

Things to consider writing in the additional comments sections of the GHG Plan Survey

The Calaveras County GHG Reduction Plan survey is divided into topical sections (e.g., energy, transportation, solid waste). At the end of most of these sections there are opportunities for you to add input in your own words. Below are some ideas you might share.

Energy

Most of the buildings we will use for the next 20 years are already built on the landscape. Please work hard to secure state and federal funding to retrofit these residential and commercial structures to save energy and to save water and to reduce the risk of large-scale wildfires ravaging these developed areas by improving defensible space, emergency access, and hardening existing homes against wildfire.

Transportation

Please secure state and federal funds to make electric vehicle charging available at government, commercial, and residential locations. This is needed to keep the tourism sector of our economy viable in the 21st century.

Solid Waste

Waste reduction is a key way to reduce methane generated by rotting waste. Many people do not give their solid waste a second thought. It is just something they throw away and something they pay a bill for. More public education on waste reduction would help. More business education on waste reduction would help. We need to do our best to help those willing to do their best to reduce GHG emissions.

Water Conservation

Please make more of an effort to promote water conservation. This includes planting gardens and crops that need less water and using efficient watering systems. Not only will this reduce GHG emissions from the energy production used to move water, but also this will help people to adapt to climate change that is reducing our water supply.

Carbon Sequestration

- 1) Work to avoid soil carbon loss and agricultural GHG emissions through the placement of grasslands under conservation easements that preclude cultivation. Grassland and shrubland soils are significant reservoirs of organic carbon that, if left uncultivated, will continue to store this carbon below ground. Additional environmental benefits achieved through this project type are: habitat conservation, sediment retention, water purification, recreation and support to traditional ranching economies.
- 2) Secure federal, state, and foundation funding to secure conservation easements on private agricultural and forest lands as they are necessary and suitable for carbon sequestration.
- 3) Promote restoration grazing practices and mulching that increase the carbon sequestration capacity of our range land.
- 4) Identify and map priority land for long-term conservation through conservation easements. This will help applicants to secure the funding they need to purchase conservation easements on those lands.

5) Mitigate the conversion of agricultural and forest lands to developed uses by requiring offsets through the acquisition of conservation easements.

6) Take steps needed to promote and to qualify Calaveras lands that sequester carbon for state cap and trade funds. "...from a cap-and-trade, carbon-offset perspective, conserving grasslands and promoting rangeland practices that promote reliable rates of carbon sequestration could help more readily meet the state's emission-reduction goals ("In Wildfire-Prone California, Grasslands a Less Vulnerable Carbon Offset Than Forests" by Kat Kerlin, July 9, 2018)."

Additional Feedback

1) The focus of this plan needs to be on helping the willing to do the most they can to reduce GHG emissions. Many will do little or nothing. The rest of us have to do our part and then do more to make up for the inaction of the unwilling.

2) It is key to educate those who are willing about what they can do and where they can get technical and financial help to do it.

3) Much of the state and federal money to do this GHG reduction work can only be accessed by local governments or with local government approval. The County needs to hire people to secure that money and implement programs to distribute it to people to reduce GHG emissions. If the County is unwilling or unable to do so, then the County needs to delegate this effort to a special district solely focused on implementing this GHG reduction plan.

4) The county should become an information center for all these possible steps. For example, the BOS could make each of these areas a focus for one of its meetings each month. It could also create flyers and pamphlets and distribute them around the county for easy access, especially for actions individuals can take. It can also identify a point person for citizens to contact with questions or for advice.