



One*

*One Oregon One Environment Summer 2011

Weaving a healthy future

To protect the Oregon we love, Oregonians must pull together

By Andrea Durbin

“When we try to pick out anything by itself we find that it is bound fast by a thousand invisible cords that cannot be broken, to everything in the universe.” Naturalist John Muir’s observation is as true today as it was a century ago—and it guides OEC’s strategy for protecting the Oregon we love.

We know that individuals, institutions and social systems are woven together, and that tugging on one thread can set in motion a change that ultimately moves us all. We want to move towards a future where Oregon’s well-being is secure and sustainable—and that’s why we seek action from all corners:

- We give individuals the information they need to act as parents, home-keepers, consumers, employees and citizens responsible for protecting what we love about Oregon
- We help businesses discover ways to profit while being responsible to the people and natural resources that will sustain their success

- We help decision-makers create laws and systems that reflect the values of the people and protect Oregon’s environment

.....
“When we try to pick out anything by itself we find that it is bound fast by a thousand invisible cords that cannot be broken, to everything in the universe.”

This spring, we teased out threads of action in the Oregon Legislature. With economic crises looming large, our challenge was to keep sight of the long-term consequences of short-term decisions; read on for details of the outcome. This summer, we’ve set our sights on the horizon as we undertake a strategic planning process which will guide our work over the next five years and beyond.

Strategies may change, but some things

remain constant: If we’re to safeguard the Oregon we love well into the future, citizens must act on their environmental values. Oregon business must make social and environmental values integral to their measures of success. And our elected officials must promote and safeguard the environment, our health and our communities.

In the years ahead, no matter how demands change or where solutions arise, OEC will stay true to our mission, making sure that all threads pull together towards clean air, clean water and an unpolluted landscape.



In this issue:

Partnerships: Solutions are built when people across Oregon make the environment their business.

Header: Cape Sebastian hike by Liz Menke

2
The Legislature:
 Did policy make the grade in 2011?

4
Pulling together:
 Highlights of OEC’s partnerships and what you can do to help.

6
Safeguard Oregon: OEC works across the state.

7
News you can use: OEC’s email letters deliver expert tips directly to your inbox.



TEETER-TOTTER LEGISLATURE:

the 2011 Oregon legislative session

A double-handled gavel

Oregon's 2011 House, with a rare 30-30 partisan split, assigned co-chairs to each committee and split leadership duties between Rep. Arnie Roblan and Rep. Bruce Hanna. They took turns holding the gavel until the last day, when they adjourned with a double-handled gavel.

CC fusionpanda

With a House evenly split between parties, a looming budget hole and just six months to consider hundreds of bills, the 2011 legislative session was a balancing act.

We worked to ensure that smart policies were lifted up and reckless measures sunk down. Our extraordinary allies—including health professionals, business leaders, parents and citizens—spoke for the environment as an enduring priority.

We were pleased to see one of OEC's biggest priorities, Cool Schools legislation, pass in a landslide. It will create healthier more energy efficient schools across Oregon.

At times, holding our ground was just as important as tipping the seesaw in favor of stronger protections. We lost some, but without a united voice, environmental programs and protections would have been deeply slashed.

Partisan politics and back room horse-trading was undeniably frustrating this year. When out-of-state lobbyists for the chemical industry insert themselves in

“Moms of Oregon are way ahead of the legislature on this.” [before the Oregon Senate voted 20-9

in favor of a BPA Ban]

Senator Chris Edwards

Oregon politics, as they did to thwart our effort to protect children from exposure to the toxic bisphenol A, we're all reminded of the important role played by citizen-supported advocacy groups like OEC. Though the ban on BPA did not become law, we did secure support from the governor and 51 of 90 legislators in favor of action; we will pursue ways to build upon this momentum for better control of toxic chemicals.

Using economic fears as a foil, some

lawmakers pushed for corporate loopholes that would allow certain polluters to avoid responsibility for protecting Oregon's rivers. OEC and other environmental advocates prevented that from happening. Other lawmakers ducked their responsibility for addressing toxics, with the dubious excuse that the marketplace makes a better steward of children's health.

Despite difficult moments, we're encouraged by the legislators on both sides of the aisle who worked hard to both balance the budget and pass prudent legislation to safeguard Oregon. Both the Cool Schools legislation and the modernization of the bottle bill passed with broad bipartisan support and will make a real

“Cool Schools is a win for kids, a win for jobs, and a win for tight school budgets.”

Representative Jules Bailey

2011 legislative session report card

Cool Schools **A+**

Cool Schools passed with near unanimous support! This bill will make it easier for schools to access a pool of existing funds set aside for energy efficiency projects, putting Oregon to work making old school buildings safer, cleaner and more efficient.

Champions: Governor Kitzhaber,
Representatives J. Smith and Bailey

Peer-to-peer car-sharing **A+**

This bill clears the way for a new type of car-sharing where companies help citizens offer their private cars for rent to their neighbors. Peer-to-peer car-sharing can reduce driving, promote clean air and save families money.

Champions: Senator Dingfelder,
Representative Cannon

21st century bottle bill **A+**

40 years ago, OEC worked to pass the nation's first bottle bill. This year, we're pleased to see it updated to cover more bottles and cans and to boost recycling incentives. Kudos to Recycling Advocates and OLCV.

Champions: Representatives Berger and Cannon,
Senators Hass, Dingfeld & Courtney

Cuts to natural resource agencies **C-**

OEC's advocacy helped natural resource agencies avoid some of the most dramatic budget cuts to programs that protect water, air and landscape. Still, the Department of Environmental Quality will bear more than its fair share of budget-balancing cuts compared to other agencies.

Business Energy Tax Credit **C-**

It may have flaws, but the BETC tax credit program has built Oregon's renewable energy industry and helped businesses save energy. Legislators recognize the program's value, but can't afford full funding. The program is on life support; Climate Solutions, Renewable Northwest Project and other advocates will seek ways to revive the economic and environmental rewards of a clean energy future.

BPA-free baby bill **F**

This bill earned a strong vote in the Senate, an expression of majority support in the House, and a broad coalition of parents, physicians, environmentalists and Oregonians. Still, bad politics kept this bill from a final vote. The bill to ban toxic bisphenol A from baby bottles, sippy cups, sports water bottles and to launch a labeling program for canned food did not pass the legislature for a second time.

Champions: Senators Dingfelder and Boquist,
Representative Cannon

Plastic bag ban, marine reserves, reducing river pollution **F**

Other good ideas that didn't make it into law: a bill to ban river-polluting copper and other heavy metals from auto brake pads; a ban on single-use plastic bags, and a proposal to add three sites to Oregon's network of marine reserves and marine protected areas.

Ramping up energy efficiency

Good ideas fell by the wayside, but we'll pick them up again in future sessions. Ideas include creating an efficiency rating for buildings (similar to a miles-per-gallon rating for cars) and requiring utilities to seek ways to conserve energy before they generate more.

Incomplete

Agriculture and water quality

OEC opposed a bill that would have weakened Oregon's ability to protect water quality from agricultural run-off. We worked to find common ground between the Governor's office, cattlemen, farmers and environmental advocates. The session ended with a compromise in the works; stay tuned in 2012 for a better bill.

Incomplete

Make your voice heard

Help shape Oregon's future by signing up to receive OEC Action Alerts in your inbox at oeconline.org/sign-up.

Pulling together for Oregon

If we're to safeguard the Oregon we love well into the future, citizens and businesses must work with decision-makers to achieve clean air, clean water and an unpolluted landscape.

KEEP OREGON ECO-HEALTHY

Clean air and water starts at home and requires cooperation from communities and industries.

One way that we work

OEC's green chemistry program brings experts together to find and share alternatives to toxic chemicals. We convened an advisory group of industry and academic experts, and published their recommendations for ways to advance a green chemistry industry in Oregon (oeconline.org/green-chemistry-report). We also advised Portland State University as they researched and reported on ways for Oregon to lead with smart chemical policy (bit.ly/psu-report).

Here's what you can do

Download our free eco-healthy homes guide at oeconline.org/ehh-kit to find ways to reduce toxics in your home. Share a copy with a friend!



KEEPING RIVERS CLEAN

Healthy rivers need the cold, clean water that comes from underground.

One way that we work

OEC holds workshops for cities and builders around the state to learn how to use plants and soil to clean runoff and recharge groundwater. At OEC's next Stormwater Solutions workshops this fall (oeconline.org/stormwater), Central Oregon participants will learn about local projects like this parking lot swale (pictured on right).

Here's what you can do

Get the Oregon Rain Garden Guide for step-by-step instructions to plan your own garden that will help keep pollution out of streams and rivers.

oeconline.org/rain-garden-guide



FARM FRESH

People who grow and make food in Oregon can be great stewards of our landscape and earn a fair living with earth-friendly practices.

One way that we work

OEC's demonstration projects show that it pays to grow in earth-friendly ways. With Clearwater Cranberries, we connected sustainable growers to restaurants and markets who'll pay well for sustainably grown fruit. Since the project began, it's easier for Oregonians to buy sustainably grown local cranberries from Oregon farming families.

Here's what you can do

Take our pledge to "vote with your fork" and choose food that's good for you and your planet. You can also sign up to bring our presentation to your workplace. oeconline.org/fork



CLIMATE COOL, ENERGY SAVVY

Oregon can lead the nation in discovering practical ways to cut global warming pollution from our state's biggest sources: transportation and energy.

One way that we work

After passing a law in 2009 to ensure that new power plants in Oregon will be cleaner than today's coal, OEC worked with partners to secure an early shut-down of Oregon's only coal plant. OEC will work with PGE to identify ways to replace Boardman coal power through conservation, energy efficiency and clean energy.



Here's what you can do

Guess what's right up there among the biggest global warming polluters? Yes indeed: It's the energy use of the buildings we live and work in. Join our Climate Coolers email list for tips that'll cut your climate impact and save you cash. oeconline.org/sign-up

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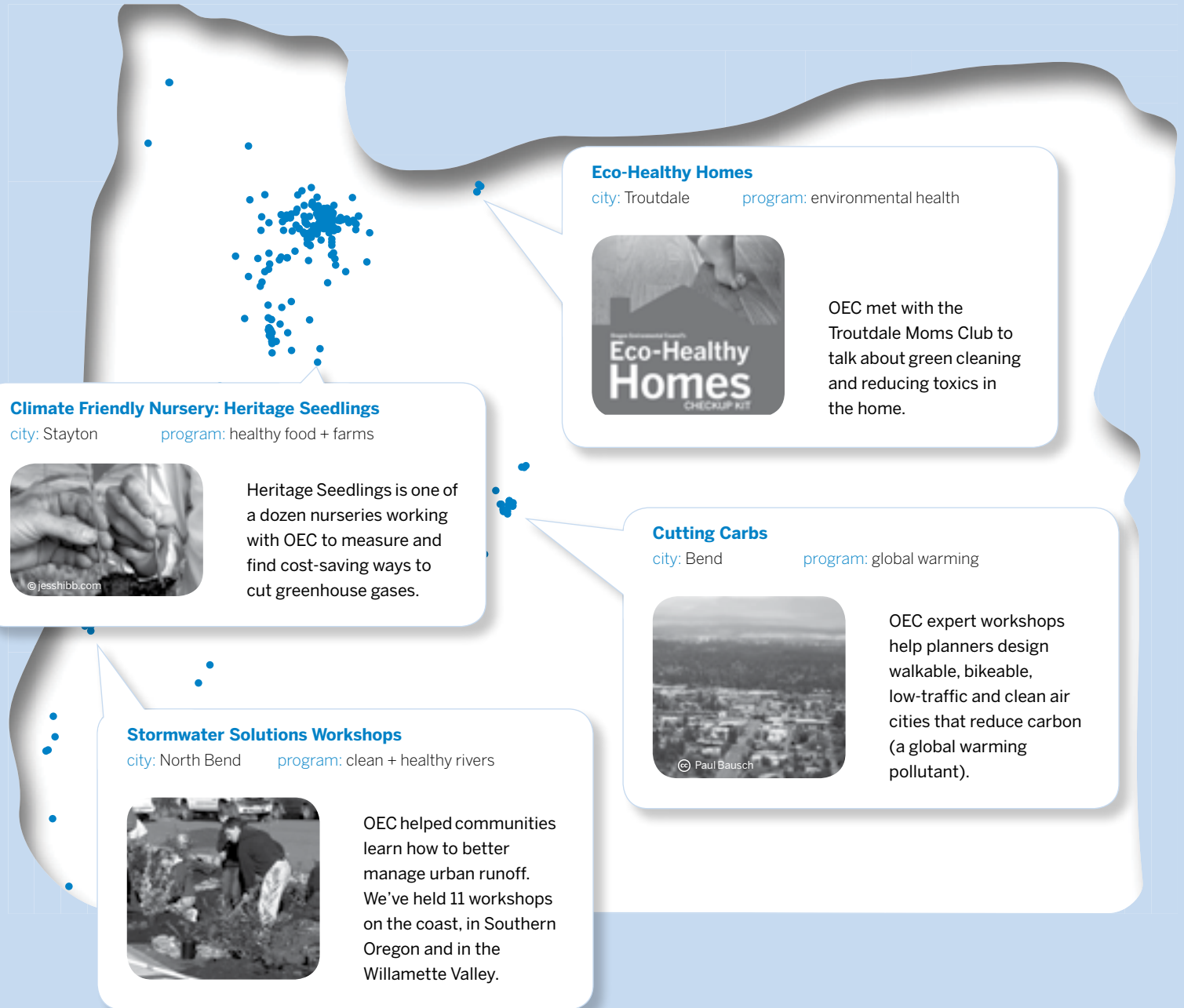
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Safeguarding all of Oregon

Oregon's mountain, desert and coastal forest regions are all connected—but each community and eco-region has its own charms and challenges. That's why OEC works all over the state to engage Oregonians of all stripes in protecting the Oregon they love. The dots on the map below represent recent projects with community partners conducted by OEC staff.



Source: State of Oregon Geospatial Enterprise Office, 2011

News you can use

Get short-and-sweet practical tips delivered to your inbox.

In the course of our work, OEC staff often find new, interesting ways to protect the well-being of Oregonians and our environment. We want to share what we learn with you. Sign up at oeconline.org/sign-up.

eONE*

If you want to know more about OEC's work than you can get in our bi-annual newsletter, eOne* may be for you. We'll send you monthly updates and news on our current program work.



HEALTHY HOME TIPS/ HEALTHY KIDS NETWORK

Safer scents, greener cleaners, earth-friendly floors and toxic-reform actions: Get our best tips for keeping your home toxic-free.

Recent tip: House plants can remove common pollutants from your air.



LOVE YOUR RIVER

Whether you paddle, fish, or simply walk the shoreline, there are a zillion ways you can protect the rivers near you. Receive our monthly tip; when you pledge action, you can win great prizes.

Recent tip: Don't feed the ducks, and do pick up after your pet.



CLIMATE COOLERS

Did you know that saving water and inflating your car tires are also ways to save energy? Get easy tips and challenges that will help you "cool the climate" by reducing your own contribution to global warming pollution.

Recent tip: You can save gas while driving by avoiding jack-rabbit starts and aggressive braking.



VOTE WITH YOUR FORK

The food you buy has ripple effects for our earth, our local economy and your family's health. Find out how to "vote" for a sustainable food system by sticking your fork in food that's good for Oregon. You'll get food tips, news and recipes.

Recent tip: If you can name every ingredient in your meal (like what's in the bread and the lunch meat), you'll eat better food and cut the energy, water, packaging, waste and transport required to create processed food.



ACTION NETWORK

Citizen involvement is an essential part of the policymaking process. Join OEC's action network and we'll let you know how you can help protect the environment and share your thoughts with legislators.



Oregon
Environmental
Council
It's Your Oregon

222 NW Davis Street, Suite 309
Portland, OR 97209-3900
503.222.1963
info@oeconline.org

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Get Involved

Strategic planning

It's been five years since OEC last looked to the horizon and set goals to guide our work. Now, it's time for a new strategic plan. Our values remain constant, but our strategies change with the times. Take our survey to weigh in on our strategic goals as we look towards 2017 and beyond. To thank you for your time and effort, we'll be raffling off a **magnum of Sokol Blosser Pinot Noir** to participants!
oeconline.org/survey

Thanks to our sponsors



- City of Portland, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
- City of Portland, Office of Healthy Working Rivers
- Hammer & Hand
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- SERA Architects

Become a member

Join OEC to protect the things you love most about Oregon. Become a member today and be part of the positive change for our health, economy and environment. Join us online at oeconline.org

Contact information

Oregon Environmental Council
222 NW Davis Street, Suite 309
Portland, OR 97209-3900
503.222.1963

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