



2019 Legislative Agenda

Each year, Environment Oregon sets out goals for the legislative session and beyond. In addition to helping us measure our progress, the legislative agenda lets decision-makers know which high-priority environmental items our members want us to tackle.

Wildlife over Waste

For decades, people have been dumping millions of tons of plastic and other trash into the Pacific. It's creating an environmental disaster for ocean wildlife: plastic and other marine debris kills millions of sea turtles, sea birds and marine mammals every year who mistake it for food. Nothing we use for ten minutes should pollute the environment and harm wildlife for hundreds of years. That's why Environment Oregon supports:

- **A statewide ban on polystyrene takeout containers and cups.** One of the most egregious single-use plastics is polystyrene, more commonly known as Styrofoam. The proposed bills would ban polystyrene takeout containers and cups across the state.
- **A statewide ban on single-use plastic grocery bags.** As of January 2019, 15 cities in Oregon have banned single-use plastic bags. We support taking this policy statewide to prevent hundreds of millions of plastic bags from ending up in our waste stream every year.
- **A "request only" policy for plastic straws across the state.** We support bills that would require that all restaurants refrain from providing customers with a plastic straw unless the customer requests it.

Global warming solutions

Across the country, people are reeling from the brutal impacts of fire and flood worsened by the changing climate. Until recently, scientists told us this was a problem our grandchildren would face. Yet, we are seeing impacts of climate change sooner than we predicted, and the rate of change we are experiencing is unprecedented.

The good news is that we still have some time to stave off the worst impacts of global warming, and we know exactly what we need to do: act quickly and boldly to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. That's why Environment Oregon supports:

- **The Clean Energy Jobs Bill:** Oregon lawmakers will be voting on a proposal called "Clean Energy Jobs," to establish a carbon pricing system to set a limit on Oregon's global warming pollution and make the biggest polluters pay for their emissions. That money is then invested into programs that further reduce global warming pollution. If passed, this proposal will put Oregon on the path to upholding our end of the Paris Climate Agreement and the Clean Power Plan.

No drilling off our coast

Oregon's beautiful coast line is too spectacular to spoil with oil. Allowing oil and gas drilling off our coast will increase the likelihood of dangerous oil spills, threatening ocean ecosystems vital to the survival of whales, dolphins, sea turtles and other marine wildlife, and putting coastal livelihoods and communities at risk. That's why Environment Oregon supports:

- **A permanent moratorium on near shore oil and gas drilling.** There is currently a law preventing oil and gas drilling in the near shore off the coast of Oregon that expires in 2020. We support making that moratorium permanent.
- **Preventing oil companies that drill off our coast from using state land or water.** We support prohibiting the leasing of lands & water within the territorial sea for oil and gas exploration offshore in federal waters.

Environment Oregon's 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. That's the idea behind Environment Oregon. We protect 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.



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Healthy farms, healthy environment

The term “Oregon farms” elicits thoughts of our state’s core values: small farms, clean air and water, and healthy local food. Unfortunately, in recent years, mega-dairies have been moving into rural Oregon and polluting the air with dangerous gases including methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, and contaminating surface and groundwater with nitrates, pharmaceuticals, and pathogens. We support:

- **Stopping the expansion of mega-dairies in Oregon.**
No new industrial mega-dairies should be allowed to open its doors until there are stronger protections in place for our air and water. We support a moratorium on new industrial dairies, establishing a stronger permitting process, closing the stock water exemption loophole and requiring more oversight from the Oregon Department of Agriculture.

Go Solar, Oregon!

Too much of the energy we use comes from dirty sources that harm our environment. By tapping into the power of the sun *and* using less energy in the first place through efficiency measures, we can re-power our lives with clean energy that doesn’t pollute and never runs out. We support the creation of a short-term solar rooftop incentive to enable residential and commercial systems to partially reduce the cost of solar system installations and make them more competitive in the market.

No Bees, No Food

Millions of bees are dying off, with alarming consequences for our environment and our food supply. Bees pollinate 71 of the 100 plants that provide 90% of our food, including apples, avocados, strawberries, and watermelons. It’s urgent we protect our bees and prevent the use of bee-killing pesticides called neonicotinoids. We support bills that decrease the use of these pesticides either by requiring a permit for their use or through an outright ban.

Clean transportation, clean air

Oregon continues to allow old, dirty diesel engines to pollute across the state, spewing up to 90% more pollution than newer, cleaner engines. This contributes to climate change and exposes Oregonians to increased risk of health threats, including heart attack, strokes and cancer. We support phasing out dirty diesel engines as quickly as possible.

Stop the rollbacks

The current federal administration has taken several steps to weaken federal environmental protections, particularly for our air and water. We support a bill that would prevent these rollbacks in Oregon by requiring the enforcement of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act as they were written on January 19, 2017.

Right to repair

We generate way too much waste, and companies use their power in the marketplace to make things harder to repair. This only adds to the amount of waste going to landfills. We support legislation that gives every Oregonian and every small business access to the parts, tools, and service information they need to repair products.

Green Zoning

As the impacts of climate change become ever more apparent, cities and states are looking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as quickly and in as many ways as possible to limit the damage. In many cities, the desire to limit emissions and other environmental impacts coexists with another challenge: how to manage growth in a smart, responsible, and environmentally friendly way as population growth outstrips housing stock and other limited resources. We support House Bill 2001, which will promote green growth by removing bans on “middle housing” in cities with more than 10,000 people and allow for as many as four homes to be built on parcels currently zoned exclusively for single-family housing.