A recap of our work for our members in 2013
To our members

“Our power comes from people taking action to protect the places we love across the state.”

If asked to imagine an environmental advocate, most people would envision a determined activist making a passionate case to a politician.

But that’s just part of the picture. For all of us at Environment Oregon, the most important advocates are the thousands of Oregonians who care enough about the environment to make their voices heard.

They’re the 110,000 Oregonians who opened their door to one of our rain-soaked canvassers, who knock on doors daily to educate citizens about important environmental causes.

They’re the 222 small business owners who made a commitment to the health of our ocean by endorsing a ban on plastic grocery bags, moving us closer to bag bans in Ashland, Bend and Salem.

They’re the 3,000 Oregonians who called on Sen. Ron Wyden to stand up and protect Oregon’s public forests in the face of the greatest threat they’ve seen in decades.

They’re the 10,000 individuals who filed a public comment opposing an outrageous timber sale on the edge of Crater Lake National Park, allowing us to stop the most egregious parts of the proposal.

Of course, our professional advocates are as passionate and persistent as they come. They’re armed with the facts and the know-how to persuade powerful decision-makers to support strong environmental protections. But every one of us knows that the real power comes from people like you, who provide support and take action to protect the places we love and to advance the environmental values we share.

Thanks for all that you do,

Rikki Seguin
Environment Oregon Conservation Advocate

P.S. I also want to thank Sarah Higginbotham, our outgoing state director, for her great work. We wish Sarah well in her new ventures.
Protect Crater Lake

Crater Lake is Oregon’s crown jewel—its deep blue waters and 2,000-foot rim walls attract half a million visitors each year. The surrounding mountains and forests are home to Roosevelt elk, black bears and bald eagles. These forests also shelter the Rogue and Deschutes rivers, where Chinook and Coho salmon spawn. We’re working to win permanent protection for 500,000 acres of wilderness, creating a 75-mile wildlife corridor of forests, mountains and streams.

10,000 took action to stop logging proposal

As we work to establish long-term protection for the Crater Lake area, we’ve kept a close eye on threats to this critical wildlife habitat. And last February, when we got word of the Bybee timber sale, a proposal to effectively clear-cut old growth on the edge of Crater Lake National Park, we were ready. We rallied our members and activists, demonstrating unprecedented support for Crater Lake National Park from individuals and businesses across the state.

• We talked to more than 60,000 Oregonians across the state and collected more than 10,000 public comments urging the protection of the forests around Crater Lake. We presented these comments to the Medford National Forest Service office, earning us media coverage in the Oregonian, OPB, Bend Bulletin, Jefferson Public Radio, Medford Mail Tribune, and local television stations.

• While this controversial timber sale was met with strong resistance, in late September, the Forest Supervisor for the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest approved a different version of what remains an environmentally damaging logging proposal, threatening 400 acres of wilderness-quality forest. Environment Oregon is proud of our work, reducing the threatened forest to just 400 acres, but we won’t stop working until Crater Lake is permanently protected from reckless logging and development.

Environment Oregon members and activists sent over 10,000 postcards and petitions to the National Forest Service, calling on them to protect Crater Lake.
Keep Plastic Out of the Pacific

Nothing that we use for a few minutes should pollute our oceans for hundreds of years. Too many of the disposable plastic bags we use end up as litter in the Pacific, where they threaten wildlife and create an ecological catastrophe. In 2013, we built momentum toward local bag bans in three new cities, and made significant progress toward a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags.
Momentum for plastic bag bans across Oregon

A toxic soup of trash known as the Pacific Garbage Patch is swirling off our coast, and it’s creating an environmental disaster for ocean wildlife. Far too much of this trash comes from single-use plastic bags. Luckily, the solution is simple: Ban the bag. So far, three Oregon cities have banned plastic bags, and in 2013, we continued to build public support for plastic bag bans across the state.

**Ashland, Bend and Salem neared bans**

In 2013, we focused on cities that offered political and geographic diversity to the growing bag ban movement. Having already won bag bans in Portland, Corvallis and Eugene, we carried that momentum into the push for bans in three more cities: Ashland, Bend and Salem.

- In Ashland, with the support of nearly 100 local businesses and more than 500 citizens, we packed a City Council hearing with supporters. Due to this strong showing of public support, the City Council moved forward in drafting an ordinance to ban single-use plastic bags.

- In Bend, more than 100 businesses, including Patagonia, signed on in support of a ban, while more than 600 citizens signed petitions—including world-famous surfer and Bend resident Gerry Lopez.

- In Salem, more than 900 citizens and 27 businesses joined our call to ban the bag. Environment Oregon’s “Bag Monster” made an appearance at a media event in Riverfront Park, and later, joined dozens of citizens and City Councilor Laura Tesler at a movie screening of “Bag It.”

- In addition to these three cities, we also took our first steps in West Linn, Beaverton, Lake Oswego, and Tigard by delivering thousands of petitions from local citizens who support plastic bag bans.

**Support grew to ban the bag statewide**

At Environment Oregon, we’re moving Oregon forward on a path to become the first state in the country to ban plastic bags. In 2012, we banned bags in Portland, Corvallis, and Eugene. And in in 2013, we built the necessary support to move forward on a bag ban in three additional cities.

It won’t be easy to overcome the plastics industry, but we have the momentum, and with your support, we can keep plastic out of the Pacific and ban the bag in Oregon.
Solar Works for Oregon

Oregon has always been an environmental leader, but we still get far too much of our energy from dirty sources like coal and oil. By making a commitment to solar power, we can power 250,000 homes with the sun by 2025 and move Oregon toward a clean energy future. In 2013, we built public support for solar through outreach, research and more.
Broad coalition, thousands of citizens urged support for solar

Oregon can power 250,000 homes with solar energy that doesn’t pollute, never runs out, and creates local jobs. At Environment Oregon, we’re working to ensure that we meet our solar potential and continue to be a leader in clean energy.

Organizers built broad statewide coalition

Right now, less than 1% of Oregon’s energy comes from the sun. That’s pretty shocking for a clean-energy state like Oregon. Despite our rainy skies, Oregon has more than enough sunshine and resources to power solar rooftops all across the state. In 2013, our advocates and organizers built a grassroots foundation of community leaders, businesses, and local organizations calling on state leaders to prioritize solar energy in Oregon. We:

• Activated over 60 small businesses, solar installers, and solar companies from Roseburg to Hood River;

• Enlisted local mayors and city councilors from Pendleton to Coos Bay who support pro-solar policies;

• Built a grassroots coalition of low income, rural, environmental, and public health organizations; and

• Educated 1,500 Oregonians face-to-face about our plan to make Oregon a solar leader.

Push to reach 250,000 solar roofs underway

Harnessing the power of the sun means putting policies in place that make it easier and more affordable for Oregonians to invest in the solar energy revolution. And that means a cleaner environment, a stronger economy, and a healthier future for Oregon.

• Better policies: We can increase access for Oregonians 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.

• A cleaner environment: Oregon could produce 30 times as much solar energy as it does today—preventing 3.8 million tons of carbon dioxide pollution, the equivalent of taking 730,000 cars off the road.

• A stronger economy: Oregon is already one of the nation’s leading centers for solar technology design and manufacturing. We have more than 100 solar firms throughout the state, employing nearly 3,000 Oregonians.
Protect Oregon’s Forests

Oregon’s forests are natural treasures. But the timber industry is threatening to open more than 1 million acres of old-growth forests and critical wildlife habitat to aggressive logging and clear-cuts. We have the opportunity to stop this reckless logging from taking place—but first we need to show overwhelming public support for our forests. That’s why Environment Oregon launched a campaign to stand up for our public forests.
Campaign to protect more than 1 million acres

In the fall of 2013, Environment Oregon launched a new campaign to protect over a million acres of Oregon’s forests from the worst attack they have faced in over 20 years. We organized the public to send a clear message: Oregonians won’t stand by and let our forests be clear-cut.

Timber industry pushing dangerous proposal

After decades of bulldozers and clear-cuts, what remains of Oregon’s public forests are protected under a hard-fought compromise reached over two decades ago. But the timber industry and their allies in Congress have been working to rip up that agreement and remove protections for over 1 million acres of Oregon’s public forests. What’s worse, these ideas quickly picked up steam in Washington, D.C., in 2013. The proposals:

- Threaten our wildlife by rolling back sections of the Endangered Species Act and allowing clear-cuts in threatened wildlife habitat;

- Threaten our water by increasing herbicide use and erosion around critical waterways that provide drinking water for nearly 2 million Oregonians;

- Roll back sections of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), limiting public participation in decision-making; and

- Threaten our local economy by putting the $12.8 billion outdoor recreation industry at risk.

Oregonians worked to save old-growth, wildlife

When we got word of these attacks, we sprung into action educating and mobilizing our members and supporters. We called on members of Congress to stand up for Oregon’s forests.

- We enlisted over 3,000 Environment Oregon members and supporters to sign a petition urging Sens. Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley to protect Oregon’s forests.

- More than 300 Oregonians called Sen. Wyden’s office voicing their opposition to the plan.

- We released a new factsheet, “Top Risks of Increased Logging in our Forests,” highlighting the truth behind these unbalanced logging proposals.

Top: Environment Oregon members hiking in the Oneonta Gorge. Middle: Our forests are home to wildlife such as the kokanee salmon. Bottom: Environment Oregon’s Rikki Seguin on NBC 5.
Wind Power for Oregon

Toward the end of 2012, as fiscal cliff negotiations stalled, crucial federal incentives for clean, renewable wind power were in danger of being eliminated. Environment Oregon called on Congress to extend these incentives. And in the eleventh hour we succeeded: President Obama and congressional leaders reached a deal that extended these critical incentives, ensuring the continued growth of wind power in Oregon.

Support urged to renew critical incentives

Oregon has the eighth-most installed wind power in the country. Wind generation in Oregon displaces more than 3.6 metric tons of global warming pollution annually—the equivalent of taking over 764,000 cars off the road each year. But as the United States approached the fiscal cliff in late 2012, critical incentives for wind were set to expire, putting wind power—and 37,000 American jobs—on the line.

• Oregon has more than enough wind potential to power our state many times over. Wind energy lessens our dependence on dirty energy and cuts carbon pollution. But powerful polluting interests like the coal and oil industries lobbied Congress to end crucial incentives for wind. With their influence in Washington, D.C., they worked to build opposition to clean energy advancements, putting our progress at risk.

• Along with our national federation, Environment Oregon submitted thousands of comments in support of extending these crucial incentives. And ultimately, we won a major victory for clean, renewable wind power when President Obama and Congress agreed in January 2013 to extend the incentives as part of the deal reached to avert the fiscal cliff.
Protect Oregon’s Waters

Last year, in a long-awaited move, the Obama administration announced a plan to restore Clean Water Act protections to the nation’s streams and wetlands. For years, we have been calling for action to close these loopholes, which leave the drinking water of 117 million Americans at risk and over half of the nation’s rivers and streams open to unchecked pollution.

Administration moved to close loopholes

The president’s announcement of a plan to restore Clean Water Act protections was big news—we’re closer than ever to victory. But big agribusinesses and developers are using all their power and resources to bring this progress to a standstill. To get these critical protections over the finish line, we’ve worked to show President Obama that the public overwhelmingly supports clean water.

- In concert with our national federation, we delivered over 84,000 public comments to the Environmental Protection Agency, including more than 1,000 from health professionals.

- More than 180 farmers wrote letters to President Obama asking him to close the loopholes for polluters.

It is clear that if polluters win, our rivers and streams lose. And we know that we can’t compete with their lobbyists dollar for dollar. But the public is with us—and if we can prove that to our elected officials, we can win. That’s why we’re bringing together Oregonians from all walks of life to protect our waterways.
Fighting Global Warming

In June, the Obama administration announced its Climate Action Plan, which will limit carbon emissions from power plants, America’s single largest source of global warming pollution. Nearly 70,000 Oregonians rallied to support the new limits after Environment Oregon and our allies ran a massive grassroots campaign demanding action on global warming.
Massive support for limits on global warming pollution

After some of the worst wildfires in Oregon in over a decade, Environment Oregon’s staff and activists worked with our colleagues in the environmental and public health communities to mobilize record levels of support for limiting the carbon pollution that fuels global warming.

Power plants largest source of carbon pollution

With intense opposition from power companies that reap huge profits from selling dirty energy, we need overwhelming support from the public in order to move the nation forward and limit global warming pollution.

• Power plants are the single largest source of carbon pollution in America, accounting for 40 percent of emissions. Yet there are no federal limits on the amount of carbon pollution power plants can dump into the atmosphere.

3.2 million Americans submitted comments

Together with our allies and our national federation, we helped galvanize 3.2 million Americans to send public comments in support of limits on carbon pollution from power plants. That’s more than twice the record for any previous environmental rule. In response, the president announced his Climate Action Plan, a significant first step in tackling global warming. 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 power plants.

• Invest in energy efficiency. New efficiency measures for buildings will cut carbon pollution by reducing our overall energy demand.

• Promote more renewable energy. The plan focuses on expanding production of clean energy sources like wind and solar.

• Support affected communities. The 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.
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