

## Fact Sheet - March 2008

The Oregon Department of Transportation recognizes that the transportation sector in Oregon generates significant greenhouse gases. In fact, transportation sources are responsible for over a third of emissions in the state – roughly the same share as the electric power sector. The department understands that in order to meet the greenhouse gas reduction goals laid out by Governor Kulongoski and the legislature, the state will need to make major changes in the transportation sector.

### The first step: address ODOT's impacts

- ODOT is aware of greenhouse gas emissions from its operations and has begun taking steps to reduce them. The agency is a major fleet fuel and building energy user within state government, but multiple efforts are ongoing to reduce these impacts. Overall, ODOT is on track to meet the Governor's goals for biofuel use and energy conservation.

### ODOT will help plan for reductions in the system

- ODOT recognizes that agency decisions regarding the planning, development, and operation of the transportation system have an impact on how the system is used. A system that is balanced, full of transportation options, optimized across jurisdictions, served by efficient and alternative-fueled vehicles, and integrated with compact, mixed use urban development will facilitate reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- There are, of course, barriers to creating such a system, and not all of the necessary solutions are within ODOT's control. For example, emissions come from people using the system, not from ODOT itself. ODOT needs support from the federal government and other state and local agencies on many fronts, such as vehicle fuel efficiency standards, federal funding for alternative programs, coordination on land use planning at both the state and local level, just to name a few.

- ODOT will be taking action to plan for the required emissions reductions and joining with other state agencies and local partners to take steps towards a lower-carbon transportation future. ODOT staff are now assembling a "portfolio" of potential emissions reduction strategies. These options will be assessed for their technical and financial feasibility and will provide a roadmap for moving forward.

### ODOT is taking significant steps to reduce emissions

- Many of ODOT's efforts to reduce emissions have significant co-benefits, such as saving money, improving health and safety, or stimulating developing industries in the state. These co-benefits are a key part of ODOT's broader sustainability efforts – what some call looking at the "triple bottom line" of environmental, social, and economic benefits. Here are examples of steps ODOT has already taken:
  - The 2006 Oregon Transportation Plan lays a policy foundation for addressing climate change – one goal in the plan (one of seven) focuses on sustainability.
  - ODOT has a full-time Sustainability Manager, located in the Director's Office.
  - ODOT is truly a "multi-modal" transportation agency – although its primary work continues to be in managing the highway system, the work of its public transit division, rail division, bike and pedestrian program, and the department's work with land use agencies continues to grow.
  - ODOT works with several relevant non-profit groups, including the Oregon Natural Step Network, the Columbia Willamette Clean Cities Coalition, and the Oregon Environmental Council.

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**For more information about  
ODOT's sustainability efforts,  
visit [www.oregon.gov/ODOT/SUS](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/SUS)**



*Here are some examples of work ODOT is doing to address climate change:*

1. ODOT's **Fleet and Facilities Sections** are leaders in state government. In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, 13% of the diesel fuels ODOT purchased were B20 biodiesel. By October 2007, the amount had increased to 22%, and ODOT is on track to meet the Governor's goal of 25% by July 2010. Maintenance crews are switching signals and message board lights to light-emitting diodes (LEDs) to save energy, and the Fleet Section is testing idle reduction technology on some heavy equipment to limit truck idling. All new facilities are built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building Silver standards at a minimum. ODOT is targeting the renovation of its Transportation Building for LEED Gold based on a cost-benefit study that showed a high performance environmentally friendly design would save the agency about \$90 million over the next 20 years.

2. In 2006, ODOT provided a **\$3 million loan to the non-profit organization Cascade Sierra Solutions (CSS)** to fund heavy-duty truck efficiency and idle reduction programs. The loan helped purchase fuel-saving equipment such as auxiliary power units or "APUs", which CSS then leases to small truck operators. The use of this equipment results in significant reductions of fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. CSS operates in Washington, Oregon and California with a primary focus on the Interstate 5 corridor. This loan was unprecedented and ODOT worked closely with the Federal Highway Administration to make the money available.



3. ODOT staff are working on a first-in-the-nation **Solar Highway initiative** to test and demonstrate the viability of locating solar panels along ODOT highways. The department is currently working through the financing and private partnership details. In addition, the department will have a demonstration project in place this year to prove the feasibility of the technology and the roadside siting.

4. Over the last several years, ODOT has worked with local jurisdictions on a number of **innovative transportation demand management projects**. "TravelSmart" is a program that uses individualized marketing to encourage environmentally friendly ways to travel. Pilot projects were funded in Salem/Keizer, Eugene, and Bend. In addition, ODOT worked with Metro, TriMet, the City of Vancouver and other public and private partners to launch the "Drive Less/Save More" campaign in February 2006. This campaign seeks to reduce single-person car trips by promoting travel options like public transit, carpooling, biking and walking, and it encourages drivers to combine multiple errands into single trips.

5. ODOT is a key partner with other public agencies in **financing transit expansions in the Portland Metro area**. ODOT planned for right-of-way to support the expansion of TriMet light rail when the I-205 corridor was constructed. In addition, ODOT Financial Services is assisting with the sale of \$250 million of lottery-backed bonds that will support the capital construction of expansion. ODOT Public Transit is administering the distribution of \$20 million in lottery-backed bonds for the purchase of streetcars to enable streetcar system expansion in the City of Portland.

6. The Oregon legislature has tasked ODOT with implementing the **ConnectOregon** program, a statewide effort aimed at enhancing Oregon's transportation system by investing in projects other than highways. These initiatives in air, rail, marine and transit will:

- reduce congestion by improving freight travel;
- provide Oregonians more options and connections; and
- keep traffic moving more reliably throughout the state.

*ConnectOregon* has 40 projects underway and 69 projects under consideration for the next round of funding.



**I**n summary, it's important to know that ODOT is aware of the magnitude of this challenge — and ODOT is stepping up to address it. The department is already reducing emissions throughout the agency in its fleet and facilities. When it comes to addressing emissions from the broader transportation system, ODOT knows it can't take care of the whole problem by itself — but the agency also knows how to work with partners to accomplish meaningful goals. ODOT will need the help of the federal government and all of its state and local partners. The agency is pleased to be part of the new Global Warming Commission, so staff can work with others to find creative solutions.