Moving Washington State Toward Net-Zero Carbon Emissions
Introduction

Climate change is the most urgent challenge of our time. The large-scale emission of greenhouse gases is causing catastrophic damage to our planet. Without rapid intervention, much of the Earth will change dramatically over the coming decades. Mass extinctions, millions of climate refugees, and severe economic disruption are only a few of the dire consequences that we will likely face unless we make significant changes soon.

Carbon Washington’s vision is for net-zero global warming emissions in Washington state. Our mission is to increase the demand for climate action and fight for smart carbon policies. By focusing on practical, effective, and economically rational climate solutions, we are working to promote programs that are supported by diverse stakeholders and can set an example for national and global action.

Promoting and Advocating for Effective Carbon-Reducing Measures

Carbon Washington identifies, analyzes, and promotes policies to reduce net carbon emissions, such as regulation, pricing, sequestration, and new technology development. We employ a three-part framework that guides our policy direction. Anything we support must be:

- Effective: Significantly reduces net greenhouse gas emissions in line with the best available scientific and economic evidence
- Equitable: Considers the needs of all affected people without increasing inequality
- Efficient: Provides maximum impact but also is compatible with economic growth

Carbon Washington works with institutions and individuals that we believe can help advance climate solutions in our state, including policy makers, legislators, scientists, economists, businesses, and nonprofit organizations. We seek input from a wide variety of experts about which approaches make the most sense scientifically, economically, politically, and locally. We promote these policies through broad engagement, outreach, and education, including working with groups whose concerns usually are not addressed by the mainstream climate change movement, such as rural communities, farmers, and ranchers. Carbon Washington has prioritized programs to engage these groups so that they are not left out of the discussion.

Given the enormity and complexity of the challenges presented by climate change, it is often difficult for people to understand all the issues involved and how they can make a meaningful impact. Carbon Washington educates Washington residents about the effects climate change is having on our state, discusses and clarifies climate policy proposals, and reports on relevant political and legal developments. Most importantly, our organization empowers people to engage with policy makers and members of their community on climate change issues.
Creating the Political Will to Pass Statewide Climate Policy

Carbon Washington is an active participant in state government and works closely with elected officials to pass meaningful and pragmatic climate legislation. Specifically, we focus on building bipartisan coalitions with lawmakers from districts around the state, including representatives from both urban and rural communities. We believe Washington can take on a leadership role in this fight and provide a blueprint for other states to follow by implementing smart and effective policies that work for as many people as possible.

We design and execute targeted advocacy and outreach programs to build political will statewide and help constituents express their support for climate issues to their legislators. We encourage and assist individuals and local businesses to write letters to their local newspapers and contact their elected representatives in support of proposed climate legislation. In 2017 and 2018, we sponsored ‘lobby days’ in Olympia, turning out 100+ constituents for meetings with their lawmakers.

Carbon Washington actively endorses and helps elect representatives who advocate for smart climate policy and have demonstrated an ability to shape their party’s climate platform. Our network of grassroots activists supports our preferred candidates through fundraising, canvassing, and other voter outreach programs. In 2018, for example, we supported and helped elect longtime supporter and climate advocate Sharon Shewmake (D) in a highly competitive Washington House race.

Finally, as demonstrated with Initiative 732 (I-732) in 2016, Carbon Washington will also develop and manage statewide initiatives to promote smart climate action. While working with elected officials in the state legislature is our preferred approach, we will not hesitate to field a ballot initiative if doing so is the best option for advancing climate policy.
How CarbonWA is Unique

1. Carbon Washington is singularly focused on addressing climate change. Our Board and Advisory Council members represent a diverse array of viewpoints, experience and expertise. We believe it is important to incorporate input from multiple fields such as economics, government, industry, science, media, and agriculture to help us form effective and actionable climate policy.

2. Carbon Washington is nonpartisan, without ties to any political party or ideological group. Our goal is to advance impactful climate legislation, and we understand the importance that coalition building and bipartisan support play in that process. As a result, we will endorse, support, and help elect both Democrats and Republicans who will act on climate change and show leadership in trying to find common ground.

3. Our focus is Washington state. We concentrate on efforts that resonate with both urban and rural communities, particularly groups that may feel left out of climate change discussions. Our aim is to successfully implement politically viable solutions that will succeed in Washington and eventually spread across the nation.

4. Carbon Washington strongly believes that market-based mechanisms are a key component of any sustainable climate policy. These can take many forms, such as carbon taxes, cap and trade systems, research and development credits, incentives for carbon sequestration and smart land use practices, tax credits for electric vehicles, etc. We believe that unless climate policy takes broader economic impacts into consideration, it is unlikely to gain sufficient political consensus to succeed.

5. Carbon Washington has a proven record of success. In 2016, we became the first organization in the U.S. to put a carbon tax on a statewide ballot (I-732). As part of that initiative, we led the biggest voter education outreach on climate change in Washington state, reaching nearly one million voters by phone and over 100,000 more by going door-to-door. This effort, run primarily by volunteers, brought national attention to climate change issues and potential solutions.

6. We have built a substantial grassroots organization that extends to all areas of Washington with the reach and ability to influence voters in all corners of the state.

7. We are respected in Olympia for our pragmatic, straight-shooting, no-nonsense focus on helping the state reduce carbon emissions and meet its stated climate goals.
Recent Examples of Our Work

**Sustainable Farms and Fields – SB 5947**
CarbonWA supported SB 5947, which addressed agricultural emissions by creating a grant program to assist with adopting carbon-reducing and sequestration practices.

What makes this bill unique is the bipartisan interest it has generated. It was introduced by an equal number of Republicans and Democrats (16 in total) including Minority Leader Mark Schoesler and Majority Caucus Chair John McCoy. By engaging rural residents, conservatives, and our natural resource economy in the solution, this bill is not only better policy, but also better politics. While SB 5947 passed the Senate in the 2019 legislative session, it did not progress in the House. Carbon Washington is spearheading an interim campaign to build support for the bill and reintroduce it with a goal of passing the legislation in 2020.

**Engaging Rural Communities For Climate Action**
In Washington state, rural communities are often the hardest hit by climate change impacts — wildfire, flooding, drought, pests, and other harms to natural resources. Agriculture accounts for roughly seven percent of Washington’s greenhouse gas emissions. Farmers can adopt proven technologies and practices that completely offset those emissions — and more — by sequestering carbon in soil and forests. Rural communities can also benefit immensely from market-based systems to reward practices that sequester carbon in the soil and reduce carbon pollution. However, this potential has been neglected by many groups that focus on climate change.

Carbon Washington is building a “climate coalition” of rural, agricultural, and timber stakeholders by deploying Carbon Washington staff, volunteers and experts to travel to agricultural regions and businesses to meet with stakeholders, introduce policies and technologies that can reduce climate pollution while strengthening rural economies, and collect feedback on what best supports their livelihoods and communities.

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**The program would fund work in three areas:**

- Reduction of carbon emissions generated throughout farming and ranching, including from fertilizers, pesticides, and fuels

- Regenerative agricultural practices like no-till and reduced tillage, cover cropping, and additions of manure, compost, and biochar

- Agroforestry, the integration of trees and shrubs that sequester carbon into farms and ranches
**Biochar Memorial**

Biochar, a form of charcoal produced from biomass sources like forest deadfall, offers several environmental and agricultural benefits. It sequesters carbon in soils for hundreds and possibly thousands of years, while also decreasing the amount of fuel for wildfires. Agriculture benefits from the nutrients biochar infuses in the soil, which increases crop yields. The broad support behind this issue (SJM 8005 passed both chambers of Washington's legislature with unanimous support) speaks to Carbon Washington's mission to promote common-sense bipartisan climate solutions. Along with the benefits biochar brings, Carbon Washington sees the passage of this memorial as a doorway to more bipartisan collaboration on climate policies.

**Carbon Tax – SB 6203**

In 2018, the state Senate passed a carbon tax bill through two committees and was within one vote of passing it off the Senate floor. This was the first legislature to advance a carbon tax through multiple committees. Carbon Washington was instrumental in providing technical input on the bill and rallying grassroots support. State Senator Guy Palumbo, a lead sponsor of the bill, recognized Carbon Washington as one of the most helpful organizations in moving the bill forward.
Who We Are

Carbon Washington is comprised of a broad coalition of academics, scientists, business and nonprofit leaders, policy makers, and concerned citizens. We welcome diversity of thought, opinion, and political affiliation. The common bond we share is a belief that we need to act quickly to implement effective climate solutions that are supported by diverse groups of people.

BOARD MEMBERS

Douglas Ray, PhD — Chair
Douglas has more than 25 years of experience in research management and executive leadership with the U.S. Department of Energy’s Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. He is a recognized authority on decarbonizing the global energy system and the environmental consequences of energy production and use. Douglas received his PhD in Chemistry from the University of California at Berkeley. He is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a contributing member of a variety of national and international organizations including the Citizens’ Climate Lobby.

Peter Kelly, PhD — Vice Chair
Peter earned a PhD in Agricultural and Resource Economics from UC Berkeley and was a full-time faculty member at Renmin University of China. He is an associate editor at the Journal of Forest Economics with a number of publications on the economics of sustainable land use. He is also founder of Grow Further, a nonprofit organization supporting agricultural science in developing countries to benefit small-scale farmers and the environment.

Dan Shih — Board Secretary
Dan is an attorney at Susman Godfrey LLP representing clients in courts across the country on complex litigation matters. He earned a bachelor’s degree in computer science from Princeton and a master’s degree in economics and J.D. from Stanford. Prior to law school, Dan worked as a management consultant at The Boston Consulting Group and in private equity. Dan also serves as a board member for the ACLU of Washington, Moisture Festival, and QLaw Association.

Matt Peterson — Treasurer
Matt is a technology executive with nearly twenty years of experience working at high growth companies and investment firms. He most recently worked at Amazon where he led digital media initiatives and M&A transactions. Early in his career, he implemented microcredit lending programs for small businesses in Central America as a Peace Corps volunteer. Matt received a bachelor’s degree in computer science from Dartmouth College and an MBA, with concentrations in business strategy and analytical finance, from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

Greg Rock — Policy Committee Chair
Greg has a Master’s degree in Sustainable Energy Engineering, worked for three years at the State Energy Office as their lead on public building efficiency improvements, founded the Green Car Company in 2004 and an Infill development company in 2008 focused on transit-oriented properties. Greg has volunteered as Carbon Washington’s lobbyist for the past four legislative sessions. Over the past two years, Greg has organized and led a multi-disciplinary research and development group focused on developing carbon sequestration technologies and policies.
Bill Boyd — Communications Committee Co-Chair
Bill has spent the past four decades in communications — as an all-news radio anchor in DC, reporter for KIRO Radio and KSTW-TV in Seattle, political press secretary, corporate communicator, partner in a marketing firm and principal of The Bill Boyd Group. Bill served for three years as communications chair of Carbon Washington. He’s a member of Audubon’s Rainier Chapter and the Citizens’ Climate Lobby. He’s also the co-founder of the Information Overload Research Group.

Samara Villasenor — Communications Committee Co-Chair
Samara Villasenor is a principal at GreatWork Strategic Communications, a boutique public relations and public affairs agency in Seattle. Samara was a communications consultant for the Yes on 732 campaign, and is a member of the Citizens’ Climate Lobby (CCL) Bellevue Chapter. Samara earned a bachelor’s degree in Japanese Language and Literature from Yale.

Kate Pflaumer — Governance Committee Chair
Kate is a retired litigator and former US Attorney for the Western District of Washington. She is also active in the Puget Soundkeeper Alliance.

Duncan Clauson
Duncan was one of the initial co-directors at Carbon Washington. Originally from the Midwest, Duncan moved to Seattle in 2006 and began working on energy and environment issues as assistant canvass director at WashPIRG (supporting I-937). Duncan earned a bachelor’s degree in Environmental Studies from the University of Washington, and a Master of Public Administration, with a focus on environmental policy and management, from the Evans School of Public Policy and Governance.

Deepa Garg
Deepa joined CarbonWA after completing her MBA from The University of Chicago Booth School of Business. Since then, she has focused her efforts on cleaner consumption, both in the clean-tech sector and consumer products. Deepa spent over a decade optimizing digital ad performance for major consumer brands, most recently at Yahoo! She currently works as Marketing Director at charity gift card nonprofit Tisbest.org. Deepa is most of all committed to leaving behind a healthier planet for her two young daughters.

Clif Swiggett
Clif is an entrepreneur, engineer, and musician. He has founded or helped lead several successful technology companies in the fields of education, healthcare, and government policy. He earned a bachelor’s degree in computer science and electrical engineering with minors in music and religion from Princeton University and holds patents in adaptive learning and harmony generation. Clif also volunteers with Citizens Climate Lobby and performs with the Alaska Suite to promote awareness and effective action on climate.

Aaron Tam
Aaron is a long-time volunteer and former campaign organizer for Carbon Washington’s I-732 campaign. He currently serves on the policy committee of the Carbon Washington board. Aaron has served as President of the University of Washington’s Earth Club and his legislative district’s Young Democrats. He is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration degree to analyze and advance policies that promote racial, socioeconomic, and environmental equity.
History

Carbon Washington was formed by a group of prominent academics and community leaders to advocate for a revenue-neutral carbon tax in Washington State. Over 3,500 economists (including 27 Nobel laureates) and every former Federal Reserve Chair agree that a carbon tax and dividend program is the most cost-effective and equitable means of reducing carbon emissions. These initial efforts resulted in the development of I-732, which was presented to Washington voters in November 2016. I-732 would have instituted a tax of $25 per ton of carbon dioxide emissions while simultaneously reducing the state sales tax and increasing the earned income tax credit. Propelled by a huge statewide network of volunteers, the initiative qualified for the ballot, surprising political insiders and those who thought climate change was still a fringe issue for voters.

Although I-732 fell short of a majority at the polls, it sent a message to politicians across the country that the voting public was looking for innovative and effective measures to address their increasing concerns around climate change. It also made national headlines by attracting support from prominent Republicans, in stark contrast to many other climate-related policies. Since I-732, Carbon Washington has supported effective solutions to climate change, including Washington state carbon tax efforts such as Initiative 1631 and SB 6203 along with other carbon reducing legislation including SB 5116 (100% clean electricity) and HB 2042 (advancing green transportation adoption). Going forward, we will continue to leverage our broad and bipartisan network of supporters to advance meaningful climate policy across the state.

For more information, please email us at info@carbonwa.org or visit www.carbonwa.org.