

'Green Machines' Tour Hits the Road

UAW & Ecology Center Campaign for Jobs & Cleaner Environment

By Claudette Juska

As the first U.S.-made hybrid was unveiled at Ford Motor Co.'s Kansas City Assembly Plant, a coalition of environmental and labor leaders launched the 'Green Machines' Tour, a traveling educational campaign to support new fuel-efficient technologies in the U.S.

The Aug. 4 debut of Ford's new Escape Hybrid provided an ideal backdrop for the 'Green Machines' Tour kick-off event. The new hybrid makes Ford Motor Co. the first domestic automaker to introduce hybrid-electric technology to the mainstream market, and also the first in the popular small SUV segment. The Escape Hybrid gets up to 36 miles per gallon in city driving, more than a 50% improvement over the standard Escape. It also has extremely low emis-

technologies in the U.S. The tour will bring together environmental groups and labor organizations, historically at odds over fuel-economy standards, to demonstrate their joint support for advanced fuel-efficient technologies, including hybrid-electric vehicles.

"The Escape Hybrid is a winner for both jobs and the environment," says Charles Griffith, Auto Project Direc-

Society. The event included a press conference and an educational forum that reviewed fuel-efficient technologies, policy initiatives to promote energy efficiency, and the role of "blue-green" alliances. UAW Local 249, whose members build the Escape Hybrid at the Kansas City, Missouri, plant, hosted the event.

The Green Machines Tour will continue making stops at UAW-organized

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— Charles Griffith, Ecology Center Auto Project Director

tor of the Ecology Center. "There is enormous potential for revitalizing auto manufacturing in the nation's heartland, while at the same time making positive environmental steps to reduce

production sites throughout the fall. In addition to hybrid technology, much of the tour will focus on the production of advanced conventional vehicle technologies, including advanced engines, transmissions, and vehicle load reductions that can each improve fuel-economy by as much as 8% per vehicle. These technologies will in many cases be produced in large volumes and be included in millions of future vehicles, which could play a significant role in leading the entire U.S. vehicle fleet towards increased fuel economy.

At many of the tour sites, production of these new advanced technologies has meant significant investment by the U.S. auto industry and preservation or creation of several hundred jobs. In Michigan alone, the 'Green Machines' Tour will be visiting up to ten plants that together have recently seen over \$2.3 billion in investment and the preservation of over 1,400 jobs. Other Tour locations include sites in Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. For more information about the Tour, visit www.greenmachinestour.org.



Above: coalition members (from left to right) Jeff Rickert (Research Director for the Apollo Alliance), Matt Snell (UAW International Rep), Mike Perry (President UAW Local 249), Charles Griffith (Auto Project Director at the Ecology Center), Jill De Witt (Burroughs Audubon Society Representative), Emil Ramirez (United Steel Workers Representative), Dave Hamilton (Sierra Club Global Warming and Energy Program Director)

sions, achieving the California Advanced Technology Partially Zero Emission Vehicle (AT-PZEV) standard.

Organized by the Ecology Center, the 'Green Machines' Tour aims at increasing awareness of American-made vehicles that can help improve fuel economy. The campaign will also promote new policies that encourage greater investments in new fuel-efficient

the release of greenhouse gases and to reduce America's dependence on foreign oil. Environmental concern and supporting good union jobs can now go hand-in-hand."

The Tour's kick-off event was jointly organized by a coalition that included leaders from the Sierra Club, the United Auto Workers, the Steelworkers, the Apollo Alliance, and the Audubon

Claudette Juska is part of the Ecology Center's Auto Project team.