

OH, NO! WE'VE BEEN ELECTED!

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Someone once suggested we'd be better off with public officials selected by chance, like choosing a jury, rather than our only choice being those who want power or who represent powerful interests.

Well, guess what. Those of us in Oregon's coastal communities, and the officials in our communities, have been selected for leadership positions in dealing with global warming. Not by vote, but simply by being impacted. Those whose homes, businesses, communities, and transportation systems are unlikely to go under water get to ignore things a little longer, but not us. We've already seen New Orleans.

The Oregon legislature is unlikely to do anything significant until embarrassed into action by coastal communities taking real action first. Our national government isn't likely to take any real action until coastal states like Oregon lead the way. So let's get moving.

The good news is we stand to benefit a lot by acting quickly and decisively. The sooner we act, and get others to act, the more we lessen the direct impacts on our communities. We also can get the economic and social benefits sooner, and without having to stand in line when everyone decides to get windmills or solar panels or hybrid cars. We'll be in way ahead when things get tighter. And will have discovered that there's a lot of good that comes out of the right action.

So where can we begin? Everyone knows we can replace our light bulbs, but there's a lot more our communities can do. Here's a start:

1. REQUIRE NET-ZERO-ENERGY HOME CONSTRUCTION – NOW. Houses are responsible for a huge hunk of our energy use. Already Habitat for Humanity and some of the housing trusts have committed to only building homes that put as much energy back in the grid as they take out. If they can, we can. Any of our communities can add that to their building codes. Oregon did that state-wide in the '70s with energy efficiency, became the leader in the nation, and has saved huge amounts of energy for 30 years. Side benefit - it's sure nice having a wood stove, solar water, and your own rooftop electricity when the power goes out. Second side benefit - our dollars support local builders rather than depleting remaining fossil fuel energy supplies.

2. DECLARE DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING MORATORIUMS IN SEA-RISE IMPACTED AREAS – NOW. What better way to get people's attention than to stop business-as-usual until we know what impacts are likely to be? More investment means more losses. Insurance companies have already terminated global-warming related policies on coastal North Carolina. Allowing more affected development now only means a deeper hole to get ourselves out of. A moratorium isn't permanent - you review when you know more. For now, half of projected sea level rise (24'), plus top of salt marsh (+12') gives a good conservative benchmark (+36'MSL).

3. BAN INCANDESCENT LIGHT BULBS – NOW. Australia has just done this. So can we.

4. RAISE ENERGY-EFFICIENCY STANDARDS – NOW. For appliances, construction, industrial processes, motor vehicles - everything.

5. TAX FOSSIL FUELS – NOW. You know, of course, that we've given oil companies tax break "depletion allowances" for years to encourage using up our oil reserves more quickly. That was crazy, but we're crazier still, if we don't tax fossil fuels and use the revenue to fund rapid transition to renewables. No, we don't have to wait for the state to take action. We can tax gasoline, propane, natural gas, heating oil, coal, and the non-renewable portion of our electricity in any of our jurisdictions. This gives both the funds and the incentives to weatherize, insulate,

install solar water heating, public transit, or high-efficiency vehicles. Higher energy prices are going to happen. If we get efficient quickly, and use less, higher prices doesn't have to result in higher energy *bills*. That's the real concern!

6. REVISE THE STATE FORESTRY ACT TO REQUIRE LONGER ROTATIONS – NOW. Longer rotations sequester greenhouse gasses. They also give huge increases in timber production, overall economic value and benefits of forests, plus environmental improvements. Current Forestry Act standards are based on industry "science", not real science.

7. IMPLEMENT GAS-GUZZLER FEEBATES – NOW. Transportation is another huge user of energy. Fees on low-efficiency vehicles (or gas taxes) can be used as rebates to speed adoption of higher efficiency vehicles. Or fund good transit. Particularly since 9/11, it's possible to go from the center of Portland to San Francisco faster by high-speed rail than by air, while using only a fraction of the fuel. Anyone who has ridden the Shinkansen in Japan or the TGV in Europe can attest that it is not only faster, but gives generous leg room, phone and internet access, and good food. ANY jurisdiction can tax gas-guzzlers and implement efficiency standards.

8. TAX OUR HYDRO-ELECTRICITY TO MAKE EXISTING USE MORE EFFICIENT – NOW. Incredibly inefficient use of electricity to heat homes, hot water, and bad industrial systems is a legacy of super-low electricity prices from when the dams produced more than we could use. Increased rates can save both energy and money if used as incentive and funding to upgrade our existing stock of homes and businesses, making them competitive and comfortable into the future. It can help BPA eliminate the fossil fuel plants we now need to supplement our hydro power. Or we could buy BPA from the Feds so they don't kidnap our "liquid solar energy" for others to use.

9. BAN BILLBOARDS, BUY LESS – NOW. This may sound crazy at first. But the prime goal of advertising is to get us to spend more and consume more, and centralize the profit from that out of our communities. And every dollar we spend represents a lot of energy. After 9/11, people stopped buying "stuff", because we realized that being a consumer is pretty low on the list of what is really important in life. We were told we "needed" to consume. But we could have spent less, worked less, and had more free time for things that really matter. Governor Tom McCall turned out the lights on billboards and freeways in 1974, as a visible reminder that we needed to reduce energy use. Getting advertising off our highways (and out of our schools) gives us back surroundings that aren't screaming at us to "buy".

10. EAT LOCAL FOOD – NOW. Low transportation costs have destroyed Hood River's apple and pear industry, replacing it with fruit shipped around the world from places without pesticide controls. Local food avoids transportation, processing, and storage costs; and ensures we know how our food is produced. It's fresher, tastes better, and supports our local farmers. Avoiding unnecessary energy use improves our local economies.

11. IMPROVE RECYCLING AND MATERIAL ENERGY USE – NOW. Recycling we've shown leadership in - both locally and statewide. More can be done. Every reuse eliminates the energy needed to produce something new. It takes 20 times the energy to create a new aluminum pop can than to recycle one. Though taxing raw material extraction is an important element in improving material energy consumption, most action on that needs to occur at larger scale. But recycling, and reuse of materials locally, can occur at home.

12. REQUIRE LIVING WAGES, AND TAX THE SUPER-RICH – NOW. Global Warming and Peak Oil will unavoidably have greater impacts on the hard-working poor. Which makes it even more important to restore the reasonable equity of wealth that democracy depends upon. The original Federal Minimum Wage would equal \$15/hour in today's dollars. Over 150 jurisdictions have already implemented living wage ordinances. We can do so in any of our communities. And it's time that the super-rich pay some taxes, instead of jumping through

Hummer-sized tax loopholes. Using energy to meet everyone's basic needs, rather than the luxuries of a few, is necessary for our survival as a nation. And here are a few guidelines to help us through the process:

- **This is a NOW, not "some future century" issue.** Some people say, "Oh, this won't be important for 100 years." There are three answers to that:
 - **Global warming is happening way faster than anyone thought** - from SuperStorms to ice melt. My own guess is sea level rise is happening far quicker than projected. Already, the British Sterns report indicates that the eleven most recent studies unanimously are projecting far faster and more dramatic change than previously believed.
 - **From the Peak Oil side of the coin, we've already stolen our children and grandchildren's oil and their future, simply by being too lazy to demand efficient standards.** The prospects will continue to get worse and sooner, unless we act sooner and more actively. Even if major impacts don't occur for 100 years, **compounding this, plus leaving a legacy for our children and grandchildren of unnecessary disaster for hundreds of millions of people and crippling economic costs for everyone is immoral.**
 - **The impacts aren't "in the future". They've already begun.** Sea level rise is only *one* of the *later* impacts. We've already had five more-than-100-year-flood events in the last 15 years. ??? Katrina reminds us that worse is to be expected. How many times do we have to repeat (or worse) the crippling community and economic impacts of this winter's storms, the '96 floods that wiped out our dairy industry, breached Hwy 6 in 25 places and closed it for 6 months, before we get it?
- **"Peak Oil" and "Global Warming" are two sides of the same issue.** Peak Oil focuses on the spiraling economic costs of wastefully depleting our fossil fuel reserves. Global Warming deals with the environmental impacts of the release of that energy. They're not separate, and the right solutions have multiple benefits. The same answers that reduce greenhouse gasses also give huge benefits as we have to compete more intensively for the remaining and more expensive fossil fuels. Start with the roots of the problems, not just the symptoms. And not needing to start more wars to steal other people's oil is a rather big side benefit of moving quickly to efficiency and renewables.
- **Be suspicious of industry and corporate proposals.** Their sole goal is maximizing the profit they make off of us, and to continue their control of our support systems. It's their values that got us into this mess, and they won't get us out. WPPS, Exxon, "clean coal" and Calpine are not the answer.
- **Demand real numbers, and wholistic economic and net energy analysis for all proposals.** Hydrogen is not a "source of energy". It takes more energy to separate it from water than it can give when burned. The same acres of cropland that ethanol proponents point to for auto fuels are also needed to raise food crops, which themselves now consume 10 times the energy they produce.
- **We really need to turn off the boob-tube and ask ourselves what we DO want from life.** What *work* do we want to do that feeds us and excites us *doing it*? What *legacy* do we want to leave for our children and grandchildren? What really *moves our hearts* and gives us a sense of being of value to others and our community? It's usually love, not money, that is the real bottom line. Those things take a fraction of the energy and work to provide bountiful benefit. But corporate consumerism can't give them to us, so we've been distracted into shiny substitutes that tarnish quickly.

The good thing is we're not starting cold into all this. We've been developing the skills and experience in the Northwest for 30 years, since the '74 oil crisis, refining the actions we need to take. Energy self-reliant homes? We built one of the first, in 1973. Cowfarm methane? Started at Washington's Monroe Prison Farm in 1975; we have one in Tillamook. No-till agriculture? Been developed in Kansas since the '70s. Local food? Tilth has been developing amazing ways to improve food production in the wet Northwest since 1974. Green buildings? We've got several award winners already in our communities. Recycling? Energy efficiency? High-efficiency wood heat? Efficient light bulbs? Automobiles? They're ready to roll.

The really, really good news is we've discovered that our growth-based culture is actually incredibly inefficient. It didn't need to be anything else. **But the opportunities are right in front of us for order-of-magnitude improvements in all of our systems – improvements that mean there is plenty – not just us, but the whole world.** Hooray!

And also remember, it's the early adaptors that win. Toyota with the Prius is already putting GM out of business. We've already lost the manufacture of wind generators, high-speed rail, PVs, and solar water heaters to countries that have acknowledged the value of efficiency. If we order high-speed trainsets, solar panels, wind turbines, home insulation, or efficient cars now, before everyone is trying to get them, we won't be last in line. There's room to regain and take leadership in many areas. Let's get to it!

OREGON COAST IMPACTS OF GLOBAL WARMING SEA LEVEL RISE:

Projected Sea Level Rise - 48'

Affected Areas - 379,000 acres

Affected Urban Areas - 41,000 acres

Affected Population (current) - 93,000

Number of families displaced - 40,380

Value of homes destroyed - \$16 billion

Family livelihoods lost - \$700 million/year

Miles of Hwy 101 affected - 122 miles

Cost of replacing Hwy 101 - \$700 million

Miles of major roads and highways affected - 570 miles

Miles of minor roads affected - 2170 miles

Miles of utility lines affected - 71 miles

Miles of railway affected - 520

Economic infrastructure lost:

Ports, jetties, harbor facilities
Beaches/tourism (\$5 billion/year
current use)
Virtually all developed coastal State
Park areas

Virtually all coastal agricultural land
Sewage treatment systems
Airports
Utility systems
Roads, railroads, bridges, tidegates

Cultural infrastructure lost:

Cemeteries, churches, schools, recreational facilities, etc.

Estimated destruction of cities:

Astoria 10%
Warrenton 100%
Seaside 90%
Cannon Beach 80%
Manzanita 40%
Nehalem 40%
Wheeler 25%
Rockaway 80%
Bay City 40%
Tillamook 100%

Lincoln City ?
Newport ?
Florence ?
Coos Bay ?
Bandon ?
Gold Beach ?
Brookings ?