

Focus on:

The Climate Advisory Team

Overview of the Interim Report from the Climate Advisory Team

On February 7, 2007, Governor Gregoire issued Executive Order 07-02, the Washington Climate Change Challenge, declaring Washington's commitment to address climate change. In the Executive Order she set goals to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by 2020, increase clean-energy jobs, and reduce spending on imported fuels. She tasked the directors of the Departments of Ecology and Community, Trade and Economic Development to consult with a broad range of stakeholders to develop recommendations for a full range of policies and strategies to help Washington meet its goals.

In March 2007, 27 leaders from business, tribal, environmental and faith communities as well as state, local and regional government were asked to form the Climate Advisory Team. Since then, the team has worked to develop recommendations outlined in an interim report.

In its work, the Climate Advisory Team has been supported by five Technical Working Groups structured around different sectors of Washington's economy: 1) Agriculture; 2) Energy Supply; 3) Residential, Commercial, and Industrial; 4) Forestry; and 5) Transportation. The Technical Working Groups have identified, analyzed, and refined a suite of options and strategies that fit the unique characteristics of Washington's economy, environment and institutions.

Key Points from the Interim Report

In its interim report, the Climate Advisory Team has outlined a comprehensive approach to enable Washington to reduce and sequester greenhouse gas emissions while creating and enhancing the economic benefits of the clean economy. The team calls for the state to be "quick and smart" in transforming to a clean economy, to have an adaptive management attitude, and to adopt a sustained commitment to addressing climate change.

CLIMATE ADVISORY TEAM

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Team Members:

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David Moore, Boeing Company
Terry Uhling, Simplot
Terry Williams, Tulalip Tribe

Legislative Liaisons:

The Honorable Kelli Linville
State Representative
The Honorable Craig Pridemore
State Senator
The Honorable Jerome Delvin
State Senator
The Honorable Doug Ericksen
State Representative

The Climate Advisory Team identified 30 “most promising” strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions quickly, efficiently and effectively. Complete and timely implementation of the options, together with actions already taken and the work of the Western Climate Initiative, will enable the state to achieve the 2020 goals.

2008 and Beyond

The Climate Advisory Team has recommended that several major actions be implemented immediately, and the others over the longer term.

The next phase will be for the state to act on those recommendations that are ready to go, and to translate the other recommendations into specific policies and programs that, when authorized, can be implemented. The Climate Advisory Team has been asked to help the state with these efforts through 2008.

The Road Map – 12 Directional Recommendations

The Climate Advisory Team has developed 12 high-level recommendations that provide direction for Washington to help meet its climate change emissions and economic goals. Together, these directional recommendations provide a framework or road map for further action. Five of the recommendations are broad and enabling and seven are more specific with strategies that the state should pursue for meaningful greenhouse gas reductions. Acting on them would set in motion Washington’s transition to a clean economy, sending signals that motivate entrepreneurs, investors, businesses and individuals to pursue opportunities, technologies, and choices that reduce carbon.

Broad, Enabling Recommendations

- Build market-based mechanisms to unleash the creativity and innovation that will deliver cost-effective emission reductions.
- Set-up reporting systems to measure and track progress in emission reductions.
- Analyze greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation choices early in decision-making, planning and development of projects.
- Invest in worker training for the emerging clean economy to ensure a skilled workforce and meaningful employment.
- Give the state enough resources to continue to lead regionally and nationally and to fulfill its responsibilities to structure and guide emission reduction strategies.

Recommendations for Specific Actions

Three recommendations address transportation and community design to reduce vehicle miles traveled, achieve ‘cleaner cars’ (and other vehicles and fuels), and support long-term transportation infrastructure investments and choices:

- 1. Build and continue to redesign communities to offer real and reliable alternatives to single occupancy vehicle use.**
- 2. Ensure Washington has vehicles that are as efficient as possible and use non-carbon or lower carbon fuels developed sustainably from regional resources.**
- 3. Invest in Washington's existing transportation infrastructure to move people and goods cleanly and efficiently.**

The 'most promising' strategies to achieve these recommendations are:

- New funding mechanisms to develop additional flexible and reliable long-term funding and use existing transportation revenue better.
- Fund long-term infrastructure choices that expand transit ridesharing and commuter choice programs and provide other transportation alternatives.
- Adopt state, regional and local vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction goals and strategies to reduce per capita VMTs statewide.
- Promote transportation pricing mechanisms that raise the cost of single-occupant vehicle travel and reduce traffic congestion.
- Promote and support development patterns that encourage compact and transit-friendly communities.
- Promote improved community planning, building design and construction.
- Increase efficiency and the capacity of freight and passenger railroads.
- Promote and fund technologies and practices that reduce diesel engine emissions and increase fuel efficiency.
- Actively manage the transportation system to increase its efficiency.
- Promote the use of Plug-In Hybrid Electric vehicles.
- Create a low-carbon fuel standard for transportation fuels sold in Washington (gasoline and diesel).
- Increase in-state production of biofuels and biofuel feedstocks.
- Advance commercialization of cellulosic processes to increase use of waste biomass for biofuels.

Design, build, upgrade and operate new and existing buildings and equipment to increase energy efficiency.

The 'most promising' strategies to achieve this recommendation are:

- Develop demand-side management (DSM), energy efficiency programs, funds, or goals for natural gas, propane, and fuel oil to address the non-electric side of energy use.
- Develop targeted-use funding and incentive mechanisms to encourage efficiency for the non-electric side of energy end-use (demand-side management) and to increase customer-sited renewable electricity.

- Offer financial incentives and instruments to encourage energy efficiency improvements (business energy tax credit and private/public efficiency funds) to support efficiency in design and construction of new and existing buildings.
- Promote and provide incentives for improved community planning and improved building design and construction in the private and non-state public sectors.
- Promote and provide incentives for energy efficiency improvement in existing buildings, with emphasis on building operations.
- Implement consumer education programs, including carbon content of products and building, and “carbon labeling.”
- Analyze and design stricter efficiency standards for appliances, equipment and lighting design, and standards for product recycling.
- Improve electric transmission capacity, access, and “smart grid”.
- Encourage cost-effective combined heat and power plants and thermal energy recovery and use.

Deliver energy from lower or non-carbon sources and more efficient use of fuels.

The ‘most promising’ strategies to achieve this recommendation are:

- Provide renewable energy incentives and remove barriers to deliver renewable power to the grid.
- Provide financial incentives and remove barriers to set up distributed renewable systems.
- Implement policies and provide incentives to improve efficiency at power plants.
- Set up rate structures and technologies that remove disincentives for utilities to invest in energy efficiency, including decoupling utility sales from revenues.
- Increase in-state production of biofuels and biofuel feedstocks. Advance the commercialization of cellulosic processes to increase use of waste biomass for biofuels.
- Improve electric transmission capacity, access, efficiency and “Smart Grid”.
- Encourage in-state production of biofuels and biofuel feedstocks.
- Adopt policies and incentives to encourage cost-effective combined heat and power and thermal energy recovery and use.

Restore and keep the health and vitality of Washington’s farms and forest lands to increase the sequestering of carbon, to reduce the release of GHG emissions and to supply biomass fuels.

The ‘most promising’ strategies to achieve this recommendation are:

- Improve forest health through technical and financial aid and enhanced regulatory mechanisms for improved forest health.
- Reduce the acres of forest lands converted to non-forest uses.

- Enable local governments, utilities, and large urban landowners to protect and maintain urban and community forests.
- Encourage more efficient farming practices, such as no-till or direct-seed, that increase carbon sequestered in agricultural soils.
- Preserve open space and agricultural land from conversion to urban or developed uses, and preserve carbon in biomass and soils.
- Increase in-state production of biofuels and biofuel feedstocks.
- Advance the commercialization of cellulosic processes to increase use of waste biomass for biofuels.

Reduce waste and Washington’s emissions of greenhouse gases through improved product choices and resource stewardship.

The ‘most promising’ strategies to achieve this recommendation are:

- Significantly expand source reduction, reuse, recycling and composting.
- Increase in-state production of biofuels and biofuel feedstocks.
- Implement consumer education programs, including carbon content of products and building, and “carbon labeling”.
- Analyze and design stricter appliance, equipment and lighting efficiency standards and ensure safe appliance and lighting product recycling and design.

MORE INFORMATION

Visit Ecology’s Climate Change web site at:
www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange

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