

SETTING THE STAGE FOR DIRECT AIR CAPTURE IN WYOMING (FACTSHEET)



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In May, C2ES convened more than 50 stakeholders from government, private companies, labor, academia, and non-governmental organizations at a [roundtable](#) in Laramie, Wyoming, to dive into the potential economic opportunity of developing direct air capture (DAC) in the state.

Discussions explored where technological, regulatory, or practical factors might pose challenges. While many participants expressed skepticism about whether the technology would live up to the high expectations of its strongest proponents, all shared excitement about the technology and expressed optimism that new DAC projects could bring jobs and investment to communities across the state, especially those historically reliant on fossil fuel extraction or utilization.

Participants called for greater community education about what DAC is and the potential benefits and risks of deploying it. Other participants highlighted the need for holistic engagement with local communities of residents and workers that is both deep and consistent.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- There is a need for more regulatory policy to clarify land rights and usage for DAC technology.
- The public must be educated about how this technology can be safely built in their communities.
- DAC projects must be sited properly and responsibly—communities, especially tribal communities, should be engaged early and often.
- The state's energy system needs coordinated improvements to better accommodate renewable energy and DAC facilities, while also leveraging existing infrastructure.
- Permitting reform is essential to this process.
- There are ample opportunities for the state's education sector to support DAC deployment. This could include project risk/benefit analysis and workforce training programs, among other areas.

You can read the full brief *Setting the Stage for Direct Air Capture in Wyoming*—which contains background on direct air capture, key themes from the roundtable, and the full set of policy recommendations—on the C2ES website.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Congress** should create categorical exclusions for certain activities (e.g., small well design and injection modifications) under the National Environmental Policy Act that can streamline geologic storage projects without compromising the safety or environmental impacts of these projects.
- **State and federal agencies** should explore ways to address long-term liability for stored carbon using a shared liability model similar to Wyoming's experience with the abandoned mine land (AML) program.
- The **Wyoming Business Council** should coordinate with the state's community colleges to characterize the benefits and risks of DAC projects to local communities, estimate job opportunities for local workforces, and develop training programs necessary to build needed competencies for the carbon management sector.
- **Wyoming's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)** and the **U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** need to ensure proper regulations are being enacted to clarify land rights across state, private, and federal lands.

SUPPORT THE EXPANSION OF A LOW-CARBON ENERGY SYSTEM TO ENSURE THE INTEGRITY OF DAC PROJECTS

- **Wyoming state government, utilities, and companies** should leverage existing infrastructure by adopting carbon capture, utilization, and storage (CCUS) retrofits on existing fossil-based power plants to increase their competitiveness to export clean power to other states with net-zero targets and provide carbon-free power to DAC facilities in the state.

- **Congress** should enact permitting reform legislation that can enable expansion of power transmission and create economic opportunities for DAC developers instead of relying on developing "renewable islands" just to power these facilities.
- The **Wyoming Energy Authority** should build a better energy system to accommodate renewable energy and DAC facilities, and also needs to leverage existing infrastructure.

RESPONSIBLY SITE DAC PROJECTS

- **State agencies** should identify low-impact sites, including previously industrially disturbed lands, and require project developers to prioritize these sites for their projects.
- **State agencies** should require project developers to demonstrate specific community benefits—such as job creation, workforce development programs, improved transportation or housing infrastructure, or access to renewable energy—in their project proposals.
- **Companies and governments** should consult tribal nations early in the project development process and work collaboratively to explore economic development opportunities for tribal communities along the carbon management value chain (e.g., equipment manufacturing, capture facilities, pipelines, storage sites).
- **Wyoming state agencies**—in partnership with **project developers, labor organizations, and community colleges**—should develop apprenticeship programs that can support the transition of traditional fossil energy workers to carbon management jobs to take advantage of the existing skills of fossil energy workers.



The Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES) is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to secure a safe and stable climate by accelerating the global transition to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions and a thriving, just, and resilient economy.