

Pacific Council Task Force to Advise State on Climate Adaptation

SACRAMENTO, Calif.--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))-- Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger of California announced today (Dec *th, 2009) that the Pacific Council's Task Force on California's Adaptation to Climate Change, will act as the Climate Adaptation Advisory Panel to the State of California. The decision for the independent, non-partisan group of private citizens, to act as an advisory panel to the state fulfills the first recommendation of the 2009 California Climate Adaptation Strategy being released this week from the California Natural Resources Agency in Sacramento.

The Task Force was developed independently, but in coordination with state climate adaptation leaders. At a preliminary meeting with the Task Force in September 2009, both Mike Chrisman, the Secretary of Natural Resources and Anthony Brunello, the Deputy Secretary of Climate Change and Energy joined to discuss the needs and challenges in the state in managing the impact of climate change. As the discussions progressed over the following day, the alignment of the Task Force's purpose with the State's needs, became clear.

"From the outset, the purpose of our Task Force was to identify the most significant threats facing California as a result of climate change and to make recommendations intended to reduce our vulnerability to those threats," explains William Reilly, the task force co-chair. "The emerging State strategy on climate adaptation calls for the appointment of an advisory panel to do just that."

The Pacific Council Task Force, is focused on three key hazards which are most likely to have increasing impact on the health and safety of California as the climate warms. These hazards are: 1. Increased wild fires and extended fire seasons, 2. Rising sea levels along 1100 miles of coastline, and 3. Reduced availability of water with reduced snow pack in the Sierras and extended periods of drought. The task force will develop recommendations for consideration by the Natural Resources Agency, the legislature and others in the State, intended to reduce these risks by enabling California to proactively manage these challenges.

Key to the success of the task force as an advisory panel is its independence. "Climate change will be with us for a long time beyond political terms and economic cycles," stated Anthony Brunello, who coordinated the development of the Climate Adaptation Strategy. "The mix of the Pacific Council Task Force's independence from state efforts, high caliber members, and willingness to build off the state climate adaptation strategy make for a perfect partnership as the Climate Change Advisory panel recommended in the strategy."

As a result of the appointment, the task force leadership, including William Reilly, former administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and president of the World Wildlife Fund; Patrick Lavin, business manager/financial secretary of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 47 and the 7th District member of the IBEW International Executive Council; and Mason Willrich, chair of the board of governors of the California Independent System Operator, as well as the leadership of the Pacific Council, John Bryson, the Co-Chairman of the Board of Directors and Dawn Nakagawa the Executive Vice President, are developing ways to expand the task force process to include public comment and input into the final recommendations, which should be complete by late Spring 2010.

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