



MARIN CARBON PROJECT

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Pioneering Standards Support Ranchers While Reducing Greenhouse Gases New offset protocol allows credits for sequestering carbon on rangelands

(SAN FRANCISCO – October 16, 2014) – The American Carbon Registry (ACR), a nonprofit that oversees the creation of rigorous carbon offset protocols as well as the independent registration of carbon offset projects, approved standards today that are designed to enlist ranchers in the fight against climate change. The standards reward ranchers for land management practices that put more carbon in the soil, thereby improving soil health and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The new protocol, *Compost Additions to Grazed Grasslands*, provides a clear process for calculating the GHG reductions from applying compost to rangeland. By strategically applying compost to grasslands, ranchers have the opportunity to generate revenue from environmental stewardship through the sale of emission reductions on voluntary carbon markets.

"This project rewards ranchers for stewardship activities that help store carbon in their soils, while improving soil health and the productivity of their land," said Robert Bonnie, USDA Under Secretary for Natural Resources and the Environment. "The American Carbon Registry's approval of this protocol supports the ability of innovative efforts like the Marin Carbon Project to identify conservation practices that increase productivity and create new sources of revenue for ranchers."

In addition to providing a sink for carbon, rangelands provide a wide variety of other natural benefits to society, including food, fiber, habitat, watershed health, open space, and cultural value. Rangelands in the West are currently under pressure of conversion to other land uses, like urban development and croplands. Therefore, finding new revenue streams for ranchers helps keep them on the ranch and enhances these valuable natural areas.

"This offset protocol is a new tool farmers and ranchers can use to mitigate and adapt to climate change and in a way that benefits their bottom line" said Robert Parkhurst, Agriculture Greenhouse Gas Markets Director for the Environmental Defense Fund. "It also demonstrates the essential role working lands play in the fight against climate change."

The new offset protocol is supported by research conducted over the past seven years by the Marin Carbon Project and the University of California, Berkeley on two locations in California. The

research has demonstrated that a one-time application of compost can sequester almost 1,000 pounds of carbon per acre per year.

“The adoption of this protocol takes the research conducted in Marin and provides an incentive for others to model and implement it on lands throughout California and the western United States,” said John Wick, co-founder of the Marin Carbon Project.

The protocol was developed by Terra Global Capital under a Conservation Innovation Grant to EDF from USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service. It has the potential to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide by 28 million metric tons per year if compost can be applied to just 5 percent of CA’s rangelands. That’s equivalent to removing nearly 6 million cars from the road.

“The approval of this protocol by ACR is the first step in providing ranchers the opportunity to generate incremental income for the environmental assets they create through sustainable land-use management,” said Leslie Durschinger, Founder and Managing Director of Terra Global.

The protocol approved by ACR today allows ranchers to model the increase in carbon sequestration on their land, have it independently verified, and generate tradable offset credits.

“American Carbon Registry is pleased to add this protocol to our growing list of agriculture, forest, and land use protocols available to U.S. farmers and ranchers,” said John Kadyszewski, director of ACR. “Our approval of this protocol allows these working landowners to be paid for delivering environmental benefits from actions on their land.”

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American Carbon Registry (www.americancarbonregistry.org), an enterprise of Winrock International, is an Offset Project Registry for the California cap-and-trade program as well as a leading voluntary carbon market offset program recognized for its high standards for environmental integrity.

Marin Carbon Project (marincarbonproject.org) seeks to enhance carbon sequestration in rangeland, agricultural, and forest soils and for landowners and land managers of these landscapes to serve as stewards of soil health and undertake carbon farming in a manner that can improve on-farm productivity, enhance ecosystems, and address climate change.

Terra Global (www.terraglobalcapital.com) is the leader in forest and agriculture greenhouse gas emissions analytics, advice and finance, providing technical expertise and investment capital to their global client base in a collaborative and innovative manner.