



County of Santa Cruz

COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

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October 22, 2015

The Honorable Greg Caput, Chair
Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors
701 Ocean Street, Fifth Floor
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Subject: County Staff's continued efforts to represent Santa Cruz during ongoing State Cap and Trade revenue allocation discussions

Dear Chair Caput and Members of the Board:

At its meeting of September 23, 2015, the Santa Cruz County Commission on the Environment voted unanimously to confirm its support for staff efforts to represent Santa Cruz County during ongoing State Cap and Trade discussions and ask the County Board of Supervisors to support county staff time dedicated to this task. The State legislature continues to discuss the best ways to distribute funds generated through the fees levied on large greenhouse gas emitters (termed Cap and Trade funds).

The County Climate Action Strategy was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 26th 2013. Since that date, county staff across multiple departments has worked diligently to implement the defined strategy and achieve the environmental objectives described within. The Planning Department Staff has successfully applied for funding to implement key aspects of the Strategy including receiving funding to complete a Community Choice Aggregation feasibility study. The Public Works Department continues to implement sustainable transportation projects and lead the state in waste reduction and recycling programs while planning to meet the county's zero-waste goal. The General Services Department continues to increase the number of electric vehicles in the County fleet and has implemented numerous energy efficiency projects in county facilities. These are just a few examples representing the efforts of numerous county staff members.

Commission on the Environment (COE) members have worked to identify additional funding opportunities to aid county and city partners implement their climate plans. As of this month, the State of California has yet to allocate over \$1 billion dollars of Cap and Trade funds. The COE has long stressed the need for state funding to be provided directly to municipalities that have drafted climate plans to aid their implementation. While funding has been made available through state agencies, including the Air Resources Board, for defined actions that aid implementation of portions of local climate plans, funding for staff to administer the plan is needed if the County and its partners are to be successful in meeting their greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

Therefore, the COE recommends the County Board of Supervisors continue to support county staff's participation in state negotiations regarding Cap and Trade policy and advocate for funding through Cap and Trade to implement real and quantifiable carbon reductions as identified and prioritized within local climate plans and strategies.

Further, the Commission would like to recognize the investments made by the County Planning Department to complete the County Climate Action Strategy and implement key aspects of that plan. County leadership regarding climate change is has been and will continue to be critical to ensure the successful implementation of programs defined within the Strategy.

Sincerely,

Greg Pepping, Chair
Santa Cruz County Commission on the Environment