

Reaching net-zero emissions by 2050: transitioning to a clean energy economy that supports goals for CLIMATE, CONSERVATION, AND COMMUNITIES

1. In just one year, the acclaimed Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) has created over **170,000 jobs and over \$110 billion dollars invested in clean energy manufacturing**. An estimated 250,000 square miles of land, an area larger than Texas, will be required for the buildout of the renewable-energy infrastructure, according to **The Nature Conservancy**, which has launched ground-breaking research that shows how smart planning minimizes impacts on nature while benefiting communities. For example, former mining lands and brownfields suitable for solar, with input from local communities regarding workforce training, environmental management, and economic priorities, will propel the renewables buildout. TNC's award-winning "Site Renewable Right" identifies where wind and solar installations can be sited while still conserving important habitat and natural areas.
2. In 2022 Congress passed the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), which is the most significant climate change act ever passed, and one that can help you green your home. Here's how: **1)** first do a professional home energy audit, which can earn you a **30% tax credit**, by contacting **The Residential Energy Services Network**, which is backed by the **Office of Renewable Energy**, that can locate certified professional energy auditors in your area; **2)** from there you can select which green home updates might be right for you, from energy-efficient windows and skylights to solar water heaters, rooftop solar, and more. You can learn more about the variety of projects that qualify for these incentives from *Your Green Life*, "Green Home Upgrades, At a Discount." (greenamerica.org/home-upgrade.) Achieving **net-zero emissions** means that the amount of emissions we are adding to the atmosphere equals the amount of emissions we are removing from it, so focusing on real solutions like switching from gas to electric appliances, reducing energy use through efficiency gains, and reducing demand on the grid through maximizing community solar will help get us there.
3. Transportation produces the **largest share of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, at 29% of our total**. If we all drove 10% less than we do now, we would see a reduction of about **110 million metric tons of CO2 emissions**, or the equivalent of powering nearly 14 million homes for one year. If you are considering purchasing a clean vehicle for personal use, you may be eligible for a tax credit for your purchase from the new federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The four main requirements to qualify are **1)** a battery capacity of at least 7 kilowatt hours, **2)** a gross vehicle weight rating of less than 14,000 pounds, **3)** a final assembly completed in North America, and **4)** that it be made by a qualified manufacturer. There are modified adjusted gross income caps (\$300,000 for married couples filing jointly, \$225,000 for heads of households, and \$150,000 for all other filers) in the qualifying process. For more information on eligibility requirements and available vehicles, visit <https://www.fueleconomy.gov/>.
4. A recent component of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 is the **American Climate Corps**, a New-Deal-inspired service program that has been replicated in Minnesota and five other states to help members secure good-paying jobs in **clean energy technologies, building communities' resilience to climate change, and other environmental protection goals**. The

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) finds that this **workforce development** will be crucial for filling the fast-growing number of green jobs in Minnesota. At the end of 2022, nearly **60,000 Minnesotans** were employed by clean energy businesses, according to a Clean Energy Economy MN (CEEM) report, with clean energy jobs growing **50% faster than the state's overall job growth that year**. Another 30,000 to 40,000 clean energy and energy efficiency jobs are expected in Minnesota over the next five or six years. These jobs will be crucial in order to combat the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's (MCPA) finding that Minnesota's residential energy emissions have **risen by 14% over the last 15 years**, largely due to natural gas used to heat homes and power some appliances. To learn more about the American Climate Corps, visit whitehouse.gov/climatecorps. To learn more about ServeMinnesota's climate-related service programs, visit serveminnesota.org.