

# **Focus On: Citizen Engagement**

## **Overview of the Citizen Engagement and Action Framework**

In a February 2007 Executive Order, Governor Gregoire and the Legislature set aggressive goals for reducing Washington's contribution to global climate change, increasing clean energy jobs, and reducing reliance on imported fuels. In addition to state and local policies, reaching these Climate Change Challenge goals requires all of us -- consumers, homeowners, commuters, and business owners -- to make personal decisions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We also need to take advantage of the opportunities presented by climate change for new technologies, new jobs, and economic prosperity.

At the Governor's direction, Department of Ecology Director Jay Manning and Community, Trade and Economic Development Director Juli Wilkerson appointed a Climate Advisory Team, representing some of Washington's most influential businesses, environmental and natural resource interests, local and regional governments, tribes, labor, and faith communities. The Climate Advisory Team worked to find ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, grow the clean energy economy, and cut spending on fuel imports. The team was assisted by Technical Working Groups that focused on transportation, buildings, agriculture, forestry and energy supply. Among their recommendations, most of the working groups identified public education and citizen engagement as a key strategy in reducing our contribution to climate change.

Governor Gregoire also directed the two agencies to recommend a strategy to prepare for the unavoidable effects of climate change. The Preparation and Adaptation Working Groups identified climate education as a priority in preparing Washington for unavoidable consequences of climate change.

### **CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT STAKEHOLDERS**

#### **Energy Utilities**

Puget Sound Energy  
Avista

#### **Business**

Applied Research Northwest  
Belina Interiors

#### **Zoos/Aquaria**

Seattle Aquarium  
Woodland Park Zoo

#### **Teachers / Students & Youth**

OSPI  
WA School Principals  
Association  
Facing the Future & Green  
Schools  
Pacific Education Institute  
Institute for Community  
Leadership  
Nisqually Middle School  
Redmond High School - Cool  
Schools

#### **Colleges & Universities**

University of Washington  
Washington State University  
Gonzaga University  
Seattle Central Community  
College

#### **NGOs**

National Wildlife Federation  
The Veriditas Group  
RE Sources for Sustainable  
Communities  
Northwest Earth Institute  
Sierra Club  
E-3 Washington & EEAW  
Audubon Washington  
The Climate Project  
Tacoma Climate Change Task  
Force

**Citizen Engagement Report to the Governor**

The Governor’s Executive Order also asked for recommendations for educating and engaging the public in the Climate Change Challenge. The interim report to the Governor includes a citizen engagement and action framework closely linked to the recommendations and priorities identified by the working groups. The framework was developed in consultation with numerous stakeholders, climate educators, and formal and community education experts.

**Climate Educator Summits Create a Network and Action Framework**

In fall 2007, Ecology hosted three summits around the state to tap into westside and eastside knowledge and expertise on climate change education. The goals of the summit were to begin drafting a framework for citizen engagement recommendations for the report to the Governor, and to bring together for the first time existing climate education practitioners and stakeholders.

More than 70 climate educators attended the three summits (see sidebar). Dozens more stakeholders and citizens also provided review and comments.

Hundreds of comments were received from the summit participants and reviewers. Common themes emerged and are now included as intended results, along with examples of possible actions, in the “Citizen Engagement and Action Framework.” In addition, the stakeholders requested the development of a network for climate educators. The framework and the first draft of the Network for Climate Educators are posted on the Ecology climate change website.

The goal of the Citizen Engagement and Action Framework is to help people know how they can contribute to slowing greenhouse gas emissions, prepare for climate change, and identify and take advantage of economic opportunities. The framework recommends actions to achieve the following intended results:

- Consumers, homeowners, commuters, business owners, and others have the technical assistance they need to make choices that will reduce their GHG emissions.

**Tribes**

Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission  
 Suquamish Tribe  
 Indigenous Environmental Network

**Local Governments**

**Cities:** Seattle, Bellingham, Spokane

**Clean Air Authorities:** Puget Sound, Northwest, Olympic, Benton

**Counties:** Thurston, Snohomish

Intercity Transit  
 Whitman Conservation District

**State Agencies**

Departments of: Ecology, Fish & Wildlife, Health, Puget Sound Partnership

**Federal Agencies**

Park Service, Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration

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- Existing climate change educators deliver effective programs in local communities; gaps are identified and filled.
- A trained and knowledgeable “green collar” workforce helps place Washington in a competitive global economic position.
- A vocational/technological career pathway from high school to post-secondary institutions produces a workforce prepared to meet climate change challenges.
- A climate change clearinghouse of information and resources is created and maintained.
- A peer to peer youth network is informed and motivated to reduce their GHG emissions, seek careers and business opportunities, and develop appropriate technology.
- The media have the information they need, when they need it, to help citizens make informed choices.

**MORE INFORMATION****Climate Change Advisory Team**

[www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/cat\\_overview.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/cat_overview.htm)

**Technical Working Groups**

[www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/cat\\_twg\\_overview.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/cat_twg_overview.htm)

**Preparation and Adaptation Working Groups**

[www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/cat\\_pawg\\_overview.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/cat_pawg_overview.htm)

**Citizen Engagement and Action Framework**

[www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/climateEd\\_overview.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/climateEd_overview.htm)

**Network for Climate Educators**

[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/climateEd\\_networkdirectory.htm#tribesh](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/climateEd_networkdirectory.htm#tribesh)[http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/climateEd\\_networkdirectory.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/climateEd_networkdirectory.htm)

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