



# Sunrise

sunrisenevada.org

Sustainable Resources Group

Summer 2008

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## SUNRISE

is a member of the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada and is a chapter of the American Solar Energy Society.

We are a non-profit formed in 1996, promoting sustainable living practices that lead to a comfortable earth friendly lifestyle.

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## President's Letter

I am inspired everyday when I read about the progress we are making here locally and nationally to make our energy and transportation systems more efficient. As an example, our latest newsletter includes an article about the new RenewableGenerations program that now offers rebates now for solar, wind, and hydroelectric generation. Another example is the thriving electric vehicle group here in Reno and the work being done nationally to integrate electric vehicles with the electrical grid. And yet, I wonder if progress is just doing what we are currently doing more efficiently?

Is progress defined by a country where we still have over-sized homes, more cars than licensed drivers, and TVs that use more energy than our refrigerators? We know that as Americans we use far too many resources and the inequity of resource utilization is at least an environmental issue while also being a social justice one. Progress must mean something other than doing what we do more

efficiently if we are to address our over-consumption of resources.

We are living in an exciting time where we have an opportunity to redefine what "progress" means. Maybe progress means developing new transportation methods that can be applied around the world to improve transportation while reducing energy usage. Maybe it means starting a new "Green Revolution" which teaches people to grow healthy food close to home without relying on chemical additives and seeds purchased from foreign corporations. The possibilities are endless.

Sunrise has worked for over ten years to educate and advocate for a sustainable future. As we have seen the adoption of so many sustainable concepts over the last few years, it becomes important that we not lose sight of the real sustainable future – one where all 6.7 billion people on earth can have their needs met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

*Philip Moore*  
President

## 2008 Solar Tour

Sunrise is proud to again host the Northern Nevada Solar Tour on Saturday, October 4th. This tour is part of the 13th annual American Solar Energy Society's National Solar Tour. The ASES National Solar Tour is the largest grassroots solar event in history. While energy prices continue to soar, this event offers participants the opportunity to tour homes and buildings to see how neighbors are using solar energy, energy efficiency, and other sustainable technologies to reduce their monthly utility bills and help tackle climate change.

Last year more than 115,000 attendees visited some 5,000 buildings in 2,900 participating communities. Closer to home, the

Northern Nevada Solar Tour sites will be in south Reno and Virginia City Highlands this year, with the kickoff meeting in Sparks. So far, the tour includes:

- A kickoff meeting at the new Reno Transportation Commission (RTC) Centennial Plaza, a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified building,
- Two off-the-grid homes in the Virginia City Highlands,
- A newly-built, highly efficient passive solar-designed home in southwest Reno that uses no air conditioning and relies on efficient radiant heating,

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## Population Control Must Be Part of Our Planning

*The State of Nevada had just under 2,000,000 residents in 2000. The US Census Bureau estimates that the population of Nevada will grow to over 4,000,000 by 2030.*

*U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Interim State Population Projections, 2005.*

*77% of water used in Nevada is for Irrigation/Stock. This percentage is expected to drop over the next ten years while overall water usage will increase 9% between 2000 and 2020.*

*Nevada State Water Plan*

Despite the recent news that human population has grown over 6,666,666,666, population control is not a subject most people choose to discuss. The subject brings up strong reactions as it directly contradicts our belief in our inalienable right to reproduce. Population control also raises controversy because it translates to immigration control in the United States and in many developing nations it translates to birth control, both deeply controversial issues.

We must start discussing population control, as it is an essential part of planning our sustainable future: a future that includes a balance between population growth, social justice, and the environment. The United Nations, in developing their Millennium Development Goals, has outlined the following principle:

*Sustainable development as a means to ensure human well-being, equitably shared by all people today and in the future, requires that the interrelationships between population, resources, the environment and development should be fully recognized, properly managed and brought into harmonious, dynamic balance. To achieve sustainable development and a higher quality of life for all people, States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate policies, including population-related policies, in order to meet the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

If we are to make population control part of our planning for a sustainable future, then we must ask ourselves some basic questions. First, do we have the resources on this earth to sustainably meet the needs of

all of these people, from basic sustenance to ending poverty, universal primary education, gender equality, and the improvement of general health while protecting our environment? Second, if we do not have the resources to meet these needs while protecting the environment, would it be preferable to limit the needs that are met for some or all humans or to limit the number of humans whose needs must be met? Third, do we believe we can create a sustainable future without addressing the number of people that will require resources from the earth?

We must start the planning process by asking these same questions of our own community. For example, do we know we have the resources to meet the needs of our current population when over 10% of Washoe County residents live below the poverty line, thousands of people are food insecure and a new tent city for the homeless has just been developed in downtown Reno? Do we have enough water to provide for the current population or future population? If we do not have the resources to meet the needs of our community, should we limit the population of Northern Nevada or continue with the pattern of only meeting the needs of a portion of our community? Do we believe there is another way to create a sustainable future for Northern Nevada without balancing the needs of our community, the resources available to meet those needs, and our environment?

All of us are interested in a sustainable future for Northern Nevada and the world. As we work to plan for that sustainable future, we must include population control as it is a critical underpinning to any successful planning effort. I look forward to this subject becoming part of our planning processes locally, nationally, and internationally as it is currently conspicuously absent.

*Philip Moore, Sunrise President*

**Call for Submissions:** We want to hear from you. Deadline for the next issue is *October 15, 2008*. Please keep length of articles to 300-500 words and send to [Philip\\_Moore@charter.net](mailto:Philip_Moore@charter.net). We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

## Some Interesting Web Links

### Earth Day Network launches new, improved Ecological Footprint Calculator to assess environmental impact

Earth Day Network, an international environmental advocacy organization and a recognized leader in the field of carbon footprint measurement, has just released its newest tool to combat climate change: The Ecological Footprint Calculator. Set to debut on Aug. 25, 2008, the Footprint Calculator is intended to raise environmental consciousness in an educational, user-friendly, and fun way.

See <http://ww2.earthday.net/footprint/index.html>

### Welcome to Green California!

Green California is a gateway for the latest information about how the state of California is working to reduce energy and resource consumption, while lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and creating healthier environments in which to work, live and learn.

See <http://www.green.ca.gov/default.htm>

### Northern Nevada Local Food Blog

This web site provides a wide variety of information about local food in Northern Nevada. It has links to sites that can teach you how to grow your own food, an up to date farmers market schedule, lists of local producers, and a guide to local restaurants that use local food in their dishes.

See <http://lfnn.blogspot.com>

*These and other interesting web links are always available on the Sunrise web site under "links."*

## 2008 Solar Tour (continued)

- A newly-built larger home in south Reno using a 20-panel solar thermal array for home and pool heating.
- A southwest Reno home featuring thermal mass panels, radiant floor heating, and energy-efficient doors and windows.

The tour starts at 9:00 AM at the RTC Centennial Plaza at the corner of Victorian and 14th Streets in Sparks. The individual sites will be open for touring starting at 10:00 AM. More information and tickets can be found on the Sunrise web site or by calling Brian Bass at 775-624-2752. There is no cost for Sunrise and ASES members! Cost for non-members is \$5/car on or before September 29, and \$10/car after September 29.

## This Year's Renewable Generation Results

*According to Program Manager and Sunrise Board Member Scott Gerz, the SolarGenerations program was completely subscribed in 39 minutes and the WindGenerations program will probably be completely subscribed by the middle of September*

## RenewableGenerations

There is some great news coming out of Sierra Pacific these days! They have just completed the development of the new "RenewableGenerations" program which now includes not only incentives for solar, but also for wind and hydroelectric generation. The program has tiered incentives for installing these types of systems geared towards encouraging schools and public entities to install renewable energy generation systems.

SolarGenerations has returned and is offering rebates from \$2.30 a watt (for residential and small businesses) up to \$4.60 a watt (for schools and public buildings) for the installation of photovoltaic systems. The program recognizes the benefits to residential users to reduce their power costs while raising the resale value of their homes, businesses in improving their bottom lines, public organizations to increase their public profile, and schools to not only save money for education but also to teach the students about the future of energy production. Please note that the program rules and rebate levels are still being finalized by the Public Utilities Commission and are subject to change.

WindGenerations is a new program offering rebates from \$2.50 per watt (for residential, small business, and agricultural customers up to 10 kW) and \$3.00 per watt (for schools and public buildings up to 10 kW). This program recognizes many of the same benefits as the SolarGenerations program to all types of power customers while opening the door to a whole new, and significantly underutilized power source.

The final component of the RenewableGenerations program is HydroGenerations. This program provides a \$2.50 per watt rebate to agricultural, grid-connected, hydroelectric generation facilities that meet the specific guidelines of the program. Interested parties should contact the HydroGenerations team to determine if their project meets the program specifications.

Our hats off to the 2007 Legislature, Sierra Pacific, and the Public Utility Commission for developing another way to encourage renewable energy generation in Nevada. We encourage everyone to explore their options for taking advantage of this important program.

## Events Calendar

### September 18

*Northern Nevada's "Imagining the Future" Business and Tech Show, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., John Ascuaga's Nugget, Sparks, Nevada*

### October 4, 2008

*Northern Nevada Solar Tour - Kickoff at 9:00 AM at Sparks Centennial Plaza, Victorian and 14th Street*

### November 6, 7:00 PM

*Annual Membership Meeting*

### December 4, 7:00 PM

*Sunrise Board Elections*

**National Solar Tour**  
Saturday,  
October 4