
Regional Climate Protection Authority

Mission Statement, Goals and Objectives Adopted April 2010, Amended March 2011

Mission Statement:

RCPA leads and coordinates countywide efforts to implement and advocate a broad range of programs and projects to reduce GHG emissions.

Goals:

1. Reduce GHG emission levels by 25% below 1990 levels by 2015.
2. Reduce GHG emission levels by 40% below 1990 levels by 2035.
3. Employ a tracking system to effectively capture GHG emission data and assess progress in reduction efforts.

Objectives:

Common themes to each objective include the need to:

- ✓ Address legislative and financing initiatives
- ✓ Identify funding needs
- ✓ Incorporate public information and educational outreach efforts
- ✓ Promote a sustainable climate friendly local economy and social equity



Transportation and Land Use

1. Using the *2009 Comprehensive Transportation Plan*, implement an effective strategy to reduce consumption of carbon based fuels and vehicle miles travelled within Sonoma County.

- ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Sonoma County Transportation Authority
- ✓ Program activities:
 - a) Support marketing of electric vehicles in Sonoma County region.
 - Create a fleet of 30,000 PHEV cars and trucks (370,000 tons/GHG)¹
 - b) Support the creation of a regional network for EV charging stations
 - c) Investigate effective parking policies to encourage alternative transportation modes.
 - d) Identify opportunities for funding expansion of transit services
 - e) Public education for reducing dependency on vehicle transportation
 - f) Institute demand pricing policies that reflect the true impact of private vehicle use. Use revenues for enhanced public transit and pedestrian level infrastructure.
 - g) Promote business implementation of commuting programs (e.g. telecommuting)
 - h) Identify needs and locations for additional Park and Ride lots.
 - i) Promote school based Traffic Demand Management (TDM)
 - j) Fully build out transit including SMART as well as walking and bicycling networks in urban areas (200,000 tons/GHG)
 - k) Institute demand management pricing policies in cities
 - l) Replace fuel used in public transit and municipal fleets with locally-produced biofuels (<50,000 tons/GHG)
 - m) Implement Commuter Choice program (100,000 to 400,000 tons/GHG)
 - n) Develop improved metrics for tracking GHG emissions from transportation at the local level

¹ All GHG emission reduction estimates are provided from the Community Climate Action Plan prepared by the Climate Protection Campaign (October 2008) www.coolplan.org

2. Promote regional solutions for effective land use policies to achieve GHG reductions.

✓ Proposed lead coordinator: SCTA/RCPA with City and County Planning Directors

✓ Program activities:

a) Support city and county Planning Directors to work collaboratively to identify and report on effective general plan policies and principles that can be adopted by local governments and will reduce the current dependency on automobile travel and allow for alternative transportation options that create bicycle and pedestrian oriented commercial centers and neighborhoods and also support transit corridors. Several effective recommendations are contained in existing best practices reports for modifying community general plans that can change the current development patterns which cause high GHG emissions. A coordinated and collaborative process to establish basic planning principles for Sonoma County provides the opportunity for all communities to collectively benefit in a shorter period of time. Many effective planning principles are already being included in general plan updates and a collaborative effort would serve to establish a public policy commitment and expedite the implementation of effective principles through general plan amendments. Examples of effective land use planning include:

- Cluster high density housing and services near transit hubs; promote compact, mixed used development.
- Locate jobs and housing in close proximity while improving the jobs/housing balance.
- Require new commercial developments to provide bicycle parking facilities at appropriate levels for the size of development.
- Adopt street and sidewalk design standards that accommodate multi-modal mobility and access.

b) Coordinate with Planning Departments to support collective response and implementation of regional planning initiatives from SB 375.

c) Provide expedited application processing for development projects that exceed GHG emission neutral or reduction standards.

d) Strengthen all Environmental Impact Reports on proposed projects to promote GHG emission reductions

- e) Strengthen city-centered, transit-oriented development (<10,000; max 200,000 tons/GHG by 2025)
- f) Maintain existing or adopt urban limit lines
- g) Strengthen zoning laws to protect lands that sequester carbon and support local resource-based industries (e.g., agriculture/timber resources)
- h) Encourage mixed-use economic development in unincorporated urban service areas
- i) Begin discussion with stakeholders including County Fleets regarding the installation of electric vehicle infrastructure and electric vehicle maintenance.
- j) Identify areas where buildings and infrastructure may be vulnerable to sea level rise, salt water intrusion, storm surge or bluff erosion and produce an interagency strategic plan for where development should be restricted, gradually withdrawn, relocated and where it should be protected.

3. Define healthy community strategies that reduce GHG emissions.

- ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Sonoma County Department of Health Services
- ✓ Program Activities:
 - a) Support programs, policies, or practices that encourage a sustainable local food system that reduces GHG emissions generated in the production, processing, and distribution of food (e.g. “farm to institution” programs that connect sustainably- and locally-grown produce with local institutions).
 - b) Encourage residents to grow food at home or in community gardens.
 - c) Increase safe walk- and bike-ability of urban neighborhoods and accessible transportation options to reduce dependence on car travel and get healthy exercise.
 - d) Encourage community development that supports aging-in-place.
 - e) Reduce heat-related mortality with a multi-prong strategy.

Energy Efficiency and Renewable Power

4. Retrofit 80% of buildings in Sonoma County to reduce energy use by an average of 30% and reduce GHG emissions from the built environment by 168,000 tons per year.
 - ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Regional Climate Protection Authority and SCEIP
 - ✓ Program Activities:
 - a) Utilize state and federal grant funding sources to design and implement a countywide building retrofit program with the speed and scale to provide building retrofit services to the owners of approximately 220,000 buildings in Sonoma County.
 - b) Identify and secure supplemental funding sources from CPUC/PG&E, DOE Weatherization program funding, CDBG, and others to make available to property owners for financing improvements.
 - c) Support the expansion and financial viability of the Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP) to enable energy audit and 'loading order' standards to be designed and implemented.
 - d) Replace natural gas and propane space and water heating with electric heat pumps and solar hot water heaters (320,000 tons/GHG).

5. Promote the large and small scale development and installation of renewable power in the form of solar, wind, biogas, thermal, biomass, cogeneration, etc.
 - ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Sonoma County Water Agency
 - ✓ Program Activities
 - a) Continue the implementation of the Renewable Energy Secure Communities (RESCO) grant project to identify opportunities for distributed renewable power at a community scale
 - b) Further explore the feasibility of a Community Choice Aggregation option at a policy setting level to educate public decision makers and the public at large.

- Switch electricity generation from fossil fuel to renewable sources via a large scale public works program that would build local utility-scale renewable energy resources in Sonoma County. (260,000 tons/GHG)
 - c) Collaborate with Sonoma County Water Agency in their efforts to achieve carbon free operations by utilizing best practices derived from their pilot project.
 - d) Coordinate the countywide building retrofit program with Solar Sonoma County Clean Energy Agent program to enhance the installation of solar PV and thermal for whole house energy efficiencies.
 - e) Encourage Sonoma County located large scale solar projects in partnership with PG&E.
 - f) Identify large publically owned sites for renewable energy potential.
 - g) Support legislation that enhances the development of renewable energy (e.g. Feed in Tariff).
6. Reduce energy used for water delivery and wastewater collection by 25% through conservation, re-use and renewable energy.
- ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Sonoma County Water Agency and City of Santa Rosa
 - ✓ Program Activities:
 - a) Create an on-bill water conservation financing program to complement the building retrofit program and address the need for energy savings from water use (14,000 ton/GHG reduction).
 - b) Improve efficiency of pumping operations for water and waste water (8,000 to 13,000 ton/GHG reduction)
7. Establish mechanisms to measure GHG emission reductions from locally administered projects and programs to ensure reductions are creditable for use in a future carbon market program.
- ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Regional Climate Protection Authority
 - ✓ Program Activities:
 - a) Research feasibility and options to enable Sonoma County to participate in state and regional carbon markets to receive compensation for GHG reductions.
 - b) Meet with state agencies to establish beneficial revenue distribution formulas and allow for local decision making on the use of funds.

- c) Identify potential offset projects with capital costs estimated to determine feasibility to develop them for purposes of carbon offset revenue.
- d) Collaborate with PG&E to secure carbon offsets for demand side energy reductions.
- e) Utilize carbon sequestration opportunities in partnership with the Agricultural and Open Space District.

Green Economy

8. Develop job training programs for building retrofitting, energy auditing, renewable power industry, automotive industry infrastructure for hybrid and electric vehicles.
 - ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Workforce Investment Board
 - ✓ Program activities:
 - a) Collaborate with the Workforce Investment Board to develop retraining programs through the CEWTP grant program
 - b) Collaborate with Sonoma State and Santa Rosa Junior College to develop curriculum for new green economy employment
 - c) Promote local offerings of existing training programs sponsored by PG&E and Solar Sonoma County for energy efficiency and renewable power.
 - d) Begin discussion with electric vehicle industry regarding workforce demand related to hybrid and electric vehicle maintenance.

9. Expand working relationships with the business community through regular communication and by identifying joint program opportunities.
 - ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Economic Development Board
 - ✓ Program Activities:
 - a) Create partnership with PG&E and Green Business Program to assist nonresidential property owners to comply with AB 1103 using energy audits and Energy Star ratings
 - b) Work with real estate industry to develop a phased-in approach to a countywide requirement to perform energy audits on residential buildings.
 - c) Work with real estate industry to develop a voluntary residential energy rating system

Resource Management

10. Develop an adaptation strategy that seeks to protect the public, property and natural resources from climate change impacts.

- ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District
- ✓ Program Activities:
 - a) Provide ongoing coastal protection by reestablishing active salt marshes and estuaries with room to retreat landward and upward; protect and increase coastal open space at strategic points.
 - b) In partnership with Sonoma County Water Agency, address predicted water shortages through water conservation, rainwater catchments, and low-impact design standards.
 - c) Reduce flooding through reduced runoff from impervious surfaces, increasing groundwater infiltration, and providing water resources for wildlife by creating detention basins and side-channel overflow reservoirs.
 - d) Protect water quality, water quantity, and aquatic ecosystems, and provide species movement opportunities by protecting and expanding riparian corridors.
 - e) Preserve and expand upland forests to provide ecosystem resilience, protect water quality, prevent excess runoff, and sequester carbon.
 - f) Identify key linkages/corridors amongst the existing protected lands network along topographical/climactic gradients that could maximize opportunities for migration of species.
 - g) Identify and promote integrated systems for resource monitoring to identify and verify trends in climate impacts.
 - h) Promote adaptive management of natural resource areas to maximize resiliency and multiple benefits as conditions change.
 - i) Mainstream adaptation planning by developing mechanisms to include adaptive management information review and multi-benefit climate adaptation strategies in county, city, and special district planning updates.

11. Minimize solid waste GHG emissions through waste reduction, re-use, recycling, and disposal/conversion technology while also maximizing use of bio-energy sources.

- ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Sonoma County/City Solid Waste Advisory Group
- ✓ Program Activities:
 - a) Support solid waste management programs that will:
 - Reduce the amount of waste generated
 - Promote the reuse of products and packaging
 - Provide for the recycling of discards including products, packaging and organics
 - b) After implementing Solutions contained in a), landfill what remains and produce energy from methane production and using waste as fuel for other energy generation opportunities such as biomass power generation.
 - c) Support actions to fully implement the Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan
 - d) Track progress on reducing GHG emissions from solid waste collection and land fill operations and issue an annual report card

12. Develop carbon sequestration and natural resources management protocols to capture carbon emissions, protect and enhance natural resource assets to counter climate change impacts from GHG emissions.

- ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation & Open Space District
- ✓ Program Activities:
 - a) Document and characterize the county's existing carbon stocks in the agricultural and natural resources landscape – develop these data into a GIS
 - b) Develop integrated, collaborative programmatic approach for integrating ecosystem services and carbon sequestration targets, working with local , state, national agencies, NGOs, universities
 - c) Work with local and regional partners to improve soil and irrigation practices
 - d) Work with local and regional partners to increase agricultural waste composting (up to 1.5 tons GHG per acre ft/yr)
 - e) Work with local and regional partners to evaluate the use of methane digesters to produce energy on dairies (180 tons GHG per day).
 - f) Work with partners to evaluate mechanisms to increase carbon dioxide sequestration and fixation in and around agricultural operations (300,000 tons/GHG)

- g) Restore and increase carbon stocks in native plant communities and ecosystems
- h) Facilitate the increased use of conservation easements as a mechanism for climate change mitigation and adaptation through zoning, dedication of public funds, and mitigation fees
- i) Establish a countywide forest carbon baseline, track progress, and issue an annual report card

13. Work with the agriculture community to develop protocols that reduce GHG emissions from agricultural practices and production.

- ✓ Proposed lead coordinator: Sonoma County Agricultural Commissioner

Program Activities: To be determined