

YOUR IMPACT

Gaining Momentum at a Pivotal Moment



Oregon
Environmental
Council

2022-2023 Impact Report

To love the planet and to
dedicate yourself to this
work requires a belief in a
better tomorrow.
Optimism is a political act.



Oregon
Environmental
Council



Jean Wilson
Board President

“ Thank you
for making a
difference for
the health of
Oregon’s
environment
and people. ”

Dear Friend of Oregon’s Environment,

This is a time of powerful progress.

The victories you’ll read about in this report are for the benefit of all Oregonians. **These are victories we share with our entire community of caring people who make progress possible, including OEC’s expert staff, our dedicated board, statewide partners, passionate advocates, legislative supporters, and you.** Thank you for being part of all we’ve accomplished together for Oregon’s environment this past year.

I’ve had the pleasure of being a champion for OEC for nearly two decades, first as a supporter, then as a board member, and now as board president. I have seen many chapters in OEC’s evolution, and now I have the honor of reflecting back on Jana Gastellum’s first year as OEC’s executive director. By the time I met Jana when I joined the board in 2016, she had already been fighting for years on landmark climate protections as OEC’s climate director. Now, at Jana’s one-year mark as executive director, **we celebrate the passage of groundbreaking public health policies, laws to bolster the resiliency of Oregonians and the economy, and momentous investments in clean, affordable energy.**

And yet, our work is far from over. With climate change impacting people and ecosystems across the globe and here at home, there is much to be done to protect Oregon’s air, water, landscapes, and communities. That’s why, after OEC’s 55 years of progress, we are as committed as ever to continue fighting for a healthy, equitable future for our beloved state’s environment and people. Under Jana’s leadership and with momentum on our side, OEC and our partners across the state are poised to continue making great strides in this pivotal time.

Thank you for being part of OEC’s community of supporters. Members empower us to show up... to set the record straight... to disarm disinformation... to elevate the voices of all Oregonians... to hold the line against powerful industry forces... to hold polluters to account... to speak truth to power... and to work with dedication and perseverance for Oregon’s future.

We are so grateful for your commitment and your generosity.

You have my thanks,

Jean Wilson
Jean Wilson
Board President

Your impact in action

This past year, community support—your support—powered our work to create positive change for Oregon’s environment. Because of you, substantial progress was made to safeguard Oregon’s future.

150 meetings

with legislators and legislative staff

98 testimonies

(64 written and 34 verbal) delivered to the Oregon House and Senate

184 hours

working on committees, developing testimony, and advocating for the environment in the rulemaking process

289 messages

delivered from constituents to lawmakers

Photo by OEC member Jeff Brittain

28 bills successfully passed!

Victories in Oregon’s 2023 Legislative Session will:



Protect children from toxic chemicals



Keep harmful chemicals out of cosmetics



Phase out “forever chemicals”



Support rural lands, economies, and communities



Protect frontline workers from climate-fueled extreme weather



Support a climate resilient future and community resilience hubs



Leverage federal funding for water, climate, and transportation infrastructure



Create much-needed staffing for state agencies



Preserve water resources



Reduce greenhouse emissions



Power the transition to clean energy

OEC staff testifying during the 2023 Legislative Session



Jamie Pang, OEC’s Senior Program Director, Environmental Health



Meagan Golec, OEC’s Member Engagement Officer



Nora Apter, OEC’s Senior Program Director, Climate

Members and our advocacy network make it all possible.

For the future



Members of OEC’s Emerging Leaders Board

OEC’s Emerging Leaders Board

Your generosity this year helped to support the next generation of environmental leaders by reinstating OEC’s Emerging Leaders Board (ELB). The ELB is a team of 21-35-year-olds who share the mission and values of OEC, have a strong interest in community and environmental protections, and want to grow their networks and gain hands-on experience. Today’s cohort is made up of nine members with a broad and diverse set

of backgrounds from advocacy and organizing to policy and law; natural resource management to sustainable business; and transportation electrification to public health. The ELB plans and hosts events and projects that focus on outreach, education, and advocacy for Oregon’s environment. New recruitments occur every 18 months. Let us know if you know someone great!

Generations of giving back

“Growing up, our family always had a connection to the environment,” shares Marlee Eckman, a member of OEC’s Emerging Leaders Board. “Whether it was a family visit to the nature center to see squirrel paw prints or catching fish at camp with my brother, as far back as I can remember, I’ve cared about the environment.”



David and Marlee Eckman

David, Marlee’s dad, agrees. When raising their two children, David and his wife instilled in them a sense of care and connection to the environment. He explains, “I grew up in LA in the 60’s when the smog

was worse than ever. As a kid, I remember so-called ‘smog days’ when it wasn’t safe to exercise outside.

Cleaning up the air took the work of a lot of people looking around and seeing that something needed to change. It’s important to have an environment that’s safe for people to work and play in.”

Marlee shares, “I used to focus on ways to take individual action, like water conservation at home. As a kid, I have fond memories of the 7-minute shower timer,” Marlee laughs, “But the challenges we face are more than one person can solve. We must hold decision makers to account and take action at every level—local, statewide, nationally, and globally.” As Marlee puts it, “Positive change is attainable when we all do our part and work together.”

Today, Marlee’s actions inspire the ways David chooses to get involved. Whether volunteering their time or making charitable contributions, Marlee and David each live out their environmental values. We are so grateful to have their support.

Thank you, Marlee and David, for being a force for positive change!

Policy for the people

Engaging in genuine negotiations, building strong relationships, and being credible advocates for science-based protections led to two big environmental health wins in the 2023 Legislative Session.

Here is what we achieved, together:

Groundbreaking new legislation: **Toxic-Free Cosmetics**

Consumers want to believe their favorite brands of personal care products are safe. But today, most contain unregulated chemicals known to be toxic when ingested, inhaled, or absorbed through the skin.

Oregon's new Toxic-Free Cosmetics law will change that—phasing out toxics and empowering consumers.

Senate Bill 546, which passed with bipartisan support, will require manufacturers to publicly disclose all chemical ingredients online so consumers can make educated purchasing decisions. The law will also phase out the worst carcinogens—such as mercury and formaldehyde releasers—by 2027.

This law is particularly important in addressing the disproportionate health risks faced by women of color,



who often experience higher exposure to toxic chemicals in personal care products. By taking action to remove these harmful substances from cosmetics, we are working towards a more equitable and safer future for communities of color and all Oregonians. Oregon is the 8th state to provide these protections.

Essential update to landmark legislation: **Toxic Free Kids Modernization Act**



Children are far more vulnerable to toxics than adults. The health impacts from exposure to dangerous chemicals in products are significant and include skin irritation, allergies, respiratory illness, headaches, endocrine disruption, reproductive disruption, and in the worst cases, cancer. In 2015, OEC led the advocacy efforts to pass the landmark Toxic Free Kids Act, requiring manufacturers of children's products to disclose—and eventually phase out—toxic chemicals.

Since the program was enacted 6 years ago, more than 4,000 reports have been filed disclosing harmful substances like arsenic, lead, and formaldehyde in children's products. But the original program limited the number of new chemicals that can be added for oversight.

The Toxic-Free Kids Modernization Act will change that—keeping up with scientific advances to better protect kids' health.

House Bill 3043 passed with bipartisan support, providing critical updates to the Toxic Free Kids Act. The new law will strengthen protections, remove the limit on the number of chemicals that can be regulated, ensure bad chemicals aren't replaced with other "regrettable substitutions", make it easier for manufacturers to comply, and require brand names and models to be reported so consumers can make informed decisions to protect their families.

Momentum amplified

Through months of advocacy by OEC and coalition partners, businesses, farmers, ranchers, and concerned Oregonians, monumental laws were passed this year to ensure

Oregon makes the most of unprecedented federal investments in clean energy, community resilience, and rural economies. Oregon's funding will be amplified by federal funds in the **Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act** and the **Inflation Reduction Act** to help our state cut climate pollution and protect against disruptions.

The benefits are far-reaching, touching every aspect of our lives and environment.



Climate Resilience Package

This comprehensive and forward-thinking initiative includes more than a dozen priority bills aimed at tackling the urgent climate crisis. These policies will provide essential public services to:

- **Strengthen the health and resilience of** Oregon's communities, lands, and local economies by creating and sustaining local, family-wage jobs in construction, energy, and agriculture.
- **Drive down the cost of living** for Oregonians by increasing energy efficiency, cutting energy costs, and expanding access to renewable energy like solar, energy storage, microgrids, and life-saving cooling technologies like heat pumps that will protect Oregonians from extreme heat.
- **Support Oregon's natural resource economies** through healthier crops, improved water quality, increased drought and wildfire resistance, and will provide rural communities with resources for emergency preparedness and resilience hubs.

The Climate Resilience Package will enable Oregon to leverage at least \$1 Billion in federal funding.



Building Resilience Campaign

Buildings are the second largest source of climate pollution in Oregon and our first line of defense against climate harm. The Climate Resilience Package will provide incentives and tools for Oregon to rapidly reduce the use of fossil fuels in new and existing buildings while ensuring that buildings are affordable and healthy for all Oregonians.



Drought Protection Package

Access to safe drinking water is a basic human right, and small, rural, and underserved communities often bear the brunt of the consequences of droughts and the health impacts of inadequate infrastructure. Through a comprehensive bipartisan Drought Package passed this year, Oregon will leverage federal funds to protect, restore, and enhance sources of drinking water for vulnerable populations, improve or replace failing water infrastructure, and support better water management, including for groundwater, in a changing climate.



Natural Climate Solutions

A new "Natural and Working Lands Fund" will support Oregon farmers, ranchers, and forestland owners to adopt and maintain climate-smart land management practices. These simple, proven solutions will reduce the future impacts of climate change through increased carbon sequestration, while also improving water quality, preventing runoff, protecting wetlands and streams, and bolstering our state's drought resilience.

Your impact: Across the state

Climate Resilience Hubs



In partnership with statewide advocacy from Unite Oregon, the 2023 Climate Resilience Package includes funding for a network of community resilience hubs across the state to provide access to safety information, shelter, and other support where the need is greatest during times of crisis—like wildfires and climate-fueled extreme heat and smoke.

Multnomah County • Washington County • Rogue Valley

Electric Vehicles at Work on Farms



EVs aren't just for urban drivers! OEC secured grant funding to provide four Oregon State University Agricultural Research Centers with all-terrain utility EVs, helping them make the most of new technology to support research, education, and farm work. Funded through a Clean Fuels Program grant, this is an on-the-ground example of our Rural Partnership work and climate policy in action.

Columbia Basin Agricultural Research Center, Pendleton
Mid-Columbia Agricultural Research and Extension Center, Hood River
Southern Oregon Research & Extension Center, Central Point
Hyslop Crop Science Field Research Laboratory, Corvallis



Well Water Testing



All Oregonians should have access to safe, clean, affordable, and plentiful drinking water. Right now, especially in eastern Oregon, too many Oregonians are dealing with contaminated drinking water wells. A bill passed in the 2023 session (HB 3207) will improve reporting requirements for domestic well testing and protect the health of hundreds of families in the Umatilla Basin.

OEC represents!

OEC is a member of **15 coalitions** with partners around the state.

Our staff members serve on **12 advisory committees and commissions** working to set statewide and regional policy on the coast, in the valleys, in the mountains, and in the high desert.

Our network of **members** represent **28 of Oregon's 36 counties**.



Statewide Water Investments

The 2023 Drought Package and statewide water investments secured this year will improve Oregon's drinking water security, agricultural resilience, food security, habitat needs, and watershed health. The investments will improve planning and coordination, meet data and reporting needs, and increase agency staffing to help with regional water management. This wide-reaching funding will deliver benefits to every county in Oregon. Here are just a few examples of regional water projects:

Deschutes River • Newport • Morrow & Umatilla Counties • Port Orford
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation • Harney County

- Water conservation through piping and improved monitoring and measurement in the Deschutes River
- Wastewater treatment improvements for the City of Newport
- Regional water infrastructure in Morrow and Umatilla Counties
- A water recycling project in Port Orford
- Water rights resolution on the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Wetland restoration and improved lake conditions for birds, farmers, and ranchers in the Harney Basin

“Good policy evolves from collaboration between legislators and the experts. I can always depend on OEC to bring the best science, canny political strategy, and the support of partners from across the state to all of our work together.”

— Representative Pam Marsh,
Oregon State Legislature,
District 5

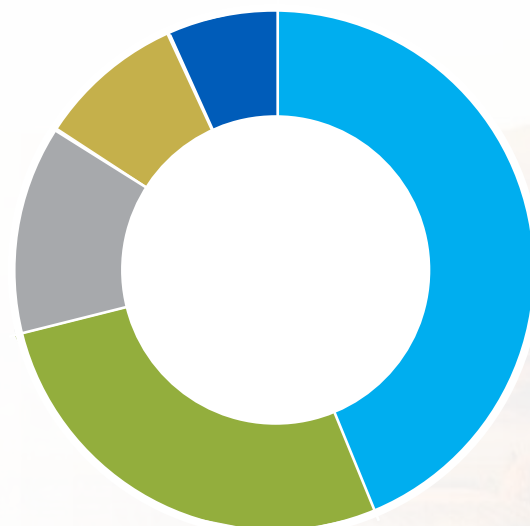
Community support

FY 2022-2023

April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023



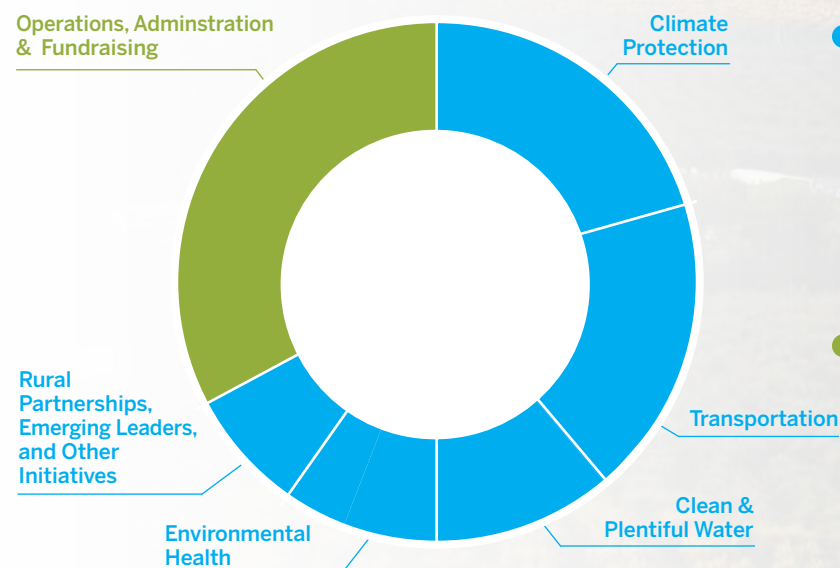
Revenue sources



- Grants
- Individual Donations
- Federal PPP Loan Forgiveness*
- Corporate Sponsors
- Nonprofit Partners

*OEC received approximately \$310K in Federal PPP Loan Forgiveness. This funding, along with the continued support of committed donors, ensured that OEC remains healthy and able to continue our critical work.

Your generosity at work



- Programs
 - Climate Protection
 - Transportation
 - Environmental Health
 - Clean & Plentiful Water
 - Rural Partnerships, Emerging Leaders, and Other Initiatives
- Operations, Administration & Fundraising



Jana Gastellum
Executive Director

Thank you for investing in the future.

The world is waking up. And there is no time to lose. With the heartbreaking and disastrous impacts of climate change reaching every corner of the globe, now is the time for tenacity, resolve, and focus. No matter your vocation or occupation, it is our time as community members, neighbors, and Oregonians to join together for a better future we know is possible. There is room for everyone.

That's why now is also the time for optimism. And joy. And imagination. By working collaboratively with partners in all corners of the state as a unified front, we are reimagining the way we steward and live within the natural world. It is our responsibility to take powerful action.

Because Oregon's future cannot wait.

Oregonians deserve to live in thriving communities, to have access to clean and plentiful water, to breathe healthy air, to experience a world free from toxic chemicals, and live in homes powered by clean, affordable energy—homes that protect their family from extreme weather caused by climate change. This future is worth fighting for, and because of your support, it is within reach.

Through your generosity, you are part of a movement that is making a difference. Across the state, thousands of supporters over more than five decades have made the impossible possible for the health of Oregon's environment. Thank you for being part of OEC's work and our community.

Together, we are powerful.

With hope and gratitude,

Jana Gastellum
Executive Director



Oregon Environmental Council

envisions a future in which all people in
Oregon have equitable access to the
benefits of clean air, pure and abundant
water, a user-friendly and low-carbon
transportation system, a healthy climate,
and resilient communities.



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