

**Briefing to the Federal Regional Council on the
Clean Air/Clean Energy (CA/CE) Initiative
August 17, 2005**

Background

The CA/CE Initiative set the following goals in 2004: 1) Increase federal agency investment in the Central Valley above the previous year's levels. (Investment in this context refers to the allocation of technical and financial resources by agency staff.); 2) Adopt policies and take actions to support incorporation of clean energy technologies into public properties in the Central Valley; and 3) Provide incubator services to develop and nurture, secure funding for clean energy projects. Participants in this initiative to date have included Federal agencies (DOE, EPA, HUD, and DOT), state agencies, and non profit organizations.

Accomplishments Since We Last Briefed the Federal Regional Council in March 2005

Where We Were In March

- Because of staffing, policy, and program changes, DOE was uncertain how it could provide continued support for the CA/CE Initiative.
- DOE provided Paul Johnson a contract to provide continued support for the CA/CE Initiative.

Major Developments Since March

- We met with the Federal Regional Council and worked out a new management arrangement for the CA/CE Initiative - Julie Riel and Stephanie Valentine agreed to be co-chairs of the CA/CE Initiative. Paul Johnson was asked to recommend ways to strengthen and redirect the Initiative given progress to date and DOE staffing and program changes. We set two goals for the next six months 1) spur progress on projects and 2) determine new direction and approaches for how to do work.
- Because of language included in one version of its FY 2006 appropriations bill, the DOE regional office may be closing in 2006.
- We have continued to develop and support innovate projects to 1) help local governments plan and implement clean energy projects in their communities; 2) develop clean transportation approaches and 3) develop renewable energy resources. Highlights include:
 - We jumpstarted work to "green" the HOPE VI project in Fresno. We encouraged Fresno Housing Authority and our Federal partners to re-engage in this project. We designed and facilitated a highly successful design charette on June 8 with over 25 participants and many design recommendations. We drafted a MOU to for partners interested in helping the Housing Authority. The Housing Authority has received an Environmental Justice Grant to help "green" the Community Center at the Project. We are working with the Housing Authority to determine the best way to accomplish this.
 - We are developing a program to work with communities to leverage HUD's HOME and CDBG funds for clean energy planning and implementation. Community interest appears to be high. We met with about 10 communities in April to discuss this and met with Fresno on June 16th to begin development of our first community program with that city. A draft MOU was prepared for Fresno.
 - In response to a request from U.S. Representative Cardoza, we hosted a call with energy experts to explore what might be done to improve the efficiency of schools k-12 in the Congressman's district. We hope to be asked to develop a follow-up meeting with school administrators in the Congressman's office later this summer.

- We are working with farmers, cities, the universities and others to produce and market a veggie fuel crop which could be blended with an additive and mixed with diesel (which could be produced from melting abandoned tires) to produce a biodiesel fuel.
 - We are supporting a dairy waste initiative with EPA, DOE, USDA, the California Energy Commission and others - to develop energy sources and remove environmental pollution associated with dairies in the Central Valley. We are exploring conversion of dairy waste to hydrogen as part of this effort.
 - We are pursuing funding through the West Coast Collaborative for agriculture sector and other projects that reduce diesel emissions in the Central Valley.
 - The Department of Transportation and Great Valley Center are working to develop a regional transportation plan for the Valley. A white paper has been developed and a DOT grant is being pursued.
 - There is a growing amount of activity through DOE's Million Solar Roof Initiative through the Great Valley Center and Strategic Energy Innovations to grow the level of solar awareness and activity in the Central Valley.
- We have explored numerous new directions and approaches for support the activities of the CA/CE Initiative. These include:
- We have had numerous discussions with the West Coast Diesel Collaborative and funding. The Collaborative appears to be an excellent means of supporting some of our diesel based agriculture and transportation sector based projects in the Central Valley.
 - We have met and talked several times with the Regional Jobs Initiative (RJI) and about their clean air policy and job creation interests. We are exploring ways to link our initiative with the RJI.
 - We have started conversations with UC Merced and CSU Fresno about the roles that these universities can play in the supporting clean energy activities in the Valley. Their interest and expertise appear to be extremely high. We supported UC Merced efforts to apply for a grant to incorporate solar into housing developments.
 - On June 24th, Governor Schwarzenegger signed an Executive Order creating a State Task Force to complement the Federal Task Force. This should increase state resources for Valley activities and help ensure the success of the CA/CE activities. The state is currently setting up an organizational structure of teams to support its Task Force.
 - We have met and are developing relationships with banks to fund and support clean energy projects in the Valley. Follow-up discussions are expected in September.
 - With State public benefits funding, the Great Valley Center (GVC) and Strategic Energy Innovations (SEI) will be working with local leaders to develop a regional energy efficiency plan and road map for the Central Valley. This process is starting in August and should be completed by late fall.

Where We Are Heading Over the Next Several Months

- The infrastructure is starting to fall into place. The California Energy Commission, universities, banks, the West Coast Collaborative and the RJI (with its strong ties to the business community) are evolving into key components.
- We will work to coordinate and include where practical CA/CE activities in the State Task Force to make best use of resources and avoid duplication of effort.
- We will support and participate in GVC/SEI efforts to develop a regional clean energy plan roadmap.
- The DOE regional office will continue to provide support (through its programs and Paul's involvement).