

RESOLUTION NO. 20 - 2020

**SAN JUAN COUNTY RESOLUTION TO RESPOND
AND ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

WHEREAS, San Juan County Council Resolution 08-2008 established an initial benchmark of local climate change response, but needs updating to reflect current conditions;

WHEREAS, in 2008, the Washington State Legislature recognized climate change poses a serious threat to the economic wellbeing, public health, natural resources and the environment. And therefore directed the Dept. of Ecology, in consultation with the Univ. of Washington, to assess and make recommendations on greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

WHEREAS, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), representing over 2,500 climate scientists and thirty years of research, has concluded that global warming caused by greenhouse gas emissions of human activities is the most pressing challenge facing the world today;

WHEREAS, the IPCC determined human activities have already caused approximately 1°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels and is likely to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052 if it continues to increase at the current rate of approximately 0.2°C per decade due to past and ongoing emissions (IPCC, 2018 Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5°C);

WHEREAS, changing weather patterns and ocean conditions are significantly impacting the health and viability of native terrestrial, fresh water, and marine ecosystems, damaging human infrastructure, and triggering climate refugee crises across the globe;

WHEREAS, cooperating governments throughout the world have adopted emission reduction targets and programs to keep global warming well below the 2°C increase, in an effort to reduce catastrophic impacts of climate change and ultimately sustain all life on Earth;

WHEREAS, San Juan County has led efforts to protect its environment, educate its residents and visitors, and support a sustainable local economy in an effort to maintain a resilient Island-based community, ranking 1st in State of Washington and 50th nationwide of resilient counties according to the Climate Resilience Screening Index (EPA600/R-17/238, October 2017); and

WHEREAS, San Jan County was the first Leave No Trace county in the United States, hosts approximately a million visitors from around the world annually, and strives to have positive impact beyond its borders;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of San Juan County, state of Washington, as follows:

1. The County will take a leadership role on climate action and adaptation, serving as a model for the community by reducing its carbon footprint, promoting renewable/sustainable energy independence, and adapting to changing ecological and economic conditions by taking the following actions:

Building Management

- a. Switch to the most energy efficient lights, appliances, and fixtures reasonably available as they require replacement;
- b. Request staff turn off all lights, computers, heaters, and other devices when not in use, and install social prompts, and “smart” systems to encourage staff to be energy conscious;
- c. Conduct an energy audit to identify consumption by HVAC systems and other devices/mechanical systems to determine operational adjustments that will reduce energy consumption;
- d. Switch or retrofit all water fixtures to low flow, and install “Be Water Wise” social prompts to promote water conservation;
- e. Meet or exceed water and energy efficiency building code standards in all county buildings or remodels;

Transportation and Fleet/Equipment

- f. Reduce individual travel and encourage telecommuting and teleconferencing whenever possible for County business;
- g. Request the State no longer require in person meeting attendance for grantees and ask that they offer all State-mandated meetings via teleconference /webinar/ or videoconference;
- h. When feasible, switch to electric vehicles for new county fleet purchases and electric motors;
- i. Eliminate the new purchase and/or use of two-stroke engine equipment (leaf blowers, lawn mowers, weed whips, chain saws, boat engines), and replace as needed with viable electric alternatives. Look for opportunities to have County contractors to follow the same requirement by 2021;
- j. Provide recharge stations at key destinations throughout the County;
- k. Prioritize, fund, and build a county-wide trail and bikeway network to/from key destinations, targeting at least one mile of network be completed per year;
- l. Support and incentivize interconnected, multi-modal transportation options, including conversion to electric bus/van/taxi service, electric rideshare and rental programs by 2025;
- m. Request Washington State Ferries prioritize San Juan Islands ferry service for electric ferries (for the whales and our waters) by 2025;
- n. Institute a policy of managed retreat for public infrastructure (roads, trails, storm drainage, parks, etc.) away from climate impacted locations (nearshore, wetlands, streams) as they fail or require upgrade, to improve long-term resiliency of investments.

Green Purchasing and Waste Management

- o. Adopt a Green (If You Must) Purchase Initiative for County office supplies/paper, electronics, nontoxic cleaning products, durable non-plastic/Styrofoam/PFAS containing goods (cups, silverware, plates, coolers) for food-serving by December 2020;
- p. Work with local solid waste facilities/operators to support their efforts at reuse centers, reduce recycling contamination, and increase recycling efficiencies to keep products market viable on/off the Islands;
- q. Facilitate Island appropriate composting/biomass digestion strategies in order to reduce overall food and organic waste shipped off Island, promote rebuilding of agricultural soils, reduce transportation impacts/costs;;
- r. Train all staff annually on proper recycling and document print reduction and encourage them to teach at least two others;
- s. Migrate to paperless approval, billing/auditing, and other management systems, and set all copiers to a default of double-sided black and white printing by 2021.
- t. Support the Plastic Free Salish Sea education efforts and adopt a 2022 full phase out of (unrecyclable) single use plastic sales and use in the County;

Environmental Restoration and Health

- u. Restore stream corridors, wetlands, and ponds by planting their buffers with trees and shrubs to lower nutrient inputs, intercept solar radiation, and reduce the risk of harmful algal blooms. Target planting trees and shrubs adjacent to aquatic resources;
- v. Protect (through land use and acquisitions) and restore nearshore habitat for forage fish and salmon by supporting the programs and projects that achieve this goal (through salmon recovery and managed retreat);
- w. Manage County owned properties and work with other public and private partners to promote forest health (thin overstock and diseased trees) to reduce fire risk, promote carbon sequestration, and protect ground water recharge and water supplies.
- x. Treat and manage 100% of the stormwater runoff from County urban growth areas by 2030.

Green Energy Production and Independence

- y. Generate 1 megawatt of County owned solar power at County properties by 2030
- z. Seek alternative, renewable sources of energy generation and storage on Island and a plan to implement them by 2025.

2. Residents, businesses, and visitors are encouraged and will be incentivized by the County activities to take individual action on climate change by:

- a. Reducing food waste and diverting food scraps from the waste stream to private or public composting and/or biomass digestion facilities;
- b. Avoiding the purchase and/or use of all single-use plastics and other plastic products;
- c. Driving less, walking/biking carpooling/ridesharing more;
- d. Reducing energy and water consumption by tracking current use and implementing conservation strategies;
- e. Using durable non-plastic water bottles, utensils, plates, etc.;

- f. Purchasing local food/ produce and other market products to sustain on-Island economies;
- g. Reducing consumption and reusing still functional products;
- h. Recycling right by reducing contamination of recyclable materials;
- i. Using and stocking only non-toxic products to reduce hazardous waste and water contamination
- j. Promoting services, supplies, and green-based jobs that support a sustainable and climate resilient Island lifestyle.

ADOPTED this 23RD day of JUNE 2020.

ATTEST: Clerk of the Council

**COUNTY COUNCIL
SAN JUAN COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Ingrid Gabriel 6.30.2020
Ingrid Gabriel, Clerk Date

Rick Hughes
Rick Hughes, Chair
District 2

REVIEWED BY COUNTY MANAGER

Michael J. Thomas 6/30/2020
Michael J. Thomas Date

Bill Watson
Bill Watson, Vice-Chair
District 1

RANDALL K. GAYLORD
APPROVED AS TO FORM ONLY

By: RK Gaylord 6/24/20
Date

Jamie Stephens
JAMIE STEPHENS
Jamie Stephens, Member
District 3