

This study examines the social networks of organizations promoting sustainable transportation policy in three rural New England states: Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont. These adjacent states have similar transportation infrastructures, climates, demographics, and societal cultures. A total of 121 organizations across the three states were surveyed. Then, each state's network density was analyzed with UCINET, social network analysis software. Results indicate that compared to Maine and New Hampshire, Vermont has a denser social network and twice the number of cliques comprised of three or more members. Before identifying the unique factors potentially contributing to Vermont's higher density, common factors were identified across all three states, including significant associations between degree centrality and the following attributes: particular organizational roles, receiving particular information, percent of work focused on sustainable transportation, and number of out-of-state ties. Among the factors that significantly associate with degree centrality in Vermont, but not in the other states, are the ranking of tailpipe emissions as an important issue, the number of partnerships related to sustainable transportation policy, and sending information regarding calls to action. The five most central organizations in each state were also analyzed to help explain the differences in network structure. Vermont's top five organizations had more ties with other states, had the highest percentage of work focused on sustainable transportation, and were substantially younger than their counterparts in Maine and New Hampshire. The results of this study illuminate potential leverage points for increasing communication between organizations in rural policy-building communities.