

Draft Climate Change Policy: July 27, 2018

1 **Vision:** Alaska’s comprehensive response to climate change ensures that healthy ecosystems and
2 prudent natural resource management occurs for current and future generations. The State’s climate
3 change strategy promotes the social, ecological, cultural and economic well-being of our communities to
4 achieve food security, energy security and environmental security in the face of climate change impacts.
5 There is an economic, ecological and ethical imperative to pursue a transition away from both State and
6 global dependence on fossil fuels. Through a firm commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions,
7 Alaska seeks to stop or slow the rate of climate change. The challenges of climate change are met by
8 Alaska innovation and resilience, such that Alaskans meet urgency with opportunity. This approach
9 encourages public and private sector leadership, investment and follow-through to achieve the goals,
10 objectives and initiatives that contribute to the long-term resilience and sustainability of Alaska’s
11 communities, economies and people.

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13 **Statement of Purpose:** Alaska recognizes that climate change is occurring, that it is disproportionately
14 affecting our ocean and terrestrial ecosystems, communities, and economies and that the State has an
15 obligation to take bold action to address those threats. The State’s approach includes the careful
16 consideration of policy options and the corresponding need for strategic implementation. The State of
17 Alaska is committed to better understanding and preparing for these risks by implementing a climate
18 change strategy that is practical and achievable, and which recognizes that climate change must be
19 integrated into State decisions. There is a clear need to increase resilience; our changing climate offers
20 Alaska both challenges and opportunities that necessitate innovation and a vision for a sustainable and
21 vibrant future. These solutions must account for and respond to the scale and speed of change, while
22 working to stop or slow the negative impacts on marine, terrestrial, and human systems.

23
24 The state economy is currently dependent on natural resource development, including oil and natural
25 gas production. While these resources are finite and contribute to global greenhouse gas emissions,
26 which are a root cause of climate change, they also support essential government services and as such
27 our ability to adapt and respond. Development of these resources can be consistent with continued
28 diversification of the economy, increased opportunities for citizens, and an intentional focus on clean
29 energy investments and carbon capture technologies. The State is obligated to facilitate this transition
30 while strengthening the economy.

31
32 The State will work with partners – including federal agencies, tribal and municipal governments,
33 corporations, universities, national and global leaders – to devise needed adaptation programs, gather
34 science, and facilitate an economic and clean energy transition. This strategic effort will include new
35 forms of coordination and attract investment and financing for clean, affordable energy and energy
36 efficiency, technological innovation, and new industries. Alaska’s efforts to reduce greenhouse gas
37 emissions fit within a global leadership effort but are entirely driven by and responsive to the state’s
38 interests. Alaska’s leadership and practical approach can serve as a model for the U.S., the Arctic and the
39 world.

40
41 **Statement of Values:** Values and principles that reflect the unique nature of our land and people inform
42 the state’s climate change policy. The State of Alaska will foster a collaborative and transparent

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1 environment in which it encourages cooperation with and between Alaskans for a durable and shared
2 success. State decision-makers understand resilience as encompassing human and environmental
3 health, recognize opportunities to include benefits to Alaskans, and acknowledge that the future will
4 depend on our ability to adapt to the many threats associated with a changing climate.

5
6 As the State moves forward with implementing its climate change strategy, it will use values of equity,
7 inclusion and justice, and technology, cost effectiveness, market-based solutions and public
8 engagement. Alaska's climate change strategy recognizes that the benefits and burdens of our changing
9 climate are unevenly distributed across the state and between communities, but envisions a
10 comprehensive and cohesive approach. The State commits to incorporating Indigenous Knowledge
11 alongside other sources of science and to using these values and different forms of knowledge to inform
12 decision-making. The policy and goals are rooted in and responsive to the values held by Indigenous
13 cultures and the many other cultures and peoples who call Alaska home.

14
15 Therefore, using the best available science and Indigenous Knowledge, decision support tools, economic
16 and risk considerations, and impact analysis, in order to ensure:

- 17 • Climate change preparedness and action,
- 18 • Safe, resilient and sustainable communities,
- 19 • Economic opportunity for all residents, and
- 20 • Food security and a healthy environment;

21
22 It is the policy of the State of Alaska as it relates to climate change impacts, mitigation and adaptation,
23 to:

24 25 **Strengthen local and State governance, build State agency capacity, and enhance collaboration and** 26 **action between state agencies and with local and tribal governments.**

27 *In furtherance of this policy, the State of Alaska shall meet the following goals:*

- 28 • Support local and tribal governments in their efforts to plan for and address the impacts of
29 climate change.
- 30 • Support research and data gathering and engage municipal and tribal governments in
31 community risk monitoring, assessment and planning.
- 32 • Strengthen existing and further implement effective, efficient systems for community
33 adaptation and relocation.
- 34 • Commit to long-term, strategic state leadership on climate change issues that includes
35 immediate action, mainstreaming climate change within existing state activities, and
36 implementation and continued evaluation of the Climate Action Plan.

37 38 **Better understand and work to address natural, human health, environmental and ecosystem** 39 **changes.**

40 *In furtherance of this policy, the State of Alaska shall meet the following goals:*

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- 1 • Using a co-production of knowledge approach that integrates western science and Indigenous
2 Knowledge, monitor and gather data needed to better understand the impacts of climate
3 change on natural environment and to identify hotspots that contribute disproportionately to
4 ecosystem resilience and health.
- 5 • Adopt an approach that understands ecosystem and food security health as part of human and
6 community health.
- 7 • Develop and implement ecosystem-scale resource management programs.

8 9 **Invest in, partner with, and encourage private sector diversification, and the growth of Alaska's** 10 **adaptation and mitigation services, clean energy and ocean economy.**

11 *In furtherance of this policy, the State of Alaska shall meet the following goals:*

- 12 • Support and incentivize energy efficiency, renewable energy, de-carbonization and
13 electrification across all sectors.
- 14 • Support diversification, investment and established business expertise within the sectors
15 addressing climate change mitigation or adaptation.
- 16 • Develop a strategic plan for growth within the ocean economy, to include transportation,
17 commercial fisheries, energy and food, and considering incentives for value-added business
18 development.

19 20 **Maximize carbon neutral growth in Alaska through a rapid transition to renewable energy,** 21 **electrification and energy efficiency.**

22 *In furtherance of this policy, the State of Alaska shall meet the following goals:*

- 23 • Reduce oil, gas and mining industry greenhouse gas emissions in Alaska by 30% (over 2005
24 levels) by 2030, with the target increased over time to accommodate advances in technology
25 and/or economic impacts.
- 26 • Increase building efficiency in both residential and non-residential sectors by 30% (over 2010
27 levels) by 2030, with the target increased over time to accommodate advances in technology
28 and/or economic impacts.
- 29 • Increase the percentage of all electricity generated from renewable resources to 50% (over 2010
30 levels) by 2030 and improve the energy efficiency of electric generation through economic
31 dispatch.
- 32 • Increase the efficiency of and reduce carbon emissions in air, rail, road and marine operations
33 and transportation, and promote the use of more efficient and lower-emitting fuels.
- 34 • Produce by 2020 a comprehensive low-carbon energy strategy and transition plan, with
35 corresponding impact analysis, scenario development, timelines and targets.

36 37 **Expand climate and environmental science, natural resource and energy education, awareness and** 38 **workforce development.**

39 *In furtherance of this policy, the State of Alaska shall meet the following goals:*

- 40 • Implement the Alaska Natural Resource and Environmental Literacy Plan.

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- 1 • Strengthen the University of Alaska’s emphasis on research and education on science, climate
- 2 change trends, impacts and opportunities, vulnerability, adaptation and mitigation, as well as
- 3 related natural resource management and hazard forecast.
- 4 • Increase public awareness of climate change impacts and human/environmental vulnerability.
- 5 • Facilitate the development of energy, adaptation and mitigation training and workforce
- 6 development programs.
- 7

8 **Make, attract or leverage financial investments that enable the state’s climate strategy.**

9 *In furtherance of this policy, the State of Alaska shall meet the following goals:*

- 10 • Increase the financing available for low-carbon renewable energy and energy efficiency
- 11 activities.
- 12 • Develop pathways for carbon revenue generation and a carbon pricing mechanism.
- 13

14 As part of its Climate Change Strategy, the State of Alaska will:

- 15 • Implement the accompanying climate communications, outreach and public education and
- 16 engagement strategy;
- 17 • Work to inform and request action from federal partners on the accompanying federal climate
- 18 impact investment, program and policy recommendations;
- 19 • Request that the University of Alaska – and other research institutions – develop actions in
- 20 response to the accompanying climate science and research strategy and recommendations.