

*INEC's mission
is to connect,
inform and
empower
individuals and
congregations to
work for justice
and the care
and renewal of
the earth.*

Faith groups build momentum for global warming action

This summer, momentum to address global warming was accelerated by the actions of diverse faith groups. In June, the Unitarian Universalist (UU) Association General Assembly selected global warming as the 2004 "Study/Action Issue" for UU congregations across the United States. The issue stated, "What can Unitarian Universalists do to promote individual and collective changes in the way we live and work in order to slow and ultimately reverse global warming?" Also in June, 30 evangelical leaders gathered and agreed to work for faith-based environmental activism among the nation's most conservative Christians. Although not making specific climate change policy recommendations, they declared that caring for the environment is part of following Jesus.

The tempo picked up in July. Top scientists and national religious leaders released "Earth's Climate Embraces Us All: A Plea from Religion and Science

for Action on Climate Change." The letter states, "We are people of religious life and people of science who travel diverse, individual paths in our search for truth. Over centuries, our communities have disagreed, sometimes contentiously, about fundamental questions of human origin, nature and purpose. At this critical moment in history, however, many of us share a deep conviction that global climate change presents an unprecedented threat to the integrity of life on Earth and a challenge to universal values that bind us as human beings." On July 6, the chairmen of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' domestic and international policy committees sent a joint letter to members of the Senate urging action on global warming. They stated, "The United States bears a special responsibility to lead and help shape responses that serve not only its own interests but those of the entire human family."

Over 90 Oregon religious leaders joined hundreds of others nationwide in signing on to *An Interfaith Call for Global Climate Justice*—a letter to U.S. senators outlining key moral and scriptural principles to guide climate change policy. The letter was released just before an anticipated vote on the McCain-Lieberman Climate Stewardship Act. It concludes, "At a time when the U.S. Senate must show leadership on the issues of global climate change, we are asking you to demonstrate your commitment to protecting all of God's creation, increasing our national security, promoting our economy and promising a better future for our children. On July 1, the letter was hand-delivered to Senators Wyden and Smith by religious leaders and its release was covered in three Oregon newspapers.



West Coast Governors' Global Warming Initiative

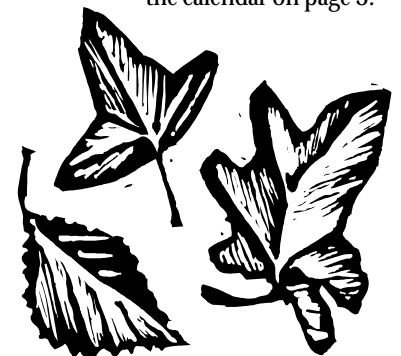
Although progress has been slow at the national level on global warming, many states have been taking an active leadership role on. In September 2003, Oregon's Governor Kulongoski joined the governors of Washington and California in the West Coast Governors' Global Warming Initiative (WCGWI).

Since February, Kulongoski's Advisory Group on Global Warming has been developing a set of recommendations to the governor. Draft recommendations will be available for public comment from Oct. 11 until mid-November. October hearings will be held on the

21st in Medford, the 26th in Portland and the 28th in Bend. This is a great opportunity for people of faith to make their voice heard on the need for action on global warming. EMO's Oregon Interfaith Power and Light (OIPL) will collaborate with the national Interfaith Power and Light and California Interfaith Power and Light to mobilize the faith community in providing input to the Oregon component of the WCGWI.

On Sept. 30, OIPL and the Oregon Interfaith Global Warming Campaign will hold a *Faith Community Training on the West Coast Governors' Global Warming Initiative*.

Chris Hagerbaumer of the Oregon Environmental Council will serve as the primary resource person. There will also be a statewide conference call on Oct. 7. For more information, see the calendar on page 3.



Building bridges in Klamath Basin water conflicts

Conflict over water continues to divide communities in the Klamath Basin, but there are signs of hope. This year Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) has been working with congregations to support them in playing a constructive role in the conflict.

On Aug. 14, EMO sponsored a dialogue and field trip, "Finding Common Ground, Common Hope," with Yainix Ranch and Sustainable Northwest in Upper Klamath Basin. This day included opportunities to learn more about the various perspectives on the conflicts in the Klamath Basin



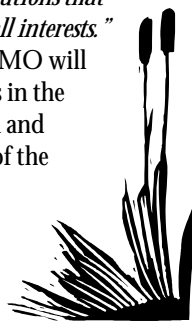
and to enter into an open, constructive dialogue about these issues and about how the faith community can contribute to promoting dialogue and to resolving them.

The event drew 28 people from different parts of the Klamath Basin. In addition to

the clergy and laity from throughout the Basin, farmers, ranchers, Klamath tribal members, natural resource agency staff and environmentalists served as resource people. A number of people noted that they found the intentional spiritual dimension of the dialogue refreshing.

The following comment from a participant reflected the sentiment of many at the gathering: the faith community can "assist in helping increase awareness of the many legitimate interests and communities affected by the water crisis and encourage cooperation in finding solutions that acknowledge and respect all interests."

This fall and spring EMO will work with congregations in the basin to learn from them and explore further the role of the faith community in addressing environmental conflict in the Basin and beyond.



2003 Annual Report

Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns (INEC) carries out Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Environmental Ministry's mission of earth stewardship by connecting, informing and empowering people, congregations and religious institutions to work for justice, care and renewal of creation.

In 2003, INEC worked with over 130 congregations across the state, including 55 with congregational liaisons. INEC's new *Eco-Notes* electronic newsletter was distributed to over 700 people. Focus areas in 2003 included energy and climate change, community food security and dialogue. In September, over 120 people attended the *Oregon Faith Leaders' Summit on Climate Stewardship* in Salem. Speakers included Secretary of State Bill Bradbury and Dr. Kent Bransford of Physicians for Social Responsibility. A report entitled "Driven by Values"—urging the State of Oregon to purchase fuel efficient autos—was released at the summit and received excellent media coverage. INEC received a

Founder of the New Northwest award at the 2003 *Sustainable Northwest Conference*. INEC gave a workshop on interfaith perspectives on sustainability at the conference.

INEC held workshops on Energy Stewardship (Oregon Interfaith Power and Light Project), Hildegard of Bingen's Green Theology, Watershed Stewardship for Communities of Faith and Sustainability.

Advocacy on the national level focused on the U.S. Senate's Energy Bill, the McCain-Lieberman Climate Stewardship Act and attempts to roll back the Clean Air Act through administrative rules. One victory was the defeat of a proposed Energy Bill provision to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. State level advocacy took place on bills related to energy as well.

Visitors from the Middle East, Africa, eastern Europe, Burma and Latin America interested in environmental organizations were hosted by INEC on several occasions for the World Affairs Council.

Thank you to our funders!

In the third quarter, INEC received funding from the following denominational and foundation sources: The Presbyterian Hunger Program (\$5,000), The United Church of Christ Hunger Action Program (\$2,000), The Tides Foundation (\$8,000) and The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (\$2,500).

Ashland congregation goes green, then takes on city

Inspired by the April 2001 regional conference of the Oregon Interfaith Global Warming Campaign, Ashland First Congregational United Church of Christ has taken action on multiple levels.

It first started with its Mission Committee identifying Earth Stewardship as an education objective. Next, the church had an energy audit performed to inform an upcoming renovation project. Then, the congregation focused outward by organizing a global warming forum for the community. This led to the development of a task force to urge the City of Ashland to set a goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as a part of the Local Governments for Sustainability Initiative. In May 2004, the city adopted a resolution to join the Initiative.

The church's fundraising for its renovation project has exceeded expectations. Perhaps there is a connection with its sense of mission! INEC applauds Ashland First's leadership.

Donate to INEC Today

Donations from congregations and individuals are increasingly important to sustaining INEC's ministry. Please encourage your congregation to consider INEC as it makes its budget for the coming year or considers local recipients for special offerings this fall. Your partnership is deeply appreciated. Call Jeannie at (503) 221-1054, ext. 278, for a letter of invitation and forms.

Upcoming INEC & co-sponsored events

September 30

Faith Community Training on the West Coast Governors' Initiative on Global Warming: How You Can Make a Difference. 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Interchurch Center, Pamplin Conference Room, 0245 SW Bancroft, Portland. Learn about a groundbreaking global warming initiative of the governors of Oregon, Washington and California that has the potential to help the West Coast—and eventually our nation—take a big step forward for climate stewardship, what is happening in Oregon and the important role citizens can play this fall. Chris Hagerbaumer of Oregon Environmental Council will speak. Cost: donations of \$5 appreciated. Light supper served. Registration deadline: Thursday, Sept. 25. Space is limited. To register, contact Jeannie Covell at (503) 221-1054, ext. 208, or jcovell@emoregon.org.

October 7

Statewide Conference Call on West Coast Governors' Initiative on Global Warming 7 to 7:45 p.m. To register, send your name and congregation or organization in an e-mail to inec@emoregon.org or call (503) 221-1054, ext. 278, and we will give you call-in information. Please register by Oct. 6. Space is limited to 20 people. The call will cost you long distance charges.

October 5

Dinner for Religious and Community Leaders with Ross Gelbspan, noted author and journalist. 5 to 6:30 p.m. at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church, 9750 SW Terwilliger Blvd., Portland. Ross Gelbspan is one of this nation's most important journalists reporting on global warming today. Come learn about his new book, *Boiling Point: How Politicians, Big Oil and Coal, Journalists and Activists Have Fueled a Climate Crisis—and What We Can Do to Avert Disaster*; and enjoy conversation. Gelbspan's previous book, *The Heat Is On*, was a watershed for the climate issue—the first to reveal fossil fuel industry financing of global warming misinformation campaigns. In *Boiling Point*, he examines the full magnitude of the climate crisis to show why it is so much more than an 'environmental' problem. Gelbspan has

spoke to religious groups on a number of occasions over the past few years and has been an inspiration to the Oregon Interfaith Global Warming Campaign. Please register by Sept. 30 by calling (503) 221-1054, ext. 278. Cost: \$12. Following the dinner, INEC is also co-sponsoring a lecture by Ross Gelbspan at 7:30 p.m. at Albany Quadrangle, Smith Hall, Lewis and Clark College, Portland, with the Environmental Department of Lewis and Clark College, Climate Solutions, Greenhouse Network and Oregon Environmental Council.

October 23

Christians for Peace and Justice Summit. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 1838 SW Jefferson, Portland. This summit is a one-day conference for Christians statewide who are interested in putting their faith into action through learning and discipleship. Professor Steven Green from Willamette University will be the featured speaker as well as presenters from a variety of groups. The fee is \$25 for individuals and \$100 for congregations. Proceeds benefit EMO's Public Policy Advocacy and Environmental Ministries. The registration deadline is Oct. 15. For more information or to register, call EMO at (503) 221-1054.

Early December

As if Salmon Matter: Ethical Choicemaking for Individuals and Congregations. Portland (exact location and time to be announced). Explore the role of salmon in Northwest culture, ethical and spiritual concerns and the choices that

individuals and congregations can make to help protect wild salmon. Co-sponsors include Shorebank Pacific, Kooskooskie Fish and Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. Highlights of the agenda include: *What Is Salmon Nation? Fish Tales: Stories of the Fishers of Salmon Nation* (Alaska, Oregon and Columbia River Tribes); a meal featuring wild Alaska and Oregon salmon; and workshops on how to take action and theological reflection throughout.

God saw living waters and peoples who cared for them, sharing the life of the cosmos and commons—the tree of life gave them its fruits for their food, its leaves were their medicine, healing for all—the riversong soared, then on wind, over waves. God blessed them, saying to them, "You are all very good." Excerpt from River Song: A Poetic Reflection for the Columbia River Pastoral Letter.

Resources

ZigZag: Real Stories, New Angles is a zippy, award-winning documentary about transportation and how our choices affect our neighborhoods and communities. It is a great resource for youth or adult religious education classes focused on simple living or stewardship. The show uses personal stories to help people think about transportation in a fun, non-threatening way. EMO served on the community advisory committee for this OPB production. To order a copy with study guide, send \$2 for postage and handling to EMO/INEC, 0245 SW Bancroft, Suite B, Portland, OR 97239.

• Volunteer thanks and opportunities

Thanks to *Dawn Caldwell* for her term of service as a Northwest AmeriCorp member and her many contributions to INEC's community food security work, including organizing a series of Garden to Plate workshops this summer. Her creativity and community building skills will be missed. We thank *Cecily Bruce* for developing Therapeutic Horticulture at EMO's Patton Home and contributing in so many ways to creating a beautiful and sustainable landscape at Patton Home.

INEC has a number of volunteer opportunities for people interested in contributing their time and talents, including office help and assistance on short term projects and events. INEC has an immediate opening for an Environmental Stewardship Coordinator through the Northwest Service Academy AmeriCorp program.

Please e-mail inec@emoregon.org or call Jenny at (503) 221-1054, ext. 278, for volunteer position descriptions.

Green congregation awards

Through its Green Congregation Awards program, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) will recognize religious communities for exemplary achievements in environmental ministry. EMO will announce the Award winners in April 2005. Each year a panel of judges knowledgeable about congregational life and environmental stewardship will choose an overall award recipient. Other congregations will receive Honorable Mention for outstanding efforts in four areas of congregational life: Worship, Education Lifestyle (of congregational members and the congregation as a whole) and Community Action and Public Witness.

EMO hopes that the sharing of ideas stimulated by the Green Congregation Awards will help congregations to imagine new ways to honor and heal the creation. Nominations for the Green Congregation Award may come from individuals, congregations or judicatories. The deadline for 2005 award nominations is Dec. 1, 2004. For nomination forms or further information, contact EMO at (503) 221-1054, ext. 278, or visit our Web site at www.emoregon.org/inec/htm.

Faith into action

- Don't forget to vote and encourage your friends, family and neighbors to do the same!
- Oct. 12 is the last day to register to vote for the Nov. 2 election.

EMO ballot measure updates

EMO's Board of Directors, with input from the Environmental Ministries Committee, has made recommendations on the following two environmental ballot measures:

Measure 34, Tillamook Forest Management. "Yes" vote recommended for a statutory amendment requiring balancing timber production, resource conservation/preservation in managing the Tillamook and Clatsop State Forests.

Measure 37, Takings Compensation. "No" vote recommended for a statutory amendment requiring governments to pay owners, or override restrictions, when certain use restrictions reduce property values. For the full analysis and recommendations go to www.emoregon.org/publicpolicyadvocacy.htm.

Eco-Ministry News is published by the Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns (INEC), a program of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. We invite you to join in our work. For more information, to get involved or to submit articles for the next issue of the newsletter, please contact Jenny Holmes, INEC program director and newsletter editor, at (503) 221-1054, ext. 278, or by e-mail at inec@emoregon.org. You can also obtain more information about EMO and INEC by visiting EMO's Web site at www.emoregon.org.

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON
 INTERFAITH NETWORK FOR EARTH CONCERNS
 0245 SW Bancroft St., Suite B
 Portland, OR 97201

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