



Kootenay Carbon Neutral Action Strategy

The Regional Districts of the Kootenay (Regional Districts of East Kootenay, Central Kootenay and Kootenay-Boundary) and the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) are working to establish an innovative approach to achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2012 for local government and First Nations **corporate** carbon footprints.

An approach at this level and scale is unique, as it covers 29 Kootenay municipalities, five First Nation communities and three Regional Districts. It will allow for the Regional Districts, local governments and First Nations communities within the Kootenays¹ to benefit from shared resources, expertise and learning to take tangible action on Climate Change. This collaborative approach will provide substantial benefits to a range of communities including small communities and electoral areas with limited resources. This is a multi-year project.

Implementation of the Kootenay Carbon Neutral Action Strategy Year 1 targets will begin in 2009. Year 1 targets are scheduled for completion by February 2010.

Goal:

To develop a coordinated regional approach and plan to assist local governments to achieve carbon neutrality and emissions reductions targets.

Objectives:

1. To develop baseline corporate emissions inventories for all Regional Districts, municipalities and First Nation communities in the Kootenay Region.
2. To create individual customized 2012 Corporate Carbon Neutral Action Plans for each of the Kootenay Regional Districts. The plans will identify emissions reduction strategies with targets and timeframes. The plans

¹ In partnership with Columbia Basin Trust (CBT), this program will be extended to include Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSR) Areas A and B, Revelstoke, Valemount, and Golden.

may also identify common interests and action items where the Regional Districts may act jointly to achieve carbon neutral objectives.

3. To provide First Nation communities and municipalities with Carbon Neutral Action Plan templates (based on the regional district plans) that are uniquely focused in a rural context for municipalities and First Nation communities in the Kootenay Region who participate in this process.
4. To enhance the capacity of the Kootenay local government elected officials and Staff to effectively engage and address the challenge of Climate Change.
5. To develop strong, action-based partnerships with industry, First Nations, and between local governments for the achievement of carbon neutrality.
6. Explore the future establishment of a Regional 2020/2050 Carbon Emissions Reduction Action Plan.
7. To develop a regional system for monitoring and evaluation of, and feedback on, the Carbon Neutral and Emissions Reduction Action Plans.
8. To explore the feasibility of establishing a Kootenay carbon offset investment program.
9. To explore the feasibility of establishing a municipal corporation with membership from the three Kootenay Regional Districts to: continue ongoing facilitation and coordination of the Kootenay Carbon Neutral Action Strategy; and to pursue investment and revenue generating opportunities.

In Year 1 of this project, we will achieve the following targets:

We will establish a Kootenay Carbon Neutral Coordination Team. The team will work closely with the Regional District CAOs to achieve the following Year 1 program targets:

1. We will develop baseline corporate emissions inventories with assistance from the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) for three Regional Districts, up to 29 Kootenay municipalities, and up to five First Nation Communities.
2. We will develop Regional District corporate Carbon Neutral Action Plans and an Action Plan template that can be used by municipalities. The action plans will be replicable for member municipalities and First Nation communities.
3. We will deliver four Climate Change learning sessions for all Kootenay local governments. The education sessions will be delivered to senior staff and elected officials in 2009. These sessions will substantially enhance regional capacity for action on carbon neutrality and will include education in the areas of mitigation and regionally specific climate impacts modeling and adaptation.

4. We will explore the feasibility of establishing a municipal corporation with membership from the three Kootenay Regional Districts to continue coordination of regional climate change action. The corporation will work exclusively on climate change issues, and will be jointly funded by the Kootenay Regional Districts.
5. We will explore the feasibility of establishing a Kootenay carbon offset investment program.

Work undertaken in Year One involves deliverables and tangible benefits on two levels:

1. the first is at the Regional District and Electoral Area level, and
2. the second is for Kootenay Municipalities and First Nations communities.

Year One Deliverables and Tangible Benefits

Regional Districts and Electoral Areas:

1. A complete corporate emissions inventory that is comparable to the member municipalities' and First Nations' inventories.
2. A complete 2012 corporate carbon neutrality action plan based on the emission inventory in 1 above.
3. A climate change education program specifically designed for elected officials and local government staff in the Kootenays.
4. Establishment of a Kootenay Carbon Neutral Coordination Team to lead the implementation of the Kootenay Carbon Neutral Action Strategy, and to serve as the primary regional resource for climate change information and learning, improved granting opportunities, internal capacity building etc.

Year One Deliverables and Tangible Benefits

Kootenay Municipalities and First Nations Communities:

1. A complete corporate emissions inventory that is comparable to the Regional District inventories.
2. Municipalities and First Nations will receive a carbon neutral action planning template, based on the emissions inventory in 1 above, which provides a basic framework for corporate carbon neutral action plans.
3. A climate change education program specifically designed for First Nations leaders and staff and for elected municipal officials and local government staff in the Kootenays.
4. Capacity building access to the Kootenay Carbon Neutral Coordination Team for Kootenay relevant climate change information and learning, shared resources, improved granting opportunities, internal capacity building etc.

In Years 2-4 of this project, we will undertake the following actions:

1. We will implement the Regional District Carbon Neutral Action Plans and will be carbon neutral in respect of Regional District Operations by 2012.
2. We will continue to actively pursue shared climate change learning and action opportunities with member municipalities and First Nations.
3. We will, on an annual basis, monitor and report to the communities of the Kootenay on our progress toward 2012 carbon neutrality.
4. We will begin the development of a long-term emissions reduction plan in keeping with province-wide targets and the establishment of a regional carbon offsets investment program.

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