

Prize-Winning Approach to Slow Climate Change

By Sharon Parham

As the world experiences yet another record-shattering summer, with unprecedented stretches of scorching heat and deadly wildfires afflicting much of North America and Europe, it is more important than ever that policymakers, businesses, and the public focus on actions that can slow down global warming rapidly. That is the mission of Global Heat Reduction (GHR), an award-winning organization that is drawing attention to climate measures with the greatest potential to reduce planetary heat, especially in the near-term.

Co-founded by Linda Brown, a long-time Napa resident and environmental entrepreneur, GHR taps the latest climate science to help governments and companies determine not only their carbon footprint, but also their heat impact, or “Heatprint”, then identify which climate actions can deliver the most heat reduction over crucial near-term timeframes, like the next 10 years, as well as the longer term.

“Getting ahead of our climate crisis not only means eliminating emissions of carbon dioxide,” said Brown, “but also doubling down on ‘super pollutants’ like methane, black carbon, refrigerants, and ozone that are rapidly warming the earth because of their powerful ability to trap heat.”

Napa’s Climate Action Committee, made up of representatives of the county and its five municipalities, agrees. Earlier this year, they signaled their strong interest in utilizing GHR’s framework to help prioritize actions proposed under the Draft Regional Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (RCAAP). They expect the Plan to be finalized this fall.

“Once the Plan is final, we will be moving forward with implementation,” said Joelle Gallagher, Napa County Supervisor for District 1 and past chair of the Climate Action Committee. “GHR’s analysis can help us focus on actions that will yield the greatest climate benefits while ensuring that taxpayer dollars are being spent wisely.”

GHR recently won the prestigious Keeling Curve Prize, awarded each year by the non-profit Climate Curve, to honor innovative, high-impact climate solutions worldwide. GHR was named one of two 2026 winners in the climate finance category, and one of 10 winners overall from an applicant pool of more than 600, during a ceremony in July emceed by Seth Meyers at the Paul JAS Center in Aspen, Colorado.

“The Keeling Curve Prize winners represent so much for our planet,” said Jacquelyn Francis, Founder and Executive Director of Climate Curve. “Their work is instilling optimism and change in a field often overshadowed by complex, urgent challenges.”

The urgency of addressing climate change was reinforced earlier this year by the World Meteorological Organization and other scientific bodies who reported that the last ten years were also the ten hottest on record. This year, a “super El Niño” is anticipated, with large swaths of the equatorial Pacific Ocean heating up several degrees above average, driving further destabilization including severe flooding, intense droughts, and higher temperatures.

“We can’t afford to wait,” said Brown. “Every year of delayed climate action only increases the difficulty and cost to society. But the good news is that we have the technology and the know-how needed. By looking at the full range of climate drivers and evaluating the near-term benefits of different climate mitigation options, we can still make a difference. It’s time to put these tools to work, and Napa can help lead the way.”

Indeed, Napa has already begun to lead. In 2025, the GHR team conducted a case study for Napa Recycling and Waste Services, focusing on its integrated composting and recycling facility on Devlin Rd. Through this study, GHR was able to shed new light on the substantial climate benefits of Napa Recycling's composting operations, especially over the next decade or two. The scale of these benefits is obscured under conventional climate accounting.

"We are grateful that our county and municipalities recognize the importance of striving toward net zero climate pollutants by 2030, and that they understand the new insights that GHR's Heatprint analysis can bring," said Jim Wilson, a county resident who lost his home during the 2020 fires, as well as a steering committee member of Napa Climate NOW! and mentor to Napa Schools for Climate Action. "We owe it to our kids to make sure they have a livable future."

Actions You Can Take

- Review the Draft RCAAP: <https://climateactionnapa.konveio.com/draft-regional-climate-action-and-adaptation-plan>
- Learn more about GHR: www.heatreduction.com

Sharon Parham is a graphic artist and member of Napa Climate NOW!

Napa Climate NOW! is a local nonprofit citizens' group advocating for smart climate solutions based on the latest climate science, part of 350 Bay Area. Info, napa.350bayareorg

Photo credit: Global Heat Reduction

Photo caption: Linda Brown representing Global Heat Reduction at New York Climate Week (Fall, 2025)

