

A Resolution Establishing a Program and Taskforce for Sustainability and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Whereas:

1. There is consensus among the world's leading scientists that global climate change is occurring and is caused in large measure by the anthropogenic (human-caused) emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.
2. Projected impacts on our citizens and infrastructure, and on our mountains, glaciers, forests, rivers, oceans, and other waterways from severe weather, rising temperatures, and rising sea levels pose a risk to Skagit County's future health and economic viability.
3. The cost of fossil fuels, including gasoline and diesel, has risen dramatically and will likely continue to rise as source availability declines, global demand increases, and governments impose carbon taxes and caps.
4. Skagit County's natural resource industries will likely experience significant negative effects due to climate change:
 - a. Fisheries will likely suffer decreased catches due to higher water temperatures, increased intensity of flood events, and decreased instream flows.
 - b. The agricultural industry will likely have to deal with additional winter flooding, more frequent summer droughts, and an increase in the cost of petroleum-based fertilizers and fuel.
 - c. The forestry industry will likely experience harvest reductions due to increased tree disease, insect infestation, and increased forest fire risk.
5. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has projected that stabilization of climate change in time to minimize impacts demands a reduction of global warming emissions to 80 percent below year 2000 levels by the year 2050.
6. States, counties, and cities throughout the United States are reducing local greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel dependency:
 - a. The Governor of the State of Washington has declared the state's commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, and to 50 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.
 - b. More than twenty-five counties nationwide have signed the Climate Stabilization Initiative proposed by King County at the National Association of Counties Annual Conference in July 2007.
 - c. The U.S. Conference of Mayors and more than 600 cities have endorsed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which commits cities to reduction of global warming emissions to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012, and calls for a federal limit on emissions.

7. Local cities and neighboring counties are taking action to conserve resources and to mitigate and adapt to the effects of global climate change:
 - a. Chelan County Commissioner Keith Goehner serves on the Governor's Climate Advisory Team Agriculture Technical Working Group.
 - b. Island County's Council of Governments is drafting a countywide sustainability resolution for adoption by the county, the cities, and their two port districts.
 - c. San Juan County has adopted a resolution and program on climate change.
 - d. Snohomish County has endorsed the Cool Counties principles, joined the ICLEI Climate Protection Campaign, adopted a climate action plan, and created a climate change taskforce.
 - e. Whatcom County has purchased 100% green power since 2006, joined the ICLEI Climate Protection Campaign, and adopted a climate action plan.
 - f. The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community approved a climate change initiative in October 2007.
 - g. The City of Anacortes has joined ICLEI, conducted a greenhouse gas inventory, and adopted a climate action plan.
 - h. The mayor of the Town of La Conner has signed the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement.
8. Skagit County has taken initial steps toward reducing its operational and geographic carbon footprint:
 - a. Partnered with Anacortes, Burlington, La Conner, Sedro-Woolley, the Port of Anacortes, the Port of Skagit County, Skagit PUD, and the Swinomish Tribe to hire a Resource Conservation Manager, funded in large part by Puget Sound Energy.
 - b. Partnered with the Swinomish Tribe in support of their application for a grant to analyze the effects of climate-linked sea level rise.
 - c. Increased countywide recycling rates to 41% of the solid waste stream, and countywide recycling and diversion rates to 53% of the solid waste stream.
 - d. Purchased two hybrid gas-electric vehicles for use by the Health Department.
 - e. Initiated the use of a 5% biodiesel mix on the Guemes Ferry on a trial basis, with plans to step up to a 20% mix.
9. Many counties throughout the nation, both large and small, are reducing global warming pollution through programs that provide economic and quality of life benefits such as reducing energy bills, preserving green space, implementing better land use policies, improving air quality, promoting waste-to-energy programs, expanding transportation and work choices to reduce traffic congestion, and fostering more economic development and job creation through energy conservation and new technologies.

10. Counties have a unique role to play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change through their regional jurisdiction over policy areas such as air quality, land use planning, transportation, zoning, forest preservation, water conservation, and wastewater and solid waste management.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved That:

Section 1. Skagit County hereby joins King County’s Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Initiative, and commits to:

- (a) Create an inventory of our county government’s operational greenhouse gas (“GHG”) emissions and implement policies, programs and operations to achieve significant, measurable and sustainable reduction of those operational GHG emissions to contribute to the regional reduction targets identified in paragraph (b);
- (b) Work closely with local, tribal, state, and federal governments and other leaders to reduce regional GHG emissions to 80 percent below 2000 levels by 2050 by developing a GHG emissions inventory and regional plan that establishes short-, mid-, and long-term GHG reduction targets, with recommended goals to stop increasing emissions by 2010, and to achieve a 10 percent reduction every five years thereafter through to 2050.
- (c) Urge Congress and the Administration to enact a multi-sector national program of requirements, market-based limits, and incentives for reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 2000 levels by 2050. Urge Congress and the Administration to strengthen standards by enacting legislation such as a Corporate Average Fuel Economy (“CAFE”) standard that achieves at least 35 miles per gallon within 10 years for cars and light trucks.

Section 2. Skagit County hereby joins ICLEI’s Climate Protection Campaign, and commits to:

- (a) Conduct a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast to determine the source and quantity of greenhouse gas emissions in the county;
- (b) Establish a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target for the forecast year;
- (c) Develop an action plan with both existing and future actions which when implemented will meet the local greenhouse gas reduction target;
- (d) Implement the action plan; and
- (e) Monitor and report progress.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved and Hereby Ordered That:

Section 3. Skagit County shall take immediate steps in 2008 to control its operational greenhouse gas emissions.

Section 4. All Skagit County staff shall:

- (a) Conserve electricity. Staff shall turn off lights, radios, monitors, printers, copiers, and other electrical devices when not in use. Where available, staff should make use of programmable systems to automatically idle equipment.
- (b) Conserve fossil fuels. Staff should practice efficient driving habits, carpool, avoid idling vehicles for longer than 30 seconds, use appropriately-sized vehicles, and limit speeds to 60 mph.
- (c) Conserve natural resources. Staff shall reduce paper consumption and plastic bottle use, and recycle all recyclable materials. Staff shall to the fullest extent practicable utilize electronic rather than paper-based communications.

Section 5. All Skagit County departments shall:

- (a) Consider the carbon impacts of all of their actions and take appropriate steps to mitigate those impacts.
- (b) Encourage and facilitate recycling by staff and visitors.
- (c) Purchase the highest-efficiency vehicles suitable for their intended use, but in no cases purchase passenger cars or SUVs with EPA 2008 fuel economy ratings of less than 34 mpg, nor pickup trucks with ratings of less than 24 mpg.
- (d) Purchase products that have low-carbon product lifecycle emissions.
- (e) Purchase high-quality carbon offsets to balance all county-purchased air travel.
- (f) Purchase only EPA Energy Star-certified and other high-efficiency devices whenever possible, and consolidate duplicative devices to further reduce electricity consumption.
- (g) By January 1, 2009, develop policies to mitigate each department's direct and indirect carbon emissions and implement the above staff directives.

Section 6. The Facilities Department shall:

- (a) Work with the National Association of Counties Courthouse Challenge program, ICLEI, the Skagit Council of Governments Resource Conservation Manager, or a combination of the same to increase the energy efficiency of all county buildings.
- (b) Install occupancy sensors to control lights in common areas and problem offices.

- (c) Identify and evaluate ways to measure electricity usage by county department for billing of electricity usage to department budgets.

Section 7. The Information Services Department shall, by January 1, 2009:

- (a) Develop an electricity conservation plan in conjunction with Puget Sound Energy for county information technology, including servers and datacenters.
- (b) Enforce policies that require all non-essential client workstations and their monitors to hibernate or power off during non-working hours, except as necessary for installation of software updates.

Section 8. Skagit County hereby creates a 12-member Climate Action and Sustainability Taskforce, members of which shall be appointed by subsequent resolution no later than August 1, 2008.

- (a) The Taskforce shall assist and advise the county as it satisfies the county's commitments to the above initiatives through the following measures.
- (b) The Taskforce shall have no independent authority to act on behalf of Skagit County or the Skagit County Board of Commissioners.
- (c) Taskforce meetings shall be open to the public, and the Taskforce shall publish minutes of its meetings on the county website.

Section 9. In conjunction with county staff, and using best-available science, the Taskforce shall develop a long-term Climate Action Program by the end of 2009. The Taskforce shall accomplish the following tasks as part of the development of the CAP:

- (a) Inventory the county's operational and regional GHG emissions.
- (b) Identify regional climate change impacts.
- (c) Identify and prioritize opportunities for county government to further reduce and offset its operational GHG emissions, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and prepare for the effects of climate change.
- (d) Identify and prioritize opportunities for county government to assist other local governments, organizations, businesses, and individuals to reduce GHG emissions, reduce dependence on fossil fuels, and prepare for the effects of climate change.
- (e) Develop a climate action goal and appropriate policies for inclusion in the 2011 GMA update proposal, specifically by advising Planning and Development Services and the Planning Commission.
- (f) Measure county progress, both as an organization and as a region, toward reaching the GHG emission targets specified in this resolution.

Witness Our Hands and the Official Seal of Our Office this 24th day of June, 2008.

**Board of County Commissioners
Skagit County, Washington**

Don Munks, Chair

Kenneth A. Dahlstedt, Commissioner

Sharon D. Dillon, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Joanne Giesbrecht, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Ryan Walters, Special Civil Deputy
Skagit County Prosecutor's Office