

By Susan Innis

Colorado Carbon Fund Provides New Way to Support Clean Energy

Have you thought about buying carbon offsets but weren't sure how? Do you know your carbon footprint? Would you like to know how energy-efficiency measures can reduce carbon dioxide emissions? Would you like to support new clean energy projects here in Colorado?

The new Colorado Carbon Fund is helping individuals and businesses reduce their carbon footprint by supporting new clean energy projects in our state.

You can participate in a three-step process to help stop global warming, at the fund's Web site, www.ColoradoCarbonFund.org.

First, you can measure your climate impacts. When you use energy in your home, or when you drive or fly, you create carbon dioxide emissions. Estimating your carbon footprint is a great way to learn how your daily choices can impact the environment.

Second, you will learn how to reduce your emissions through energy efficiency and renewable energy. There are many simple steps you can take that will add up to significant savings – both in your wallet and for our climate.

Third, you can offset unavoidable emissions through the Colorado Carbon Fund. Your tax-deductible donation will go to new local projects that reduce emissions.

By taking these three steps, you will help Colorado meet our state's Climate Action Plan goal to reduce emissions 20 percent by 2020.

Many people wonder whether carbon offsets really have any environmental benefits. The Colorado Carbon Fund is unique because it supports new, verifiable greenhouse gas reduction projects that are developed right here in Colorado. In this way, consumers can see firsthand the benefits of new clean energy projects in their communities. The types of projects that could be supported include:

- Increasing energy efficiency in schools, buildings or transportation.
- Generating energy from renewable sources, like biomass or solar water heating.
- Capturing methane from animal waste and using it to generate energy at farms.
- Modifying a power plant or factory to use fuels that lower emissions.

Before the Colorado Carbon Fund accepts a project, it makes sure the project is reducing emissions. First, the project receives a rigorous, third-party review to validate its current performance and the expected results. Once the project is part of the fund, it is monitored, usually each year, to verify that it is achieving its performance objectives and that offsets are delivered.



QUALITY CONTROL IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR CARBON OFFSETS. TO BE SURE IT IS BENEFITING THE ENVIRONMENT, EVERY OFFSET PROJECT MUST:

- **Provide new or additional benefits.** A high-quality offset project would not have happened without the specific funding provided by the purchase of carbon offsets.
- **Be rigorously measured and verified.** The benefits of the offset project must be measured and verified by an independent third party over the entire length of the project.
- **Have lasting benefits.** The effects of the offset project must be long-lasting, not temporary.



Susan Innis is the Colorado Carbon Fund manager for the Governor's Energy Office. For more information about the Colorado Carbon Fund, visit www.ColoradoCarbonFund.org or contact Susan at (303) 866-2309.