

# MINUTES AND NOTES

## CLIMATE CHANGE COMPACT OF YOLO COUNTY

May 8, 2009

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Yolo County Supervisor Matt Rexroad opened the meeting at 9:05 am and thanked UC Davis for its assistance in providing meeting space and amenities.

### BRIEF UPDATES ON RECENT MEMBER ACTIVITIES

**City of Winters:** Conducting their second annual E.A.R.T.H. (Energy, Agriculture and Food, Recycling and Resources, Transportation, and Habitat) festival on Sunday June, 7th.

**UC Davis:** UC Davis and reported that the CEC has funded their RESCO project to combine photovoltaics and a bio-digester for the West Village development. They have also instituted a pilot “Be Green” project in Mrak Hall to test how various approached work or don’t work in terms of changing employee behavior to use less energy. They are also examining through a pilot project the potential for dry storage of genetic materials to replace refrigeration.

**Davis Joint Unified School District:** As part of the “Green Schools” program they will be conducting a “Green Schools Month” for May and a “Green Schools Expo” on May 23<sup>rd</sup> in conjunction with the Davis Farmers Market in Central Park. Schools will bring examples of green projects they have been working on and display these for the community at large. The district continues to investigate the potential for a Power Purchase Agreement for development of solar photovoltaic energy.

**Yolo County:** Has completed a draft update to the General Plan that includes more than 300 specific goals, policies, and actions related to climate change and greenhouse gas reduction. David Morrison reported that these include waiver of permit fees for wind and solar on residential and farm properties; the use of permeable materials in construction; development of a “Green Building” ordinance, and; a new paradigm for community development (Dunnigan) that requires new planning concepts, including the reduction of VMT and water use.

**City of Davis:** Reported that the city is working on its Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant Funding application and that the city council has adopted greenhouse gas emission standards for new construction. Davis is also looking at establishing a solar farm, either through expansion of PV on the property north of town now occupied by PVUSA or on a separate property. The city has completed Phase I of its Climate Action Plan. Councilman Saylor discussed plans for “May is Bike Month,” the news that Davis has been selected as the site for the US Bicycle Hall of Fame, and has approved the first steps to institute an AB 811 financing program for energy efficiency and solar in existing housing.

**Pacific Gas and Electric:** Announced that a program to install LED street lights is now in effect that establishes a “tariff” that will result in substantial energy savings to local governments, as well as a rebate program to reduce the cost of making the change from qualifying high pressure sodium lights.

**City of Woodland:** Recently installed at the new shopping center on I-5 a charging station for electric vehicles. They are looking for a consultant to assist with development of their EECBG application, and their City Council Energy Committee recently completed a matrix of policies and actions that forms the basis for development of a Climate Action Plan.

**Yolo County Office of Education:** Reported that they are pursuing a green purchasing plan for all their cleaning products and other supplies, and are looking at the potential for solar in the near future.

**Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District:** They completed their baseline inventory of energy use and filed their verified inventory with the Climate Action Registry. They are actively tracking the development of the ARB Regional Targets Advisory Committee that is responsible for establishing regional greenhouse gas reduction targets.

**City of West Sacramento:** Their Green Team is developing a “Green Building” ordinance and will have a public workshop on the topic on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Their Green Team continues to meet to develop and implement energy efficiency actions and policies across all city departments.

**Yolo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District:** They are examining ways to reduce haul distances and emissions due to dam-related construction activities.

**Yolo County Housing:** They have switched out all cleaning supplies for “green” products for both their office building and rental units and have experienced significant cost reductions. They also instituted recycling at all locations. They have joined the Climate Action Registry and are the first public housing authority in the country to do so. They are exploring installing double-pane windows.

**Sacramento County:** Reported that their Climate Action Plan will go to the Board of Supervisors next week and will consist of a Phase 1 development of an inventory and reduction targets and a Phase 2 analysis of the feasibility of actions and policies to meet that target. They plan on using their EECBG funds to implement the CAP.

**PMC:** Provided an update on the status of EECBG and other funding opportunities, with an expected emphasis on energy efficiency and conservation as priority activities before consideration of development of photovoltaics.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT’S ROLE IN RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN CALIFORNIA**

Mr. Cliff Rechtschaffen, Special Assistant to the California Attorney General, spoke about the role of local government in responding to climate change (CC). His presentation included the following points:

1. Yolo County has done a great job in drafting its General Plan, with more than 400 separate goals, policies, and actions related to climate change and greenhouse gas reduction. In general, he complimented the Compact and its member jurisdictions for being active and out in front on this issue, and for approaching it on a regional basis.

2. It is important not only to articulate goals for greenhouse gas reduction, but to back these up with specific and enforceable actions and policies.
3. Important considerations for local government include: increased density, infill, targeting new development within city limits, and performance-based VMT limits.
4. California law requires the consideration of CC in the environmental review process, including: a good-faith effort to calculate emissions; a determination of significance; identification of enforceable mitigation measures; the impact of CC on the project, and; consideration of measures to adapt to the potential consequences of CC.
5. The determination of “level of significance” is difficult, but the state Office of Planning and Research has given some guidance, and the South Coast Air Quality Management District and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District have developed standards that local governments might use.
6. Local governments can “tier” from an adopted greenhouse gas reduction plan that includes specific and enforceable energy efficiency and other measures.

#### **THE “LOW CARBON DIET” – A TOOL FOR ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN EXISTING HOUSING STOCK**

Mitch Sears discussed the use of this program to solve the question many local governments are asking: “How do we increase the energy efficiency of existing housing stock?” THE LCD is a key strategy for the City of Davis to meet the greenhouse gas reduction targets it has set for itself as a community.

The program asks participants to “lose” 5,000 pound of carbon emissions over the period of a year. The program itself is 30-days long, during which participants take actions that, over the course of a year, reach this total. Each participant is provided a workbook, and is encouraged to work in groups in order to reinforce the sense of accountability to results.

The city piloted a program with 100 civic leaders to advertise the program and iron out any bugs. The program is staff intensive and the city plans in the future to work through existing community networks (PTA, churches, schools, etc.) to propagate the program more widely in the community. This is a low cost option for local governments

#### **ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05. The Compact meets the second Friday of every other month. The next meeting will be July 10<sup>th</sup> May 8<sup>th</sup> from 9 – 11 am. **Please note the location change:** we will be meeting, on a one time only basis for the July 10 meeting, at Digital Technology Laboratory at 3805 Faraday (next to the new Target on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street). The DTL building is LEED Certified and our meeting will include a tour of the facility and a discussion about LEED certification.