

Focus on: Climate Strategy Budget Priorities



The Cedar Creek fire viewed from Wyman Bridge, July 2021

Building Washington's low-carbon future

Gov. Jay Inslee's 2022 supplemental budget proposal includes \$9,353,000 in funding for the five directives for the Washington Department of Ecology that will further support our state's ability to meet our near and long-term climate goals, while addressing important issues of air quality inequity and sustaining clean industry in our state.

In 2021, legislature passed sweeping new climate laws, including the flagship Climate Commitment Act (CCA), creating a comprehensive approach to reducing greenhouse gases in our state.

But much work remains if we are to meet the greenhouse gas emission limits the Legislature established in 2020, which require statewide emissions to drop by 95% by 2050, with incremental interim targets starting in 2030. Governor Inslee's 2022 supplemental budget proposal focuses on ensuring the successful implementation of these new laws.

Implement provisions of the Climate Commitment Act - \$2.3 million

The Climate Commitment Act (CCA) directs Ecology to develop and implement a cap-and-invest program designed to incentivize businesses to reduce emissions, and to establish a mechanism for linkage of Washington's program to existing programs in other jurisdictions. With environmental justice and equity at the heart of the CCA, Ecology is also tasked with developing plans to reduce air pollution and address health inequities in overburdened communities who bear a disproportionate share of the impacts from climate change.

Due to late changes to this bill during the 2021 legislative session, budget allocations from the 2021-2023 operating budget were not sufficient to effectively implement this critical legislation. Funding in the Governor's supplemental operating budget will ensure that Ecology is able to move forward with this important work.

Tribal capacity for climate investments - \$4.23 million

The Climate Commitment Act directs investments to Tribal nations for climate resiliency and emissions reduction programs. Governor Inslee's budget provides \$4 million in grants to Tribes to support building capacity to develop clean energy and climate mitigation projects, and engage with Ecology on other projects eligible for funding through the CCA.

Expand air quality monitoring in overburdened communities - \$1.93 million

The environmental justice and equity provisions of the CCA require additional air quality monitoring in vulnerable communities. Gov. Insee's budget supports Ecology's work to expand its air quality monitoring program to more fully cover the communities that have been most heavily impacted by the effects of climate change and air pollution.

Expanding the current monitoring program will allow Ecology to assess whether emissions reductions are being achieved in line with CCA requirements, and to move swiftly to adopt and enforce more stringent standards where necessary. Revenue from the CCA's cap-and-invest program is to be used, in part, to fund projects and programs that address air quality inequity in these overburdened communities, and the extension of our air quality monitoring program will help Ecology ensure that these funds are being directed to the communities most in need.

Improve greenhouse gas assessments for new projects - \$538,000

Under Washington's State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), state and local governments are required to fully evaluate the environmental impacts from proposed projects. While those analyses are required to include greenhouse gas emissions and the impacts of climate change, there has not been a consistent approach for accomplishing those evaluations.

In 2019, Gov. Inslee directed Ecology to develop a new rule that would create a level playing field for measuring greenhouse gas emissions from major industrial and fossil fuel projects, and determining what types of mitigation are appropriate if the project is built. Work on this rule was paused to align with work being done under the Climate Commitment Act. In his 2022 budget proposal, Gov. Inslee provides funding for Ecology to finalize the Greenhouse Gas Assessment of Projects rule and align it with the provisions of the Climate Commitment Act.

Support clean energy permitting process - \$350,000

As we work to build the low-carbon future here in Washington, we need to build clean energy capacity and grow clean industries to support good in-state jobs, reduce the impacts of climate change, and preserve Tribal consultation and treaty rights. The Governor's 2022 supplemental budget for Ecology provides funding for additional staff to support clean energy developers in the permitting process and provide technical assistance.

More information Please view the Governor's Climate Policy Brief: [Gov. Jay Inslee's strategic climate agenda, Dec. 2021 \(wa.gov\)](#).

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ADA Accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6800 or email melanie.forster@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.