



COUNTY OF YOLO

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Yolo County Honored With Beacon Leadership and Innovation Award For Sustainability Achievements

(Woodland, CA) – The Yolo County Community Services Department is proud to announce that Yolo County has received the prestigious 2023 Beacon Leadership and Innovation Award for Equity and Engagement in Sustainability and Climate Adaptation. This award was presented to Yolo County Supervisors Oscar Villegas and Lucas Frerichs by the Institute for Local Government (ILG), in recognition of Yolo County's exemplary efforts in creating a model for advancing sustainability, equity, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, Yolo County received a 2023 Beacon Spotlight Award for Community Greenhouse Gas Reductions.

The Beacon Leadership and Innovation Award highlights the pivotal framework being created by the Sustainability Program's pending Climate Action and Adaptation Plan. The ILG's judging committee was particularly impressed by the program's commitment to centering equity and collaborating with vulnerable, marginalized, and historically underserved communities. This recognition underscores Yolo County's dedication to inclusivity and ensuring that all voices are heard in the pursuit of sustainable and resilient practices. The Sustainability Program's exceptional community engagement strategy is a testament to Yolo County's forward-thinking approach in addressing climate challenges.

"We are honored to receive the Beacon Leadership and Innovation Award from the Institute for Local Government. This award reaffirms our commitment to centering equity in all aspects of our sustainability initiatives," said Kristen Wraithwall, Yolo County's Sustainability Manager. "This wouldn't have been possible without the tireless efforts of the Yolo County Climate Action Commission members and our incredible community partners."

The Beacon Awards, presented by ILG, provides recognition and support for local agencies, within California, working to build more vibrant and sustainable communities. ILG honors voluntary efforts by cities, counties, and special districts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, save energy, and adopt policies that promote sustainability.

"In 2020, I introduced a resolution declaring a climate emergency, setting a new target of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030, and establishing the Yolo County Climate Commission," said Supervisor Jim Provenza. "This stands as one of the most ambitious climate goals in the nation. Additionally, we mandated that achieving this goal must bring tangible benefits to communities of color and disadvantaged areas. Our aim was to demonstrate the feasibility of significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and to serve as a model for

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other cities, counties, and states, illustrating the direction we must collectively take as a result of the climate crisis."

Supervisor Jim Provenza added, "In contrast to some previous environmental initiatives, we are advancing in a manner that avoids a disproportionate burden on underserved communities. We are grateful that ILG has acknowledged these efforts by awarding us the 2023 Beacon Leadership and Innovation Award."

In September 2020, Yolo County responded to the climate crisis by adopting Resolution No. 20-114, recognizing the exacerbation of social and economic disparities by the COVID-19 pandemic. This resolution spurred the creation of the Yolo County Climate Action Commission and directed the development of the 2030 Countywide Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP), with a bold commitment of achieving carbon negativity by 2030. The plan, initiated in 2023, prioritizes community partnerships, equity, and scientific rigor, emphasizing an inclusive approach that addresses regional goals, fosters resilience, and reflects Yolo County's unique role, particularly the carbon sequestration benefits of agriculture.

Yolo County's pending 2030 CAAP is guided by a set of goals, including fostering robust community partnerships, centering equity, incorporating rigorous science, promoting regional collaboration, ensuring health and resilience, setting ambitious targets, and recognizing the region's agricultural significance. As the plan unfolds, the Yolo County Climate Action Commission remains committed to transparency and community engagement, sharing updates on progress and early action projects to propel the county towards a sustainable and carbon-negative future. For more information, please visit: www.YoloCAAP.org

The Yolo County Board of Supervisors and Climate Action Commission extend their gratitude to ILG for these prestigious awards as they both remain committed to driving positive change, fostering equity, and continuing to implement innovative solutions for a more sustainable and resilient future.

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