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SOLUTIONS TO GLOBAL WARMING

Global Warming and NEVADA

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates average temperatures in Nevada could rise about 5 degrees Fahrenheit by 2100 if global warming continues unabated. This could lead to earlier peak snowmelt and hotter, drier summers which may result in an increase in wildfires and more intense droughts. Nevada's growing population is already putting pressure on the state's water resources like never before, something that may well become more troubling in the decades to come. Global warming could cause reduced stream flows for important resources like the Colorado River, one of the main water arteries to Las Vegas. This could push southern parts of the state to tap into other areas of Nevada, impacting natural springs and riparian habitat and putting fish and other wildlife at risk.



Global warming effects on Nevada wildlife

Nevada is home to an incredible diversity of native wildlife species, including 299 birds, 123 mammals, 48 fish, 52 reptiles and 13 amphibians. Rising temperatures in the state will likely change the makeup of entire ecosystems, forcing wildlife to shift their ranges or adapt.

- Desert vegetation—including many plant species unique to Nevada—are vulnerable to changes in temperature and carbon dioxide levels. Such changes brought on by global warming could allow invasive plants to overtake these ecosystems.
- The breeding range of a number of songbirds—including the savanna sparrow and sage thrasher—could shrink or shift out of Nevada if global warming continues. These birds help keep outbreaks of rangeland grasshoppers and other pests in check.
- The marshes of the Great Basin are crucial habitat for migratory waterfowl. Hundreds of thousands of waterfowl such as canvasback and redhead ducks, snow geese and tundra

swans overwinter or breed in these areas. Global warming could make Nevada's hydrological cycle even more unpredictable, putting additional stress on these wetland ecosystems.



What is Global Warming?

When coal, gas and oil are burned, they produce carbon dioxide that builds up in the atmosphere and traps the sun's heat. Much of this greenhouse gas released today remains in the atmosphere after even 100 years, trapping more and more heat.

Since the mid-1800s, emissions of carbon dioxide have skyrocketed, and subsequently global temperatures have risen by about 1 degree Fahrenheit in the last century. Earth has not experienced such a rapid change in temperature in thousands of years.

Unless we reduce the pollution that causes global warming, temperatures could climb between 2-10 degrees Fahrenheit this century. Such a rapid rise in

temperature would fundamentally reshape the planet's climate, forever changing the landscape and water resources people and wildlife depend upon.



What's at stake for Nevadans?

The changes from global warming threaten to not only degrade the natural forest and aquatic ecosystems of Nevada but also the health and economy of the state.

- Hotter, drier conditions in summer could contribute to an increase in the frequency and intensity of wildfires, threatening property as well as wildlife habitat.
- Scientists have found that hotter temperatures caused by global warming can lead to higher concentrations of ground-level ozone pollution, a leading cause of respiratory problems, especially in children and seniors. More ozone pollution would make it even more difficult for urban areas like Las Vegas and Reno to meet national health standards.
- Loss of wildlife and habitat could mean a loss of tourism dollars. In 2001, more than 657,000 people spent more than \$680 million on hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing in Nevada, which in turn created more than 9,400 jobs in the state.

“Global warming poses an overriding challenge to our responsibility to protect wildlife for our children’s future. We must advance balanced solutions that work for people, wildlife and the economy to overcome this challenge.”—

Larry Schweiger
President, CEO
National Wildlife Federation

THE CLIMATE STEWARDSHIP ACT:

The Climate Stewardship Act is a bipartisan plan of action in Congress that sets achievable goals for reducing global warming pollution in the United States. The bill requires power plants, oil companies and other major sources to collectively reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to what they emitted in the year 2000. The bill also allows businesses to implement their own solutions, using a flexible emissions trading system that has successfully reduced air pollution under the Clean Air Act at a fraction of the anticipated costs.

The Act will:

- Create more than 5,500 new energy technology jobs in Nevada by the year 2020.
- Provide Nevada with at least \$7.9 million each year in additional wildlife conservation funding to help protect the state’s wildlife from the impacts of global warming.
- Provide new income to Nevada’s farmers by rewarding environmentally friendly farming and forestry practices.

Visit www.nwf.org/globalwarming or www.climateenetwork.org/csa for more information.



Nevada's solutions to global warming

Nevada has been a leader in developing solutions to global warming.

- State law requires utilities to provide 20 percent of Nevada’s power from renewable sources by 2015, with at least 5 percent of that renewable energy coming from solar power. The law gives Nevada one of the most aggressive “renewable portfolio standards” in the nation.
- The state has the potential to generate more than 52 percent of its electricity from wind power, and nearly 46 percent of its electricity from geothermal energy, positioning Nevada as a potential leader in the renewable energy production market.
- Nevada businesses that use renewable energy as a primary energy source and that have a generating capacity of at least 10 kilowatt-hours get a 50-percent property tax exemption for real and personal property used to generate renewable energy.

Following some simple guidelines, you can cut your global warming pollution, become more energy efficient and give something back to nature.

- **Convert to compact fluorescent bulbs:** If every household in America replaced its next burned out light bulb with a compact fluorescent, we would prevent more than 13 billion pounds of carbon dioxide from being emitted.
- **Become a Green Tag subscriber:** Many states now offer options for homeowners to buy electricity from clean, renewable sources such as wind, solar and biomass that produce little or no global warming pollution. Green energy can also be purchased through the National Wildlife Federation by visiting www.nwf.org/energy.

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