Defending the places we love

You’re standing up against federal rollbacks

From Crater Lake to Mount Hood, for more than a century Americans have taken action to protect the places we love, guided by our shared values and informed by the best advice of our scientists.

Yet President Trump and the 115th Congress have embarked on a reckless, shortsighted plan to dismantle dozens of environmental protections.

Environment Oregon and our nationwide network are working to inform the public about what’s at stake, hold the administration and Congress accountable, and build the support necessary to defend our health and the places we love.

Clean air, clean water, open spaces

The president and Congress are working to eliminate federal protection for 61,200 miles of streams in Oregon, with nearly 2 million miles of streams left unprotected across America. They’re moving backward on climate action and endangering public health by moving to shut down the Clean Power Plan, a key part of our commitment to reduce global warming pollution.

Even worse, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is now being run by Scott Pruitt, even though he sued the EPA 14 times to block environmental protections. And perhaps most frighteningly, the White House’s 2018 budget proposal aims to slice the EPA’s overall budget by 31 percent and staffing by 21 percent.

So we’re uniting people from all sides of the political spectrum in urging our senators to stand up and defend our environmental protections.

Acting on our shared values

You, our members, are taking action, generating thousands of petitions, calls and emails to our elected leaders. This is making an impact, but we need to do more. The leaders and activists of the past organized the first Earth Day, supported and passed the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act, and created the EPA. Now the torch passes to us. The children we know and love today can live cleaner, healthier lives in a greener world, but only if we can keep our protections in place and make them stronger.

In response to moves by the president and Congress that would threaten the people and places we love, Americans like you across the country and from all sides of the political spectrum are standing up for clean water, limits on carbon pollution and smog, and protected wild places.

We need your help to defend our environmental protections. Take action online to urge our senators to stand up for the people and places we love in Oregon.

www.EnvironmentOregon.org

Our national citizen outreach staff are speaking with households across the country this summer to educate, mobilize and unite Americans to defend our environment and health.
Your Impact

Who’s leading the way on renewable energy?

Despite the Trump administration’s promises to move America backward on climate action and renewable energy, businesses and cities across the country have committed to 100 percent renewable energy. And a new report from Environment Oregon Research & Policy Center, “Renewable Energy 100: The Course to a Carbon-Free Campus”, shows that America’s institutions of higher education can also play a crucial role in combating global warming.

Colleges and universities have long played a leading role in bringing technological changes to society, and should commit to getting 100 percent of their energy from clean, renewable sources.

Meanwhile, in the Northeast, our national federation has been calling on our elected officials to double the strength of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, the nation’s best climate and clean air program. In February, 546 health professionals, businesses, academics, elected officials and community leaders from nine states in the Northeast joined our call to action.

How you can protect public lands

Just weeks after the 115th Congress convened for the first time, Rep. Jason Chaffetz filed a bill that would sell off 3.3 million acres of America’s public lands. But he wasn’t expecting the public opposition from hunters, anglers, outdoor enthusiasts, and supporters of wilderness like you. More than 1,000 people showed up at a pro-public lands rally in Helena, Mont., the hashtag #keepitpublic zipped around Twitter, and Rep. Chaffetz’s Facebook page filled up with criticism. One week after introducing the legislation, Chaffetz announced that he would withdraw his bill— which goes to show what people power can accomplish.

Environment Oregon has also been working to protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), one of our nation’s most incredible landscapes. This national treasure is home to polar bears, grizzlies, caribou and wolves, but the oil and gas industry is threatening to exploit the region for profit.

That’s why, with your support, we’re mobilizing members and supporters to urge Congress to designate the ANWR as permanently protected wilderness.

Toward a greener future

Environment Oregon and Environment Oregon Research & Policy Center gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities to support our work to build a cleaner, greener, healthier future.

For more information, call 1-800-841-7299 x312 or send an email to PlannedGiving@EnvironmentOregon.org.
Solar’s growth must continue in Oregon

As solar power continues to expand across the country, Environment Oregon is working to protect and grow strong solar policies in Salem and in city halls around the state. On the heels of a landmark clean energy law that, with the support of our members, we helped pass last year, which gets Oregon off coal and doubles our commitment to renewable energy, we need to continue the momentum toward 100 percent renewable energy.

**Extending critical tax incentives**
A significant driver of rooftop solar growth in Oregon is the Residential Energy Tax Credit (RETC), which provides up to a $6,000 credit for rooftop solar installations and energy efficiency upgrades. Over the years, the RETC has helped thousands of Oregonians go solar, helping them lower their utility bills and the state’s reliance on fossil fuels.

Unfortunately, it’s uncertain whether lawmakers will extend the RETC, which is set to expire at the end of the year. That’s why Environment Oregon has been engaging solar installers, local elected officials, and small business owners in order to convince state legislators that the RETC deserves to be extended. This spring, we organized town hall events and film screenings; generated media attention through opinion pieces and research reports; and advocated directly to legislators in Salem.

**Organizing at the local level**
Over the past several months, we’ve been focusing much of our organizing efforts in the Columbia Gorge. In Hood River, we worked with a coalition of solar advocates to convince the City Council to pass a unanimous resolution in support of extending the RETC.

We also hosted events in Hood River and The Dalles to get the word out about the RETC and how people could get involved. In February, we hosted a Solar Power Happy Hour at pFriem Family Brewers in Hood River with Hood River City Councilmember Becky Brun; and in March, we organized a solar forum at Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles. At both events, our solar campaign organizer Carlina Arango led discussions on how best to push forward clean energy incentives in Salem.

In March, we also worked with students at Portland State University to host a film screening of “Catching the Sun,” a documentary about the global race to lead the clean energy revolution. The documentary was followed by a discussion with solar energy experts on the practicality of residential solar power and how individuals can influence solar energy policy by participating in the grassroots movement.

At the time of printing this newsletter, we don’t know what the outcome for the RETC will be in Salem. But Environment Oregon will continue working in communities across the state to generate the grassroots muscle needed to convince our state legislators to make solar energy a priority. That’s because we know the public is on our side and, with your help, we can bring this widespread support straight to decision-makers’ desks.

**Portland ranks 17th nationally for total solar PV installed**
As Oregon continues to debate policies critical to the growth of solar power, a new Environment Oregon Research & Policy Center report released in April shows that Portland, Ore., ranks 17th for total solar PV installed in the nation.


The figures in the report reflect the recent growth of solar across the country: The top 20 cities listed in the report have nearly as much solar today as the entire country had installed in 2010. Despite that growth, challenges remain for the solar industry in Oregon.

Without legislative action, the Residential Energy Tax Credit, a well-run, popular program with a long history in our state to incentivize homeowners to install solar energy systems for their homes, will expire by the end of this year.

“Cities are big energy users with lots of unutilized roof space suitable for solar panels,” said Carlina Arango, organizer with Environment Oregon Research & Policy Center. “Portland can continue leading the way and protect our environment by advocating for pro-solar policies at the city and state level, and using as much of our solar potential as possible.”
Chefs join our call to save bees

As a member of Environment Oregon, you have supported our work to save bees and our food supply by calling for a ban on bee-killing pesticides. You may have taken action by signing our petition to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), spreading the word in your community, or planting bee-friendly plants in your garden. In fact, all of our work on this campaign has only been possible thanks to the support of passionate members like you.

This winter, our campaign took another step forward when 235 restaurateurs sent a letter calling on the EPA to ban bee-killing pesticides. Then, in February, 65 chefs and restaurant owners joined with Environment Oregon to launch the Bee Friendly Food Alliance.

“From family run pizza shops to fine dining destinations, chefs and restaurant owners around the country are coming together to Save the Bees,” said Christy Leavitt, Bee Friendly Food Alliance Coordinator with Environment Oregon. “Chefs know up close and personal: no bees means no food.”