

NAZCCA Year in Review - 2023

It's been quite a year for NAZCCA. We have welcomed Jason Kordosky (Jason.NAZCCA@gmail.com) as our new Regional Field Organizer and have seen many successes for NAZCCA Climate Action Teams (CATs) in Flagstaff, Sedona, Cottonwood/Verde Valley, and Prescott Quad Cities. Jason brings a depth of organizing experience and a warm and welcoming personality to NAZCCA's grassroots work. Thousands of new signatures were collected this year on numerous NAZCCA petitions pushing for climate action. This year we also welcomed Emma Onawa from Rimrock to the NAZCCA Board of Directors. Emma brings in a new suite of grant-writing skills and experience.

While NAZCCA has found great organizing success, our challenges have also grown. Past Flagstaff and Sedona City Councils have been very pro-active by declaring a climate emergency and passing Climate Action and Adaptation Plans and the Flagstaff Carbon Neutrality Plan (CNP). The CNP sets the goal for the City to reach net zero emissions by 2030, but our current City Council has been making big decisions that go directly against that goal.

This spring, NAZCCA's Fossil Free Arizona CAT petitioned City Council to divest our City's money from the dirty, fossil fuel developing bank, Wells Fargo. The City Council refused. Two months later, City Council approved a \$billion-dollar mega-development for an unneeded hospital without even asking what its carbon footprint would be. Both of these decisions went against the Net Zero goal in a big way.

Fortunately, Sat Best empowered a group of NAZCCA members to form the Clean Health CAT to fight this \$billion-dollar proposal on the outskirts of town. They joined other groups who were also concerned about the negative impacts of this mega-development on the quality and cost of healthcare, on Flagstaff's downtown businesses, and on Flagstaff's environment - including the impact on our forest, Flagstaff's emissions goal, and on global climate change. They helped form the Flagstaff Community First PAC and helped to collect over 5,600 signatures to get a referendum on the ballot. After a successful campaign to get out the vote, the City Council's decision was reversed by 73% of the voters and the mega-development was blocked. NAZCCA's Clean Health CAT will continue to urge the hospital to renovate which would have about one third of the carbon footprint of new construction in the forest. We will also urge them to go for LEED Carbon Zero certification in any future development proposals.

Fossil Free Arizona has re-grouped and is working with the City to improve the chances that they will put out a request for new bank proposals in the next go-round. We have high hopes that the City can set its goal for a cleaner and more respectable bank in the future.

Under the leadership of Kevin Hayes and Adam Shimoni, NAZCCA's Bike CAT has changed its name to "Ped & Pedal CAT" and has been successful in getting City Council's approval on making bike lanes and intersections safer. While the constraint on some of these projects is funding, others, like improving the signaling for greater safety at intersections are already underway. With their success we hope to encourage more people to get out from behind the wheels of their combustion vehicles.

The Fleet Electrification NOW! CAT (FEN CAT) has collected over 2,500 signatures in their short existence, and they are now working with Coconino County, City of Flagstaff, FUSD, NAU, and Mountain Line Buses to electrify as quickly as possible. Each of these agencies has its own set of challenges and is being approached and encouraged by different FEN CAT members. Mountain Line is clearly further ahead than any of the other agencies with solid plans for fully electric buses and support infrastructure.

Another recent challenge was an attack on Flagstaff's Carbon Neutrality Plan by a group of climate deniers. They wanted Council to amend the priorities of the CNP to be shifted away from emissions reductions to things like wildfire and flood control. Shifting these priorities would have the sole effect of undermining all emissions reduction efforts. Unfortunately, City Council voted to approve the proposed amendment for further consideration. Therefore, NAZCCA's City Council Watch CAT quickly roused NAZCCA members to make public comments in support of the Net Zero goal at two City Council meetings in December. We packed the room, and over 200 people stood in support of the CNP and its Net Zero goal. When this item comes up on City Council's agenda this spring, we will flood Council chambers again. We can only hope that this Council is beginning to realize how important the Net Zero goal is to our community.

NAZCCA's Educator CAT has organized a speaker series called "Climate Talks for Everyone", or "Climate Talks" for short. So far there have been eight bi-weekly presentations, and these are all recorded and are now part the library of educational materials available to NAZCCA members and all other citizens of the world. These ZOOM presentations have been attended by members from all over Northern Arizona as well as from Africa, Europe, Australia, and North America. You can view past and upcoming presentations at:

<https://www.nazcca.org/speaker-series-climate-talks-for-everyone>

NAZCCA's Educator CAT also continues to publish the monthly column "Spotlight on Climate" in the Arizona Daily Sun. Climate scientists, NAZCCA activists, and climate-concerned citizens have written columns to engage the general public on a wide range of climate change topics. You can read and download these articles here: <https://www.nazcca.org/spotlight-on-climate>

There are many ways to get involved. The Green Burial CAT continues to inform folks about greener ways to go. The Hydrogen Hub CAT is looking for ways to promote and implement green hydrogen, the Outreach, Protests, Events, and Networking CAT (OPEN CAT) continues to engage the public and recruit new members to sign NAZCCA petitions, the Vegan CAT is beginning to build, and new CATs keep forming.

A new CAT has recently formed to inform, engage, and empower folks to get active on Community Choice Aggregation (CCA). Since their very beginnings, utility companies have been set up as regional monopolies. In the early days this was important because they needed to build the generation capacity and the delivery grid. Now, however, these monopoly protections are blocking new clean energy providers and keeping consumers from having a choice of clean electricity. Community Choice Aggregation seeks to promote enabling legislation that would give people more choice in the electricity they consume. Reach out to Dr. David Spence (ds0268@gmail.com) if you would like to get involved with the CCA CAT.

Thank you for being an important part of NAZCCA's climate change activism. Without you, none of these life-saving things would happen. New heat and storm records were set all over the World this past year. The number of climate refugees was well over 36 million.

Please join in as much as you possibly can in this coming year. We desperately need your skills, in whatever way you can contribute them. And, as always, your generous donations are what keeps the organization going. Please make any contributions you can to: <https://account.venmo.com/u/nazcca> or https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=ETZSQF96Z25XJ

Best Wishes!

Stefan

Dr. Stefan Sommer, NAZCCA Board of Directors
Stefan.NAZCCA@gmail.com
www.NAZCCA.org

