



# Utah Climate Action Network

**Public Engagement Plan**

April 2017



## Overview

This brief report was created to reflect current and future public engagement activities of the Utah Climate Action Network among its leaders and organizational membership state-wide.

## About the Utah Climate Action Network

The Utah Climate Action Network is a partnership between government, research institutions, non-profits and foundations, faith-based organizations, the private sector and individuals working to respond to climate change in Utah. The Network Mission is to:

*“Foster diverse conversation, leadership, and coordinated action to ensure a collaborative response to climate change and its impacts on the people, economies, and prosperity of Utah.”*

The Network delivers on its mission by supporting the following activities:

- Cross-sector relationships and connections
- Shared understanding of local climate change issues and solutions
- Collaborative regional climate action and long-term resilience efforts

More details on the Network, including contact information, is available at:

<http://www.utahclimateactionnetwork.com/>

## Current Activities

**Climate Subgroups** - In order to address various climate related topics in a more tailored way we have launched individual working groups / subgroups to create a platform for sharing of best practices and initiate local project collaboration. Each working group will meet quarterly by phone, web-conference or in-person. Each working group will have a leader or team of leaders to set the agenda for each meeting and drive actionable outcomes. Working groups will additionally report out on details of their plans and projects at the quarterly all-network meetings. Groups will continue their topical engagement as long as value is still being derived by participants and will be adaptive to local opportunities.

The climate subgroups currently include the following topical areas: Water, Electric Vehicles, Greenhouse Gas Accounting and Planning, and Public Health. A recent network activity – Salt Lake County’s Climate and Health Symposium<sup>1</sup> – is one example of related local media coverage.<sup>2</sup>

As capacity grows in these subgroup areas, we anticipate greater coverage and engagement from both members and the general public. The network may also expand the number of topical working groups, or evolve current groups, to address emerging interests of its members.

**Social Media and Public Engagement** – The network has continued to be a source of reliable local climate information through a sustained social media campaign. This is primarily through twitter (@utclimateaction) and Facebook, with roughly 500 total followers at this point.

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<sup>1</sup> Reference links: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/climate-and-health-symposium-tickets-30300566811>;  
<https://slcgreenblog.com/2016/03/17/climate-variability-health-symposium-and-open-house-april-6-7-2016/>;  
<http://www.slco.org/calendardiversity/eventDetail.cfm?EventID=36191&Month=4&Year=2016&SiteID=21>

<sup>2</sup> <http://kuer.org/post/salt-lake-county-develops-plan-climate-change#stream/0>

**Path to Positive Utah** – In addition to core activities of the network, the Utah Climate Action Network has partnered with ecoAmerica to initiate a “climate champions” campaign called Path to Positive Utah (P2PUT). ecoAmerica is a national non-profit building a critical mass of institutional leadership, public support, and political will for definitive climate solutions in the United States by developing and equipping networks of trusted leaders and institutions across prominent societal sectors, and by supporting climate leadership with robust programs that inspire and empower stakeholder engagement and collaboration.<sup>3</sup>

Through the Path to Positive Communities program<sup>4</sup> ecoAmerica and the network are amplifying support for local climate mitigation and resilience efforts through partnerships and sustained local climate leadership. The initiative will bring together diverse local leaders across key community sectors and provide sector-specific engagement strategies and content designed to broaden public awareness and support for local policies and programs.

The engagement strategy, specifically tailored to Utah, will center on engaging moderate-to-conservative leaders in business, government, faith and other critical organizations. The leaders will agree to a climate commitment highlighting the importance of addressing climate issues to the economy and overall well-being of Utah residents. The list of leaders will be presented publicly on a website<sup>5</sup> that allows for testimonial quotes and commitments from diverse leaders in order to inspire conversations on climate change led by trusted tribal leaders. The current plan is to delay for project deployment until a critical number of signatories have joined. Ultimately, this public engagement campaign can be extremely powerful in advancing conversations on climate solutions publicly but bringing relevance of the issue to the general public.



## Future Plans

**Climate Subgroups** – As membership increases we envision needs regarding the broad array of technical issues around climate change will expand beyond our initial subgroup topics. These may be interdisciplinary or non-traditional technical topics such as water/energy/food nexus and behavior change. We intend to explore these concerns as needed and use these topics as a continuing mode for public engagement particularly around topics that are more cogent to local residents. A topic of interest is reaching out to low-income and marginalized communities and engaging in a dialog about the needs of communities that are at highest risk of climate impacts, whether environmental, economic, or social in nature. Initial engagement with these communities may lead to Network involvement with key partners in energy efficiency and educational programs. In addition to new subgroups for network members, we plan to hold public events focusing on specific climate topics and local opportunities to take action.

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<sup>3</sup> For more information please see: <https://ecoamerica.org/about/>

<sup>4</sup> For more information please see: <https://ecoamerica.org/communities/>; <http://pathtopositive.org/>.

<sup>5</sup>[http://pathtopositiveutah.org/?password-protected=login&redirect\\_to=http%3A%2F%2Fpathtopositiveutah.org%2F](http://pathtopositiveutah.org/?password-protected=login&redirect_to=http%3A%2F%2Fpathtopositiveutah.org%2F)

**Climate Week** – Utah Climate Week 2017 will be a coordinated series of climate related events, activities, and educational programming focused on direct public engagement around climate issues. Coordination in terms of branding, outreach to local press, websites and social media will all be coordinated by the network. Utah Climate Week 2017 tentatively scheduled for launch in October 2017.

**Path to Positive Utah** – We envision the Path to positive campaign as a critical driver of public engagement and skills building among network members. After engaging leaders to sign up we will provide climate communications trainings and technical assistance to those who communicate climate issues to their constituents. We have a number of trainings planned for 2017 and will continue into 2018. We also aim to leverage the campaign to engage higher profile public figures through exclusive meetings and public events.