

# SILICON VALLEY CLIMATE ACTION NEWS

*Silicon Valley CAN!*

Newsletter of the Silicon Valley Climate Action Alliance, Issue 9, March 2018  
 “A publication dedicated to the sharing of good climate news throughout the Silicon Valley”

## PERSONAL

### Is It Time to Move Your Money?

by Holly Lindquist

There is a movement afoot to divest from fossil fuel companies. [Norway's Norges Bank](#) announced late last year that it would divest from fossil fuels, and last month, [New York City's pension funds](#) announced the same. Even individuals are making an effort to divest both their investments and banking from fossil fuels, with [Millennials leading the charge](#). Did you know that most large banks

BANK	EXTREME OIL	COAL MINING	COAL POWER	LNG EXPORT
UNITED STATES				
BANK OF AMERICA	D-	B-	D	D-
CITIGROUP	D+	B-	C-	D
GOLDMAN SACHS	D+	C-	C	D-
JPMORGAN CHASE	D	B-	C	D-
MORGAN STANLEY	D-	B-	C	D-
PNC	N/A	B-	C+	D-
WELLS FARGO	D+	B-	D	D-

around the world lend money for fossil fuel extraction and infrastructure projects? A [2017 report](#) from Rainforest Action Network (RAN) and Sierra Club found that, despite marketing their green credentials, multinational banks continue to pour money into fossil fuels. Between 2014 and 206, international banks financed almost \$300 billion in fossil fuel activities. Among American banks, the scores assigned in the RAN report are in the B- to C range for coal mining (probably because it has become less economically feasible), but are in the C to D- range for extreme oil (including tar sands, Arctic, and ultra-deepwater), coal power, and liquid natural gas (LNG) export. You may even find that there are [other reasons](#) to divest from these large banks. When it comes to investments, divesting from mutual funds with fossil fuel stocks doesn't have to hurt your bottom line. A [Morningstar analysis](#) of fund performance found that two-thirds of sustainable funds available in the U.S. finished in the top half of their respective categories. Investments in fossil fuels may even become risky. The think tank Carbon Tracker, [recently warned](#) that if fossil fuel companies base their decisions on current government policies instead of Paris Climate Agreement goals, they risk wasting \$1.6 trillion of expenditures.

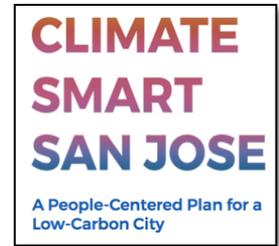
**What you can do:** *If you use any of the banks listed above and use Twitter, you can [use this site to send tweets](#) to these banks asking them to stop #BankingOnClimateChange. Consider [moving your money to a local credit union](#). Be sure to inform your old bank why you are moving your money.*

## LOCAL

### San Jose Announces Ambitious New Climate Plan

by Holly Lindquist

[San Jose recently announced](#) a new climate plan, hoping to be the first in the U.S. to meet the emission reduction levels outlined in the Paris Agreement. The plan includes: the community-choice energy program that will make 100% emission-free electricity available to everyone who participates in the program, a reduction in carbon emissions from cars of a million tons by 2030, a 30% reduction in per capita residential water consumption, and a gigawatt of solar power – enough for 250,000 homes. The plan is expected to cost around \$264 billion to implement between now and 2050. You can read the full plan [here](#).



*What you can do: If you are a San Jose resident, keep an eye out for information on signing up for [San Jose Clean Energy](#) (launching this spring). Sign up for the 100% carbon-free energy option to have the greatest impact.*

## REGIONAL

### Pacific Coast Collaborative is Leader for US Climate Action

by Holly Lindquist

In our last two issues, we reported about climate action in Washington and Oregon. These two states are part of the [Pacific Coast Collaborative](#) along with California, British Columbia, and Alaska (observing), an agreement to set a cooperative direction into the “Pacific Century”. The Collaborative states that “with a combined population of 54 million and a GDP of \$3 trillion,” the region is “poised to emerge as a mega-region and global economic powerhouse driven by innovation, energy, geographic location and sustainable resource management, attracting new jobs and investment while enhancing an already unparalleled quality of life.” [Part of the commitment](#) of the Collaborative is to address climate change and move the clean energy economy forward. While we in California are always pushing our legislators to do more, [California is a climate leader](#) in the U.S., and Washington and Oregon are [working to catch up](#). Washington has tried several times to put a price on carbon, but the most recent bill finally passed out of a key committee in February (the first of the carbon pricing proposals to get any kind of vote). Washington also has a 100-percent-clean-energy bill before its legislature. Oregon just [ended a short legislative session](#) without passing its “cap-and-invest” carbon emissions bill, but it is now the top priority for the 2019 session.

*What you can do: Help us keep moving California forward on climate leadership by [joining the 350 Silicon Valley Legislative Team](#).*

## NATIONAL

### Young Voters and Plaintiffs Seeking Climate Action

by Holly Lindquist

A [recent article in Scientific American](#) suggests that Millennial’s climate views could be important in 10 House elections this November. This assertion is based on two studies. The first, a recent study from [Pew Research Center](#) showing that Millennials (those currently aged 18-37) are more liberal than older

Americans on many issues, [including climate](#). The other [study from Tufts](#) shows the 10 Congressional districts where millennial voters could potentially make the greatest difference in the November election. Most of these districts are in the Midwest, but one is California: California's 39<sup>th</sup> district, long held by House Foreign Affairs Chairman Ed Royce (R), who is retiring after this term. In 2016, [Millennials surpassed Baby Boomers](#) as the largest generation in the U.S., but they still lag behind in voting. However, in 2016 [Millennials and Gen X together outvoted Boomers](#) in the 2016 election. And as Millennial voter turnout increases (as happens as people age) and the Millennial generation grows (as it is expected to do through immigration), Millennials will become the most important voting block in the country. In addition to voting, young Americans are using the court to seek climate justice. We reported [last August](#) about the Our Children's Trust lawsuit against the federal government. The Trump administration had filed a petition to dismiss the case; however this past week, the [Ninth Circuit ruled](#) that the suit can move forward. The lawsuit seeks science-based climate recovery plans by the federal government.

**What you can do:** *Support Get-out-the-vote ([GOTV](#)) organizations, especially those targeted at young voters such as [Rock the Vote](#) and [Glam up the Midterms](#).*

*Support the young climate plaintiffs suing for climate action by making a donation to Our Children's Trust. [Our Children's Trust](#) is a nonprofit organization elevating the voice of youth, those with most to lose, to secure the legal right to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate on behalf of present and future generations.*

## INTERNATIONAL

### Sahara Solar: North Africa Providing Power to Europe

by Holly Lindquist

When it comes to solar power, there may be no better place than the Sahara Desert, with vast open areas of land and 3,000 hours of sun every year. It has been estimated that the world's deserts receive enough solar energy in 6 hours to power the world for a year. Several large projects are under development to take advantage of this resource. The [Benban Solar Park in Egypt](#) is aiming to be the largest solar park in the world, expecting to reach between 1.6-2 GW of power by mid-2019. Construction is underway on several projects, and financing has been secured for 29 projects so far, representing 1.5 GW. On the western edge of the Sahara, [Morocco wants to be the "Saudi Arabia of solar energy"](#). Its flagship project, a \$9 billion collected concentrating solar plant (CSP), is expected to produce 580 MW when completed. This project, called Noor, meaning "light" in Arabic, along with another plant under development in Tunisia, are pilot projects of the [DESERTEC concept](#). The DESERTEC plan, developed by the think tank Club of Rome, is to promote solar and wind power across the Sahara, following development criteria to ensure environmental and social responsibility. This Sahara power could be transmitted to many parts of Europe via [underwater cables crossing the Mediterranean Sea](#).



**What you can do:** *[Contribute](#) to the [DESERTEC Foundation](#) to help accelerate the energy transition.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ➤ **Electric Vehicle Workshop**

**March 28, Millbrae Library, 6:30 – 8:30 pm.** *Want to love the planet AND your car? We'll show you how!* FREE Electric Vehicle Workshop – Everything You Need to Know to “Go EV”

Come learn about: The benefits of EVs versus gas-powered cars, government rebates (up to \$12,000) for “going EV”, battery range and charging basics, leasing versus buying, current makes/models and what’s in store for the future! At 6:30 pm EV owners will display their vehicles and answer questions about EV ownership; 7-8:30 pm Workshop and Q&A.

### ➤ **Green@Home Sunnyvale Workshop**

**March 29, Sunnyvale Senior Center, 1:00 - 2:30 pm.** Green@Home is a free program to help Sunnyvale residents save energy. Sponsored by the City of Sunnyvale and offered by Acterra, a local non-profit, Green@Home helps residents save money and reduce their environmental impact. Come fine out more at this education workshop. [Register](#).

## ***Transform and the Silicon Valley Climate Action Alliance Present:***

### **[Connecting Communities](#)**

#### **An event series envisioning a just and sustainable transportation future**

Transportation and housing are at a crisis point in Silicon Valley, and they’re connected to another hot issue: climate change. What can we do to solve all three problems simultaneously?

### ➤ **Car-Light Housing: More affordability, less traffic**

We need to address the housing affordability crisis, but we don’t want to make it harder to get around town or harm the climate. Join us for this discussion to:

- Learn about the connections between housing affordability, traffic reduction, and climate change;
- Hear what neighboring communities are doing to reduce the need to drive; and
- See how you can help make your community more walkable, affordable, and transit-friendly.

#### **Monday, March 26 from 6-8pm**

San Mateo Downtown Library, 55 W 3rd Ave. San Mateo

[RSVP for this event](#)

### ➤ **Optimizing Our Highways: Moving More People with Fewer Cars**

An express lane is now being considered on 101 from San Francisco to San Jose, but projections show that it alone will do little to solve our traffic woes. It is increasingly clear that the only way to get to the root of congestion — and to reduce climate emissions — is by catalyzing a dramatic shift from solo driving to carpools, shuttles, transit and incentivizing a shift to clean vehicles. Can we make Silicon Valley the place to break out with truly disruptive ideas that work?

#### **Monday, April 30 from 7-8:30**

Burlingame Public Library, Lane Room, 480 Primrose Road, Burlingame

[RSVP for this event](#)

➤ **Three Revolutions: Planning for an electric, autonomous, shared transportation future**

Three revolutions will fundamentally change transportation. But whether these changes will be for better or worse for social equity, traffic congestion, pollution, and energy use, will depend on the policy choices we make now.

**Thursday, April 19, 6:30-8pm**

SamTrans Auditorium, 1250 San Carlos Ave, San Carlos

[RSVP for this event](#)

➤ **Electric Vehicles for Everyone**

How is California accelerating the transition from polluting, fossil fuel cars to electric vehicles? Come learn about charging stations and infrastructure, what cars and trucks are available, saving money by going electric, and how everyone can benefit from the growth of electric vehicles.

**Thursday, May 17, 6:30-8pm**

Redwood City Library, 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City

[RSVP for this event](#)

**CLIMATE PROGRESS** .....is happening, communities are winning, countries, states, and cities are acting, despite what “you know who” is attempting to do...

Feb 11 – [Colorado’s Second-Largest Solar Farm Could Soon Be Built in Arapahoe County](#)

Feb 13 – [China Reassigns 60,000 Soldiers to Plant Trees in Bid to Fight Pollution](#)

Feb 20 – [Better Climate Science has Opened the Door to Lawsuits Against Big Oil](#)

Feb 23 – [Federal Judge Blocks Construction of Bayou Bridge Pipeline](#)

Mar 1 – [Two Coal-Heavy Utilities Will Disclose Climate Risks After Faith-Based Shareholder Pressure](#)

Mar 3 – [A Tiny Canadian Town Just Beat a Multimillion Dollar Oil Company in Court](#)

Mar 5 – [Tesla Installing World’s Largest Solar Rooftop on Nevada Gigafactory](#)

**You Can Subscribe to SVCAN!**

Want to read more good news about progress in the fight against climate change? Want more personal actions you can take to help protect the climate? You can now subscribe to get an email notification and link whenever a new issue of SVCAN is available. And, share with others who may want to subscribe. Pass this on to your friends, neighbors, and family and share with your community/church/school email lists to that they can subscribe also! [Sign up at here.](#)