

**STATE OF MONTANA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
EXECUTIVE ORDER No. 8-2019**

**EXECUTIVE ORDER CREATING THE MONTANA CLIMATE SOLUTIONS
COUNCIL AND JOINING THE STATE OF MONTANA TO THE U.S. CLIMATE
ALLIANCE**

WHEREAS, climate change poses a serious threat to Montana’s natural resources, public health, communities, and economy;

WHEREAS, Montanans understand that climate change is occurring and are concerned about the impacts it will have on current and future generations;

WHEREAS, the most recent National Climate Assessment (NCA), released in November 2018 by the 13 federal agencies that comprise the U.S. Global Change Research Program, concluded that: the most recent decade was the nation’s warmest on record; human activities, especially emissions of greenhouse gases, are the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century; human-induced climate change is projected to continue and it will accelerate significantly if global emissions of heat-trapping gases continue to increase; and, the widespread and potentially irreversible impacts of a changing climate require an urgent effort to both reduce emissions and build resilience for communities;

WHEREAS, the 2017 Montana Climate Assessment found that annual average temperatures in the state have risen 2 to 3 degrees Fahrenheit since 1950 at approximately double the rate of the nation as a whole, and are projected to increase 4.5 to 6.0 degrees Fahrenheit by mid-century and 5.6 to 9.8 degrees Fahrenheit by the end of the century; and that rising temperatures in the state, which are projected to continue to exceed the national average will result in reduced snowpack, shifts in historical patterns of streamflow, increases in the frequency, size and likely severity of wildfires, and result in additional stress on Montana’s water supplies;

WHEREAS, the NCA described threats posed by climate change to human health and well-being, national security, energy, and agricultural systems, including impacts from increased extreme weather events;

WHEREAS, the NCA further acknowledges that climate change poses significant threats to vulnerable communities who lack the resources, geographic mobility, and expertise to adapt to changes, including pronounced threats to the cultural resources, economic vitality and human health of Tribal Nations;

WHEREAS, protection of Montana’s iconic hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation opportunities remains critical to our heritage, quality of life, economy, and ability to attract and retain businesses in diverse industries;

WHEREAS, Montana’s farmers and ranchers have long managed weather-related risks to help feed the nation and the world and will require new tools, including improved climate information, to support innovation and diversification of agricultural products and practices to better prepare for and mitigate future climate impacts;

WHEREAS, Montana’s active engagement in climate solutions will lead to more sustained economic growth and expanded job opportunities for workers across the state’s economy, including jobs tied to the production and export of clean, low-cost energy to meet regional demands;

WHEREAS, Montana’s economy is well positioned to build upon the clean energy accomplishments over the past six years, including attainment of the 15 percent renewable portfolio standard for utilities in 2015, doubling wind capacity by constructing 180 megawatts of generating capacity from wind, quadrupling installed solar capacity with the development of Montana’s first six utility-scale solar farms, installation of community solar projects by four rural electric cooperatives, and a 250 percent increase in the number of solar-powered homes and businesses;

WHEREAS, Montana’s response to climate change can safeguard traditional economic strengths and spur a new generation of clean technology businesses through efforts to modernize the grid and power generation, pursue more renewable energy and energy efficiency, and encourage innovation;

WHEREAS, changing market conditions nationally and globally demand that Montana’s businesses seek pragmatic solutions that maintain competitiveness and create a stable investment environment;

WHEREAS, furthering Montana’s engagement in climate solutions will lead to more sustained economic growth and set the stage for a carbon-free energy future while increasing the number of jobs tied to the production and export of clean, low-cost energy and goods to meet regional, national and global demands;

WHEREAS, Montana’s carbon dioxide emissions have dropped 20 percent from the historical high in 2007, while the state’s gross domestic product grew more than 25 percent over the same period, demonstrating the resiliency of our economy to grow as emissions decline;

WHEREAS, U.S. states have continued to lead on climate change, have taken state-level action that is benefitting state economies and strengthening communities, and are demonstrating leadership to the nation and the world that ambitious climate action is achievable; and

WHEREAS, the bipartisan U.S. Climate Alliance was formed by governors in response to President Trump’s decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement, with member states committing to implement policies that advance the goals of the Paris Agreement, track and report progress to the global community, and accelerate new and existing policies to reduce carbon pollution and promote clean energy deployment at the subnational level.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, STEVE BULLOCK, Governor of the State of Montana, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the State of Montana, Title 2, Chapter 15, MCA, and other applicable statutes, do hereby join the coalition of governors in the U.S. Climate Alliance, and create the Montana Climate Solutions Council (Council) and order as follows:

PURPOSE

The Council shall provide recommendations and strategies for the State of Montana to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; strengthen greenhouse gas inventories and accounting to track progress and maintain accountability; prepare the state for climate impacts; and identify needs and gaps in climate science, decision support tools, and the research, development, and commercialization of new technologies. The Council shall focus on identifying strategies that build upon anticipated regional competitive advantages, prepare and build resilience for Montanans and the State government, and address the needs of communities in transition through appropriate economic development and workforce strategies.

DUTIES

Section 1: By June 1, 2020, the Council shall issue the Montana Climate Solutions Plan (Plan). The Plan shall include recommendations toward achieving an interim goal of net greenhouse gas neutrality for average annual electric loads in the state by no later than 2035 and a goal of net greenhouse gas neutrality economy-wide at a date to be determined by the Council. The Plan shall build upon prior activities, including the Montana Renewables Development Action Plan, and shall consider cost-effective strategies that position the state to safeguard existing economic and energy assets, while pursuing future growth and competitive advantage opportunities to serve regional markets. The Plan shall include strategies in the following areas:

- a) Expanding renewable energy generation and pursuing cost-effective conservation and energy efficiency strategies to reduce or manage electric loads such as;
 - i. Expanding wind and solar generation at all scales;
 - ii. Exploring projects that complement existing and future generation sources such as pumped hydro and other forms of energy storage, biomass, and geothermal; and
 - iii. Pursuing solutions to properly value and deploy energy efficiency strategies throughout the energy system.
- b) Reducing emissions from traditional electricity generation sources while maintaining competitive advantages in electricity production, generation, and exports such as;
 - i. Continuing to advance the demonstration and deployment of carbon capture, storage, and utilization in support of negative emissions technologies; and
 - ii. Exploring the additional benefits and efficiencies associated with regional power markets.
- c) Supporting voluntary, incentive-driven tools and technologies for improving productivity, reducing emissions, and boosting soil health and carbon storage on farms and ranchlands, and in forests and wood products;
- d) Promoting alternative modes of transportation and electrification of the transportation sector, including regionally interconnected electric vehicle infrastructure corridors; and

- e) Continuing to reduce emissions from the State's fleet, facilities, and operations.

Section 2: The Council shall coordinate with the Montana University System (MUS) to identify strategies to build upon the work of the Montana Climate Assessment (MCA) to develop science driven, regionally relevant research on climate impacts facing Montana's economy. In addition to strategies to further the work of the MCA, the Council shall identify needs and opportunities for additional extension, outreach, and climate services to deliver timely and relevant climate science and decision support to stakeholders, including municipal, county and tribal governments.

The Council shall coordinate with the MUS to identify opportunities for the State to support innovation in climate-smart research and technology development, demonstration, and manufacturing working with the state's business community. The Council and MUS will identify opportunities for Montana to provide national and international leadership to advance technologies that support low and negative emissions and lead the deployment of new energy generation, transmission, and storage technologies. The Council and MUS will also identify strategies to support work at state universities that advances the engineering, design, research, and manufacturing of low emissions technologies in areas such as transportation, materials engineering, agricultural productivity, manufacturing, and natural resource management. Strategies should seek to integrate appropriate plans for economic development, workforce development, and technology transfer. Where possible, the Council and MUS should explore appropriate opportunities to link strategies to future updates to the MUS's Science and Technology Plan.

Section 3: Individual state agencies shall develop initiatives and goals for efficiencies in resource management and operations. The Council will coordinate with all relevant state agencies to ensure that the initiatives incorporate the Purpose and Duties of this Order, which are:

- a) Making climate an immediate and actionable priority for the State by improving efficiencies in resource management and operations through individual agencies initiatives and quantifiable goals that can be implemented now, with measurable progress made by June 30, 2020;
- b) Initiating a state government-wide effort to better prepare Montana for climate-related risks and disasters by incorporating climate adaptation strategies into existing planning and operations. The Council and agencies shall identify existing state plans and incorporate strategies into future planning efforts. Where required, agencies will prepare a Supplemental Climate Plan to address climate adaptation and resiliency. Supplemental Climate Plans should incorporate the best-available science concerning climate-related risks and vulnerabilities facing communities and key economic sectors in the state and identify prudent and cost-effective adaptation strategies and funding needs for building climate resilience and incentivizing preparedness as part of disaster relief. The Council and agencies should consider the need for landscape or watershed scale planning to effectively address risks and integrate solutions; and
- c) Determining any additional near-term strategies for infrastructure investment, environmental remediation, economic and workforce development in communities presently impacted, or anticipated to be impacted, from regional energy transitions.

COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION

1. The Council members shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor.
2. The Council shall be comprised of members representing the various geographic areas, organizations, and economies of the state.
3. The Council shall include Ex-Officio members to support and inform the work of the Council, including the directors or their designees from the following state agencies: the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Department of Labor and Industry, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Commerce, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Department of Administration, Department of Agriculture, Department of Transportation, Department of Military Affairs, Disaster and Emergency Services, Northwest Power and Conservation Council, and the Governor's Natural Resources Policy Advisor.
4. The Governor will designate two Co-Chairs of the Council: one Co-Chair shall be an appointed Council member and the other Co-Chair shall be an Ex-Officio member from the Governor's Office or Cabinet.
5. The Council may establish subcommittees comprised of Council members and Ex-Officio members to aid it in the performance of its duties.
6. The Council may establish procedural by-laws or operating principals to aid it in the performance of its duties.
7. The Office of the Governor and the Department of Environmental Quality shall assist in staffing the Council and may retain an independent contractor, or contractors, as necessary, to provide facilitation assistance and technical expertise to the Council.

DELIVERABLES

The Council shall deliver plans according to the following schedule:

1. Draft Montana Climate Solutions Plan for Public Comment
Due: January 31, 2020
2. Individual state agency initiatives and goals for efficiencies in resource management and operations
Due: March 15, 2020
3. Final Montana Climate Solutions Plan Issued
Due: June 15, 2020
4. Agency Supplemental Climate Plans
Due: June 15, 2020
5. Agency progress reports on efficiencies in resource management and operations
Due: June 30, 2020

ADMINISTRATION

The Council shall engage members of the public in formulating their recommendations, including conducting meetings in an open and transparent manner and facilitating public comment on draft products at appropriate times during their deliberations. All recommendations of the Council shall be delivered to the Governor, the Energy and Telecommunication Interim Committee, the Environmental Quality Council Interim Committee, and the Public Service Commission upon completion.

DURATION

The Council shall complete its work and cease to exist by August 1, 2020, unless rescinded or renewed by subsequent executive order.

COMPENSATION

The Council members will be eligible for reasonable travel reimbursement per § 2-15-122, MCA.

This Order is effective immediately.



GIVEN under my hand and the GREAT SEAL of the State of Montana this 1 day of July 2019.

STEVE BULLOCK, Governor

ATTEST:

Corey Stapleton, by [Signature]
COREY STAPLETON, Secretary of State *deputy*