

2011 Green Car of the Year® Finalists Revealed

Winner to be Announced at the LA Auto Show Nov. 18

LOS ANGELES - Green Car Journal announced today its five finalists for the 2011 Green Car of the Year®, including the 2011 Chevrolet Volt, 2011 Ford Fiesta, 2011 Hyundai Sonata Hybrid, 2011 Lincoln MKZ Hybrid and the 2011 Nissan LEAF. For the sixth consecutive year, this increasingly important award will be announced during a press conference at the LA Auto Show Press Days on Nov. 18.

The Green Car of the Year® award is a program that honors environmental leadership in the automobile field and recognizes vehicles that become available to consumers during the award year. For the first time, the Green Car of the Year® finalists include two primarily electric-drive vehicles in addition to two hybrids and a high mile-per-gallon, gasoline internal combustion engine.

"These five 2011 Green Car of the Year® finalists reflect an auto industry in transition," said Ron Cogan, editor and publisher of Green Car Journal and editor of GreenCar.com. "It wasn't long ago when electric drive was a novelty. Now, it's expected that auto manufacturers will include electric drive in some form among their model offerings."

While four of the five Green Car of the Year® nominees do incorporate electric drive, the Ford Fiesta nominee underscores that internal combustion continues to evolve in important ways. This hatchback achieves up to 40 EPA estimated highway fuel economy, running on conventional gasoline. Along with vehicles incorporating electric drive, a new generation of internal combustion gasoline and clean diesel models are expected to push efficiencies ever higher in the coming years.

Dozens of potential nominees weighed in during the selection process. Green Car Journal editors considered vehicles employing all fuels and technologies in the effort to raise the bar in environmental performance, including high efficiency gasoline internal combustion, advanced diesel, hybrids, electrics and vehicles capable of running on alternative fuels. In the Green Car of the Year® program, nominees must stand out as exemplary models that forward environmental performance in meaningful and quantifiable ways. Market significance and "newness" are also factors. All nominees must be on sale by January 1 of the award year.

Jurors include leaders of the nation's top environmental organizations, including Carl Pope, chairman of the Sierra Club; Frances Beinecke, president of the Natural Resources Defense Council; Jean-Michel Cousteau, president of Ocean Futures Society and Matt Petersen, president of Global Green USA. Also, Jay Leno, noted auto enthusiast and host of the "Tonight Show," as well as automotive icon Carroll Shelby join Green Car Journal editors in rounding out the 2011 jury.