

# Environment and Energy Committee

## VISION STATEMENT

### Public and Private Sector Sustainability Initiatives

#### Background

ACEC members engage in a wide range of engineering works that propel the nation's economy, and enhance and safeguard America's quality of life. America's continued prosperity and welfare rely on a clear understanding of both how our built environment relates with our natural environment, and on strong professional commitments to achieve and sustain through our work the simultaneous goals of financial performance, community interaction, and environmental stewardship.

The demonstrable consequences of certain societal actions – and inactions – are now measured in units of diminishing quality of life, of unreliable sources of clean water, of failing infrastructure, and of faltering natural ecosystems that support and sustain our natural resource-based industries and services. Conditions are worsening and are placing tremendous strains on the nation's and the world's institutions. Time is quickly running out to not only recognize these consequences but to change our approaches and singular solutions. The Environment and Energy Committee supports opportunities to achieve engineering and policy solutions that maximize productive outputs and services while improving/sustaining community, financial, and environmental resources.

#### Position:

For these reasons, The Environment and Energy Committee believes that making our built environment sustainable while maintaining and improving the quality of life for all is the critical challenge of the 21st century. Accordingly, the Committee recommends the following actions:

- Establish strong, candid and credible dialog with the American people in order inform and share information about the nature and extent of the problems and risks associated with non-sustainable development.
- Devise and implement a system to continuously analyze and assess environmental conditions, infrastructure health and resource availability.
- Create an environment for innovation, one which fosters the development and application of new and more sustainable technologies while enabling the practitioners to share equitably both the risks and the rewards.
- Make the necessary investments to shore up, maintain and upgrade our nation's infrastructure, so that it becomes more sustainable and resilient.
- Work globally to address the pressing issues such as energy demand, global climate change, drought and poverty.