

Zero Emission Vehicle Ambassador Handbook



Redwood Coast Energy Authority Advanced Fuels & Transportation Program

2019-2020

Contents

Welcome!.....	3
About the Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA).....	5
About RCEA’s Advanced Fuels and Transportation Program	6
RCEA’s ZEV Ambassador Program	7
Key responsibilities	7
Attending RCEA outreach events.....	7
Showcasing your ZEV	8
Qualifications.....	8
Time Commitment.....	8
Benefits to the community.....	9
Event Coordination.....	9
Volunteer Guidelines.....	9
Thank you!.....	11
Resources.....	12

Welcome!

Welcome to the ZEV Ambassador Program, brought to you by the RCEA Advanced Fuels and Transportation team! The ZEV Ambassador Program is a subset of the RCEA ZEV Enthusiast Group which launched in Spring 2018.

The purpose of the ZEV Enthusiast Group is to serve as a public engagement group that fosters community awareness and adoption of ZEVs and EV infrastructure. This group is open to community members that drive plug-in electric vehicles, those who don't drive an EV but are interested in promoting local low-carbon transportation options, and those who want to improve ZEV services that RCEA provides to the community.

The ZEV Ambassador Program is optional for members of the ZEV Enthusiast Group. Not all Enthusiasts need to participate in RCEA community events as Ambassadors, but are encouraged to do so.

By volunteering as a ZEV Ambassador, you play an essential role in helping your community reduce fossil fuel consumption, increase energy efficiency, and advance the use of zero emission vehicles (ZEVs) in the region.

As a ZEV Ambassador, you will help meet the State's goals to increase ZEV awareness, access, and adoption in Humboldt County.

In this guide you will find information about RCEA, the Advanced Fuels and Transportation Program, and the ZEV Ambassador Program design. It also includes basic information on our operational policies, procedures, and an overview of your participation.

You are a part of the clean energy movement and we are excited to host community members committed to addressing energy and natural resource conservation in our region. Your feedback is encouraged as we commit to improve our program services to better serve the community. We look forward to continuing our work together on increasing ZEV awareness in Humboldt County!

Sincerely,

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About the Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA)

RCEA's purpose is to develop and implement sustainable energy initiatives that reduce energy demand, increase energy efficiency, and advance the use of clean, efficient and renewable resources available in the region.

Formed in 2003, the RCEA is a local government joint powers authority of the County of Humboldt, the Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Rio Dell, and Trinidad, and the Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District. The Authority is governed by a board of directors comprised of appointed representatives from each of the nine member-entities (typically the representative is an elected official from the members' own governing body. Many RCEA programs and projects are implemented in partnership with other entities such as the California Energy Commission, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), the Humboldt State University Schatz Energy Research Center, the California Air Resources Board, and other local government stakeholders.

About RCEA's Advanced Fuels and Transportation Program

The State of California has set ambitious goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions through the adoption of zero emissions vehicles (ZEV). In 2012, the Governor's Office issued an executive order to call for 1.5 million zero emission vehicles on California roads by 2025. Recently, Governor Brown accelerated this goal and issued an executive order calling for 5 million ZEVs by 2030. Beyond ZEV targets, California has set a progressive low carbon fuel standard and allocated funding to promote renewable and alternative fuels for transportation.

Funded by the California Energy Commission, RCEA's transportation project team has taken strides to satisfy the 2012 targets (3,000 ZEVs on the road in the North Coast Region by 2025). In 2014, RCEA and SERC jointly created the [North Coast Plug-in Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan](#) to help the North Coast region accomplish BEV adoption goals. This plan was succeeded by nine funded public charging stations, and two phases of BEV implementation activities. In addition, the project team developed the Alternative Fuels Readiness Plan and the Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan.

Current projects consist of monitoring the 14 RCEA owned charging stations and promoting the adoption of ZEVs through ride-and-drive events, tabling, presentations, seminars, social media, fleet analyses, training opportunities, and green fleet policies—to name a few.

RCEA's ongoing ZEV readiness activities continue to focus on light-duty vehicles and the general public, but is also starting to consider medium and heavy-duty equipment such as electric school and transit buses. Sharing advanced fuel vehicle knowledge and personal experiences with the public continues to be an important activity of the transportation team. With our readiness plans in place, we're also eager to grow our local infrastructure and are working to find more funding, such as for charging stations, while also tackling societal perception challenges such as vehicle refueling times and driving range. Infrastructure is still in the early growth phase and needs dedicated attention and funding for our region to fulfill its ZEV adoption goals.

RCEA's ZEV Ambassador Program

The Redwood Coast Energy Authority Advanced Fuels and Transportation Program received grant funding from the California Energy Commission to implement the North Coast Plug-In Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan completed in 2014. One implementation objective is to host, promote, and facilitate a group of “ZEV enthusiasts” consisting of community members eager to assist RCEA’s ZEV efforts and promote low-carbon transportation locally, and improve RCEA’s ZEV community services.

This effort was kicked off in May 2018, where the Enthusiasts shared their desired outcomes and developed a scope of work, which included participating in RCEA outreach events. The goal of the Enthusiast Group is to foster community awareness and adoption of ZEVs and related infrastructure. Potential group activities include participating at outreach events, providing feedback on RCEA’s ZEV program, and sharing ZEV-related resources to other residents of Humboldt County.

The ZEV Ambassadors will undergo training with RCEA staff to become versed in RCEA resources and tools used to engage with the local community. After the training, the Community Strategies team will contact the ZEV Ambassadors for participation in future outreach events. We encourage you to share your knowledge on ZEV technology, relate to the community members, and if an option, showcase your ZEV!

Key responsibilities

- Participate in ZEV Enthusiast meetings
- Attend RCEA outreach events, at your convenience
- Showcase your ZEV at RCEA outreach events, at your convenience

Attending RCEA outreach events

RCEA participates in events throughout the county to reach a wide range of people. We favor events where the public is available and interested in learning about programs such as ZEV promotion. Here are some of the events we’ve done in the past:

- Trinidad Fish Festival, June 2017
- Arcata Oyster Festival, June 2017
- McKinleyville Pony Express Days, June 2017
- Hybrid and Electric Races at Samoa Drag, June 2017
- Expo, Eureka 4th of July Festival, July 2017
- Ride and Drive, Turtle Bay Exploration Eureka, August 2017
- HSU Career Expo 2017

- Samoa Open House 2018
- Expo, Plant Green Sustainability 2018
- Expo, Eureka Natural Foods Earth Day 2018
- Arcata Oyster Festival, June 2018
- Expo, 4th of July in Crescent City 2018

Many events are mostly tabling activities with print and display material to encourage interaction. The public particularly likes expos where we have space to showcase actual cars alongside their owners. Other events include presentations to local clubs or groups.

Showcasing your ZEV

For Enthusiasts who are fortunate enough to drive a ZEV, this is your chance to showcase your vehicle at public events. This is an effective outreach tool that shows actual drivers and their vehicles, and provides a casual, personable way for the public to learn first-hand about owning and driving a ZEV.

When a venue has room to showcase vehicles, we'll ask for participations. Our goal is to provide a variety of vehicles, so sometimes we'll prioritize certain models to ensure a good mix of manufactures and makes for the public to view. We may also aim for a mix of people who own and lease vehicles so that the public can discuss various ownership options.

Qualifications

To qualify as a ZEV Enthusiast by willing and able to:

- Learn about and share knowledge and personal experience with ZEV technology;
- Be willing to engage with the general public through polite, respectful interaction;
- Serve as a representative of a local government agency;
- For volunteers participating in vehicle showcases, [insert employee "registered car and driver license" statement].

Background check?

Time Commitment

- 2 hours of training March 7th
- 1-2 hours to review educational resources
- 1-8 hours for each outreach event

The time commitment is suggested and dependent on each individual Ambassador. RCEA is not requiring you to attend a certain number of events for a specific number of hours. Any participation is welcome and at your leisure.

Benefits to the community

As a ZEV Ambassador, you are given a channel to share your knowledge and experience to fellow community members. Many people lack exposure to advanced transportation technology and are unaware of educational sources. At RCEA outreach events, you are connecting with curious people that are learning about ZEVs for the first time and will pose a variety of questions, comments, and suggestions. Offering your personal experience so others can relate to you is the most effective way to break down pre-conceived barriers and misconceptions specific to ZEV technology. You are improving a community member's understanding and potentially being the reason why they invest in a ZEV. Your participation will spread the awareness of ZEV technology and set our community on the path to reduce emissions, improve air quality, and public health.

As an Ambassador, you get to share your knowledge, give back to your community, promote ZEVs, and help to build the future of transportation. It also looks nice on your resume.

Event Coordination

The Community Strategies Department will contact the ZEV Ambassadors with outreach event opportunities. Some events will be appropriate for showcasing ZEVs, others will simply require the presence of an informed individual to answer questions specific to ZEV technology in general, RCEA specific projects and ZEV technology and charging infrastructure. In the past, local car dealers have participated in our events by showing cars, so owning a ZEV definitely is not a prerequisite to participating!

Volunteer Guidelines

We ask all ZEV Ambassadors to remember the following guidelines:

1. **At a high level: always take a customer-centric approach and provide excellent customer service!** This means you should attentively and efficiently address public inquiries, provide them with resources, be nice, and do what you can to meet their needs. When you don't know the answers to questions, redirect to an RCEA staff member.
2. **Always begin your interaction with a smile; especially if the individual appears to be upset or eager for a heated debate.** If an individual raises their voice or uses a harsh tone, maintain a calm voice and pleasant tone. This proves to be effective in de-escalating what could be a hostile interaction. Do not engage in debate, but rather provide facts in a calm tone.
3. **Escalate as appropriate.** At times, you may be faced with upset or angry members of the public. Maintain a professional, kind, respectful and genuine interaction with all. If the situation escalates, please notify RCEA staff. At no time shall a volunteer stay in a situation that may become abusive or violent.

4. **Don't make up answers to questions for which you are unsure of the answers.** It's better to say "I'm not sure, but I can find the answer for you. Can you write down your contact information so we can give you a call back once we find the answer for you?"
5. **When you don't know the answers to questions, redirect to an RCEA staff member.** As representatives of RCEA, Ambassadors should be familiar with key ZEV resources and programmatic facts, as provided by RCEA. Volunteers will be provided training resources during the Ambassador Training. Additional briefing materials may be provided prior to outreach events. Please review the RCEA website and read the materials in the 'Resource' section below carefully. If the public has questions outside of your expertise, please direct them to the appropriate RCEA staff.
6. **Try to be confident and concise when in conversation with members of the public.** It's better to take your time and answer questions thoroughly and accurately than to rush through responses to questions with incorrect information.
7. **Don't give out your cell phone number or a staff cell phone number.**
8. **If you get in to a conversation that makes you feel afraid or uncomfortable for any reason, immediately ask another team member to assist you.**
A discrete way to do this might be: "Please wait for a moment while I get someone to help you"
9. **If you commit to an event, please show up on time and ready to volunteer.** Notify the designated event staff with reasonable notice about absences, tardiness and any other problems that may prevent you from fulfilling your commitment.
10. **Ambassadors are not expected to be "experts", but your personal experience is tremendously valuable to prospective ZEV buyers, and others interested about ZEVs.**
11. **When sharing your personal experiences related to RCEA, please keep your comments positive and constructive.** You can choose not to answer questions as well. Additionally, all vehicles and technologies have limitations and shortcomings, so be diplomatic when discussing these topics. Provide observations and share news and scientific references and avoid speculation or derogatory statements.
12. **RCEA is a local government agency and serves all citizens.** As such, we ask that volunteers remain unbiased towards programs, organizations, and political affiliations. Additionally, volunteers shall avoid discussions specific to politics, ideology, and other personal topics while actively representing RCEA with the public.
13. **At no time shall a volunteer conduct political campaign or religious activities while also serving as an RCEA representative.**
14. **Volunteers will not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while engaging with the public.**

15. **To be as approachable as possible to all members of the public, we ask that volunteers choose appropriate casual work attire to wear to events.** RCEA staff typically wears clothing absent of any branding when talking with the public, and suggests that volunteers do the same. As a public agency we uphold a non-confrontational and inclusive attitude toward all members of the public, and our volunteers reflect the principles of the agency. If in doubt, check with an RCEA staff member.
16. **Ambassadors will be provided with name badges and potentially other items such as caps to help visibly and officially link volunteers to their service role with RCEA.** Ambassadors are expected to wear their name badge through the duration of the event participation.
17. **Restrain from over-selling the ZEV technology and be mindful of a community member's disinterest.**
18. **As a government agency, we cannot give preferential treatment to any one group, individual, or business.** This means that we cannot recommend a specific car dealership, car model, or charging station manufacturer to the public.
19. **Do not engage in or condone misconduct, harassment, workplace violence or unethical behavior; immediately report any such behavior to an RCEA staff member.**
20. **Have fun meeting new faces and hearing new stories!**

Thank you!

The Redwood Coast Energy Authority appreciate your willingness to lend your time to help increase ZEV adoption and the public's awareness of this technology. With your assistance, we are able to reach many more members of the public than is possible otherwise. We look forward to working with you.

Resources

As a representative of RCEA, we expect Ambassadors to be able to communicate basic information about our ZEV programs and resources.

The EV Ownership 101 presentation is a good starting point.

Various hand-outs will be provided at RCEA outreach events, and we encourage reading through the key hand-outs listed below, so you are able to connect the public with the most appropriate information.

- RCEA ZEV Enthusiast Group Kick-Off Presentation
- Department of Energy List of 2018 Alternative Fuel Vehicle Models (Includes ZEVs)
- Department of Energy List of 2019 Alternative Fuel Vehicle Models (Includes ZEVs)
- California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project: Sample Incentives
- California Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Project: Humboldt Presentation
- EV Charging Station Levels Pyramid
- Permitting Guides (Arcata, Eureka, County)
- EV Ownership 101 Presentation
- Electric Vehicle Charger Selection Guide
- EV Incentives Sheet
- Hydrogen Fueling Station Map
- Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle FAQ Sheet
- Map of RCEA-Owned Charging Stations (REVNet)
- ZEV Enthusiast Meeting #2
- *North Coast and Upstate Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan*
- *North Coast Plug-In Electric Vehicle Readiness Plan*
- *Northwest California Alternative Fuels Readiness Plan*
- EV-A Rate

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