



# New support to keep plastic out of Pacific

## Celebrating the banning of the bag in Corvallis

In July, advocates congratulated Corvallis on taking a stand against plastic pollution—after the city became the second in the state to ban single-use plastic bags.

“The city of Corvallis should be applauded for standing up to harmful waste that’s polluting our oceans and creating a disaster for wildlife,” said state director at Environment Oregon Sarah Higginbotham. “Corvallis is now leading the way for other Oregon cities looking to follow suit and ban the bag.”

Corvallis became the first city in the state to include a fee on paper bags—a policy coupled with a plastic bag ban in cities up and down the West Coast that’s shown to effectively move consumers to reusable alternatives.

### 1.7 billion plastic bags every year

The plastic “Bag Monster”—whose attendance at City Council meetings became a fixture and constant reminder of the 500 bags the average Oregonian uses in one year—gave farewell remarks.

“I’m headed off to other places I can still call home,” the Bag Monster announced. “I’m going to fight for my right to pollute the environment in Eugene,” a reference to the pending vote on a similar ordinance in Eugene.

### 100,000 victims of plastic trash

The proposed plastic bag ban would address plastic ocean pollution and harm to marine wildlife caused by the 1.7 billion



Ingrid Taylor, Creative Commons

▲ Plastic bag and other plastic trash washed in from the Pacific.

plastic bags Oregonians use every year. Plastic debris kills more than 100,000 sea turtles, sea birds and marine mammals each year. Adult seabirds often inadvertently feed small bits of plastic to their chicks, while toxic pollutants from the plastic leach into the water and are absorbed by marine mammals.

“Corvallis supported a statewide bag ban, and when the state Legislature failed after

facing heavy opposition from out-of-state special interests, Corvallis residents took local action,” said Higginbotham.

The coalition of Environment Oregon, the Surfrider Foundation and the Mary’s Peak Chapter of the Sierra Club submitted more than 1,000 citizen petitions in support of a bag ban. More than 60 businesses, including the Northwest Grocery Association, also signed on in support.

Carol Munro, Creative Commons



## more online

◀ Visit our website to take action to ban plastic bags, protect Crater Lake and more at: [www.EnvironmentOregon.org](http://www.EnvironmentOregon.org) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/enviroregon](http://www.facebook.com/enviroregon)



## To our members

For many, fall's cooler weather and rain showers mean putting away the hiking boots, stowing the kayak, and keeping out of the elements. For Oregonians however, the season is an invitation to enjoy more of our favorite places—albeit often with our hoods up. Like me, I hope you find a moment to relish the view under a canopy of autumn leaves or savor a favorite hike before winter arrives.

At Environment Oregon, our work also continues despite the downpour. The plastics industry is working to block efforts that keep our oceans clean, while fossil fuel companies are fighting to preserve the status quo. However, with Eugene poised to ban the bag and the launching of our new solar campaign, this fall is looking to be a bright one for protecting Oregon's environment.

We couldn't do it without you.

Many thanks,

Sarah Higginbotham  
State Director

## Recent action

### Fuel economy standards save money and pollution

Reducing gasoline consumption provides many benefits—among them cleaner air, less global warming pollution, and less pressure to drill for oil. And, of course, it saves us money.

The average Oregon household would have saved approximately \$560 this summer if vehicles met President Barack Obama's proposed 54.5 miles per gallon fuel efficiency requirement.

According to a report by Environment America Research & Policy Center in May, Oregon's pollution would have been reduced by 1.7 million tons of carbon dioxide had the new standards been in place this summer. Implementing the president's plan will be a huge step to reducing our state's dependence on oil—a major goal for Environment Oregon.

### Gov. releases draft 10-Year Energy Plan

In June, Governor Kitzhaber released a draft of Oregon's proposed 10-Year Energy Plan. The goal of the plan is to reduce Oregon's dependence on carbon-intensive fuels and foreign oil, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and develop renewable energy—all while boosting Oregon's economy.

Environment Oregon and a coalition of environmental, clean-energy and public interest organizations released a joint response: "... Oregonians are increasingly concerned about the harm climate change is causing to our environment, economy and communities; the governor's plan is an important opportunity to accelerate our region's transition from a fossil-fueled past to a clean energy future..."

"The governor's commitment to developing an energy plan that will reduce Oregon's dependence on dirty fossil fuels should be applauded," Environment Oregon State Director Sarah Higginbotham said. "A final plan should be one that furthers that progress with a vision for clean, renewable energy solutions that make sense for Oregon's environment, our families' health, and the economy."





Dave Morrow, DMCustomCreations.com

# The sun shines on Oregon

Solar power could supply 10 percent of the state's electricity by 2025, according to a report from Environment Oregon Research & Policy Center.

"Solar Works for Oregon," released in July, outlines the sun's vast potential to provide power, protect the environment, and create jobs for Oregonians. Even in the often-cloudy Willamette Valley, the sun shines more during the year than in Germany—the world's largest solar market. At a press conference, Environment Oregon emphasized the need for strong leadership, and State Rep. Jules Bailey announced his plan to introduce solar legislation.

## The proof on the roof

The new report reveals that Oregon could feasibly develop enough electricity from rooftop solar in the next 13 years to power 250,000 typical Oregon homes—or all the homes in Portland.

Placing solar water heating systems on those sunny rooftops would also reduce Oregon's energy use for residential and commercial water heating by 6 percent—fully supplying water heating to more than 150,000 households.

Rooftop solar energy is also generated close to where it will be used, minimizing the need to invest in power lines and other infrastructure.

## 3.8 million fewer tons of carbon dioxide

Global warming is expected to increase average temperatures in Oregon 10 degrees by 2080. The rise would have dramatic impacts on our winter snowpack, urban and rural water supplies, agricultural productivity and salmon habitat—just to name a few.

Capturing the sun's energy at its fullest potential would eliminate approximately 3.8 million tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere—lowering Oregon's contribution to global warming by 8 percent.

When it comes to the solar industry and job market, Oregon is already among the fastest growing in the nation. The state currently employs 3,300 workers at 545 firms. Expanding the industry would ensure additional jobs in manufacturing, installation and maintenance.

## Our recommendations

Our report outlines a suite of policy options that can move Oregon forward on homegrown solar energy.

Oregon should set a goal to generate 10 percent of its electricity from solar—more than 30 times as much as today—by 2025 and to install 300,000 solar water-heating systems by 2025.

We can do this through expanded incentive and financing programs, a scaled-up CLEAN program (a "feed-in-tariff") and by expanding the renewable energy standard set aside for solar.

Oregon should also create a net zero energy building code—requiring all homes and all new commercial buildings to generate the equivalent of their energy use annually by 2020.

"All of this potential is right at our fingertips," said Environment Oregon State Director Sarah Higginbotham. "Let's get to using it."



Dept. of Energy, NREL

▲ Workers install solar panels atop the Portland Water Bureau.



Brigitte Werner, Creative Commons

## Green Future Fund

### A new way to honor supporters

Environment Oregon is proud to announce the establishment of our Green Future Fund.

The Green Future Fund will honor a special group of our donors: those who are ensuring a greener future by remembering Environment Oregon or our sister group, Environment Oregon Research & Policy Center, in their wills, life insurance policies or retirement accounts.

These legacy donors are helping to ensure that Environment Oregon will continue to flourish—protecting the places we love and the values we share for years to come.

"We appreciate all of our supporters," said Environment Oregon's Sarah Higginbotham. "But I feel a special gratitude toward those members who have the vision and generosity to plan a gift that will protect our state's environment beyond their own lifetimes."

Establishing a legacy gift also offers donors a few advantages. Some supporters wish they could give more, but can't right now. Including Environment Oregon in your estate plan costs nothing today, while ensuring support for our mission in the future. Legacy gifts may also offer tax benefit. Your professional advisor can help you determine any tax advantage.

As a Green Future Fund donor, with your permission, we'll recognize your gift in our annual report and other publications, helping to inspire other members to make their own legacy gifts. Of course, you may also choose to give anonymously. Either way, any specific details you choose to provide about your gift will remain confidential.

If you'd like to become a member of the Green Future Fund, or if you just have questions, call our planned giving coordinator, Marilyn Tesauro, at 1-800-841-7299 or [plannedgiving@EnvironmentOregon.org](mailto:plannedgiving@EnvironmentOregon.org).

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# Environment Oregon

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## 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.

Staff

## Statewide support for Crater Lake

Environment Oregon recently partnered with the Wild on Wilderness Committee of Umpqua Watersheds to kick off a series of community slide shows about the Crater Lake Wilderness Proposal—a plan for a 75-mile-long wildlife corridor that would protect nearly half a million acres of forests, mountains and streams.

Presentations took place in Portland, Salem and Bend. Environment Oregon State Director Sarah Higginbotham discussed with local communities the importance of stopping clearcut proposals around Oregon's only national park and permanently protecting this critical habitat for bear, elk and spawning salmon.

The campaign to protect Crater Lake continued this summer. We talked face-to-face with more than 35,000 Oregonians, from Ashland to Cannon Beach and from Portland to Bend, about protecting the thousands of acres of pristine wilderness surrounding Crater Lake National Park and the endangered wildlife that call it home.



### more inside

*Corvallis commits to ban the bag; Gov. drafts 10-year Energy Plan; Fuel economy standards offer big savings, and more.*

◀ *Environment Oregon hosts press conference to release "Solar Works for Oregon" report.*