



County of Sonoma

State of California

Date: September 17, 2019

Item Number: _____
Resolution Number: _____

4/5 Vote Required

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNTY OF SONOMA ENDORSING THE DECLARATION OF A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION TO RESTORE A SAFE CLIMATE

WHEREAS, human activities have warmed the Earth to a point that threatens climate stability, and climate change has already set in motion catastrophic changes to the Earth's systems, including fresh water scarcity and droughts, floods, extreme weather events and increased heat, wildfires, accelerating ice mass loss that will result in sea-level rise, and species extinction; and

WHEREAS, the current pace and scale of national climate action is not sufficient to avert substantial damage to the economy, environment, and human health over the coming decades; and

WHEREAS, the October 8, 2018 special report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projected that curtailing warming to 1.5°C to reduce the risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, economic growth and plant and animal life this century, will require an unprecedented transformation of every sector of the global economy over the next 12 years; and

WHEREAS, on November 23, 2018 the Federal Government issued the Fourth National Climate Assessment¹ detailing the massive threat that climate change poses to the American economy and underscoring the need for immediate climate emergency action at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, critical tipping points must be avoided, as they will have cascading feedback effects that are predicted to cause an increasingly uncontrollable climate emergency that includes a devastating burden to the global economy, and with current greenhouse gas (GHG) emission levels these tipping points could be passed as soon as 2050; and

WHEREAS, restoring a safe and stable climate requires an emergency mobilization to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions across all sectors, to rapidly and safely draw down or remove all the excess carbon from the atmosphere, and to implement measures to protect all people and species; and

WHEREAS, a just transition away from fossil fuels requires the development of a framework for a fair shift to an economy that is ecologically sustainable, equitable, and just for all its members; and

WHEREAS, marginalized communities worldwide—including people of color, immigrants, indigenous communities, low-income people, those with disabilities, and the unhoused—are

¹ <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/>

Resolution #

Date:

Page 2

already disproportionately affected by climate change and must benefit from a just transition to a sustainable and equitable economy; and

WHEREAS, on September 10, 2018, the State of California’s Governor Brown issued an executive order establishing a 2045 statewide target to achieve carbon neutrality, and on the same day, Senate Bill 100 was passed, which sets a 100% clean electricity goal for the State by 2045; and

WHEREAS, California’s Fourth Climate Change Assessment² warned that extreme weather and climate-related events in the United States are worsening, predicting increased drought cycles and heat waves in the western U.S. with a resulting three-fold increase in intensity and magnitude of wildfires, declined water supply and snow pack, increased flooding, impacted agriculture, as well as substantial damages to the U.S. economy and human health, unless GHG emissions are curbed; and

WHEREAS, the California Legislature has set clear climate objectives for the next decade, including a 40% reduction in 1990 level GHG emissions by 2030; 50% renewable energy; 50% reduction in petroleum use in vehicles and a doubling of energy efficiency savings in existing buildings³; and

WHEREAS, Sonoma County has already begun to experience extreme climate-related events, including six years of drought, the October 2017 Northern California wildfires, which caused more than \$9.4 billion in damage and killed forty-four people, and the February 2019 Winter Storms and Flooding that caused over \$150 million in damages and resulted in the declaration of a local health emergency due to the scale of household hazardous waste scattered along waterways, roadsides and on public and private properties after flooding; and

WHEREAS, Sonoma County public agencies have taken a number of important actions to reduce GHG emissions and enhance quality of life in our community, including long-term commitments to preserving over 100,000 acres of both agricultural and open space lands; setting and meeting a goal to deliver carbon free water; offering cost effective programs to reduce energy use and conserve water; and establishing Sonoma Clean Power, a regional community choice energy provider offering the first 100% local renewable power option in California; and

WHEREAS, after the 2017 fires, the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors formed the Office of Recovery and Resiliency to develop a framework for both fire recovery and greater community resiliency; and

WHEREAS, the Recovery and Resiliency Framework (Framework) was approved on December 11, 2018 and which represents the County’s long-term vision for a resilient future; and

WHEREAS, the Framework has five strategic areas of recovery and resiliency: Community Preparedness and Infrastructure, Housing, Economy, Safety Net Services, and Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, many of the Framework’s implementation goals and activities/projects are related to or support actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, mitigate climate change impacts, and promote climate resiliency; and

WHEREAS, the current scale and rate of expansion of local government action has not resulted in the necessary reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions to enable us to limit global temperature increase to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and no more than 1.5°C as

² <http://www.climateassessment.ca.gov/>

³ <https://ww3.arb.ca.gov/cc/pillars/pillars.htm>

Resolution #

Date:

Page 3

outlined in the 2016 Paris Climate Accord and recommended by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); and

WHEREAS, many of the major climate change drivers - energy generation, fuel standards, consumption patterns, product design and specification and large scale infrastructure investments – are dispersed across both the private and public sector and are controlled at scales larger than local and regional governments; and

WHEREAS, in order to avoid irreversible, catastrophic climate change impacts, we cannot only focus on reducing emissions but must also dramatically increase and enable meaningful carbon sequestration while preparing communities now for significant climate impacts;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the COUNTY OF SONOMA declares that a climate emergency threatens humanity and the natural and built environments; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the COUNTY OF SONOMA joins a nationwide call for a just transition away from fossil fuels and an urgent collaborative climate mobilization effort focused on enacting policies that dramatically reduce heat-trapping emissions, and rapidly catalyzing a mobilization at all levels of government to restore a safe climate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an urgent global climate mobilization effort to reverse global warming is needed to achieve zero net emissions as quickly as possible and that full community participation, inclusion and support is integral to our efforts to safely draw down carbon from the atmosphere and accelerate adaptation and resilience strategies in preparation for intensifying climate impacts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the COUNTY OF SONOMA acknowledges that successful climate action and a just transition at scale requires that we work both within and outside of our regional boundaries and across sectors to accelerate the necessary systems change required to address the climate emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the COUNTY OF SONOMA, commits to contributing to the development of a countywide 2030 Climate Emergency Mobilization Strategy that focuses on identifying key local actions – including a ten-year Emergency Policy Package prioritizing the most impactful local policies that will drive systems change while also identifying the key areas for state level advocacy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, while the COUNTY OF SONOMA commits to coordinate with RCPA on the 2030 Climate Emergency Mobilization Strategy, the County is not precluded from taking its own actions, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the COUNTY OF SONOMA re-commits to ensuring that our actions remain in alignment with the most current scientific findings regarding climate change; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the COUNTY OF SONOMA will collaboratively develop and implement more ambitious but achievable goals consistent with or exceeding state goals and objectives, integrated into a new 2030 Climate Emergency Mobilization Strategy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the COUNTY OF SONOMA commits to identifying a Climate Emergency Mobilization Liaison to drive this effort in our jurisdiction and to provide financial resources to

Resolution #

Date:

Page 4

support the participation of this County staff member in the RCPA coalition of local governments to further mobilize regional climate action; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Board of Supervisors of the COUNTY OF SONOMA establishes the climate emergency and development and implementation of the 2030 Climate Emergency Mobilization Strategy as a top Board priority, and directs staff to work with the RCPA and coalition members to reevaluate all existing policies through the lens of the climate emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the COUNTY OF SONOMA commits to educating its employees and residents about the climate crisis and the work needed to catalyze an equitable emergency climate mobilization effort at the local, regional, state, national and global levels.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board this 17th day of September, 2019.

Supervisors:

Gorin:

Zane:

Gore:

Hopkins:

Rabbitt:

Ayes:

Noes:

Absent:

Abstain:

So Ordered.