

# **ALASKA WILL BENEFIT FROM CLEAN ENERGY LEGISLATION THAT LIMITS CARBON POLLUTION**

Clean energy already provides many hundreds of Alaska workers with good jobs during hard times. This fact sheet collects several sources of information showing how accelerating the clean-energy transition will benefit Alaska's economy – and, conversely, the costs and consequences of failing to act.

## **CLEAN ENERGY JOBS**

University of Massachusetts researchers conclude that the American Clean Energy and Security Act, coupled with the clean energy provisions passed in the ARRA stimulus package that Congress passed in February 2009, will drive \$150 billion of investment in clean energy nationwide. This investment will create more than **4,000 jobs** for Alaska.<sup>1</sup>

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS**

The Department of Energy has identified significant, untapped opportunities for key industries in Alaska to prosper under a clean energy economy. There are at least 81 ways for small- and medium-sized industrial plants in Alaska to **earn savings from efficiency**, with an average payback of only 0.8 years. Only 58% of these opportunities have been implemented.<sup>2</sup>

## **COSTS OF INACTION**

According to a June 2009 report released by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, inaction on global warming will have heavy economic consequences for Alaska.<sup>3</sup>

- Alaska's fishermen – who produce over **\$5.8 billion** annually for the state<sup>4</sup> – will have their livelihoods threatened by shifting populations of commercial fish.
- Alaska's valuable white spruce forests are already declining from **drought stress**, and increasing temperatures will lead to more devastating spruce beetle and spruce budworm outbreaks.
- The area burned by **wildfires will double** by 2050 and quadruple by the end of the century.
- Thawing permafrost will cripple valuable public infrastructure and damage roads, runways, and water and sewer systems, costing an extra **\$6.1 billion** in repairs by 2030. The thawing ground also dramatically reduces the number of days the Alaska Department of Natural Resources allows travel on the tundra, an essential component of oil and gas exploration.<sup>5</sup>
- The National Wildlife Federation shows how global warming will **damage the 28,583 jobs** provided by Alaska's **\$1.4 billion** hunting, wildlife watching, and angling industries.<sup>6</sup>

## **START THE CLEAN ENERGY ECONOMY NOW**

Comprehensive energy and climate legislation would jumpstart a new energy economy in Alaska and accelerate the growth of good-paying jobs. If we fail to act soon, the new markets for clean energy will grow overseas instead.

**Alaska can't afford to miss out on one of the largest new economic revolutions.**

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Pollin, James Heintz, and Heidi Garrett-Peltier: The Economic Benefits of Investing in Clean Energy. Department of Economics and Political Economy Research Institute (PERI), University of Massachusetts, Amherst. June 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Industrial Technologies Program - Industrial Assessment Centers Database. Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.  
<http://www.iac.rutgers.edu/database/state.php>

<sup>3</sup> University of Maryland's Center for Integrative Environmental Research: Assessing the Costs of Climate Change: Alaska. 2008.  
<http://www.cier.umd.edu/climateadaptation/>

<sup>4</sup> Northern Economics Inc: The Seafood Industry in Alaska's Economy. January 2009. [http://www.marineconservationalliance.org/docs/SIAE\\_Jan09.pdf](http://www.marineconservationalliance.org/docs/SIAE_Jan09.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Unified Synthesis Product: Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States. Report by the US Climate Change Science Program.  
<http://www.globalchange.gov/usimpacts>

<sup>6</sup> National Wildlife Federation: Global Warming and Alaska. 2009. <http://www.nwf.org/Global-Warming/In-Your-State.aspx>