

A RESOLUTION REAFFIRMING SUMMIT COUNTY'S COMMITMENT TO EFFORTS TO ADDRESS GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

WHEREAS, there is scientific consensus regarding the reality of climate change and the recognition that human activity, especially the combustion of fossil fuels that create greenhouse gases, is an important driver of climate change; and

WHEREAS, climate change has been widely recognized by government, business and academic leaders as a worldwide threat with the potential to harm our economy, safety, public health, and quality of life; and

WHEREAS, the long-term consequences of climate change are devastating to Summit County, our agriculture, tourist and recreation-based economy, and quality of life, such as increased heat, prolonged drought, destructive wildfires, increased flooding, reduced stream flow, and shorter snow seasons, among others; and

WHEREAS, on June 1, 2017, President Donald Trump announced his decision to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Accord, a nonbinding agreement signed by 195 countries that directs each nation to develop their own plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the goal of limiting global temperature increases to 1.5 °C of pre-industrial period levels; and

WHEREAS, withdrawal from this agreement means the United States will play no role in the move to a non-fossil fueled economy, in total contrast to other countries, therefore threatening our global leadership in combating climate change, and demeaning efforts underway to address greenhouse gas emissions in other nations around the world; and

WHEREAS, withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord leaves the United States at an economic disadvantage in the concert of nations; for example, India, the world's third largest polluter after China and the U.S., has made abandoning coal-fueled electricity an official policy and instead, India is embracing clean, renewable energy; and

WHEREAS, as a consequence of pulling out of this agreement and eliminating incentives to subsidize and support the clean, renewable energy sector, it is likely job creation will slow down in the technologically advanced sectors of the economy, meanwhile, deregulation of American fossil-fuel industries that already enjoy tax breaks and subsidies will expand; and

WHEREAS, the expansion of fossil-fueled industries creates a huge risk to public health, American lives and the economy by exacerbating climate change; and

WHEREAS, in the absence of leadership from the President and at the federal level, it is imperative that measures be taken locally to reduce consumption and usage of fossil fuels and to transition to alternative fuel sources as a way to mitigate and stop further and ongoing damage to our community and the Earth; and

WHEREAS, Summit County has already recognized the threats of climate change to the County and pledged to take a leadership role in promoting public awareness, education, and outreach regarding how the economy, the environment, and societal well-being interrelate to each other within the confluence of climate change, thus better preparing our citizens to both mitigate the impacts of climate change and confront the negative impacts of climate change in a more productive manner; and

WHEREAS, Summit County adopted a county-wide climate action plan in July 2015, which charts a course of collective actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the County; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the Summit County Council reaffirmed environmental stewardship as one of its three strategic goals and will consider in the near future a resolution adopting the strategic plan outlining the ways in which the County will move the needle on environmental issues this year; and

WHEREAS, we are joined in taking action on climate change by a global coalition of cities, counties, state and national governments and community and private sector leaders who recognize the importance and potential of these actions to protect and enhance the well-being of current and future generations; and

WHEREAS, more than two hundred and eleven (211) mayors representing more than 54 million Americans have recently re-affirmed their communities' commitments to climate action; and

WHEREAS, the transition away from fossil fuels can be accelerated through a market-driven mechanism, such as a carbon fee and dividend that would encourage and empower residents to reduce and replace their consumption of fossil fuels with renewable and other alternative energy sources through conservation, being more efficient, and choosing less carbon-intensive energy sources; and

WHEREAS, Summit County encourages the United States Congress to pass legislation that levies an annually increasing revenue-neutral fee on the carbon in fossil fuels at the point of production and importation sufficient to encourage individuals and corporations to produce and use less fossil fuels and to make the transition less onerous on the economy and to consumers by returning to American households all the revenues generated from this fee; and

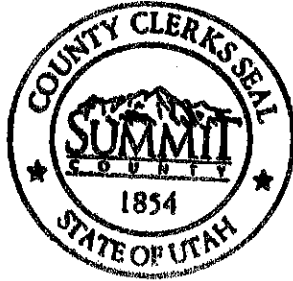
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Council of Summit County, Utah, that:

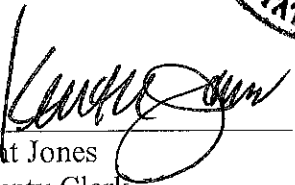
1. Climate change will increase stress on the County's rich diversity of plant and animal species and adversely affect human health through prolonged drought, increased wildfires, widespread tree death and millions of dollars in economic losses.
2. Climate change will negatively impact agriculture, tourism, and recreation revenues through increased heat, lower air quality, reduced snow pack resulting in lower stream flow and groundwater recharge, and shorter snow seasons.

3. Summit County supports the central aim of the Paris Climate Accord, which is to “strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 °C.... and to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change.”
4. Beyond the numerous social and environmental benefits acquired through participating in the Paris Climate Accord, additional opportunities to realize the enormous economic benefits in the emerging new world economy revolving around clean energy technologies, sustainable food production and energy and water conservation are vital to our region.
5. The Summit County Council directs the County Manager and staff to continue to implement the strategies outlined in the County’s Climate Action Plan and to take other measures to support the Council’s environmental stewardship strategic goal to reduce the County’s contributions to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change.

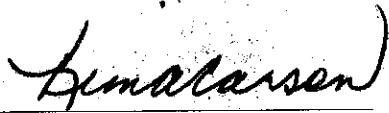
APPROVED AND ADOPTED this 21st day of June, 2017.

ATTEST:




Kent Jones
County Clerk

SUMMIT COUNTY COUNCIL
SUMMIT COUNTY, UTAH


Kim Carson
Council Vice-Chair