

**Sonoma County “Climate Scan”  
Bruce Riordan, Climate Bay Area  
September 2009**

**Innovative Projects:**

NOTE: This is not a complete list of Sonoma County climate projects. It is a list of some of the most *innovative approaches* being taken in Sonoma that will hopefully inspire and inform efforts around the region.

**1. Sonoma County Local Government EV Partnership**

Partnership members are working with Nissan with a goal of putting 1,000 EVs on the road plus charging infrastructure. Purpose is to publicly demonstrate viability of EVs for most travel. Partners: Sonoma County Cities, Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA), Sonoma County, Northern Sonoma County Air District, Sonoma County Open Space District, Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) and employers. Vehicles will be used by Sonoma public agencies and employees of those agencies. One of 27 Nissan partnerships nationwide. Some of the vehicles may be Nissan’s new Leaf (100 mile range) that are coming in October 2010.

**2. Sonoma County Energy Independence Program**

AB 811 program provides financing through the county for residential and commercial building owners for solar, energy efficiency, etc. projects. Paid back through property taxes over 5, 10 or 20 years. \$20M in applications to-date with \$12.6M approved and \$6M done. Planned to provide \$100M in first funding cycle then bond to refund program. <http://www.sonomacountyenergy.org/>

**3. Solar Sonoma County**

Public/private program (modeled on successful Solar Sebastopol) to implement 25 MW of solar by 2011 with a one-stop, customer friendly approach involving public agencies, solar companies, community organizations, etc. Funded by SCWA, BAAQMD, DOE and others. <http://www.solarsonomacounty.com/>

**4. Countywide Retrofit/Renewables Program**

County has hired BKi to design and implement initial program with eventual goal of reducing 170,000 tons of GHGs by 2015. This goal can be reached by retrofitting 80% of residential and commercial buildings to 30% improvement in energy efficiency. Includes outreach/marketing, program planning, work force development training and pilot to saturate a neighborhood.

**5. Carbon Free Water by 2015**

SCWA project to reduce own energy use through development of a wide ranging renewables portfolio including solar, biogas, fuel cells, small hydro and other power sources. Currently 4.5 MW from renewables out of 12 MW total. SCWA is largest energy user in county. <http://www.scwa.ca.gov/>

- 6. Renewable Energy Based Secure Communities (RESCO)**  
\$2M, 3-year proposal for grant from CEC to help Sonoma move from fossil fuels to renewables/energy efficiency. Partners: SCWA, SCTA, Climate Protection Campaign (CPC) and Los Alamos National Lab.
- 7. Retrofit for Energy and Environmental Performance Program**  
\$12M proposal to DOE and CEC for pilot program to provide rebates to property owners for energy efficiency. Partners: SCTA, CPC and Sustainable Spaces.
- 8. Pay As You Save (PAYS)**  
Proposal (initially to Santa Rosa city council) to finance water conservation projects through on-bill financing. Approach is to create one standard program that all cities can adopt.
- 9. Wave Energy Project**  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has recently (July) granted preliminary permits for investigation of wave energy projects at 3 locations off the Sonoma coast by SCWA. Will study feasibility of developing 2-5 MW and assessing potential for 40+ MW at each location. SCWA working with coalition of interested stakeholders. <http://www.scwa.ca.gov/projects/waveenergy/index.php>
- 10. AB 1103 Strategy**  
SCTA is working with PG&E and Sonoma Co. Economic Development Board to help commercial property owners comply with new state legislation (January 1, 2010) that requires energy ratings for commercial buildings. Goal: Make energy use and savings more transparent and let market work.
- 11. Regional Georexchange Energy Efficiency Project**  
Plan (in development) to create a template for zero-net-energy communities by using recycled water from treatment plant to heat and cool (using heat exchangers) buildings in large business park nearby. The balance of energy use will then be met using a combination of renewables and energy efficiency. Feasibility study underway with results expected in October.  
<http://scwa2.computergrafixco.com/eNews/index.asp?issue=1/1/2009&campaign=Enews&article=2029>
- 12. Poznan Climate Negotiations**  
SCWA sent 2 elected officials (MacKenzie & Brown) to pre-Copenhagen climate talks in Poznan, Poland to participate in local government sessions emphasizing the critical role that locals can play in meeting national climate targets.
- 13. Cool Schools**  
Full-time coordinator at Climate Protection Campaign develops and facilitates classroom-based service learning projects, engaging students to take action at school and in the community to reduce GHGs. Focuses on high school-aged students. [www.climateprotectioncampaign.org](http://www.climateprotectioncampaign.org)

#### **14. Getting Parking Pricing Right**

The City of Santa Rosa, the Climate Protection Campaign, and other sponsors brought Donald Shoup, UCLA parking expert, to Santa Rosa in August 2009. The goal of this new effort is that Santa Rosa and other cities will consider revising their parking pricing policies to reduce GHG emissions and other co-benefits.

[http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/doclib/agendas\\_packets\\_minutes/Pages/20090811\\_CC\\_Video.aspx](http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us/doclib/agendas_packets_minutes/Pages/20090811_CC_Video.aspx)

#### **15. Sonoma Mountain Village**

Sonoma Mountain Village is a 200-acre, mixed-use, solar-powered, zero-waste community under development in Rohnert Park by Codding Enterprises. SOMO will support a “five-minute lifestyle,” with parks, shopping, services and a town square all within a short walk of homes and businesses.

<http://www.sonomamountainvillage.com/>

### **Structure/Key Stakeholders**

#### **1. AB 881**

State legislation (pending) that will create the Sonoma Regional Climate Protection Authority using same board and admin as Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA).

#### **2. CPC – SCWA – SCTA – Cities – County – Business - Schools**

Powerful, highly-coordinated approach by committed leaders. Climate Protection Campaign (relatively well-funded NGO) has advocated and organized since 2001. Sonoma County Water Agency has taken a very pro-active role, including funding key efforts. Sonoma County Transportation Authority is now taking lead government role. Cities and Sonoma County all organized to ratify the 2015 goal in 2005 and to subsequently implement projects. A number of business groups—the Sonoma County Alliance, the Association of Realtors, the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce and the North Bay Leadership Council—are also involved in Sonoma’s climate protection efforts, as are individual businesses.

<http://www.climateprotectioncampaign.org/>

<http://www.scwa.ca.gov/>

<http://www.sctainfo.org>

#### **3. Sonoma County Community Climate Action Plan**

Detailed plan to meet goal established in 2005 by County and all nine cities to reduce emissions by 25% below 1990 level by 2015. In each of 3 areas—Efficiency First, Smart Transportation and Land Use, and Power Up Locally (renewables)—the plan describes a lengthy set of solutions that will together attain the GHG goal. Each solution lists costs, implementer, feasibility rating, and GHG reduction. [www.coolplan.org](http://www.coolplan.org)

#### **4. Sonoma County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2009)**

One of SCTA plan’s 4 goals is to reduce emissions by 25% below 1990 by 2015 (mirroring countywide climate goal) and by 40% by 2035. Strategies and GHG reductions are outlined in the CTP. <http://www.sctainfo.org/ctp.htm>

## Key Contacts:

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## Top Needs (September 2009)

1. More resources (staffing) to develop and implement projects.
2. Analysis to determine which climate protection actions are best taken at which level - national, state, regional, and/or local. For a given barrier/opportunity, what are the key roles to be played by each that together can produce optimum results? (The Climate Protection Campaign has just begun a research project with Sonoma State University planning students on this topic.)
3. Accurate, timely and standardized method for Sonoma County to measure transportation GHGs.
4. A price on carbon to “turbo-charge” all local action.
5. A RE-AMP-type project at the regional level. (RE-AMP is an eight-state network of nonprofits and foundations, “striving for Midwest leadership in 21st century clean energy,” by reducing GHGs from the electricity sector 80 percent by 2030.)  
<http://www.reamp.org/newsroom>