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**County of Santa Clara Signs on to “Cool Counties”
Initiative**

*Santa Clara County to Put Financial Teeth into County’s Policies and
Practices to Mitigate Greenhouse Gas Emissions*

SAN JOSE, CALIF.— Today, the County of Santa Clara voted to support the U.S. Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration. The initiative requires participating counties to take a leadership role in addressing climate change in their region by planning for and reducing regional greenhouse gas emissions. It also urges the federal government to enact multi-sector national programs to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions.

“We need to take a look at our municipal operations and figure out ways that as a county government we contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and take action to reduce them,” said Board of Supervisors Chairperson, Supervisor Don Gage. “All of us - individuals, private firms and government share the responsibility to reduce these emissions as much as possible.”

The “Cool Counties” Initiative was launched on July 16, 2007, by 12 counties representing 17 million people, at the meeting of the National Association of Counties (NACO) in Richmond, Virginia. Today, the Board decided not only to endorse the Declaration but to commit the resources required to give the action real meaning.

“For this to be more than a gesture, the County needs to approve financial resources to fully implement the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration,” stated County Executive Pete Kutas, who proposed \$340,000 to cover staff costs and \$11 million in unfunded energy conservation projects that have already been identified. “This is just the start.”

By adopting the U.S. Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration, the county agrees to:

- Take an inventory of County government operations and countywide community greenhouse gas emissions.
- Reduce County government greenhouse gas emissions by 80% below current levels by 2050 through a 10% reduction every five years.
- Work with local, State, and Federal leaders to inventory and reduce countywide greenhouse gas emissions to 80% below current levels by 2050 through a 10% reduction every five years; and,
- Urge Congress and the Federal administration to enact similar multi sector national program requirements and to implement programs that will reduce national greenhouse gas emissions by 80 % by 2050.

“We are already actively engaged in energy conservation and environmentally friendly programs, with this effort we will continue to lead by example when it comes to mitigating the effects of greenhouse gas emissions,” said Supervisor Liz Kniss, who represents the Board of Supervisors on the Board of Directors of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission. “It will require a substantial monetary investment, but will save so much more over the long term.”

The County’s efforts will include analyzing the impact of this resolution on the way the County does business, and developing a Climate Action Plan that will provide a roadmap for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The County will need to consider climate change in the general plan update, when improving zoning changes and land use requests through the County’s Planning office.

To fulfill the U.S. Cool Counties promises to the public, the elected officials of the participating Cool Counties will need to be extensively engaged at the State and Federal levels to get the legislation and funding needed to reconfigure the national economy from

fossil fuels to alternative energies, and to develop and deploy energy efficient technologies among other strategies.

“We will also need to dedicate the efforts of County Board Supervisors in attaining action at the State and Federal level for developing and deploying new technologies,” said Larry Jinkins, Director of the Counties Facilities and Fleet Department whose department will coordinate the effort. “We need to establish regional and national emissions reduction strategies, and identify sources of funding.”

“We all have to do our part to address global warming,” said Supervisor Blanca Alvarado, “Today we are affirming our commitment to take a leadership position and to ensure that the County is environmentally responsible in very specific ways.”

The County of Santa Clara continues to promote environmental stewardship and conservation by a wide array of green practices and policies in the course of its procurement, recycling, pesticide use, energy conservation and facilities and fleet, among other County business operations. A comprehensive report on the County’s Green Initiatives can be found on the County’s website: www.sccgov.org.

“I whole heartedly support this direction,” said Supervisor Ken Yeager. “We have to use whatever authority we have to change how we do business to reduce our impact on global warming and be better stewards of the environment.”

“Two of our country’s biggest challenges are the effects of greenhouse gases and our heavy reliance on fossil fuels,” said Supervisor Pete McHugh. “Our action today sets the tone of our future direction. Not only will we be participating in initiatives underway at the state, we also will be initiating and proposing specific actions to address these challenges.”

About the Cool Counties Climate Stabilization Declaration

On July 16, 2007, during the National Association County Organizations (NACO) meeting members launched the Cool Counties initiative. Initial members included King County (WA), Fairfax (VA), Nassau (FL), Arlington (VA), Montgomery and Queen Anne's (MD), Miami-Dade (FL), Alameda (CA), Cook (IL), Shelby (TN), Hennepin (MN) and Dane (WI). King, Fairfax and Nassau Counties led the initiative in partnership with the Sierra Club.

The U.S. Cool Counties program is one of many recent greenhouse gas emissions reduction programs and initiatives having varying emissions reduction goals over differing time frames including the Kyoto Protocol, and California's AB 32, U.S.

In calling for an 80% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by the year 2050, the U.S. Cool Counties program is similar in most respects to AB 32. However, the Cool Counties program sets the reduction target below current (2007) levels whereas AB 32 sets the target below 1990 levels. Both programs require a reduction in the use of fossil fuels within the next 42 years while population continues to increase. Since fossil fuels are the primary energy source for our industrialized nation, meeting this goal will fundamentally change our industrial sectors and society.