



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Mark Andre, Director
Environmental Services
(707) 822-8184 or 845-5804 cell

City of Arcata Becomes First Local Government Agency to Contract for Marketing Carbon Emission Reduction

On October 21, 2009, the Arcata City Council approved a contract with the Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) to sell verified emissions reductions. PG&E purchased these offsets on behalf of the more than 30,000 ClimateSmart™ customers. The investment will help fight climate change by yielding 40,000 metric tons of verifiable greenhouse gas emission reductions from forest carbon sequestration.

The ClimateSmart program is a voluntary, tax-deductible program that allows enrolled PG&E customers to balance out the greenhouse gas emissions produced by the energy they use. The ClimateSmart program invests all payments in new, independently verified projects that reduce or absorb greenhouse gas emissions.

“The City of Arcata is proud to be the first municipal entity in California to sell offsets under the ClimateSmart program. As the smallest city in the state with a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan, our hope is to lead and inspire other communities to make similar commitments on behalf of the environmental legacy we are leaving for our children,” said City of Arcata Mayor Mark Wheatley.

The ClimateSmart program will help support Arcata’s approach to sustainable forest management. By sequestering large amounts of carbon, we can provide critical benefits to the land and our community – restoring forest biodiversity, improving water quality and enhancing recreational assets – through innovative investments in stewardship,” stated Wheatley.

Environmental Services Director Mark Andre stated, “Arcata’s forest carbon sequestration project is consistent with our mission of promoting a model forest to demonstrate sustainability and ecologically integrated approaches.”

The ClimateSmart program is purchasing the emission reductions from the Jacoby Creek Forest and Sunny Brae tract of the Arcata Community Forest. By reducing the harvests in these 460 acres of redwood and Douglas fir forests on the North Coast, the City of Arcata will allow them to grow larger and capture more greenhouse gases from the atmosphere. Arcata's Community Forest comprises 2,109 acres.

The greenhouse gas emission reductions purchased by the ClimateSmart program will be registered by the Climate Action Reserve, a national offsets registry working to ensure the environmental benefits and integrity of emission reductions. Once the project generates and independently verifies the greenhouse gas emission reductions, the ClimateSmart program retires them on behalf of PG&E's enrolled customers. This retirement ensures that these reductions will not be used for any purpose other than for making enrolled customers carbon neutral.

“By investing in Arcata’s Community Forest, the ClimateSmart program is helping to make real, meaningful progress toward meeting California's aggressive goals for fighting climate change,” said Humboldt County Supervisor Mark Lovelace. “Healthy, growing, well-managed forests are a key component for addressing greenhouse gases. By investing in our forests, we are truly investing in our future.”

City of Arcata residents are welcomed to enroll in the ClimateSmart program to offset their personal greenhouse gas emissions. Beckie Menten, City of Arcata Energy Specialist, acknowledges the role offsets can play in meeting our personal and national climate protection goals. “Offsets offer a unique way to stimulate investment in protecting our natural resources. Our community is encouraged to remember the broad toolbox available for reducing emissions, including energy conservation and efficiency as well as renewable energy generation. Offsets have an important place in this toolbox.”

Please contact the City of Arcata Department of Environmental Services at (707) 822-8184 or eservices@cityofarcata.org or more information on this transaction, or to find out ways to reduce your carbon footprint and make an impact on climate change.

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For additional information please contact:

Beckie Menten
Energy Program Specialist
Environmental Services Department
(707) 822-8184