
Western Climate Initiative



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, August 22, 2007

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Western Climate Initiative Members Set Regional Target to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions

*New Mexico Joins Seven States, Provinces to Reduce Emissions by 15
Percent Below 2005 Levels by 2020*

(Santa Fe, NM) – The eight members of the Western Climate Initiative (WCI) today announced the establishment of a regional goal to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the West to 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020.

In February of this year the governors of Arizona, California, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington created the WCI with a long-term commitment to significantly reduce regional GHG emissions thus lowering the risk of dangerous threats to the climate. Science suggests that this will require worldwide reductions between 50 and 85 percent in carbon dioxide emissions from current levels by 2050.

As part of this commitment, members of the WCI agreed to establish a Western regional GHG reduction goal by the end of August 2007 and design a multi-sector market-based mechanism, such as a load-based cap-and-trade program, by the end of August 2008 to help reach the goal. Each member will also participate in a multi-state GHG emissions registry.

Since February the state of Utah and the Canadian provinces of British Columbia and Manitoba also have joined the WCI. All eight states and provinces jointly agreed to the economy-wide regional goal announced today.

The regional goal reflects the combined impact of the individual GHG emissions goals that each WCI member has already set for itself and does not replace the members' individual goals. WCI members will use the regional goal in the design of the multi-

sector market-based mechanism. Other U.S. states, tribes, Canadian provinces and Mexican states seeking to join the WCI must have an economy-wide greenhouse gas reduction goal that is consistent with the regional goal, in addition to other factors.

Presently, four other U.S. states (Colorado, Kansas, Nevada and Wyoming), three other Canadian provinces (Ontario, Quebec and Saskatchewan) and one Mexican state (Sonora) are participating as observers to the WCI's deliberations. Some of these entities, as well as others, may seek to join the WCI as full members.

“States and provinces are leading the way by working to solve – not just debating – the problem of climate change,” said New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson. “Our goal is the most aggressive regional goal in North America – to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 15% by 2020. Next the partners in the Western Climate Initiative will develop a cap-and-trade program and do our part to tackle global warming.”

In 2005, recognizing the lack of federal action and the significant threat that climate change poses to New Mexico, Governor Richardson set statewide greenhouse gas reduction targets: 2000 levels by 2012, 10% below 2000 levels by 2020, and 75% below 2000 levels by 2050. In December 2006, the Governor's Climate Change Advisory Group sent him 69 policy recommendations that would meet – and exceed – the Governor's targets and produce approximately \$2 billion in net savings for the state's economy. The Governor immediately issued an executive order acting on a number of these recommendations, such as adopting clean tailpipe standards for vehicles and establishing green building codes.

See http://www.governor.state.nm.us/orders/2006/EO_2006_069.pdf.

Furthermore, the 2007 legislative session was a banner year for clean energy policy in New Mexico: we increased our renewable portfolio standard, established a Renewable Energy Transmission Authority, and established tax incentives for clean electricity production and sustainably built homes and businesses. Participation in the Western Climate Initiative is the next logical step for New Mexico, building on our significant greenhouse gas reduction activities at the state level.

WCI members have begun work on meeting the August 2008 deadline for designing the multi-sector market-based mechanism to reduce greenhouse gases. All eight WCI members joined The Climate Registry, a GHG emissions registry consisting of more than forty U.S. states, tribes, Canadian provinces and Mexican states.

More information about the WCI, including the regional goal and how it was calculated, is available on the WCI's Web site at www.westernclimateinitiative.org.