MEDIA AND PERCEPTION

What a Difference a Decade Makes

National Renewable Energy Marketing Conference
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SUCCESS SOARS WITH THE WIND:
2-YEAR-OLD BOULDER COMPANY GIVES CONSUMERS A RENEWABLE CHOICE
Green power makes the world better for future generations
Green Power: Buyer Beware
Utilities are offering renewable options to customers for a fee—but most of the extra revenue is going to marketing
Other articles by same author for BW

• **The Dirty Truth About Clean Coal** 06/19/08
• **E-Waste: The Dirty Secret of Recycling Electronics** 10/15/08
• **The College Credit-Card Hustle** 07/17/08
• **Little Green Lies** 12/31/06
• **Click Fraud's Secret Problem** 12/01/06
Energy firm offsets pollution with trees
Do carbon offsets live up to their promise?
FTC Asks if Carbon-Offset Money Is Well Spent
Toronto Star: July 26, 2008

Carbon offsets a con job to salve our consciences
Washington Post: October 6, 2008

There's a Gold Mine
In Environmental Guilt
Carbon-Offset Sales Brisk Despite Financial Crisis
The GAO Report:

*Carbon Offsets: The U.S. Voluntary Market is Growing, but Quality Assurance Poses Challenges for Market Participants*

released to the public on 9/26/08
"The report paints a picture of trading practices that are so complex and opaque that they're ripe for fraud," said Rep. Joe Barton (R-Texas), ranking member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

"Suspicions confirmed. GAO found the new carbon offset trading marketers offer consumers no real assurance that backing their beliefs with their money does a lick of good. In fact, the GAO suggests the opposite."
But did they find a smoking gun?

In fact, no.

- The report found a fast-growing voluntary market (66% increase in supply from 2004 to 2007) that is developing quality offsets independent of government oversight.
- The report did not recommend executive action.
- Many of the current issues in the market the report outlined in additionality, permanence, double-counting, verification and monitoring, and transparency.
- In short, the report outlines the market’s need for Green-e Climate— independent oversight that requires strict standards for offset quality, measurement, and verification, and transparency for consumers about their purchases.
- It also suggests this is best done in the private sector, where it won’t raise prices or stifle innovation.
One more perception issue:
The GAO questioned RECs credibility as offsets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credibility of Offset Projects (31 responses – who? Unknown)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ag Methane</td>
<td>3.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fuel Switching</td>
<td>3.39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landfill Methane</td>
<td>3.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coal Mine Methane</td>
<td>2.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial Gas</td>
<td>2.82</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Non-REC renewable energy</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.67</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Energy Efficiency</td>
<td>2.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afforestation</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reforestation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoided Deforestation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ag Soil Carbon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Range soil carbon</td>
<td>1.81</td>
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<tr>
<td>RECs</td>
<td>1.26</td>
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</tbody>
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We agree that RECs are not offsets, but one method of tracking renewable energy generation.

source GAO-08-1048
The Center for Resource Solutions

A nonprofit organization working nationally and internationally to fight climate change by building policies and consumer-protection mechanisms in renewable energy, greenhouse gas reductions, and energy efficiency.

**Green-e Energy**: Launched in 1997 to provide consumer protection for the green power markets in North America.

**Green-e Marketplace**: Launched in 2005 to verify green power claims made by companies purchasing renewable energy for their operations.

**Green-e Climate**: Launched in 2008 to provide consumer protection for the carbon offset market.
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