

Implementation of Executive Order 09-05 Washington's Leadership on Climate Change Transportation

Background and Principles

Emissions from the transportation sector account for nearly 50% of the greenhouse gas emissions in Washington State. Reducing transportation sector emissions in Washington State has been and will continue to be in the spotlight. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) sees this as an opportunity to provide people with better transportation options rather than limit individual behavior.

WSDOT believes that as the state moves forward the strategies should be

- Based in science
- Balanced (providing a menu of options)
- Strategic (scalable and appropriate for different environments such as rural vs. urban)

Washington State has set both greenhouse gas and vehicle miles traveled reduction benchmarks. Washington State needs a full suite of strategies to reduce transportation greenhouse gas emissions. The primary ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector include

- Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT)
- Improving vehicle technology
- Lowering the carbon content of fuels
- Improving the efficiency of the transportation system

Research shows that it will take all of these strategies to adequately reduce emissions.

The Governor's Executive Order provides a balanced approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by focusing on improving vehicle technologies and fuels as well as directing the state to provide people with better transportation options so that the state can reduce its vehicle miles traveled. In addition WSDOT, through its *Moving Washington* initiative is focusing on improving transportation system efficiencies to reduce idling from congestion and the resulting emissions.

Action area: Reducing Greenhouse Gases from Transportation

Vehicle Miles Traveled: By Dec. 2010, develop estimates of vehicle miles traveled (VMT), evaluate and develop recommendations on existing VMT benchmarks to address low or no emission vehicles, and develop other strategies for reducing transportation emissions. *The Department of Transportation, in consultation with the Departments of Ecology and Commerce, will work with local governments and business and environmental stakeholders to evaluate VMT benchmarks and other strategies for reducing GHG emissions from the transportation sector.*

Next Steps: *WSDOT is organizing an initial meeting with the departments of Ecology and Commerce and a small stakeholder group comprised of environmental, business, and local government representatives. At this meeting the group will help develop the process moving forward. There will be opportunities for interested parties and the public to comment on the development of this work most likely through open house presentations and/or through WSDOT's Climate Change website. WSDOT will also continue to*

August 6, 2009

develop best practices and tools to measure VMT and analyze the economic costs and benefits of implementing emission reduction strategies as directed by RCW 47.01.440.

Regional Transportation Plans: Work with larger regional transportation planning organizations (RTPOs) to develop regional transportation plans and report on progress by Dec. 2011. *The Department of Transportation will work with the Puget Sound Regional Council, Spokane Regional Transportation Council, Southwest WA Regional Transportation Council, and Thurston Regional Planning Council to cooperatively develop and adopt regional transportation plans that provide people with transportation alternatives, reduce GHG emissions and meet VMT benchmarks.*

Next Steps: *This work is being discussed in consultation with the RTPO/MPO/WSDOT coordinating committee. WSDOT has been fully engaged with the Puget Sound Regional Council's plan update and in preliminary discussions with the Thurston Regional Planning Council. WSDOT is working to advance ongoing efforts around VMT measurement (per direction in RCW 47.01.440) prior to engaging with the Spokane Regional Transportation Council and the Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council. WSDOT anticipates engaging with the Spokane and the Southwest planning organizations within the next two months.*

Fuel Standards: Provide recommendations for low-carbon fuel standards or alternatives to reduce carbon in transportation fuels by July 2010. *Ecology, in consultation with the Departments of Commerce and Transportation as well as interested stakeholders, will assess various lower carbon fuel programs and options, assess how those options would align with Washington's transportation fuel supply conditions, and recommend a low carbon fuel approach that best fits our state.*

Next Steps: *WSDOT is working in collaboration with Ecology and Commerce to identify major components and issues associated with a Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS). A series of workshops and consultations will be held to gather information from interested stakeholders. After circulating a draft for comment, the final report will recommend approaches to the major LCFS issues and a pathway for implementing an LCFS in Washington, including provisions for completing analysis of any unresolved issues.*

West Coast Green Highway: Develop and seek federal funding for the electrification of the West Coast interstate highway, to purchase electric vehicles, and to install infrastructure to support electric vehicles and other efficient low-carbon vehicles. *The Governor's Office will work with state agencies, representatives from the states of California and Oregon, and private sector stakeholders to fund a West Coast Green Highway, to support the purchase of electric vehicles, and to build the infrastructure needed to support efficient low- and no- carbon fuels and vehicles.*

Next Steps: *Lead by the Governor's Office, an interagency team comprised of WSDOT, Commerce, Ecology, Revenue and General Administration is developing a proposed multi-state work plan to advance electric vehicle and alternative fueling infrastructure on the west coast. The work plan focuses on three primary areas: (1) Fuels: developing the supply of sustainably-produced, low- and no-carbon transportation fuels, including electricity; (2) Infrastructure: spurring supply-chain, refueling and recharging infrastructure development to support the use of the new-technology vehicles; and (3) Vehicles: forming partnerships with private firms (including OEMs) to bring low- and zero- emission vehicles to the west coast market, and supporting their purchase and use by drivers.*