

**Napa County Climate Adaptation/Resilience Snapshot  
Compiled by the Bay Area Climate & Energy Resilience Project (BACERP)  
March 2014**

This summary memo is based on input from Napa County climate stakeholders. The information was gathered via phone, email, web search, and an in-person group meeting co-hosted by the Napa County Transportation Planning Agency in December 2013. The information is presented in four sections:

- County-Level “Spotlight” Adaptation & Resilience Initiatives
- Climate Planning Activities
- Current Structure for Coordination Among Cities
- Resources and Assistance To Accelerate Action

### **I. County-Level “Spotlight” Adaptation & Resilience Initiatives**

Across the Bay Area, government, non-profit and private sector stakeholders are developing and implementing programs that address climate impacts (e.g., sea level rise, extreme storms, fire, and heat) and build community resilience. Some are called “climate adaptation” projects, while others focus on health, transportation, or land conservation, but provide substantial climate adaptation or resilience co-benefits.

Whatever they are called, these efforts are increasingly mainstreaming climate issues into community planning and making our cities more prepared for the physical, economic, and social impacts of climate change. Importantly, a number of these programs can provide a wonderful double-benefit, by building local resilience AND reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

For example, in Napa County:

- The Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency is developing innovative strategies to reduce VMT among wine country visitors.
- Health advocates are promoting active transportation to reduce both transportation GHG emissions and obesity rates, and are reviewing the health implications of heat waves, flood events, and invasive pests.
- County and city-operated water providers are working with the private sector and other partners to implement water conservation and efficiency strategies for the wine industry and residential users. This includes the Groundwater Resource Advisory Committee (GRAC), which works on data collection, monitoring, well pump test protocols, management objectives, and building community support.
- The Napa County Local Food Advisory Council advises the Agricultural Commissioner to promote the development of a sustainable local food system, and provides a forum for public input on local food production and consumption.

- Napa County has joined two innovative energy financing programs—CaliforniaFIRST and Home Energy Renovation Opportunity (HERO) for residential and commercial customers.

At the same time, there are a growing number of region-wide, climate-related initiatives such as [Plan Bay Area](#), the [Bay Area Ecosystems Climate Change Consortium](#), PG&E's [infrastructure protection work](#), the [Integrated Regional Water Management Plan](#), TBC3's [fine-scale hydrology mapping](#) for land managers, the Bay Area Council's [extreme storm study](#), Bay Localize's [Community Resilience Toolkit 2.0](#), [BayREN](#) (energy efficiency), [Cal-BRACE](#) (health), and the [Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Project](#). (These regional efforts are outside the focus of this county-level report.)

Within this broad and growing climate context, we have selected 5 Napa climate adaptation and resilience initiatives to "spotlight" as notable examples of *county-level innovation and leadership*. These are described below with the hope that they will inspire and inform stakeholders in counties across the region. (Note: For accuracy, we have used language from project web sites where possible.)

*Web links are provided for each spotlight initiative. To learn more, including project contact info, email the BACERP staff — [Bruce@bayareaajpc.net](mailto:Bruce@bayareaajpc.net) or [Aleka@bayareaajpec.net](mailto:Aleka@bayareaajpec.net).*

### **Measure A: Napa River/Napa Creek Flood Protection Project**

*Innovation in flood protection, cross-sector partnerships, and major project financing*

Napa County has a long history of flooding issues with 21 serious floods recorded since 1862. While it was clear to residents and businesses that new flood protection initiatives were necessary, early plans were rejected due to concerns about both environmental and economic impacts. In 1996, a precedent-setting coalition representing diverse Napa interest groups came together in a series of meetings to develop what is now one of the most successful flood protection projects in the state.

Passed by two-thirds of Napa County voters in 1998, Measure A provides environmental restoration and economic development to achieve 100-year flood protection—new dikes, levees and floodwalls and bank stabilization—while maintaining “living river principles.” Project partners include Napa County and its cities, the Friends of the Napa River, the Napa Valley Economic Development Corporation, the Sierra Club and the Chamber of Commerce.

Measure A created the Napa Flood Protection and Watershed Improvement Expenditure Plan, the Financial Oversight Committee and the Technical Advisory Panel, and established the half-cent sales tax to fund the local share of projects (additional funding comes from federal and state sources). Each incorporated city or town receives a share of Measure A revenue, and a share goes to Napa County for

the unincorporated area. Measure A includes specific approved projects and allows for the funding of other projects to improve flood protection, water supply and the health of the watershed. All of the Napa governments involved in Measure A signed a Joint Powers Agreement to spell out structure and responsibilities.

### **State Route 37 Stewardship Study**

*Forward thinking solutions for critical Bay Area infrastructure*

Highway 37 passes through the last great marshes in the San Francisco Bay, providing commuters, tourists, and trucks a path between I-80 and highway 101. Route 37 is now in jeopardy of becoming flooded more often because of sea-level rise. The Highway 37 Stewardship Study includes stakeholder processes and technical analyses to determine possible future planning solutions for the highway and its human and natural environment.

The Route 37 project is a good local example of effective cross-sector partnerships, involving a long-term commitment by Bay Area transportation, environmental, and resource protection agencies. It will be a significant challenge to reach a mutually agreeable solution in this extremely sensitive environment threatened by climate change.

Phase I of the project was funded by the Transportation Research Board, Strategic Highway Research Program 2, and supported a collaboration among Caltrans District 4, the UC Davis Road Ecology Center, the Sonoma Ecology Center, Southern Sonoma County Resources Conservation District, Sonoma Land Trust, and the Napa County Resources Conservation District. With additional funding from Caltrans, Phase II of the project will begin in 2014 by re-engaging partners and stakeholders to develop alternative designs and scenarios.

### **Napa Green: Sustainability Leadership in the Wine Industry**

*Best practices and certification for water, energy and other resource topics*

Napa Green is the wine industry's most comprehensive "best practices" program for sustainable land-use and wine production. This voluntary program developed by the Napa Valley Vintners and Napa Valley Grape Growers, along with local industry and environmental groups, is open to all Napa County vintners and grape growers.

The program is focused on independently certified, environmentally sound farming and production methods that meet and exceed more than 20 local, state and federal best practices. The Napa Green certification programs for both land use and wineries include multiple sustainability benchmarks for water and energy conservation, healthy riparian environments, and restoration of wildlife habitat. Over 80 wineries have achieved the Napa Certified Green Land and/or Napa Certified Green Winery certifications resulting in significant reductions in both water and energy use and increased conservation of natural capital.

## **Sustainable Napa County Energy Projects**

### *Nonprofit leadership in community outreach and engagement*

Sustainable Napa County (SNC) recently received a grant from PG&E to develop a public engagement campaign with specific focus on identifying common climate concerns across the political spectrum. This is a new part of SNC's work to bring together Napa County business, agriculture, nonprofit, and government entities for long term environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Other project focus areas include:

- Supporting green public policy development countywide, beginning with green building ordinances.
- Promoting renewable energy action by bringing new approaches to the community and working to reduce traditional barriers to action such as financing for solar installations for homeowners.
- Helping social service nonprofit organizations become energy efficient and more sustainable.
- Becoming a comprehensive sustainability resource center for Napa county that informs and inspires the residents of Napa County where they live, work and play

## **Napa Countywide Climate Action Framework**

### *County guidance and partnership building in critical climate planning*

The Countywide Climate Action Framework was specifically developed to assist cities and other stakeholders in moving from climate planning to action. This will require the combined effort of residents, businesses, local government staff and elected officials in Napa County.

The Framework provides a consensus-based context for detailed climate planning efforts. It outlines a package of 53 actions that, when translated into locally specific programs and projects, will help meet climate protection targets. Actions proposed in the Framework will pay for themselves in energy cost and other savings and are designed to promote an economy powered by more local, reliable energy, a healthier environment, healthier people, and a preserved natural environment.

The Framework will be followed by locally appropriate implementation plans, designed for each jurisdiction, focusing on specific programs and projects. Funded in part by BAAQMD, the Framework was developed by the Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency, the Napa Valley Community Foundation, American Canyon, Calistoga, Napa, St. Helena, Yountville, and the County of Napa.

## II. Climate Planning Activities

### A. Climate Action Plans

Climate Action Plans (CAP's), completed by more than 40 Bay Area cities, set goals and strategies for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction. Recently, some cities have also begun to include climate adaptation strategies in their CAP's that address heat, sea level rise, extreme storms, higher fire risk, and other climate impacts. The chart below provides key information on Napa County climate action plans.

Napa's draft Countywide Climate Action Plan recommends potential strategies for post-2020 planning including integration of the Safety Element and Hazard Mitigation and Disaster Recovery plans into a comprehensive countywide strategy.

#### Climate Action Planning Activity

City	Adopted CAP	GHG Reduction Goal	Adaptation Section in CAP
American Canyon	No	Community-wide target for energy-related GHG emissions - 15% below 2005 baseline by 2020 <sup>1</sup>	-
Calistoga	No	15% below 2005 levels by 2020 <sup>2</sup>	-
Napa	No <sup>3</sup>	-	-
St. Helena	No	20% below 2005 levels by 2020	-
Yountville	No	20% below 2010 emission levels by 2020 <sup>4</sup>	-
County unincorporated areas	Pending <sup>5</sup>	15% below 2005 emission levels by 2020	Draft lists adaptation projects underway & outlines potential adaptation efforts <sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> GHG reduction goals outlined in city of American Canyon's draft Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan (EECAP): <http://www.cityofamericancanyon.org/Modules/ShowDocument.aspx?documentid=3557>

<sup>2</sup> Adopted by resolution.

<sup>3</sup> In the City of Napa's Sustainability plan, goals include reducing municipal energy use 15% below 2005 levels by 2020. [http://www.cityofnapa.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1221&Itemid=815](http://www.cityofnapa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1221&Itemid=815)

<sup>4</sup> Adopted by resolution in November 2013.

<sup>5</sup> A proposed CAP was recommended for adoption in early 2012 - Board of Supervisors requested the CAP better address transportation emissions and to credit past accomplishments and voluntary efforts. Napa County Department of Planning, Building and Environmental services will begin revising the CAP in July 2013.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.countyofnapa.org/CAP/>

## **B. Other Climate Planning**

The Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency is launching a countywide transportation planning effort in 2014 that will involve a climate change element. Napa County's Hazard Mitigation Plan is also being updated to address adaptation.

## **III. Current Structure for Coordination Among Cities**

No formal structure for climate coordination at this time.

## **IV. Resources and Assistance to Accelerate Action**

BACERP staff asked Napa stakeholders to identify and discuss what services or products would be most helpful to advancing their climate work. This could include assistance and resources provided by a proposed regional climate adaptation "hub." Napa stakeholder input is summarized below (grouped but unranked).

*Note: The bold headings describe common themes from the stakeholder discussions. The bulleted items are opinions expressed by individuals.*

### ***Framing, Friends and Funding (Overall comments)***

- We need help with top three needs: 1) **Framing** – we need better ways to reach people who are hard to reach and who don't see climate change as an issue or a priority. 2) **Finding Friends** – we need to identify where we can effectively partner with others for action. The Hub could connect people to jointly tackle common challenges. 3) **Funding** – we need better access to both public and private funding sources. The Hub could help by putting stakeholders together for joint funding proposals or by coordinating groups of stakeholders to advocate for funding at regional, state or federal levels.
- The Hub could help facilitate work on a goal for adaptation. This could come from the state or be more Bay Area focused. Specifically, this goal should coincide with more streamlined and productive applications of CEQA and NEPA – these need to be more balanced.
- The recent Transportation Futures Plan took all of the County's current GHG reduction policies into account and modeled the fact that the County will not reach climate goals with only these policies in place. We need to figure out next steps based on this conclusion.
- There is a need to develop place-based health initiatives in vulnerable communities and to have more focus on vulnerable communities in general.

### ***Help Us Address Specific Climate Impacts that will Greatly Affect our County***

- Decreased water supply is already a significant issue for both urban users and the wine industry.
- Invasive species (both in terms of pests and plants) as a result of climate change will become more of a challenging issue in the future. Statewide, invasive species management is completely underfunded.
- There is a significant need for infrastructure funding in Napa County. Some impacts to the county's infrastructure associated with climate change are linked to the future of Highway 37. If improvements to Highway 37 necessary to minimize the impacts of climate change are disregarded, there is a direct threat to Napa's highways and road infrastructure.

### ***Help Us Engage the Wine Industry and the Public to Build Local Economic and Climate Resiliency***

- Wine industry stakeholders are concerned about climate impacts but have not reached consensus on a long-term vision for action.
- The wine industry must be fully engaged if we are to protect and enhance our local economy.
- We need support developing wine industry focused messaging around climate change. Protecting the wine industry from major climate impacts is key to maintaining economic resiliency.
- While the wine industry is clearly the dominant economic force in Napa County, the issues that we will experience associated with climate change will be similar to those across the Bay Area—water, heat, flooding, drought, food and energy prices, etc. Approaching these from a more regional perspective would be helpful.

### ***We Need Better Communication About Climate Issues But These Messages Must be Tailored to Rural Counties***

- There is a need to recognize and appreciate the key role that the rural parts of the Bay Area play in the region – especially with respect to agriculture.
- We need to develop a narrative that is wine industry specific to make it relevant to Napa County residents and decision makers—this can't just be a regional or California story about climate change if you want to get the public's attention.

- Perhaps the Hub could bring together the four rural counties to work collaboratively on these issues—we speak some of the same language.
- Our communications efforts should focus on early education (elementary, middle and high school) and broad public outreach to help get the message out to multiple audiences, including those who may not agree with the need for climate action.

***Implementation Resources are Extremely Limited – Help Us Secure Funding and Make Better Use of Existing Resources***

- Overall, there are very limited resources for climate plan implementation. Technical assistance would be very helpful to aid smaller cities to plan and implement.
- An online data center would be helpful. The task of looking for data takes too much time with current staff resources. An online source that helped with this and also created standards for quality data would be very helpful.
- The Open Space District needs guidance and agreed-upon protocols on carbon sequestration. We don't have the staff capacity to deal with this. We would like to get carbon credit for critical open space work.

## **V. Participants**

We thank the following Napa County stakeholders who provided their valuable time and smart thinking:

- Brent Cooper, Planning Director, City of American Canyon
- Greg Desmond, Planning Director, City of St. Helena
- Jeri Gill, CEO, Sustainable Napa County
- Lynn Goldberg, Planning Director, City of Calistoga
- Eliot Hurwitz, Planning Manager, Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency
- Steve Lederer, Public Works Director, Napa County
- Julie Lucido, Flood Project Manager, City of Napa
- John McDowell, Deputy Planning Director, Napa County
- Phillip Miller, Deputy Director, Flood Control, Napa County
- Kate Miller, Executive Director, Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency
- Pete Parkinson, Interim Planning Director, County of Napa
- Kelli Schimmoeller, Public Works Department, City of Napa



- Danielle Schmitz, Senior Planner, Napa County Transportation and Planning Agency
- Sandra Smith, Associate Planner, Town of Yountville
- Karen Smith, Public Health Officer/Deputy Director, County of Napa Health and Human Services Agency
- Bob Tiernan, Planning Director, Town of Yountville
- Rick Tooker, Community Development Director, City of Napa
- Ursula Vogler, Climate Initiatives Program Project Manager, Metropolitan Transportation Commission
- John Woodbury, Executive Director, Napa County Parks and Open Space