

North Dakota Priority Climate Action Plan created

Led by the Department of Environmental Quality, North Dakotans from across the state contributed to a plan designed to ensure a sustainable, high-quality environment for current and future generations.

BISMARCK, N.D. – The Department of Environmental Quality collaborated with North Dakota residents, community leaders, and key economic sectors to produce the first state plan aimed at environmental sustainability and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The initial stage of a multi-year planning effort, the [North Dakota Priority Climate Action Plan](#) features five implementation-ready strategies from the state’s agriculture, energy, and natural lands sectors to fuel local economies, strengthen energy independence and reduce pollution throughout North Dakota. These strategies include:

1. **Energy Conservation Grant Program** – Expand the program to provide greater funding to support public and tribal building energy efficiency improvements across the state.
2. **Alliance to Advance Climate-Smart Agriculture Program** – Extend the program and expand its reach to support farmers and ranchers in up to eight additional Soil Conservation Districts (SCDs) with financial incentives for climate-smart agriculture practices on working lands.
3. **Soil Health Cover Crop Program** – Expand the program eligibility and incentives to support producers in 54 SCDs by implementing cover crops to promote soil health and increasing access to no-till drill equipment.
4. **City of Fargo LED Streetlight Upgrades** – Upgrade all remaining streetlight replacements throughout the City of Fargo to more energy-efficient and longer-lasting LEDs that use approximately 50% less energy and benefit surrounding communities.
5. **N.D. Statewide Tree Planting Initiative** – Expand the program to support additional producers in 54 SCDs with tree and shrub plantings to improve soil health and energy efficiency upgrades for tree seedling storage coolers.

These five strategies form the basis for North Dakota to compete for implementation grant funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Spring 2024.

The state plan reflects input received through 24 Sustainability Input Forums held in communities across the state, discussions with North Dakota subject matter experts, intergovernmental coordination meetings, and a second round of input forums. Additional

strategies identified during this planning process remain under consideration for the state's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan, a long-term planning and stakeholder engagement process that will begin later this year.

"This state plan is just the beginning," said Dave Glatt, Environmental Quality Director. "We appreciate every North Dakota resident who took the time to participate in a public meeting, complete a survey, or email us their feedback. This first step required easy-to-implement projects. We focus next on larger range planning efforts to further identify opportunities to help meet the state's goal of carbon neutrality by 2030."

These efforts are supported through a planning grant from EPA's Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program. North Dakota's Priority Climate Action Plan and results from the Sustainability Input Forums are available at www.deq.nd.gov/sustainability.

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