

SOLUTIONS AGENDA

Compound problems require compound solutions



WILDLIFE & ECOSYSTEM HEALTH



WATER SUPPLY



WATER QUALITY



CLIMATE MITIGATION (CARBON STORAGE)



THRIVING COMMUNITIES



EQUITABLE LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

The overlapping challenges presented climate change can be best met by natural climate solutions and investments that offer multiple benefits. We've identified 6 core categories of climate resilience benefits above. RE Sources proposes the following agenda to guide investment and planning at the local, county and state levels:

1. CONSERVE LAND



Protecting natural areas, ag land, forestland, shorelines and floodplains helps retain the resilience of natural systems, preserve habitat and ensure future opportunities for food production, forestry, flood mitigation, recreation and open space.

2. CONSERVE WATER



Residential and agricultural water conservation efforts will be critical as droughts increase. Clarifying legal water rights and access ahead of increased droughts and water scarcity can avoid messy water conflicts while also upholding the treaty rights of Lummi Nation and the Nooksack Indian Tribe.

3. RESTORE FLOODPLAINS & RIVERS



River restoration efforts, including channel migration and in-stream habitat projects, can help rivers accommodate heavy river flow in flood events. Adding buffers, areas of natural vegetation between waterways and any form of land use, can help shade streams and keep temperatures down, prevent erosion and improve water quality.

4. PROTECT & RESTORE WETLANDS



Estuaries, shorelines, wetlands and other areas for natural water storage can mitigate the harmful effects of droughts, floods and storm surges, while also protecting vital habitat for juvenile salmon and countless other wildlife species. Estuaries and wetlands are also important natural sources of carbon storage, aka blue carbon.

5. ADAPT FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



Increasing logging rotations and planting more diverse and drought-resistant species can help cultivate forests that burn less intensely, are more disease resistant and recover more quickly in the wake of wildfires. Forests also sequester carbon, provide shade and habitat, and help retain and filter water.

6. INCREASE PROTECTIONS FOR FRONTLINE WORKERS



Frontline workers, especially farmworkers and others who work outdoors, are at risk from high temperatures and hazardous air quality from wildfire smoke. Protections for days extreme heat or smoke, fair pay, and reductions in exposure to pesticides and herbicides can support resilience by restoring land and water while using labor to take care of the planet and local communities.

7. UPDATE LAND USE PLANNING EFFORTS



Requiring shoreline and other county and state planning efforts to account for climate impacts will help ensure our systems, infrastructure and communities are future-proofed. New building standards must reflect a growing need for utilizing clean energy and building electrification to mitigate climate change, while also adapting for increased cooling needs in response to increased temperatures.

8. UPGRADE WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITIES



These facilities need to function at, and bounce back from, the projected impacts of a 2°C temperature rise. This will safeguard our communities from infrastructure failures and unsanitary conditions and protect our waterways, bays and the Salish Sea from devastating overflows of pollution.

9. REDUCE BACTERIA AND NUTRIENTS



Reducing bacteria (such as fecal coliform) and nutrients (particularly phosphorus and nitrogen) from human and animal poop in fresh and saltwater areas is critical to improving water quality, particularly as warmer waters foster more harmful algal blooms. Benefits to improved water quality include healthier aquatic ecosystems, more swimmable beaches, lakes and rivers, and better health outcomes for seafood-dependent communities.