



Weld County Natural Gas Coalition

Marketing Activities

2012

CDOT PUBLIC AWARENESS & MARKETING PROJECT STATUS REPORT

In 2010, the Weld County Natural Gas Coalition allied oil and gas industry professionals, transportation planners, educators, vehicle conversion specialists, automobile and truck dealers, fleet managers and civic and business leaders under the direction of Weld County Commissioner Barbara Kirkmeyer to develop a comprehensive marketing plan for natural gas. The “Alternative Fuel Corridor Plan: A Blueprint for Success” presented the gas industry’s economic impact, status and projections; provided grant background, impetus and funding requirements; established the purpose and goals of the initiative; made the environmental and economic case for natural gas; and garnered the commitment necessary to effectively promote natural gas. The plan laid out three primary phases:

1. **OUTREACH:** Promoting Natural Gas as **THE** Alternative Transportation Fuel
2. **VEHICLES:** Encouraging the Conversion to and Production of Natural Gas Vehicles
3. **FUELING STATIONS:** Establishing a Natural Gas Supply Infrastructure

Each of these goals was simultaneously pursued and refined.

1. OUTREACH: Promoting Natural Gas as **THE** Alternative Transportation Fuel

From 2010 through 2012, representatives from the Coalition made presentations at 28 events (attached) exposing more than 95,700 people to the concept of using natural gas as a transportation fuel. They touted the abundant supply, affordability, safety, and environmental benefits of this natural resource that is domestically produced, much of it in Weld County. Brochures detailing these attributes along with maps of existing and planned CNG stations were produced and distributed. Case studies of CNG/LNG usage in fleets of light, medium and heavy duty trucks and passenger vehicles bolstered the economic and performance rationale for natural gas as a transportation fuel. Armed with the intelligence gathered from these meetings, studies and contacts, fleet managers attending the meeting in June 2012, were presented with a compelling array of information and speakers.

A radio campaign potentially reaching an audience of a million listeners advertised the benefits of natural gas as **THE** alternative transportation fuel. Four radio stations, K99, Tri102, KXBG and KCOL, serving northern Colorado aired hundreds of ads in June, July, August and December informing listeners that the natural gas produced in Weld County was abundant, safe, clean, affordable, and available in Firestone, Greeley, Fort Lupton and Kersey.

Scott James, host of KCOL’s Rocky Mountain Viewpoints radio show, interviewed Commissioner Kirkmeyer in September. Her case for natural gas vehicles was thorough, knowledgeable and compelling, and personal since her private vehicle runs on CNG.



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Newspaper ads were placed in the *Greeley Tribune* and *Carbon Valley Farmer and Miner* announcing CNG station openings and the benefits of natural gas. Articles about natural gas vehicles have appeared in the *Greeley Tribune* and *Denver Post* and on *Fox 31 News*.

The Weld Smart Energy website www.WeldSmartEnergy.org, features information on CNG stations, the benefits of natural gas including costs, safety and supply, environmental comparisons, incentives, activities, photos and upcoming events.

2. VEHICLES: Encouraging the Conversion to and Production of Natural Gas Vehicles

The marketing plan set a target of 150 vehicles for conversion to CNG/LNG. Weld County was among the first to convert many of their vehicles to natural gas, with a total of 36 light and medium duty trucks, passenger vehicles, and two LNG heavy duty trucks operating on natural gas at the end of 2012. In addition, Encana, Noble and Anadarko are converting their fleets to CNG. Noble Energy has subsidized the purchase of CNG school buses, fire engines and municipal vehicles. Many Weld County communities, school districts, and individuals have also converted their private vehicles from gas to CNG. The visibility of these 150 CNG vehicles is critical for the driving public to recognize natural gas as a viable transportation fueling alternative; however, they must also see CNG stations featuring lower prices. That leads us to the next goal.

3. FUELING STATIONS: Establishing a Natural Gas Supply Infrastructure

While the public awareness campaign was underway, fleet managers and municipalities were converting and purchasing CNG vehicles, bids were being solicited and awarded for the construction of four CNG fueling stations throughout Weld County. Each of the four stations held grand openings that received excellent press coverage (attached) and were attended by county commissioners, local civic and business leaders, industry representatives, several interested parties and the public. At the Fort Lupton station opening, Mayor Tommy Holton arrived in his one-day old city CNG pick-up truck and conducted a fueling demonstration.

With the opening of:

SkyBlu in Firestone, June 29

SkyBlu in Greeley, October 18

Zeit Energy (North Station) in Fort Lupton, December 19

Zeit Energy (Kramer's Wedge Store) in Kersey, December 21

Weld County established a natural gas fueling infrastructure that offers convenient locations and excellent pricing to a large number of CNG vehicles.



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ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

The outreach efforts will continue, with presentations at meetings, service clubs, tradeshow, industry events and conferences ongoing.

The next phase calls for 1,000 vehicles using natural gas to be on the road in the next five years. As part of an initiative with several governors signing a memorandum of understanding promoting natural gas, Governor Hickenlooper visited American car manufacturers in Detroit to appeal for OEM natural gas vehicles that will be purchased for the Colorado state fleet. Weld County plans to expand their natural gas fleet. WGNGC will continue to work with the natural gas industry to subsidize the conversion and purchase of municipal and school district vehicles to demonstrate their reliability and performance and increase the number of vehicles using natural gas.

Existing stations will be advertised and their sales monitored, and if volume dictates, additional stations will be planned.

Throughout the marketing campaign, WGNGC solicited private funds to pay for meals, promotional products, events and advertising to leverage and extend grant funding. Partnerships with other organizations like Clean Cities, regions, government agencies, Weld County officials and municipalities, school districts and other educational institutions and industry groups generated excellent participation at the Fleet Event, station openings and enabled WGNGC to disseminate their message to a targeted audience of thousands of interested people.

WGNGC is working with Aims Community College to develop NGV and infrastructure certification programs to provide the industry with the trained professionals that will be needed to ensure continued growth and prosperity.

Four stations operating, 150 vehicles on the road and thousands of people learning the benefits of natural gas as THE alternative transportation fuel signals a stunning success for the Weld Natural Gas Vehicle Coalition and CDOT.