



American Carbon Registry Presents Annual Awards for Outstanding Environmental Achievements

SAN FRANCISCO, March 27, 2014 – Last night, the [American Carbon Registry](#) (ACR), a nonprofit enterprise of [Winrock International](#), hosted its annual gala reception to recognize and thank its members and partners. ACR Director John Kadyszewski welcomed guests and presented highlights from the year. He described the awards to be presented to recognize outstanding environmental achievements including the individual Climate Leadership award, as well as corporate awards based on ACR's guiding principles of innovation, quality and excellence.

Kadyszewski presented ACR's **Climate Leadership** award to Joseph Goffman, Associate Assistant Administrator and Senior Counsel in the Office of Air and Radiation at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in recognition of his assiduous pursuit of market solutions to benefit the environment. Goffman has led the development of cutting-edge climate policy for more than 30 years from multiple positions on Capitol Hill, at the Environmental Defense Fund, and at EPA including the first cap and trade program for air pollution, which provided a convincing demonstration of the power of markets to achieve environmental goals cost effectively.

"Joe is respected by his peers for his ability to bring together people from different perspectives willing to find common ground and for his creativity in finding actions that yield tangible results," Kadyszewski said. "His career-long accomplishments and ongoing efforts offer hope that meaningful results can be accomplished quickly and we hope his example will inspire other individuals to action."

The **Innovation** award went to three entities that have each pioneered the development of first-of-a-kind carbon offset projects in the agriculture sector: Terra Global Capital, Ducks Unlimited and the Delta Institute. All three awardees are piloting offset projects under USDA's Conservation Innovation Grant program, which aims to stimulate the adoption of innovative approaches to environmental stewardship in the agriculture sector. The projects all mark important milestones in broadening the opportunities for farmers and landowners to participate in carbon markets, incentivizing adoption of voluntary actions to reduce emissions.

Terra Global Capital was recognized with the **Innovation** award for the development of a 5,000 acre rice management project in California's Sacramento Valley, recently listed on ACR, and based on the ACR methodology for Emissions Reductions in Rice Management systems developed by Terra Global. Rice cultivation is the third largest source of methane emissions in the U.S. agriculture sector, and the top two rice producing states, Arkansas and California, are responsible for over half of U.S. greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from rice production. Participating farmers in this first rice project will implement voluntary management practices on their fields to reduce methane emissions, earning carbon credits to be sold in the voluntary and potentially the California carbon markets.

"We are honored to be recognized by ACR for this important first step of operationalizing U.S. agricultural GHG offsets. This would not be possible without the support of the participating growers and from our funders and partners including EDF, California Rice Commission, and Applied Geosolutions", said Leslie Durschinger, Founder, Managing Director Terra Global Capital.

Ducks Unlimited (DU) received the **Innovation** award for their cutting edge conservation project in the Prairie Pothole Region of North Dakota, a vast area of grasslands and wetlands that provides a vital wildlife habitat. In this region, annual losses of native grasslands to crop production have averaged approximately 50,000 acres per year since 2007, leading to significant GHG emissions due to the release of carbon dioxide from soils when they are tilled. DU's project is preserving the carbon sequestered in the soil by avoiding the conversion of these valuable prairies to cropland. Currently DU is working to complete the verification and validation of the project that is in the pilot stage working with landowners in eight counties in North Dakota to help them generate income from the sale of carbon credits generated through the preservation of their grasslands.

"Ranchers in the Dakotas and Montana are looking for ways to keep their livestock operations viable," said Steve Adair, director of DU's Great Plains Region. "DU, with assistance from partners, developed a methodology to measure carbon captured and stored by native prairie and is working to develop a carbon credit opportunity to provide landowners an extra incentive to maintain the grasslands and wetlands, instead of converting the land to crop production."

The Delta Institute was presented with the **Innovation** award for the registration on ACR of the first U.S. fertilizer management project, a Michigan pilot currently in verification for reducing nitrogen fertilizer use on corn. Nitrogen fertilizers, one of the largest agricultural sources of GHG emissions, result in emissions of nitrous oxide (N₂O), a GHG with approximately 300 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. Corn is among the most intensive uses of fertilizer and represents a significant opportunity for nitrogen use efficiencies that could reduce GHG emissions while maintaining or improving yields. The project is the first in the recently launched Delta Nitrogen Credit Program, via which qualified Corn Belt farmers who change their nitrogen fertilizer management practices will receive payments from the sale of carbon credits.

"We are proud of this recognition by ACR of our nine years of work with Midwest farmers to create and implement market-driven solutions to build environmental resilience, such as the Delta Nitrogen Credit Program," said Delta Institute CEO Jean Pogge. "Farmers are the ultimate stewards of our land and water resources, and this program demonstrates that they can reduce emissions while producing food, fuel, and fiber. We are excited to have many great partners on this innovative program to incentivize low emissions agricultural practices."

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) received the ACR **Utility Excellence** award for almost seven decades of environmental leadership and a demonstrated commitment to reducing its climate impact. The utility's deep-rooted commitment to renewable energy has made Sacramento's community-owned electric utility one of the cleanest in the nation. Combining renewable resources such as wind and solar with the hydroelectricity generated in the Upper American River Project, nearly 50 percent of SMUD's power mix comes from non-carbon emitting sources. In addition, SMUD has a long history as a national leader in internal and customer-facing environment programs. SMUD's own buildings are designed to be energy efficient: SMUD's Customer Service Center is an award winning LEED Platinum building, as is the recently-completed SMUD East Campus Operations Center, the most energy-efficient corporate yard in the nation and a net-zero energy site. In addition, SMUD is reducing its vehicle emissions through the use of low carbon fuels as well as investments in a fleet of electric and hybrid vehicles. SMUD's customer-facing environmental initiatives such as SolarSmart, Greenergy and Home Performance Program have also yielded impressive results. Over 50,000 customers have joined Greenergy to invest in renewable energy, 1,000 Solar Smart Homes have been built, and energy efficiency programs have resulted in customer savings of \$950 million. Aside from technical merits, SMUD boasts rates that are among the lowest in California and for a decade has received the top customer satisfaction scores among all California utilities.

"SMUD is very honored to receive this award. One of SMUD's Core Values is Environmental Protection," said Rob Kerth, a member of SMUD Board of Directors. "As the community-owned electric utility serving the state capital, SMUD is committed to reducing our region's carbon emissions to reducing our greenhouse gas emissions by 90 percent by the year 2050. We also have the most aggressive energy efficiency goals of any utility in the state."

The Climate Trust was honored with the ACR **Commitment to Quality** award for the organization's time-tested dedication to focusing on the quality of offsets that they procure on behalf of voluntary and regulated carbon market clients. In 1997, The Climate Trust was founded as a nonprofit organization to acquire carbon offsets on behalf of new fossil-fueled power plants regulated by the Oregon Carbon Dioxide Standard, the nation's first legislation to curb emissions of carbon dioxide. Since that time, The Climate Trust has retired over 1.5 million tons of offsets and committed over \$17 million to projects that not only reduce GHG emissions, but also conserve habitats, create jobs, improve air quality, preserve biodiversity and benefit water quality. ACR applauds The Climate Trust's pioneering work to foster initiatives important to market integrity such as their founding role of the Offset Quality Initiative, in which ACR, The Climate Group, the Climate Action Reserve and the Pew Center on Global Climate Change were partners.

"Our strategy has been to focus on innovative offset projects in high-impact sectors that create multiple benefits for communities and the environment—all while meeting rigorous, third-party standards," said Sean Penrith, CEO of The Climate Trust. "We appreciate ACR's recognition of our commitment to quality, which is fundamental both to the success of our business and the market."

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The nonprofit [American Carbon Registry](#) (ACR), an enterprise of Winrock International, is a leading carbon offset program recognized for its high standards for environmental integrity. Founded in 1996 as the first voluntary GHG registry in the world, ACR has over 18 years of unparalleled voluntary carbon market experience in the development of rigorous, science-based offset methodologies and operational experience in the oversight of offset project verification, registration, offset issuance and retirement reporting. In addition to its voluntary carbon market activities, ACR is an approved Offset Project Registry and Early Action Offset Program for the California Cap-and-Trade Program. In this role, ACR works with the state regulatory agency to oversee the registration and issuance of Offset Credits, which can be converted to compliance credits and used by California entities to help meet their emissions reductions obligations. ACR has issued 40 million tons of emissions reduction credits and continues to lead voluntary carbon market innovation.