

## **It's Better Together: Regional Collaboration to Advance Climate and Energy Initiatives**

### Panelists:

Greg Jones – Vice President, Sierra Business Council

Tyler Masters – Program Manager, Western Riverside Council of Governments

Craig Perkins – Executive Director, The Energy Coalition (moderator)

Allison Wood – Associate Regional Energy/Climate Planner, San Diego Council of Governments

### **Craig:**

- How are local agencies dealing with the job they need to get done and figure out the path forward on a regional scale?
- Context: In Cali, a move to decarbonize the economy, paradigm shift, a new way of doing business, impacts all sectors of the community and our economy
- World is moving away from the energy systems of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; moving toward new energy system – utility 2.0, being driven by tech change, customers being able to take control of their energy destinies
- This is an opportunity for local govs to figure out new pathways that will have the highest level of long term benefits for the jurisdictions they serve
- Lots of challenges and barriers to public sector to take action in energy
- Many people are looking towards public sector to meet these very ambitious standards that we have set
- Regional approach to providing services and resources that public agencies need to take action in their buildings and facilities

### Tyler – WRCOG, energy department

- Regional streetlight program, CCA feasibility, res EE retrofit program
- Collaboration and how to advance climate and energy initiatives
- “It’s better together”
  - lots of benefits for doing things collaboratively and regionally
- Innovation, creativity – everybody here has been a part of something creative, big opportunity to share innovative best practices with your neighbor
- The wheel analogy – the wheel was used to create pots, creativity created the wheel
- Regional collaboration transformed the wheel into so much more
- WRCOG
  - JPA, 17 member jurisdictions
  - Address needs in subregions, save cities money and time
  - A lot of the needs in x city are the same needs that are found in your city
- Regional streetlight program
  - Streetlights are a high utility cost for jurisdictions

- Lots of cities have reached out to WRCOG with this need, please look into this to mitigate this large line item cost
- What will the program accomplish?
  - Admin, operational and maintenance cost efficiencies
  - Synergies
  - Reduction in costs, maintenance, energy consumption
  - Improvements in public safety
  - Assists in meeting local and statewide energy and GHG goals
- Benefits of regional collaboration
  - Cost sharing
  - Best practices
  - Two sets of eyes are better than one
  - Holistic approach
- Tri-COG CCA Study
  - Central valley, san bern, riverside cogs
  - Cost efficiency, 48 jurisdictions, but not 48X more expensive
- Mid-managers association
  - Murrieta – tasked with an ordinance, no expertise, decided to collaborate with Temecula to see what similar ordinances they had already researched and implemented, created the idea for mid-managers association
- Opportunities to collaborate regionally
  - Attend conferences
  - Networking
  - Engage and create your regional agencies, use them
  - Identify existing resources
  - Bring an open mind to specific tasks

**Allison Wood – SANDAG, regional energy climate planner**

- Ability to leverage partnership with sdc&e – very similar service areas
- 18 cities and county of san diego
- Regional Planning, services for local governments and collaborative programs
- Regional Planning
  - Regional energy strategy
  - Climate action strategy
  - Expand on more than just transportation
  - Shoreline and habitat restoration plans as well
  - PEV readiness plan
  - Trying to bring EE and alt fuels together in regional planning process
- Services for local governments
  - Worked with sdc&e to produce energy roadmaps for each jurisdiction
  - Worked with clean cities organization
  - Plug-in SD: EV readiness plan, help streamline permit process for EV charging stations

- Climate planning and resources: updating GHG inventories to support climate action plans, sandag maintains a lot of data to support member agencies to help them implement their caps
- Subregional collaborations: 4 different – southbay energy action collaborative, north coast energy action collaborative – all in different phases of caps
- Help jurisdictions get recognition – beacon program
- Climate collaborative, san diego region
  - Advance climate planning, demonstrate local leadership, build capacity in public agencies
  - [www.sdclimatecollaborative.org](http://www.sdclimatecollaborative.org)
  - partner with academia, non profits and businesses
  - 22 members
  - advance climate planning
    - quarterly meetings of 40 plus, sea level rise working group, facilitate peer to peer sharing, very staff driven
    - host trainings
    - build capacity for action, NOAA coastal resilience grant
  - Demonstrate local leadership, help put collaborative on the map, we are all working together on this

### **Greg Jones – Sierra Business Council**

- Non profit
- Our mission: look at slide
- Business innovation and development center
- Climate and energy programs
- Sierra Resources – water, wildlife, recreational, farming, agriculture, forest health, lots of resources to protect
- Building support and capacity for local governments
  - Saving kWh: Sierra Nevada Energy Watch – 11 counties and over 3000 projects, small and medium and municipal energy retrofits and projects, partner with local contractors
  - Building capacity for local governments is key – helps inspire local economy
  - Climate planning: 28 local govs GHG inventories, 9 EAP’s Energy Action Plans, 4 CivicSpark Fellows, helping to bring the next level of climate and energy planners to the floor, giving them an opportunity to be successful
- Regional Climate impacts
  - In the sierra can look very dire at times
  - Snowfall carries 60% of Cali’s water
  - Regional collaborations need to also work with state stakeholders to address needs
- Sierra Camp (regional and statewide collaboration)

- Strategy: policy research and recommendations, approached by OPR and ARCCA to develop this collaborative
- Urban-Rural connection, look at slide
  - 21 members, very diverse local gov and private entities
- Water: much of it in the state comes from the sierra Nevada and norcal
  - Sacramento: American and sac rivers that feed into Folsom Lake
  - San Fran Bay Area: 7.1 mil res – 85% of water comes from hetch hetchy reservoir, huge risk from forest fires
  - Fresno: most of its water is ground water, but also san Joaquin and kings river, federally protected watershed, threatened from dying trees
  - Los Angeles Area: California Water Project – travels from norcal, feather river, extreme risk of fire threat, LA has done a good job in limiting water use
  - San Diego: Mostly Colorado river, State water project and groundwater
- ARCCA
  - 5 current collaboratives: Sac, Bay area, sierra camp, LARC, San Diego

## Q&A

- what is a really unique collaborative in your opinion?
  - Greg: ARCCA – has really transformed the conversation of where water comes from and where it is going, helps to better take care of and manage limited resources and be resilient
- In the 4 year drought, what are you doing to help the forest?
  - Greg: need billions of dollars, 70% of forests are dying because of drought, huge risk of wildfire; recent governors order to prioritize dying forests, need to thin dead and dying trees out of forest before they go up in flames, it's a state, regional and federal issue
- Nuts and bolts of street lighting project? What tool did you use to meet everybody's need? Bulk purchasing across jurisdictions, how do you do that?
  - Tyler: want to bring in community stakeholders to do this bulk build instead of just having local governments make decisions on behalf of their jurisdictions
  - Allison: individual cities went through their own process and included a piggy back clause so that other jurisdictions could use the same path and contractors if they wanted
- Using data to track sustainability?
  - Allison: working on a regional framework focusing on data, one of the main issues is that the utility data is at the zipcode level and doesn't align with the jurisdictional boundaries
  - Craig: UCLA Energy Atlas project, very frustrating right now but data is the key to moving forward; Boston requires every building to disclose their energy and water use (over a certain size), we have to

get over the notion that this data is so sensitive and private, we need it to move forward, its not the utilities fault, they are just responding to the CPUC regulations

- Greg: IOUs and universities are collecting a lot of this data, but you also need to ask the right questions to what you are trying to get from that data
- How do you determine where to use program resources in a region? How do you determine between two potential locations?
  - Allison: cogs are their to make sure all the jurisdictions have access to the same resources regardless of their size
  - Tyler: Take this to governing board, they work with staff to determine where the best place is