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NATURAL GAS AND HYBRID VEHICLES STILL STARS, DIESELS STILL NO-SHOWS IN ANNUAL RANKING OF TOP ECO-FRIENDLY VEHICLES

Washington, DC—With the auto world focused on fuel efficiency in the face of \$100-per-barrel oil, new fuel economy requirements, and concern about climate change, the American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) today named the year's "greenest" and "meanest" vehicles, along with environmental scorings of all model year 2008 cars and passenger trucks. This announcement marks the eleventh year ACEEE has published its widely-respected rankings. The vehicle scores are part of *ACEEE's Green Book® Online*, ACEEE's environmental guide to cars and trucks, available at greencars.org

Earning the "greenest vehicle" title for the fifth consecutive year is Honda's natural gas-powered Civic GX. Hybrid-electric vehicles also continue to perform well in ACEEE's annual ranking, despite being disproportionately affected by changes to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's fuel economy calculations. The Toyota Prius and Honda Civic Hybrid claim spots two and three, while the highly-anticipated Smart Fortwo Convertible and the Toyota Yaris complete the top five, showcasing the environmental benefits of smaller passenger vehicles. Others on the "Greenest" list include conventional and hybrid-electric vehicles from Honda, Toyota, Mini, and Ford. The 2008 Ford Focus comfortably takes the 9th spot in ACEEE's annual ranking, reversing last year's shutout of domestic manufacturers.

"Hybrids stand out, even after being taken down a notch by the new fuel economy calculations," said ACEEE vehicle analyst Shruti Vaidyanathan. "And sales rose by a whopping 40% last year. This interest in hybrid vehicles should shine the spotlight on other green vehicle technologies that can significantly improve fuel efficiency."

Widely regarded as the pre-eminent buyer's guide to environment-friendly passenger cars, trucks, and SUVs, greencars.org provides the facts necessary to examine the eco-performance of any 2008 model. Vehicles are analyzed on the basis of a "Green Score," a singular measure that incorporates unhealthy tailpipe emissions, fuel consumption, and the emissions of gases that cause global warming.

This year's "Meanest Vehicles for the Environment" list is dominated by European imports; only three domestic models make an appearance. Diesel-powered vehicles continue to perform poorly on ACEEE's annual ranking due to the high levels of environmentally damaging nitrogen oxides and particulate matter they release, despite greater fuel efficiency. The eagerly-awaited "fifty-state" diesel that should greatly boost these vehicles' environmental scores is still missing in this year's offerings. Once again, the diesel-powered Volkswagen Touareg receives the dubious honor of being the year's most environment-unfriendly vehicle, leading a pack of diesel-powered vehicles that includes the Mercedes-Benz GL320 CDI, R320 CDI, and ML320 CDI, and the Jeep Grand Cherokee. Rounding out the "dirty dozen" are low sales-volume sports cars and heavier vehicles: the Bugatti Veyron, Mercedes-Benz G55 AMG, Hummer H2, GMC Yukon 2500, Bentley Azure, and Bentley Arnage. "We're looking to diesels to help reduce

global warming emissions, yet they're still hanging out at environmental rock bottom," said ACEEE Transportation Director Therese Langer.

The **greencars.org** Web site also identifies a selection of top widely-available models in each vehicle class. This "Greener Choices" list includes larger vehicles, such as the Toyota Tacoma, Nissan Frontier pickup, and the Chevrolet Tahoe Hybrid C1500. Passenger cars such as the Honda Fit and Hyundai Sonata also top their respective classes. As the list demonstrates, consumers can make "greener choices" whether they need a sedan, minivan, pickup truck, or SUV.

"The Greener Choices aspect of the Green Book is good news for U.S. automakers, because it shows that higher-mileage choices are available in all vehicle classes," said ACEEE Policy Director Bill Prindle. "By moving new designs toward the best performers in each class, automakers can get a head start on meeting Congress' new fuel economy standards."

In addition to highlighting the year's "Greenest," "Meanest," "Greener Choices," and best-in-class lists, the greencars.org Web site contains informational write-ups on model year 2008 highlights, a consumer primer on vehicles and the environment, and advice on how to buy green when shopping for a new car or truck.

Summary "Green Scores" of the 1,300+ configurations of all model year 2008 vehicles are made available to subscribers of ACEEE's *Green Book*[®] *Online* interactive database along with each configuration's fuel economy, health-related pollution impacts, global warming emissions, and estimated fuel expenses. Subscribers can also build custom lists for comparing vehicles. Monthly and annual subscriptions to ACEEE's *Green Book*[®] *Online* are available at **greencars.org**. Press materials are available from ACEEE Publications. For further information, contact:

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