



# Fall Report

## Three more cities poised to ban the bag

### Bend, Ashland and Salem call for protecting our rivers and our ocean

This summer, we continued our campaign to ban the bag from cities across Oregon. Carrying the confidence of having already won bag bans in Portland, Corvallis and Eugene, we pushed for three more cities: Bend, Ashland and Salem, to follow in their footsteps and take action to keep plastic out of the Pacific.

#### 400 Bend citizens, 49 businesses

In July, Environment Oregon held an event to bring Bend citizens and local businesses together to call on the city council to ban plastic bags. So far, more than 49 businesses, including Patagonia, have signed on in support, while more than 400 citizens have signed petitions, including world-famous surfer and Bend resident, Gerry Lopez.

#### Film screening in Ashland

Our campaign to ban the bag in Ashland kicked off with a free screening of the film “Bag It,” the winner of the Ashland Independent Film Festival Audience Choice Award in 2010.

Rogue Riverkeeper, Jackson County Master Recyclers, nearly 100 businesses, as well as the Northwest Grocery Association, have all joined Environment Oregon in working to ban the bag in Ashland. More than 500 citizens have also signed petitions in support of the ban.

“But we need city councilors to take action to protect the Rogue River and the Pacific,” said Nina Gillespie, Ashland organizer with Environment Oregon.



▲ Outside Portland’s City Hall after banning the bag

#### “Bag Monster” in Salem

More than 900 citizens and 27 businesses have joined our call to ban bags in Salem. The Bag Monster made an appearance at a media event at Riverfront Park and later joined dozens of citizens and City Councilor Laura Tesler at a screening of “Bag It” at the public library.

And that’s not all.

In early August, we took our first steps in Lake Oswego, Tigard and Beaverton by delivering thousands of petitions from local citizens who support a plastic bag ban.

Environment Oregon hopes the progress made this summer will mean that in the months to come, we’ll be announcing new victories for keeping plastic out of the Pacific.



### more online

For more information on our efforts to ban the bag in Oregon, visit [www.EnvironmentOregon.org](http://www.EnvironmentOregon.org) or Facebook us at [Facebook.com/Enviroregon](https://www.facebook.com/Enviroregon).

◀ Plastic bags in the Pacific harm wildlife like sea turtles and puffins.



## To our members

As director of an organization like this one, with big goals of protecting Oregon’s environment, it’s hard to slow down. As soon as one campaign goal is achieved, there’s another behind it.

But while working with my staff to write this newsletter to you, it’s clear that the last few months have been huge for us. After celebrating the passage of HB 2893 in the Legislature, a victory for Oregon’s solar energy future, there was no time to rest.

As you probably know, banning plastic bags from Oregon has long been one of our biggest priorities, and I feel confident that our big push to ban the bag in three more cities will help build the critical momentum to win our ultimate goal of making Oregon the first state on the West Coast to do away with the bag for good.

So I just want to say thank you, and as you read this newsletter, I hope you feel as much of a sense of accomplishment as I do. I look forward to more victories with you at our side. Thanks.

Sarah Higginbotham  
State Director

## Recent action

### Oregon ranks 13th for solar

Oregon ranks 13th in the nation for solar installations per capita, according to a report released this fall by Environment Oregon Research and Policy Center. The report, “Lighting the Way,” documents the progress of solar growth and names the top 12 solar states in America.

Environment Oregon has a goal of continuing to move the state up in that ranking by putting up 250,000 solar roofs by 2025. Oregon could produce 30 times as much solar energy as it does today—preventing 3.8 million tons of carbon pollution.

“The 12 states that were ranked as the top solar states in the country have strong policies that enable more homeowners, businesses and utilities to go solar,” said Sarah Higginbotham, state director. “It’s time for legislators to make sure more clean energy technology ends up on a quarter million solar roofs right here in Oregon.”

### ... and 6th for ocean protection

Oregon ranks sixth in working to protect state ocean waters, according to a report released by Environment Oregon, the Marine Conservation Institute and Mission Blue. The SeaStates report is the first national ranking of coastal states’ efforts to protect their ocean waters with “no-take” Marine Protected Areas, the best tool to help oceans thrive.

“Despite the stunning views off of Oregon’s coast and glimpses of whales and sea otters that so many of us love, Oregon is only ranked sixth for ocean protection,” said Sarah Higginbotham, state director for Environment Oregon. “While we applaud the great steps Oregon has taken to protect the Pacific in recent years, only 0.31 percent of our coastal waters are currently protected by ‘no-take’ Marine Protected Areas.”

Free from fishing, oil drilling, and other extractive uses, “no-take” Marine Protected Areas allow areas to thrive and recover their former abundance and health.



Flickr user: moosealope/Creative Commons

▲ Humpback whale off the Oregon coast

# What Obama's climate plan means for Oregon

President Obama announced a climate plan that will set limits on carbon pollution from power plants, advance energy efficiency and increase the nation's commitment to renewable energy. In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, record drought in many states, and the largest wildfires in Oregon in over a century, the president's plan to address global warming was loudly applauded by Environment Oregon and many others.

"All of us who have felt the effects of global warming, or simply worried about what's in store for our kids, can take comfort in knowing that President Obama has put the nation on a path toward a cleaner, healthier and safer future," said Environment Oregon's State Director Sarah Higginbotham.

## More intense storms, costly wildfires

Left unchecked, global warming is projected to bring to Oregon more intense storms and costly wildfires. Scientists have warned that the window is rapidly closing for making the necessary cuts in carbon pollution to protect future generations from the worst consequences of global warming. To respond to this threat, the president's plan contains several key components. It will:

- **Limit carbon pollution from new and existing power plants.** The president directed the Environmental Protection Agency to set limits on carbon pollution from new and existing power plants, which currently lack any such federal limits, despite being the largest single-source of the carbon pollution fueling global warming.
- **Invest in energy efficiency.** New efficiency measures for buildings and new appliances will cut carbon pollution by reducing our overall energy demand.
- **Build more renewable energy.** The plan focuses on expanding production of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar, especially on public lands.
- **Support affected communities.** The president's plan will help ensure that

communities are better equipped to prepare for and recover from the impacts of global warming.

- **Rebuild U.S. leadership internationally.** The president's plan calls for the U.S. to actively engage in international efforts to address global warming.

"His actions to reduce carbon emissions from coal-fired power plants, improve appliance standards, and promote renewable energy on public lands will reduce our nation's carbon footprint while making the U.S. more competitive," said Gov. John Kitzhaber.

## Focus on cutting carbon pollution

Environment Oregon offered special praise for the president's pledge to cut carbon pollution from existing power plants.

"Carbon pollution from power plants is a huge part of the global warming problem," said Higginbotham. "We also know that this plan is just one important step in a multi-year effort, and that the proof of the plan's success will be in the pudding."



Daniel Borman/Creative Commons

## more online

To learn more about our work to curb global warming, visit:  
[www.EnvironmentOregon.org](http://www.EnvironmentOregon.org)

▲ *President Obama speaks to a group of students about the need for alternative energies*



www.aim.org

## Gina McCarthy confirmed as new EPA administrator

On July 18, in a bipartisan vote of 59 to 40, the U.S. Senate confirmed Gina McCarthy as Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The confirmation came within a month of President Obama instructing the EPA to cut carbon pollution from power plants as part of his plan to fight global warming.

In response, Sarah Higginbotham, director of Environment Oregon, released the following statement: "Gina McCarthy's confirmation is long-awaited good news for the planet and Oregon and should not surprise anyone remotely familiar with her record.

"McCarthy's stellar work under both Republican and Democratic governors, coupled with her track record at the EPA proves that when it comes to protecting our families' health and environment, it isn't about which party or who you work for. It's about whether you can get the job done. Gina McCarthy can get the job done.

"Working with a variety of stakeholders over the past four years, McCarthy was integral to several historic initiatives, including new, cleaner car standards that represent the biggest step the U.S. has ever taken to get off oil and tackle global warming; the first-ever federal limits on mercury pollution from power plants; and the first-ever proposed federal limits on carbon pollution from new power plants.

"I am confident that McCarthy will continue to put her professionalism and commitment to work developing solutions to the formidable environmental challenges we still face."

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## Fall Report

VOLUME 7 | NO. 2 | 2013

*View from Watchman Peak at Crater Lake*

### Environment Oregon

#### Our mission

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind Environment Oregon. We focus exclusively on protecting Oregon's air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

## Calling for park protection on Trails Day

On June 1, National Trails Day, Environment Oregon called on leaders to keep beloved parks, like Crater Lake, open and protected from development and pollution. National Trails Day is celebrated by thousands of nature-lovers nationwide, who spend the first Saturday in June hiking their favorite trails and enjoying our local and national parks.

Crater Lake, Oregon's only national park, is the crown jewel of Oregon. Its sapphire blue waters and 2,000 foot rim walls attract nearly half-a-million visitors a year. Yet in recent years, Congress has slashed funding for our National Park System by more than 10 percent, and now, House leaders want to cut even more.

"On National Trails Day, it's easy to see that Oregonians care deeply about access to beautiful places—whether it's their local parks or our only national park, Crater Lake," said Sarah Higginbotham, Environment Oregon's state director. "I hope that Oregon's leaders get the message—everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy Crater Lake National Park."



Staff

### more inside

*Three more cities poised to ban the bag; Oregon ranks 6th for ocean protection; President Obama's climate plan a victory for Oregon, and more.*

◀ *Oregonians celebrating National Trails Day*