

# Colorado Renewable Energy Society Strategic Plan, Mission, and Vision

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The vision of the Colorado Renewable Energy Society (CRES) is that Colorado's energy will derive primarily from sustainable, renewable energy resources.

The CRES mission is to advance policies that lead to a sustainable energy future for Colorado and heighten awareness of the benefits of renewable energy and energy efficiency.

## ***CRES Objectives***

The Colorado Renewable Energy Society supports policies that lead to the further development and adoption of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies to where they can supply 20% of Colorado's energy needs by 2015, 50% by 2030, and 100% by 2050.

In support of the policy part of its mission, CRES will advocate for Colorado to:

- Establish net metering for small, distributed renewable energy systems statewide.
- Create a systems benefit charge to create a way to finance renewable energy and energy efficiency installations and technology development.
- Enact a tax credit for Colorado homeowners and businesses who install solar power and water heating systems.

In support of the awareness part of its mission, CRES will:

- Develop an information clearinghouse and speakers bureau to communicate with Coloradans about the benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy and the need to transform to an efficient renewable economy.
- Form alliances with a growing number of like-minded organizations.
- Expand CRES membership.

## ***Rationale***

Why does CRES believe adoption of a renewable energy and energy efficiency path benefits the state's citizens and businesses? For starters, we should be taking better economic advantage of Colorado's extensive solar and wind resources and intellectual assets. Renewable energy and energy efficiency:

- Protect consumers from price volatility and runaway fossil fuel prices in the short term.
- Generate more local jobs and spending inside Colorado than fossil technologies.
- Preserve our natural environment, air quality, and limited water supplies.
- Provide greater energy security over the long term.

Most important of all is the health of the planet itself is in jeopardy from global climate change due to emissions of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels. A majority now agree that energy efficiency and renewable energy are a big part of the solution. CRES believes we should start a transition toward a renewable energy economy now in order to minimize environmental and economic disruptions that could result from waiting too long.

### ***How Do We Get There From Here?***

Colorado voters passed a milestone in 2004 when they approved Amendment 37 establishing a renewable energy standard for the state's investor owned utilities. Nevertheless, the leadership for a renewable future is just beginning to coalesce in Colorado, and there are opposing trends. For example, there is proposal from the coal industry to construct three large coal-fired generating stations that will lock Coloradans and their children into decades of air pollution, water depletion, carbon dioxide emissions, and potentially stranded investments.

Instead, CRES will pressure electric utilities to increase their commitments to conservation, seek to establish natural gas conservation programs, and place renewable energy and energy efficiency in the forefront of the state's energy policy. Specifically, Colorado should

- Formulate rate structures through the Colorado Public Utilities Commission that ensure that energy efficiency and renewable energy are profitable for utilities.
- Emulate the experience of neighboring states that have used renewable energy construction projects as economic development tools.
- Learn from and adopt energy efficiency programs that have been successful in other western states.
- Encourage energy independence through distributed generation at homes and businesses.
- Conceive financing mechanisms to build new transmission capacity for our region's sizeable wind energy resources.