentally friendly.	neither selected nor de-selected as a potential source of future generation.
Hydro Quebec <i>(High Priority)</i>	80% of the participants believed that Vermont should continue to purchase from HQ. When asked to choose between HQ and oil, coal, gas and out of state nuclear, support for HQ grew to 93%.	86% of the sample (49% strongly) believed Vermont should continue to buy power from HQ. Support grew 20% post deliberation. Hydro was viewed as a clean resource.	94% of the conference participants believed the state should continue to purchase power from Hydro Quebec. Additionally, a large majority believed hydroelectric power is environmentally friendly.
Vermont Yankee <i>(Divided issue)</i>	When asked if Vermont should continue to purchase power from VY, 63% opposed further purchases. When asked to choose between gas, oil, coal and out of state nuclear, 54% of participants changed to support, vs. 46% who opposed nuclear	A slender plurality (50% vs. 48%) agreed that Vermont should continue to purchase power from VY. Deliberations had an insignificant affect on opinions. VY was viewed as less environmentally friendly than wood.	As with the other components of the public engagement process, nuclear power is a divided issue. Here, it was about 50% support. Issues considered positive: no greenhouse gases and price; con: radiological waste.
Rate Issues	Participants expressed a desire for lifecycle costs to be factored into rates; they were split on the issues of dynamic pricing and predictability.	Participants had less of a willingness to pay individually for renewables, believing costs should be divided by consumers	Participants tended to favor choice and economy in regard to rate issues. There was slight support for dynamic pricing.
Cross-Cutting issue: Generation	Participants were indifferent to acquiring power from Vermont-owned utilities vs. contracted.	A large majority (more than 70%) preferred that utilities build facilities, rather than buy power.	A majority preferred contracts or had no preference for new power, vs. utility owned facilities.
Cross-Cutting Issue: Size	Participants showed a slight preference for decentralized, small generation, vs. centralized generation.	Both before and after deliberation, a large majority preferred having smaller, decentralized plants.	Participants appeared to prefer smaller, decentralized facilities that were suggestive of a renewable strategy.
Cross-Cutting Issue: Location	About 2/3's of participants believe Vermont's power should be generated in state.	Post deliberation, most (68%) of participants want power to come from within Vermont.	Conference participants appeared to be indifferent of the location where power was generated.
Process notes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ High level of "self-selecting" participants; ▪ Tended to support socialized solutions; ▪ Had a high willingness to pay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Random sample, but still self-selecting; ▪ Less willingness to pay; ▪ Polling on facts showed participants knowledge grew. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One public session was offered, based on interest and registration via Raab; ▪ The remaining conferences were target to associations to obtain a business perspective.