

# Improving Salt River Project's Sustainability Goals

## WHY SRP MUST ADOPT STRONGER DECARBONIZATION PLANS

### The Challenge

As the second-largest energy utility in Arizona, SRP has one of the weakest plans among utilities in the West to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. An 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 is the industry standard under the Paris Agreement. Much larger utilities in the region, such as Xcel Energy in Colorado, have plans to reduce climate pollution more than 80% by 2030. In addition, SRP is the only major utility in the West with no plan to shutter its coal plants.



**Coronado Generating Station in St. John's, Arizona**  
*Photo credit: SRP Media Gallery*

### The Goals

- **In 2024, SRP must commit to reducing greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2030.**
- **Emissions reduction measurements must be absolute mass-based.**
- **Closure dates for Coronado and Springerville coal plants must be defined.**

### The Opportunity

SRP has assembled a Sustainability Advisory Group to provide feedback and technical input on the utility's 2035 Corporate Sustainability Goals. Experts from WRA, partner organizations and companies like Google and Apple are part of this working group; convening four times between October and December and again in January 2024. These small-group meetings are a forum for participating stakeholders to present science-based data on stronger, accelerated decarbonization plans to SRP's sustainability team.

Urgent action is necessary to effectively influence SRP's future sustainability goals: SRP staff will make final recommendations to the Board's Strategic Planning Committee in February, and the SRP Board will vote on the updated sustainability goals proposal in early March.

# Mass-based vs SRP's Intensity-based Measuring

Picture any rapidly-growing city. As more people arrive, the amount of energy needed rises, so utilities like SRP provide more megawatt hours. If SRP set a mass-based (or absolute) goal to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions 80% by 2030, that cap would apply to its system regardless of how many new people arrive and more megawatts are added to the grid.

But with an intensity-based metric, emissions are measured relative to a specific unit, typically megawatt hours. SRP's current carbon emissions reduction goal is to reduce the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted by each megawatt hour of electricity generated 65% by 2035, as compared to 2005 levels. This intensity-based goal obscures the true task at hand, which is to reduce the total tons of greenhouse gas pollution entering the atmosphere.

SRP's Integrated System Plan released in October 2023 predicts significant increases in the total number of megawatt hours it will generate. In other words, by increasing the denominator, intensity-based metrics present a misleadingly rosy picture of SRP's climate impact.

All Arizonans deserve cleaner air. Mass-based is the best method of measuring how many tons of CO<sub>2</sub> are pumped into the atmosphere. **We can't fight climate change without reducing carbon emissions from the power sector.**



We are committed to working with SRP staff and board, legislators, city and county officials, business leaders, conservation allies and grassroots organizations to help make SRP's Corporate Sustainability Goals as strong and effective as possible. We welcome your feedback on this process and how we can improve it.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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