

Santa Fe's Carbon Offset~Community Service Project



Project Summary

(see the next page for detailed information about the project)

Standing up for a nationwide carbon fee & dividend program, the Climate Change Leadership Institute, Santa Fe Green Chamber of Commerce, Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL), New Mexico Energy Smart Academy at the Santa Fe Community College and many other leading entities are together spearheading a **local carbon offset project to fund energy efficiency assistance for low income households and do native grass/carbon sink planting throughout Santa Fe County**. This direct action project presents each of us with an opportunity to engage in transformational leadership on a vital issue: transitioning our nation away from the unsustainable path which externalizes the cost of fossil fuels and embarking instead on this new frontier of local stewardship which saves water & energy, empowers those in need, beautifies the community, reduces our carbon footprint and restores the climate that sustains us all.

Step forward as individuals or teams, volunteer in seed planting and give \$407 (which is the estimated current US per capita metric ton emission of carbon dioxide @ 18.5 multiplied by \$22/ton which is a typical starting CO2 impact fee) as a community carbon offset. **Know that every dollar given to this project will be considered a tax deductible donation going exclusively to the community service outcomes stated with absolutely no administrative fees going to the coordinating organizations.** People who cannot afford the full fee may form a team to contribute collectively, get a business sponsor or give on a sliding scale basis. Local businesses may contribute to the project by donating based on their annual metric ton emissions, making payment for a team of its own employees or sponsoring community members needing assistance (businesses receive higher level of certification by the SF Green Chamber for their participation).

[MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO THIS SANTA FE CARBON OFFSET PROJECT \[INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES/TEAMS/BUSINESSES MAY DONATE\]](#)

[FORM A TEAM & ENLIST OTHERS TO JOIN THE PROJECT \[DOWNLOAD PROJECT SUMMARY AND TEAM PLEDGE PAGE\]](#)

[ENLIST YOUR SUPPORT & VOLUNTEER FOR FALL NATIVE GRASS PLANTING](#)

[BUILD ALLIANCES \(FOR NGOS, CHURCHES, CIVIC GROUPS\)
AND BE A MATCHING FUND PARTNER \(FOR FOUNDATIONS\)](#)

Contact CCLI at 505-988-3364 or by e-mail at ccli@takeresponsibility.us for more information.

Background & Details on Santa Fe's Carbon Offset~Community Service Project

Precedents

There are poignant examples in history of community self determination and self taxation to advance a common cause greater than self interest. From old time (BCE), the Torah legislated that one type of tax should not be paid to the temple at all, but rather, distributed to help those in need – this is the first known program of a self initiated taxation legislated for a social purpose. Closer to home, the Boston Tea Party protested Great Britain's taxation and imposition of import duties without the colonists consent by dumping imported tea from the East India Company into the Boston Harbor. Later in the American Revolution the independence seekers taxed themselves to support their up and coming troops for the battle that would ensue. In our times, including in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, there are brave and generous examples of community self determination funds to help heal a national or global crisis.

The Choice Before Us

The climate crisis we face today is indeed international in scope but it is also a crisis internally within our nation and within ourselves: the question now is not whether or not there is a problem (the world's leading scientists have confirmed with overwhelming evidence that human induced climate change is real and destructive) but whether we as a society have the will to stand up and pay the true price of our energy and in so doing curb our nation's unceasing and unsustainable emission of greenhouse gases. We can continue kicking the can down the road and imposing the clean up costs on future generations. Or we can enact a national carbon fee and dividend, take responsibility for our climate pollution by embracing conservation and innovation instead and lead what will be the cleanest and most empowering revolution in history.

Our Declaration

We the people of Santa Fe County, New Mexico, and hopefully extending throughout the United States of America, hereby commit to a form of self taxation and self determination for the benefit of uplifting those in need and restoring the equilibrium of our precious climate. Starting on April 15th, 2013 ("Tax Day") we are embarking on a voluntary ***carbon offset, community service & climate restoration project*** to take direct action locally and demonstrate the need for national leadership and a nationwide revenue neutral carbon tax.

Examples of carbon tax points of reference here and abroad

Ireland and Australia currently have a carbon fee which stands at an amount above our proposed starting point of \$22/ton. For other references points, Thomas Friedman proposes \$20/ton starting point. \$25/ton (= \$462/yr) is the starting point recommended in US Congressman Carson's carbon tax bill; \$26/ton (= \$481/yr) is an estimate by the EPA; \$30.5/ton (= \$564/yr) is currently the annualized per capita carbon tax amount in British Columbia; and \$115/ton (= \$2,127/yr) is recommended by James Hansen based on his assessment of the severity of the

Contact CCLI at 505-988-3364 or by e-mail at ccli@takeresponsibility.us for more information.

climate crisis. For more information on the national movement for a revenue neutral carbon tax (otherwise known as a “carbon fee and dividend”) visit <http://citizensclimatelobby.org/node/398>.

Lowering Our Water, Energy & Carbon Footprint

This Santa Fe carbon offset~community service project will promote hands on ways to conserve energy and water while reducing our carbon footprint. Adopting excellent energy efficiency steps as well as the other conservation actions encouraged by this project will enable project donors (including the individuals, teams and businesses as well as foundation matching funders) to more than make back their contributions paid in by way of earning future savings on our electric, propane and gas bills as well as gasoline and water expenditures. And by deploying these financial/energy/water saving strategies, we will be meaningfully reducing our carbon footprint.

Providing Energy Efficiency Assistance for Low Income Households

This project will directly help empower low income households by supporting targeted, cost effective energy efficiency improvements for mobile home communities that generally rely on high cost propane or electric and are in dire need of support. At a time when federal money for low income energy efficiency is drastically shrinking, there is a huge gap to fill in helping low income families and at the same time advance majorly needed energy efficiency progress. With every \$400 dollars raised from this project we will partner with Los Amigos to increase the efficiency of the ductwork and provide essential inputs including installing a carbon monoxide alarm and low-flow shower heads as needed to help these families keep safe, save money on energy bills, save water and reduce their carbon footprint. This is a manageable service as well as a proven way to cost effectively deploy resources to stimulate important energy & water conservation while helping reduce the high poverty rate. The resulting reduction of metric ton emissions of carbon dioxide for every mobile home served and in aggregate will be quantified as will the anticipated financial/energy/water savings per household served to demonstrate the return on this investment which our preliminary modeling indicates to be outstanding. This community service endeavor will not only provide significant outcomes in the ways indicated and measurable benefits to the households served but the mobile home communities themselves will be engaged to serve the greater cause by receiving seeds for planting and participating in the native grass restoration that we will do together.

Restoring the Climate Locally thru Native Grass/Carbon Sink Planting

Planting native seed grass is an enlivening and low cost way of establishing meaningful carbon sinks that at the same time add to the aesthetics of the community. Native grasses in our Northern New Mexico region – including Giant Sacaton, Indian Rice Grass, Blue Grama, Buffalo – need little water and care to take root and once they do the roots run deep which is why they are such an effective carbon sink. Every \$7 of the \$407 community carbon fees raised will go towards acquiring the seeds for these appropriate grasses (at a bundled low cost price). The planting of the seeds will be done as a volunteer component of the project and the plantings themselves will be done at strategic locations in conjunction with Santa Fe County, the City of Santa Fe, residential communities, participating businesses and other state and local partners in the vicinity. We will undertake this restoration project in collaboration with experts in the field

Contact CCLI at 505-988-3364 or by e-mail at ccli@takeresponsibility.us for more information.

(including the NM Native Plant Society, Plants of the Southwest and local nurseries including Agua Fria Nursery and many others). Together we will properly plant the native grasses at optimal places in Santa Fe County during organized volunteer service~planting days in the fall. Similar to the energy efficiency program for low income households, we will measure the meaningful carbon reduction gains from our collective investment in native grass planting.

Project Impacts, Modeling Results & Evaluation

Santa Fe's Carbon Offset~Community Service Project has uniquely compelling reasons for individuals, families, teams, businesses and foundations to contribute to it. Unlike widespread carbon off set initiatives underway that are accessed on-line through various national and international organizations, this project is truly local -- it is indeed of the community, for the community and by the community. The project also has integrity and timeliness - focusing on the pressing issues of carbon taxing, energy efficiency and climate restoration all at once. Furthermore the project is placing a premium on modeling and evaluating the return on investment (we are doing project evaluation with the help of Santa Fe Community College's New Mexico Energy Smart Academy as well as a research auditor and analyst). We are forecasting and will demonstrate meaningful reduction in metric ton emission of co2 from both the carbon sink and energy efficiency assistance components of the project. Every \$407 dollars raised has a significant bang for the buck per third party evaluation which we will post on the website and provide to those who are contributing. Finally the host and coordinating organizations for this project receive no money for administering the project. Rather all contributions (like the revenue neutral portion of a carbon tax) go directly back into the community without a cent of surcharge.

Accountability

The Climate Change Leadership Institute (CCLI) is leading this project in conjunction with the Citizens Climate Lobby and host of other supporting organizations including the Santa Fe Green Chamber of Commerce, Santa Fe Community College's Energy Smart Academy and several others. CCLI is administering the climate offset fund purely as a community service and will not receiving any income or fees for administering this project. All Santa Fe carbon offset dollars raised are being used strictly for the community service benefits of low income household energy efficiency support and native seed grass planting for the purpose of climate restoration. Because CCLI is 501(c)3 non-profit organization, all carbon offest payments made by participating individuals, teams, foundations and businesses are tax deductible.

Culmination Events:

The people, teams, local business leaders as well as foundations contributing to Santa Fe's carbon offset~community service project, as well as the low income mobile home owners participating in energy efficiency program support, will be invited to a community picnic (in association with the native seed grass plantings) as well as a special Sunday Brunch at Vinaigrette all happening in the Fall. This project picnic and brunch are not only a way of thanking those who are giving their hard earned dollars and efforts into this direct action project, they will be educational as well. There will be brief project presentations made about the local

Contact CCLI at 505-988-3364 or by e-mail at ccli@takeresponsibility.us for more information.

project and the associated drive for a revenue neutral national carbon tax (“carbon fee and dividend”) as well as optimal ways to reduce our energy, water and carbon footprint. It is an important dual purpose of these events to celebrate the community’s leadership and learn to become more sustainable by working in concert together.

[MAKE A TAX DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO THIS SANTA FE CARBON OFFSET PROJECT \[INDIVIDUALS/FAMILIES/TEAMS/BUSINESSES MAY DONATE\]](#)

[FORM A TEAM & ENLIST OTHERS TO JOIN THE PROJECT \[DOWNLOAD PROJECT SUMMARY AND TEAM PLEDGE PAGE\]](#)

[ENLIST YOUR SUPPORT & VOLUNTEER FOR FALL NATIVE GRASS PLANTING](#)

[BUILD ALLIANCES \(FOR NGOS, CHURCHES, CIVIG GROUPS\)
AND BE A MATCHING FUND PARTNER \(FOR FOUNDATIONS\)](#)