National Efforts Addressing Climate Change
The Kyoto Protocol

• 1988 – UN forms the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
• 1992 – Senate ratifies United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
• 1995 – IPCC makes first statement that human activity is likely affecting global climate
• 1997 – Kyoto Protocol agreed
The Kyoto Protocol

• 1997 – Developed Nations agree to reduce greenhouse gases emissions by an average of 5% from 1990 levels, to be achieved 2008 - 2012

• 1997 – US Senate unanimously passes the Byrd – Hagel non-binding resolution, stating that the US should not sign the Kyoto Protocol

• 1998 – US signs, but does not submit to Senate for ratification
The Kyoto Protocol

• 2001 – President Bush announces opposition to the Kyoto Protocol, siting exemption of China and India, and that it “would cause serious harm to the US economy”
US Climate Change Efforts, After Kyoto

- 2001 – In response to Kyoto, Bush presents voluntary policy to reduce the “intensity” of greenhouse gas emissions by 18% over 10 years.

- 2003 and 2005 – McCain/Lieberman carbon cap and trade bills fail US Senate vote
US Climate Change Efforts, After Kyoto

• 2007 – Global Warming Reduction Act dies in committee in Senate

• 2009 – House passes Clean Energy and Security Act, including cap and trade, it is never brought to vote in Senate

• 2013 – 2 Climate related bills fail to clear committee in the Senate
Copenhagen Agreement

- 2009 – Includes for the first time GHG emission reduction pledges by both developed and developing nations
- Last minute negotiations led by President Obama fail to reach a legally binding agreement
- To save face, parties agree to “take note of” a political statement on GHG emission reduction
Obama Administration: Executive Action and Regulation

- 2013 – Climate Action Plan
  - Regulate GHG Emissions
  - Energy Efficiency
  - Renewable Energy
  - Natural Gas
  - Leading by Example
  - Climate Resilience
  - International Climate Change Leadership
EPA: The Clean Power Plan

• August, 2015 – EPA announces rule to cut GHG emissions from existing power plants by 32% from 2005 levels by 2030
  • States have specific targets based on their energy mix
  • Each state must submit a plan by Sept. 2016, extensions to 2018
  • States to use renewable energy, natural gas, nuclear, and shift from coal-fired plants to achieve goal

• 22 States have filed suit to challenge EPA’s authority to regulate their energy production
Looking Forward:
Paris Climate Conference, Dec. 2015

• Goal – Reach a binding legal agreement on GHG emission reductions by developed and developing nations to limit global temperature rise to 2°C

• To take effect in 2020

• Analysis of current reduction commitments conclude they are probably not enough to meet the 2°C goal