



Mission & Vision

The Clean Energy Transition Institute is an independent, nonpartisan nonprofit that accelerates the transition to a clean energy economy in the Northwest by advancing cost-effective deep decarbonization strategies. Our goal is to decarbonize the region's economy at the speed and scale that climate science requires.

Geographical Focus

We are headquartered in Seattle, Washington and focus primarily on the four Northwest states—Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.

Audience

We support Northwest elected officials; utilities and utility commissions; advocates; private investors; business leaders; and philanthropic and government funders involved in climate and clean energy solutions and policy.

Role

Our role is to:

- Provide unbiased research and analysis to guide climate and energy policy
- Offer a clean energy solutions and technologies information clearinghouse for the Northwest
- Convene key decision-makers to facilitate adoption of regional clean energy strategies
- Provide a neutral platform to help diverse stakeholders debate and resolve the opportunities, risks, and trade-offs associated with alternative deep decarbonization strategies

Value-Add

At a time of hyper-partisanship and divisive national political discourse around climate change, the Northwest has significant alignment on the need to transition to a low-carbon economy. But even in our region, views differ on the feasibility of different pathways. This presents a challenge to efforts that advance solutions addressing decarbonization at scale.

A divide exists between policy advocates and industry incumbents, such as utilities, with the advocates thinking that the incumbents do not take seriously the imperative of a clean energy transition and the incumbents believing that the advocates do not understand the economic and regulatory realities that make a clean energy transition difficult.

Our belief, as well as our experience so far, is that neutral data, modeling, and analytics informed by economic, technical, and regulatory realities, as well as the climate imperative, help bridge this divide and resolve disagreements. By providing roadmaps and sequencing of actions that lead to achieving shared goals, we offer decision makers the foundation for understanding workable solutions.

Accomplishments to Date

Work to date validates our hypothesis that offering carefully analyzed, unbiased, and factual solutions brings disparate sides together to enable a productive dialogue about how best to overcome decarbonization hurdles.

For example, the Institute's deep decarbonization study, [*Meeting the Challenge of Our Time: Pathways to a Clean Energy Future in the Northwest*](#), found that while it is extremely challenging to remove all natural gas from the electric grid by 2050, as advocates demand, it is possible to remove most of it and use what remains sparingly for reliability, as utilities assert. This finding focuses the discussion on how to get on the path to removing all but 3.7% of natural gas from the electricity grid in the Northwest.

Similarly, other key findings about electrifying vehicles; decarbonizing buildings; increasing grid transmission between California and the Northwest; enabling emerging technologies; and assessing sustainable biomass in the region offer multiple avenues for key stakeholders to engage on the opportunities and challenges of decarbonizing the Northwest.

National and Regional Briefings: Our deep decarbonization study is acclaimed for its economy-wide approach, rigorous analysis, and clarity about the pathways the Northwest must pursue from now until 2050. We have presented it nationally and regionally to a diverse group, including Microsoft Corporation; Natural Resources Defense Council; Center for Biological Diversity; Environmental Protection Agency; Washington State Governor's office and executive agencies; Northwest Congressional delegation staffs; Bipartisan Policy Coalition; and Northwest Power Planning Council.

We have provided keynote addresses or participated on panels at several leading conferences, including the Washington and Oregon Energy Leadership Summits; GridFWD; NW Energy Coalition's Clean and Affordable Energy Conference; and the Yale Environmental Sustainability Summit.

We have been invited to Helena, MT to brief Montana Governor Steven Bullock's Climate Solutions Task Force on December 10, 2019 and will present the Northwest deep decarbonization study at the Low Carbon Prosperity Institute's December 12, 2019 annual gathering of policymakers to frame a discussion about which clean energy solutions to prioritize in the next decade in Washington state.

On January 27, 2020, we will brief Washington State House and Senate lawmakers at an event organized by Representative Beth Doglio to guide 2020 legislative clean energy policymaking in Olympia.

Convening Stakeholders: We convened a series of meetings in the fall with key policymakers to explore decarbonization strategies:

- A three-hour work session with the Public Generating Pool (a consortium of 11 consumer-owned electric utilities, 10 in Washington and one in Oregon) at which we delved deeply into the decarbonization study's technical and economic findings.
- A briefing of the study's Washington-state only results for Governor Jay Inslee's climate and clean energy policy and agency staff from Commerce, Office of Financial Management, Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council, and the Utilities and Transportation Commission.
- A presentation to the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration's annual elected officials' summit at which the King County Executive and mayors and city councilmembers set their 2020 climate and clean energy policy agenda.
- A standing-room-only briefing of key stakeholders from Washington state's research universities, utilities, clean tech business and investor communities, and advocacy groups on the Northwest deep decarbonization pathways study.

Current Focus and Next Steps

The institute is currently pursuing three priority initiatives:

1. **Translating the study's findings into a Policy Playbook** setting forth policy, investment, and innovation frameworks to advance action on the region's decarbonization pathways.
2. **Co-developing with community partners a building decarbonization pilot project** to examine how to incorporate equity considerations into strategies for decarbonizing buildings.
3. **Mapping clean energy economic development projects** to demonstrate the economic impact of clean energy innovation throughout the Northwest.

For the **Policy Playbook**, we will address how to eliminate natural gas in buildings, transport, and the grid; accelerate transportation electrification; and improve electricity transmission between the Northwest and California, a necessary element for the massive electrification that deep decarbonization requires.

At the request of stakeholders, we will analyze **alternative deep decarbonization pathways and conduct sensitivity analyses with different assumptions** about hydroelectricity (in particular, potential climate impacts on hydro generation); nuclear availability; early coal plant retirement; natural gas pricing; and a constrained renewables case.

We will also focus on **equity considerations in the transition to a clean energy economy**. The Northwest deep decarbonization pathways study was not designed to explore equity, other than to solve for least-cost solutions, hence there is considerable work to be done to determine how deep decarbonization can be implemented equitably.

Impact and Opportunity for Support

In just one year, the Institute has proven to be an important catalyst for framing informed discussions about deep decarbonization in the Northwest. We are respected for providing unbiased research, daylighting the nuances of the clean energy transition, and surfacing the trade-offs and opportunities of a cross-sectoral approach to deep decarbonization in the Northwest. We have briefed over 500 people in various formal and informal settings and attracted the attention of key decision makers at the national and regional level in government, business, advocacy, utilities, regulators, and universities.

The imperative to decarbonize the world rapidly is without a doubt. With the United States backpeddling on climate action, it is critically important that regions step up. Here in the Northwest, where we have both alignment around acting on climate and a head start with a relatively clean electricity grid, we have an enormous opportunity and obligation to accelerate deep decarbonization and demonstrate that a rapid transformation to a clean energy economy is achievable in the coming decades.

The Clean Energy Transition Institute is filling a critical and underserved role articulating the technical and economic pathways to a clean energy transition in the Northwest and educating key stakeholders with fact-based analysis and framed choices for how to bring that transformation about.

Thank you for considering support for the Clean Energy Transition Institute.

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