



NRDC ENVIRONMENTAL OFFSET POLICY

Please visit www.nrdc.org/our-sustainability for the latest information.

Environmental offsets are positive mitigation measures implemented to help counterbalance negative environmental impacts. Our negative environmental impact stems from the operations of our offices and our movement around the world to perform and share our work. We purchase offsets for both our generation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and water use:

- **Before purchasing a carbon offset**, we reduce direct and indirect (embodied) energy use, and shift to renewable energy when feasible.
- **Before purchasing Water Restoration Certificates® (WRCs)**, we reduce direct water use and implement water conservation measures.

We aspire to have our offset purchases be well-implemented and effectively managed to ensure it supports a secure water future, reduces GHG emissions, and/or increases sequestration while providing additional benefits besides environmental mitigation. **Offsets are not the solution to climate change, but rather one mechanism that can support our transition to a sustainable future.**

HOW WE CALCULATE OUR IMPACT

Annually, we calculate our operational GHG emissions and water use impact for the previous fiscal year (July 1 - June 30) using industry best practices. For operational building emissions, the following NRDC offices are included in our calculations: Beijing, China; Bozeman, MT; Chicago, IL; New York, NY; San Francisco, CA; Santa Monica, CA; Washington, D.C.

Our areas of impact and how we calculate them are as follows:

- **Operational building emissions.** Using WRI's [GHG Protocol](#), we calculate the carbon dioxide equivalent in metric tons (MT CO₂e) resulting from energy use.
 - **Scope 1.** Emission generation from on-site combustion, primarily natural gas and biofuel for space heating.
 - **Scope 2.** Emission generation from energy produced off-site (grid electricity, district heat, or steam). We calculate and report both market-based and location-based emissions:
 - **Market-based.** We purchase renewable energy via renewable energy credits (REC). These RECs are then offset based on location, unless we are able to produce electricity on our local grid through a remote-net metering or community solar arrangement.

- **Verified Emissions Reduction.** Ensures that 1 Verified Emissions Reduction is equivalent to 1 tonne of CO₂e.
- **Transaction oversight.** The Green e-Climate program ensures that GHG reduction projects are verified by a program (such as the Climate Action Reserve, Gold Standard, and/or Verified Carbon Standard) that supports additionality and result in real, verified, enforceable, and permanent reductions. It takes oversight further by monitoring how offsets are transacted and advertised in the retail market in order to avoid double-counting of the same reduction.

WATER OFFSET CRITERIA

- **Water Restoration Certificates®.** We purchase WRCs that provide Verified Instream Inflow Benefits through the Bonneville Environmental Foundation in the amount of 1 credit per 1,000 gallons used. These credits directly support the restoration of natural water systems. It promotes biodiversity, healthy plants, biological communities, water storage, and infiltration in wetlands and watersheds.
- **Diversity of projects.** Bonneville Environmental Foundation's WRC projects supports a portfolio of water efforts including water security, management, restoration and infrastructure across the United States.
- **Verification.** Third-party verification bodies (i.e., National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, and LimnoTech) review the accredited WRCs restoration project to ensure that the projects occur and provide the most environmental and water benefits.