

**Alaska Center for the Environment • Alaska Community Action on Toxics
Alaska Conservation Solutions • Alaska Public Interest Research Group
Alaska Wildlife Alliance • Audubon Alaska • Cook Inletkeeper
Defenders of Wildlife • Native American Rights Fund • Natural Resources
Defense Council • Northern Alaska Environmental Center • Sierra Club,
Alaska Chapter • Yukon River Watershed Inter-Tribal Council**

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GROUPS SUPPORT PUBLIC'S RIGHT-TO-KNOW ABOUT GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

State Petition Would Establish Common-Sense Reporting System

ANCHORAGE, AK – As Alaska confronts the prospects of rapid climate change, a coalition of groups has filed a petition with the State of Alaska, Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC), requesting it adopt regulations requiring major emitters in Alaska to report their greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). The U.S. Supreme Court today issued a ruling requiring EPA to re-evaluate its decision not to regulate certain greenhouse gas emissions, but a final decision on those issues could take years, and the State of Alaska already possesses the legal authority to require greenhouse gas reporting.

Temperatures at the Earth's surface have increased by an estimated 1.4°F (0.8°C) between 1900 and 2005. The past decade was the hottest of the past 150 years, and the hottest 22 years on record have occurred since 1980. There is an overwhelming scientific consensus that this warming is largely the result of emissions of carbon dioxide, methane, and other GHG from human activities. These activities include industrial processes, fossil fuel combustion, and alterations in surface environments such as the destruction of wetlands and deforestation.

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While Arctic regions are warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world, Alaska's Arctic region is feeling the effects of global warming at a rate four times that of the rest of the world.¹ From receding glaciers and melting sea ice, to dying forests and warming salmon streams, Alaska is experiencing the disproportionate effects of rapid climate change. A recent report found Alaskans are responsible for the highest per-capita GHG emissions in the nation.²

"Alaska is ground zero for the impacts from global warming, and it should be leading the nation in seeking solutions to it," said Randy Virgin, Executive Director for the Alaska Center for the Environment. "As a first step in this leadership role, Alaska needs to identify its major sources of greenhouse gas emissions and quantify those emissions."

If enacted by ADEC, the rule the petitioners proposed would require major emitters to report their GHG emissions and fossil fuel usage but it would not impose any emission controls. Many major national companies, including some Alaska oil companies, are already voluntarily reporting their GHG in other states, and the California Legislature enacted a law last year directing the California Air Resources Board to adopt regulations requiring it. Since 1986, a similar program under the federal Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) has led to substantial toxic emissions reductions and considerable cost savings for industry.

"Reporting greenhouse gas emissions is a concrete, common sense way for Alaska to start protecting our coastal communities in the face of rapid climate change," said Bob Shavelson, Executive Director of Cook Inletkeeper. "The public has a right-to-know about greenhouse gas sources, and with carbon taxes and other federal controls on the horizon, a public reporting system will help Alaska businesses save money and make informed business decisions."

The petitioners are: Alaska Center for the Environment, Alaska Community Action on Toxics, Alaska Conservation Solutions, Alaska Public Interest Research Group, Alaska Wildlife Alliance, Audubon Alaska, Cook Inletkeeper, Defenders of Wildlife, Native American Rights Fund, Northern Alaska Environmental Center, and Sierra Club, Alaska Chapter.

The petitioners are represented by the environmental law firm Trustees for Alaska. The petition can be viewed on www.trustees.org, www.akcenter.org or www.inletkeeper.org.

¹ National Assessment Synthesis Team (2001). Climate Change Impacts on the United States: The Potential Consequence of Climate Variability and Change. Cambridge University Press. IFBN 0-521-0075-0.

² See Alaska Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Reference Case Projections, 1990-2020 (available at: <http://www.dec.state.ak.us/air/doc/AK-GHG-EI-2007.pdf>).