

The Energy Activist

NW Energy Coalition

Energy Conservation

Doing more with less, not doing without



Brandon helps his father Robert McLaughlin make the right choice — that compact fluorescent bulb will go on saving electricity long after the energy crisis is over.

Time To Shine

The strength, diversity and mutual support of the **NW Energy Coalition** are needed more desperately now than ever before in response to the **Bush Administration's** topsy-turvy energy policy. New federal proposals to dig, drill, drain and burn our way out of an energy crisis will lead only to poison in our air and water, death to our wildlife and wild lands and short-term profits for a select few.



We must use our strength and our practical, affordable solutions to counter this assault on our environment and economy. Increased energy efficiency and clean renewable resources, such as wind and solar, are quicker, cleaner and cheaper than turning to gas, coal, nuclear and diesel power. Boosting efforts to weatherize low-income households reduces demand for energy and takes the sting out of rising energy costs for our most vulnerable neighbors. And clean energy means less demand for hydropower and that's good for salmon. It's a good thing we have been working at this Coalition thing for twenty years! We need all our friends, all our good ideas and all our courage now.



The Energy Activist

Founded in 1981, the NW Energy Coalition is dedicated to the pursuit of clean and affordable energy. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, all donations to the NW Energy Coalition are tax-deductible.

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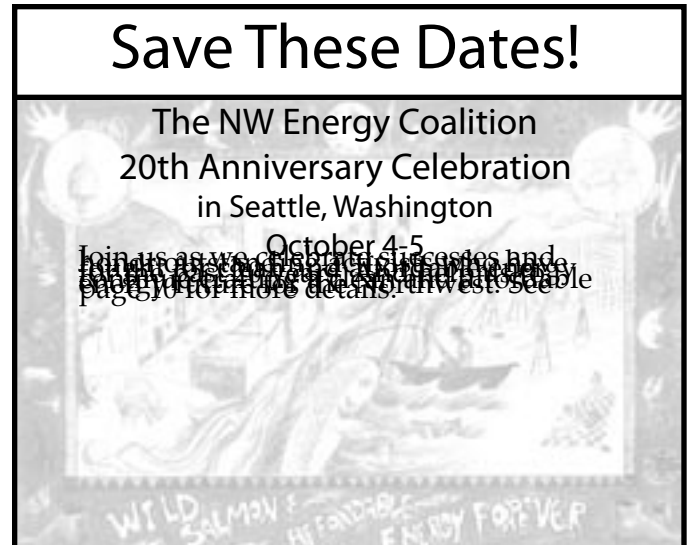
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Save These Dates!

The NW Energy Coalition
 20th Anniversary Celebration
 in Seattle, Washington

October 4-5

Join us as we celebrate successes and learn about new challenges ahead. See page 10 for more details. www.nwec.org



Crisis (kri-sis) n. 1. a decisive time

We can beat the power crisis without shivering in the dark

The energy crisis and a looming drought in the Northwest has made conservation a top-of-mind issue for the first time in more than twenty years. We're bombarded daily with requests from utilities, energy officials and elected leaders to save energy. While turning down thermostats, shutting off lights and other energy-saving habits can make a big difference, they only offer short-term relief. So far, what we've been asked to do in the current crisis is not true conservation; it's emergency curtailment. As a short-term strategy, that makes sense. But let's not confuse crisis-driven actions with an effective, long-term strategy against energy waste.

Saving energy without sacrificing comfort and convenience

Using less energy every time we turn on the heat, flip a light switch or throw in a load of laundry is the real solution to the energy crisis. Rather than turn the thermostat down below our comfort level, we can insulate our homes. Instead of making do with less light, we can install energy efficient lights. Rather than mixing colors and whites in the washer and always using cold water, we can buy an energy-and water-saving washing machine. You get the idea.

One-time actions that increase energy efficiency will transform increased awareness about energy into lasting changes that will stretch precious resources even after the crisis is over. A compact fluorescent light bulb will keep saving energy long after the person who installed it stopped worrying about power costs.



Hassle-Free Energy Efficiency — Do it once and forget about it

- ✓ Switch to compact fluorescent bulbs. They use one-fourth the energy used by regular bulbs. Look for rebates from your local utility. Choose energy-efficient appliances: look for the **Energy Star** label.
- ✓ Install a programmable thermostat. Your heating system will be set automatically to keep your home at the right temperature — warm when you get out of bed or return home; cooler at night and when you're at work or away.
- ✓ Set your water heater at 115 degrees (F), which is comfortable for most uses.
- ✓ Weatherize your home by sealing air leaks around windows, doors and heating ducts. Insulate attics, walls and floors. Assistance is available to help low-income households weatherize.
- ✓ Use motion detectors to trigger outdoor lights rather than leaving them on all night.
- ✓ Regularly clean your furnace and heat pump filters to keep them operating efficiently.
- ✓ Wash clothes in warm or cold water. Even switching from hot to warm can cut energy use in half.
- ✓ Go to the Web site: www.HomeEnergySaver.lbl.gov for customized advice on how to make your home more energy efficient.

It's Not Automatic

Leadership needed to unlock the power of conservation

If it's really a great cost-effective alternative to building expensive power plants and decreases our dependence on burning fossil fuels, why isn't energy conservation widespread? Why must utilities and public agencies provide incentives to encourage energy efficiency?

The answer may seem quite evident to the energy savvy. For example, it makes sense to implement building codes that *require* energy efficiency in new construction because builders are generally not interested in the dollar amount due on utility bills down the line. Builders, in both commercial and residential construction usually choose the cheapest materials, not the most energy efficient and they invest in what sells — essentially what looks good. Unfortunately, efficiency is invisible to most people.

But many of us live and work in buildings that date before even the most basic efficiency standards. Many of us also rent either work space or housing and find ourselves somewhat removed from the utility bill and the purchasing decisions that could lead to higher energy efficiency.



Here at the **NW Energy Coalition** office in **Seattle**, our rent includes the cost of lights, heat and cooling. Because we don't directly pay for what we use and are not presented with a measure of kilowatt hours

consumed each month, there is little economic incentive to conserve energy or to purchase energy-efficient equipment. As a renter, even if your electricity is metered separately and you can gage how much you use, the landlord still has final say on investments for efficient windows or energy-efficient water heaters, refrigerators and appliances.

Understanding the challenges presented by these "split-incentives," many utilities and public agencies have reinvigorated their push for conservation. A recent effort from **Seattle City Light**, a member of the NW Energy Coalition, delivered conservation kits to more than 40 percent of its residential customers. City Light planners originally expected a response of about 35 percent to its offer for free compact fluorescent bulbs and faucet aerators.

Seattle landlord, neighborhood shopkeeper and long-time City Light customer **Jules James** says the kits provide useful knowledge for making conservation choices. "It gives us a chance to experiment with what we should be doing and it makes us all think twice as we walk past the light bulb display at the hardware store," James explains. It also saves on maintenance labor costs because the bulbs last longer, he adds.

Programs like these and others where utilities offer money (such as rebates or low-interest loans) and technical assistance to make energy efficiency worthwhile are necessary components of a good energy policy. In the face of an energy crisis, local, state and federal have unique opportunity to put conservation to work. With increased efficiency, we use less energy which means we save money, help salmon and reduce pollution in the long run.

Overflowing With Potential

Faster, cheaper, cleaner — conservation beats the competition

The harsh reality of a severe drought means the hydropower-dependent Northwest faces better than a one-in-five chance of suffering rolling blackouts this summer. But even under normal water conditions, energy experts assert demand for power in the Northwest is perilously close to outpacing supply.

The growing clamor to build more power plants seems sensible and justified, but also echoes calls made 25 years ago when the Northwest last faced an energy crisis. The region embarked on a crash course that ended in the largest bond default in the nation's history. A portion of virtually every Northwest electric bill still goes toward payments on that debt, more than 20 years after the **Washington Public Power Supply System** (now **Energy Northwest**) finally abandoned four out of its five proposed nuclear plants.

The silver lining of the nuclear debt cloud was the emergence of a new strategy to tackle growing power consumption — a strategy based on conservation. The **Bonneville Power Administration** and the region's utilities proved during the 1980s and early 1990s that making Northwest homes and businesses more energy efficient is cheaper and faster than adding new generation. Even modern gas-fired power plants take two to four years to come online once they receive permits.

In the 10 years preceding 1997, the Northwest saved enough electricity to power the cities of **Seattle, Washington**, and **Eugene, Oregon**, combined. That conservation has freed up more energy than the three gas-fired power plants now under construction in the Northwest will produce once they're completed.

In the mid-90s, however, the Bonneville Power Administration and many Northwest utilities began slashing investments in conservation. Energy was plentiful, prices were low, and with deregulation looming, utilities were reluctant to make long-term investments. If utilities in Washington had maintained investments in conservation, however, the state would have freed up 300 megawatts of energy — enough to power more than 200,000 homes.

But the year 2000 brought soaring prices and short supplies. In 2001, energy efficiency is poised to make a major comeback.



A Grand Coulee of Cheap Conservation

The Northwest Power Planning Council estimates there is enough energy efficiency potential in the region to free up as much power as Grand Coulee dam produces. That conservation will cost an average of about 2 cents for each kilowatt hour (kWh) saved. At that price, conservation clearly beats the competition. Power generated by gas-burning power plants works is at least 4 cents per kWh and coal comes in at just over 6 cents per kWh.

Coalition Leads in WA Legislature



Energy was a top-of-mind issue in **Olympia** this year. The **NW Energy Coalition** and its members, led by the **Washington Public Interest Research Group (WashPIRG)**, **League of Women Voters** and the **Washington Environmental Council** set the stage for debate on how the state should respond to the energy crisis by pushing a **Clean, Affordable, Reliable Energy (CARE)**

package. The CARE proposal would require utilities to make minimum investments in energy conservation, new renewable resources and low-income energy services.

Governor Gary Locke unveiled bi-partisan legislation which, like the CARE package, quickly succumbed to the quagmire of an evenly divided **House of Representatives** and a one-seat majority **Senate**. A race to the bottom for any protections for the environment ensued and proposals aimed at diversifying the state's energy supply with renewable resources failed. Lawmakers passed an energy bill which will give tax breaks to aluminum companies and allow for the siting of larger fossil fuel power plants without state review. Fortunately, the legislation will provide \$2.5 million for critically needed low-income energy assistance. Governor Locke is expected to sign the bill.



Activists Defend Restructuring in OR



The **NW Energy Coalition (NWEC)** and the **Fair and Clean Energy Coalition (FCEC)** are working tirelessly to protect **Oregon's Electricity Restructuring law (SB1149)**. Hysteria over **California's** deregulation plan and the role it played in causing the energy crisis has fostered faulty assumptions about SB1149 which differs dramatically from the approach taken by Oregon's neighbor to the South.

SB1149 would be a positive step forward for Oregon. Set to go into effect on October 1, the law would establish minimum statewide investments in energy conservation, development of new renewable resources and low-income energy services. The new law would also allow residences to choose among green power options and save money by using electricity during off-peak hours. And small cusatomers could stay with regulated service identical to what they have now.

SB 1149 would also establish statewide investments in low-income energy assistance, a critical need in the face of soaring energy costs. Although SB 1149 mistakenly omitted the word "annually," members of NWEC and FCEC successfully lobbied this year to fix the critical omission in the 1997 law. The **Oregon Energy Assistance Program** will be funded at a level of \$10 million annually, not just on a one-time basis. Contact **Jeff Bissonette** at FCEC for more information, jbissonette@igc.org or (503) 227-1984.

Energy War Rages in Montana



In January, **Governor Judy Martz** appointed 15 person energy council to investigate solutions to Montana's energy crisis. The Governor's council was predictably stacked with representatives from industry. The council and the Legislature proceeded to launch a full-scale assault on clean and affordable energy and the environment. Proposed legislation took aim at the **Montana Environmental Protection Act (MEPA)** and the **Major Facility Siting Act**; sought to reduce taxes on new coal-fired generation; and tamper with the **Universal System Benefits Charge (USBC)**.

In response, the NWEC **Montana Caucus** — led by **Pat Judge** and **Graden Oehlerich** of **Montana Environmental Information Center**, **MontPIRG** executive director **David Ponder** and NWEC Board Chair **Debbie Smith** — created a **Citizen's Energy Council**. The Council, made up of representatives from organized labor, senior citizens, religious organizations and environmental groups, developed benchmark principles to measure proposed legislation and presented its own recommendations to the Governor on how to solve the energy crisis.

By session's end, some of the anti-environmental bills passed, but MEPA remained intact, incentives for conservation and renewables were improved, the USBC was extended by two and a half years through the end of 2005 and the proposal for a **Montana Electricity Buyers Cooperative** were revived. For more information, contact NWEC MT Caucus Chair, Graden Oehlerich at 406-721-3589 or gradeno@montana.com.

Idaho Energy Coalition Revitalized



The newly revitalized **Idaho Energy Coalition (IEC)** is providing an important forum for tracking energy issues in Idaho. IEC plans to spotlight clean energy at the **Idaho Association of Cities** conference on building codes this November with a look at how clean energy can help solve the energy crisis and boost local economies. The

annual event draws both building professionals and city officials. Organizers this year will target Senator **Mike Crapo's** office, the **Idaho Power Company**, the **Energy Office** at the **Idaho Department of Water Resources**, the **Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory**, the **U.S. Department of Energy's Wind Power America** program, and local foundations as potential partners and sponsors.

IEC also will weigh in as an intervenor on a recent proposal from the Idaho Power Company to raise rates. The coalition aims to ensure the company invests in energy conservation, new renewable resources and assistance for low-income households as part of any rate hike.



Thinking Globally, Acting Regionally

New Global Warming Coalition Forms



Imagine the Northwest 50 years from now if human induced climate change goes unchecked:

- Winters are even wetter, but due to warmer temperatures snowpack in the **Cascades** is 50 percent less than today; in the **Northern Rockies** snowpack is down 30 percent.
- Winter and spring flooding is growing, but in summer drought is three times as common as it used to be.
- The Lower Snake River has only a 47 percent chance of sufficient flows for salmon.
- Forest cover in the **Cascades** is reduced by 15 to 25 percent, with the eastern slopes of the range now covered in sage rather than conifers. Forests in the Northern Rockies are experiencing more frequent and devastating fires, and are being ravaged by insect pests.
- Warmer weather has dampened the coastal upwelling of cold, nutrient-rich water which once supported a rich ecosystem of plankton, fish, seabirds and marine mammals.
- Further north, warmer temperatures have driven salmon from the **Gulf of Alaska** to a last refuge in the northern **Bering Sea**.

It's a frightening picture, but based on regional modeling by scientists at **Seattle's Joint Institute for the Study of Atmosphere and Ocean** and at **Pacific Northwest National Laboratory**, it's all too likely.

But help is on the way. Regional public interest group leaders and others gathered near **Portland** in December to sow the seeds of united action against global warming. Representatives of 39 environmental, public health, good government and faith-based groups decided to combine forces in a new coalition bringing together groups in **Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington** and **British Columbia**. The coalition, which will initially be under the sponsorship of the **NW Energy Coalition**, aims to:

- 1) Build a broad-based coalition to put climate change squarely on the region's policy agenda;
- 2) Highlight the linkages between climate change and our most pressing challenges and our most promising opportunities;
- 3) Position the region as a national and international leader in developing and implementing climate change solutions; and
- 4) Demonstrate unmistakably that effective action against climate change is consistent with and can contribute to, economic prosperity.

Former NW Energy Coalition executive director Marc Sullivan has been hired to staff the startup of the new coalition. "Our national leaders have conspicuously failed to meet the challenge of global warming," says Sullivan. "We think it's time for individuals, local communities, states and provinces to assume a leadership role. Every one of us is making some contribution to the problem; every one of us can contribute to its solution. It's the ultimate 'Think globally, act locally' issue."

The NW Energy Coalition Welcomes New Staff

Heather Rhoads-Weaver and Bryan Flint are the newest staff members to the Coalition. Bryan is the new Outreach Associate, replacing **Barbara Wilson**. He has already become well known to the Washington and Idaho Caucuses since he serves as staff liaison to both. Bryan's long-time vocation for clean and affordable energy led him to join the Coalition as an individual member in 1998. He brings years of experience in outreach through his work with the Washington **House Democratic Campaign Committee** and grassroots organizing with the **Washington Rural Organizing Project**.



Heather Rhoads-Weaver



Bryan Flint

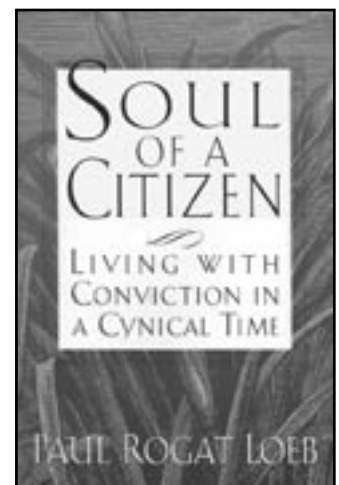
Policy Director, **Nancy Hirsh**, came back from maternity leave to work three days a week allowing the Coalition to bring Heather on to help with the ever-mounting policy workload. Heather's experience includes organizing and policy work in the Midwest for **Iowa SEED (Sustainable Energy for Economic Development)** and policy work for **Global Energy Concepts**, a Kirkland, Washington-based wind energy engineering company. In the other half of her professional life, Heather is organizing Northwest SEED to bring clean energy economic development to farmers, ranchers and rural communities.

In addition, **Georgene Scott** has joined the Coalition as contract accountant. Her son Scott knew of the Coalition through his work as an energy efficiency consultant and vouched for us. And **Marc Sullivan** continues to grace the Coalition's Seattle offices. He served as a terrific interim Policy Director while Nancy was home with her family's newest member — **Rachel Rose**. The Coalition will continue to enjoy his expertise and eloquence as director of the new climate change project (not officially named yet) through September. But **Kathmandu** calls come October.

Overcoming Apathy and Cynicism

Paul Loeb's 1999 book, **Soul of a Citizen**, is even more compelling now than when it came out. Subtitled "**Living with Conviction in a Cynical Time**," the book is a must-read for energy activists and for all public interest advocates. Loeb explores the reasons for apathy and cynicism in this era of multinational corporate power and robber baron glorification; but he does not stop there. He gives us all the sensible and inspired reasons why we can and should be active in our neighborhoods, cities, states and countries. He illustrates with very real stories from committed activists, some famous, most not.

Loeb uses **Puget Sound Gillnetters Association** stalwart **Pete Knutsen** to show the rewards of activism. Pete is familiar to many in this Coalition, and it was a pleasure to read his exploits and eloquence used adroitly to encourage the novice to get involved and to provide the weary or discouraged with hope and concrete suggestions on how to keep going. Loeb's stories come from all over the country as do the accolades for his book (from **Studs Terkel** and **Alice Walker** to **Paul Hawken** and **John Sweeney**). He lives in **Seattle**, however, and has expressed strong support for the commitment to activism for a clean and affordable energy future to which the Coalition is devoted. Visit www.soulofacitizen.org to learn more about the book.



Membership

NW Energy Coalition Plans 20th Anniversary Party



Board members gather in 1990 to celebrate the NW Energy Coalition's first 10 years

This year marks the **20th anniversary** of the **NW Energy Coalition**. In October, NWECC will host Coalition members, allies and the public for three days of inspired debate on how the Northwest can meet the energy challenges of the next 20 years.

Participants can also expect to learn how investments in energy conservation, new sources of renewable energy, low-income energy services and salmon restoration have transformed the Northwest landscape and culture for the better during the last 20 years. **Together we'll reflect on our legacy, honor our activists, and celebrate our victories.**

Since its inception in 1981, NWECC has grown to nearly 100 member organizations and has nurtured the movement for clean, affordable energy in the Northwest. The strength of a Coalition is far greater than that of any individual group, so every single Coalition victory is a win for each of its members.

One of the greatest achievements of NWECC's first 20 years has been cultivating a far-reaching movement for sensible energy policy. Four separate coalitions have formed in the last decade, each dedicated in its own way to making the Northwest energy system a reliable source of affordable energy for all and a model on balancing energy production with environmental stewardship. The **Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition** (www.wildsalmon.org) tirelessly champions salmon restoration in the **Columbia** and **Snake Rivers**, where hydropower generation has imperiled what was once the greatest salmon river system in the world.

Renewable Northwest Project (RNP) (www.rnp.org) successes are highlighted by two large-scale wind projects already in operation capable of serving the energy needs of about 35,000 households, and additional wind resources in the construction phase that will serve another 70,000. RNP has successfully advanced use, development, understanding and acceptance of renewables in countless other ways.

The **Fair and Clean Energy Coalition** (www.fcec.org), an Oregon-based coalition of low-income, environmental, and consumer advocates, formed around the challenge of utility restructuring, which introduced new threats and challenges to securing a clean and affordable energy future for Oregon. FCEC played a pivotal role in designing and passing legislation that stands as a model of how states can protect consumers, low-income households and the environment under energy restructuring.

Finally, the yet-to-be-named **climate change coalition** is coming together to tackle global climate change, sure to be one of the most dangerous and difficult threats Northwest clean and affordable energy enthusiasts will ever face, and eventually overcome.

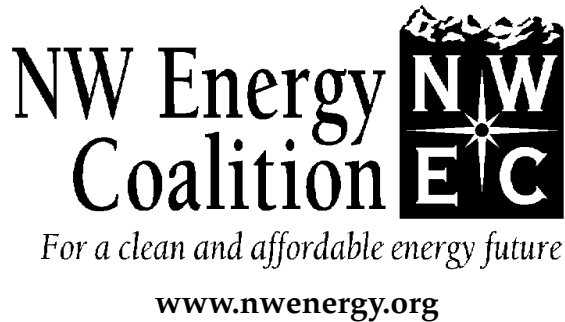
We hope you'll join us for the NWECC 20th Anniversary Celebration and Conference in Seattle.

NWECC Anniversary Celebration: Friday, October 5, 6-10 pm

Educational Seminars: Friday and Saturday, October 5 and 6, 9-4 pm

Board Meeting: Sunday, October 7

— For more information, contact Outreach Director Rob Gala.



Yes! I want to join the fight for clean and affordable energy to protect consumers and the environment by supporting the NW Energy Coalition.

The NW Energy Coalition is a regional alliance of 100 businesses, environmental and low-income advocates, progressive utilities, community action agencies and consumer groups working for reliable energy that's clean and affordable. By joining NW Energy Coalition, you're supporting an effective advocate with 20 years of successful experience bringing communities together to make energy policy that makes economic as well as environmental sense.

Sponsors and members of NWECA receive the monthly *Report*, our insightful policy publication, in addition to the *Energy Activist*. Members can also make use of our e-mail lists to announce events and spotlight issues in their area. As a member you'll also receive action alerts and invitations to our conferences, board meetings, and special events.

I'll volunteer in the following ways:

- Write/call decision makers about important issues
- Write letters to my local newspaper
- Join an email alert list (my address is below)
- I can offer my expertise in _____
- Help in the Seattle office
- Educate legislators/testify
- Phone other concerned citizens

I want to support the Coalition. My check is enclosed.

- \$40 Sponsor
- \$100 Solar Star
- \$250 Salmon Saver
- \$500 Efficiency Afficionado
- \$1,000 Green Power Pro
- \$ _____ Other

Name _____ Organization _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Phone (W) _____ (H) _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____ Web _____

Please send information about organizational membership.

Contributions to NWECA are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to NWECA.
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NW Energy Coalition

A World Institute for a Sustainable Humanity — International
Alaska Housing Finance Corporation — AK
Alliance to Save Energy — National
Alternative Energy Resources Organization — MT
American Rivers — National
Association For The Advancement of Sustainable Energy Policy — BC
Central Area Motivation Program — WA
Citizens' Utility Board — OR
Clallam-Jefferson Community Action Council — WA
Climate Solutions — WA
Cold Spring Conservancy — WA
Community Action Directors of Oregon — OR
Earth and Spirit Council — OR
Emerald People's Utility District — OR
Eugene Future Power Committee — OR
Eugene Water and Electric Board — OR
Fair Use of Snohomish Energy — WA
Friends of the Earth — National
Golden Eagle Audubon Society — ID
Greenpeace — International
Housing & Community Service Agency of Lane County — OR
Human Resources Council, District XI — MT
Idaho Community Action Network — ID
Idaho Conservation League — ID
Idaho Consumer Affairs — ID
Idaho Rivers United — ID
Idaho Rural Council — ID
Idaho Wildlife Federation — ID
Kootenay-Okanagan Electric Consumers Association — BC
League of Utilities and Social Service Agencies — OR
League of Women Voters — ID, OR, WA
Metrocenter YMCA — WA
Missoula Urban Demonstration Project — MT
Montana Environmental Information Center — MT
Montana Public Interest Research Group — MT
Montana River Action — MT
Mountaineers — WA
National Center For Appropriate Technology — MT
Natural Resources Defense Council — National
Northern Plains Resource Council — MT
National Energy Efficiency Alliance - Regional
Northwest Energy Efficiency Council — WA
Northwest Resource Information Center — ID
Olympic Community Action Program - WA
Opportunity Council — WA
Oregon Action — OR
Oregon Energy Coordinators Association — OR
Oregon Energy Partnership — OR
Oregon Environmental Council — OR
Oregon State Public Interest Research Group — OR
Pacific Northwest Council of Carpenters — Regional
Pacific Rivers Council — OR
Portland Energy Conservation, Inc. — OR
Portland General Electric — OR
Puget Sound Council of Senior Citizens — WA
Renewable Northwest Project — Regional
Rivers Council of Washington — WA
Salmon For All — OR
Save Our *Wild* Salmon Coalition — Regional
Sea of O - OR
Seattle Audubon Society — WA
Seattle City Light — WA
Sierra Club — Regional
Sierra Club of British Columbia — BC
Snohomish County Public Utility District — WA
Solar Energy Association of Oregon — OR
Solar Information Center — OR
Solar Washington - WA
South Central Community Action - ID
South East Idaho Community Action Agency — ID
Southern Alliance for Clean Energy
Spokane Neighborhood Action Programs — WA
Tahoma Audubon Society — WA
Trout Unlimited — WA
Union of Concerned Scientists — National
Washington Citizen Action — WA
Washington Environmental Council — WA
Washington Public Interest Research Group — WA
Washington State Association of Community Action Agencies — WA
Washington State University Energy Program — WA
Washington Wilderness Coalition — WA
Western SUN Cooperative — Regional
Working for Equality and Economic Liberation — MT
Yakima Valley Opportunities Industrialization Center — WA

Associate Members
City of Ashland — OR
Puget Sound Energy — WA

Supporting Members
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Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development — WA
Housing Authority of Skagit County — WA
Multnomah County Weatherization — OR
Rocky Mountain Institute — National

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