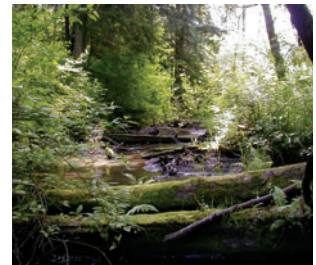
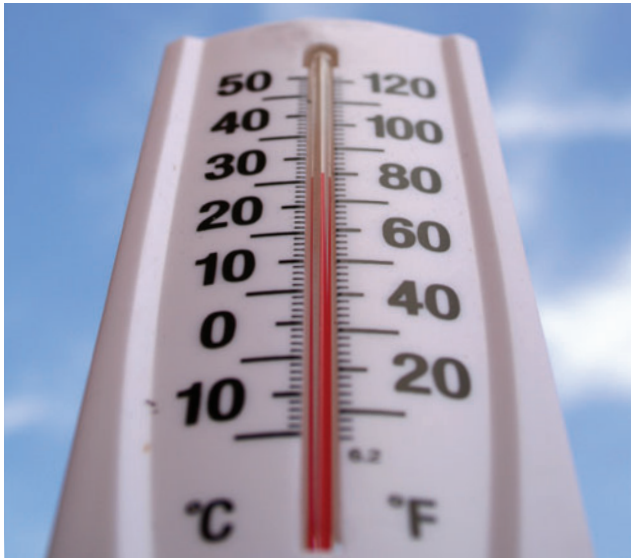


PREPARING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

A Guidebook for Local, Regional, and State Governments



Written by

Center for Science in the Earth System (The Climate Impacts Group)
Joint Institute for the Study of the Atmosphere and Ocean
University of Washington

King County, Washington

With an introduction by King County Executive Ron Sims



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**Center for Science in the Earth System (The Climate Impacts Group)
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University of Washington
and
King County, Washington**

In association with

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability

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about the authors and the climate resilient communities program™

The Climate Impacts Group at the University of Washington

The Climate Impacts Group (CIG) is an interdisciplinary research group studying the impacts of natural climate variability and global climate change (“global warming”) on the U.S. Pacific Northwest. Through research and interaction with regional stakeholders, the CIG works to increase the resilience of the Pacific Northwest to fluctuations in climate. The CIG is unique in its focus on the intersection of climate science and public policy. The group performs fundamental research on climate impacts and works with Pacific Northwest planners and policy makers to apply this information to regional decision making processes.

The CIG is part of the Center for Science in the Earth System at the University of Washington’s Joint Institute for the Study of the Atmosphere and Ocean, and is one of eight Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessment (RISA) teams studying regional impacts of climate variability and climate change in the United States. The RISA program is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Climate Program Office. CIG also receives additional financial and technical support from the University of Washington.

King County, Washington

Located on Puget Sound in Washington State and covering an area of 2,134 square miles, King County is nearly twice as large as the average county in the United States. With almost 1.8 million people, it also ranks as the 14th most populous county in the nation.

King County’s terrain ranges from farmland and the Cascade Mountains on the east side to Puget Sound and urban coastline on the west side. King County’s rural and metropolitan areas are vulnerable to many projected climate change impacts, including declining mountain snowpack (which is directly linked to water supplies), increased risk of drought, sea level rise, and increased flooding in coastal and freshwater river systems.

King County provides regional services to all residents of the county, including people who live in cities. These include courts and related legal services, public health services, the county jail, records and elections, property tax appraisals and regional parks and facilities, including the King County International Airport (Boeing Field). The county government also has responsibility for public transit and sewage disposal. The King County Executive is the elected executive officer of county government, and the Metropolitan King County Council is the elected legislative body of county government.

Now in his third term as King County Executive, Ron Sims has built his career in public service around the progressive principles of environmental stewardship, social justice, and good government. He has a national reputation for boldness and vision, and has an established record of environmental protection. In early 2007, under his leadership, King County’s Executive Action Group on Climate Change released its inaugural climate plan, which included aggressive strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from government operations and the region, as well as practical steps to make the region more resilient to projected climate change impacts. He has been honored with the Sierra Club’s prestigious 2006 Edgar Wayburn Award, which celebrates outstanding service to the environment by a person in government, *Governing Magazine’s* 2006 national Public Official of the Year award, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s 2007 Climate Protector Award.

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and the Climate Resilient Communities Program™

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability is an international association of almost 1,000 local governments worldwide and more than 250 in the United States that have made commitments to sustainable development and climate protection. ICLEI, founded in 1990 as the International Council on Local Environmental Initiatives and now known officially as ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, strives to advance solutions to global climate change through cumulative local action. ICLEI provides technical and policy assistance, software training, climate expertise, information services and peer networking to help members build capacity, share knowledge and implement sustainable development and climate protection at the local level.

In 1993, ICLEI launched its Cities for Climate Protection Campaign® to assist local and regional governments in adopting policies and implementing quantifiable measures to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and enhance urban livability and sustainability. More than 800 local governments participate in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign and have begun to integrate sustainability and climate change mitigation into their decision-making processes. ICLEI runs this highly successful and widely recognized campaign either regionally or nationally in Australia, Canada, Europe, Japan, Latin America, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the United States. The campaign is based on an innovative performance framework structured around five milestones that local governments commit to undertake. The milestones allow local governments to understand how municipal decisions affect energy use and how these decisions can be used to mitigate global climate change while improving community quality of life.

In fall 2005, ICLEI launched its Climate Resilient Communities Program with funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to help local governments throughout the United States improve their resiliency to climate change impacts. The Climate Resilient Communities Program helps local governments develop tools to protect their communities from the impacts and costs associated with climate change. Program participants learn to use tools and develop strategies that reduce hazards and manage risks related to regulations, planning, urban design, and investments. The program also helps communities identify and pursue creative opportunities that arise from change. Early partners have included: Keene, New Hampshire; Fort Collins, Colorado; Anchorage, Alaska; Miami-Dade County, Florida; and Homer, Alaska.

As in the Cities for Climate Protection Campaign framework, local and regional governments in the Climate Resilient Communities Program can measure their progress according to five milestones of preparedness. The Five Milestones – 1) Initiate a climate resiliency effort, 2) Conduct a climate resiliency study, 3) Set preparedness goals and develop your preparedness plan, 4) Implement your preparedness plan, and 5) Measure your progress and update your plan – are consistent with the material of this guidebook.

In addition to making this guidebook available to its members and local government leaders, ICLEI is ready to assist any municipalities that want to implement the milestones, strategies and recommendations of the guidebook. ICLEI is a leading resource for cities, towns and counties on climate mitigation and adaptation, and its growing peer network of members is an excellent venue for municipalities to communicate with one another, share best practices, and address the challenge of climate change together at the local level. To learn more about ICLEI or the Climate Resilient Communities program and to become a member, please visit <http://www.iclei.org>.