

# Environmental Justice

[Encompasses previous planks of Environment, Energy, and the Climate Crisis, Transportation, and Agriculture, Aquaculture, Fisheries, and Forestry...]

We must unite to prevent the destruction of the environment, our communities, and our planet. We must proactively address climate change as a crisis. All people, including future generations, have the right to clean air, water, and a healthy natural environment. The struggle to protect our planet’s climate health must be mutually dependent and interwoven with the struggles for racial and economic justice. We are the stewards of the land and water that sustain us. We must preserve family farms, strengthen rural communities, ensure the availability of high-quality food, and maintain the viability of land and water. We believe that an efficient, well-planned, multimodal transportation system promotes a healthy economy, environment, and community.

## We believe:

- Both our economic stability and the health of our environment depend on sound policy decisions incorporating the best scientific evidence;
- Sustainable energy production and strong environmental protections strengthen our economy and our country;
- Public discussion and education should occur at all levels of community and government about how and why to conserve resources and energy;
- State and National policies must promote biodiversity, ecosystem and watershed protection, and restoration of wild salmon and endangered species;
- Managing public lands as a public trust benefits us all;
- Washington State should be among the leaders of national and international efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and mitigate climate change;
- The commitment to protect our planet’s climate health must be seen as mutually dependent and interwoven with the struggles for racial and economic justice;
- Efficient, well-planned, multimodal transportation promotes a healthy economy, environment, and community.

## We Call For:

| National Level | State Level |
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- Achieving a net-zero carbon emission economy by 2050;
- Innovative and sustainable solutions to environmental challenges and our climate crisis;

- Full funding for all the planning steps necessary to support state and local environmental protection mandates, including assessment, permitting, mitigation follow-up, and data collection, tracking, and analysis needed for due diligence in evaluating impacts to natural systems;
- Requiring that environmental impact assessments consider the full scope of every proposal, to avoid the segmentation of projects as a tactic for reducing identified impacts;
- Requiring developers to pay impact fees to mitigate increased needs for schools, safe pedestrian infrastructure, roads, parks, sewers, and other effects of development;
- Research and program funding to develop and implement safe, clean alternative energy solutions and to encourage resource conservation;
- Expanded programs and incentives for consumers and businesses to encourage energy conservation and the use of renewable, environmentally responsible energy and of efficient energy-distribution technologies;
- Modernizing the grid for distributed two-way energy flows and incorporating new, connected technologies, while maintaining minimal rate impacts;
- The Tri-Party Agreement and other efforts of Washington State to ensure that the Hanford Reservation clean-up is promptly completed, and that Columbia River water quality and local communities are protected from the Hanford Reservation's contamination;
- Reinstating the Superfund Tax requiring polluters to pay cleanup costs;
- Conserving resources and promoting sustainability through recycling and waste reduction efforts;
- Correcting the disproportionate effects of environmental degradation on low-income and minority communities;
- Protecting our critical environmental areas including wilderness areas, old growth forests, wildlife habitat areas and corridors, wetlands, lakes, rivers, streams, riparian areas, the Columbia River, Puget Sound, coastlines, oceans, and other bodies of water through vigilant monitoring and planned growth management;
- Protecting environmentally sensitive areas by prohibiting oil, gas, and mineral exploration, extraction, and transportation in such areas;
- Protecting environmentally sensitive areas by prohibiting waste disposal, storage or treatment in such areas;
- Holding manufacturers responsible for the costs of collection, cleanup and disposition of their products and packaging at the end of their useful lives, such as batteries and prescription medications;
- Increased support for development of renewable and sustainable energy programs to supply electricity to the power grid;
- Enforcing the Model Light Ordinance to protect nocturnal animal and bird species from excessive artificial light pollution;
- Establishing and implementing a price on carbon-based pollution, to internalize the costs of increased air pollution and climate change from fossil fuels;
- A long-term national energy policy with realistic and comprehensive planning;
- Enacting new laws and enforcing current regulations to eliminate pollution of Washington waters at the source;
- Enhancing protection of riverine and marine ecosystems from tanker and cargo-vessel collisions, unlawful discharges and spills of petroleum-based products, and bilge water pumping operations containing invasive aquatic species;
- Implementing the "just transition" framework to ensure ongoing employment for workers as the world shifts from fossil fuels to non-carbon-based economies;
- Expanded restoration efforts to improve fisheries including:
  - o Revision of storm water culverts under roads and railroads to better facilitate fish passage;
  - o Habitat restoration;

- o Shading of rivers; and
- o Pollution-reduction goals, with detection of pollution sources and enforcement of violations.
- Incentives to encourage the agricultural skills, careers, and lifestyles that are essential to our country's survival;
- Expanding investment in agricultural research at state colleges and universities to develop and support sustainable agricultural practices and products;
- A living wage for agricultural workers, regardless of whether they are citizens, documented workers or undocumented workers;
- A guest worker program for agriculture, ensuring a reliable labor source while extending application of minimum wage laws, appropriate housing and healthcare, and legal protections to the workforce and employers with proactive enforcement of violating employers and robust accountability to the existing workers who work on the farms and live in the communities;
- Reduction of antibiotic use in livestock production;
- Strengthening the Washington State Growth Management Act and policies that preserve agricultural land and natural resources, along with robust rural infrastructure;
- Finalizing the publication of the Water Resource Inventory Act (WRIA) program in order to expedite processing the backlog of water rights applications;
- Decisions about water resources based on sound, credible scientific and economic information, including local concerns;
- Protecting wild salmon and other native marine life;
- Development of a comprehensive plan to enhance recovery of the Snake River Salmon runs while mitigating other impacts;
- Adoption of sustainable agriculture, aquaculture, fishery and forestry methods, including adequate funding of research and extension efforts which include the effects of climate change;
- Development of a comprehensive plan for long-term sustainable harvest of the world's ocean resources, to avoid overharvesting and species extinction;
- Reduction of the use of pesticides and herbicides, both commercial and residential, and the rapid phase out of pesticides and herbicides responsible for the collapse of pollinator species and increased safeguards for workers who may be exposed to them;
- Improving the inspections of domestic and imported foods and livestock to ensure safe food and the humane treatment of livestock;
- Clear food labeling, including date packaged, full and complete disclosure of nation of origin, genetically modified organism status, irradiation, and organic certification;
- Supporting and encouraging vibrant and sustainable small farms, family farms and urban farms;
- Localized marketing, community supported agriculture, and cooperative localized marketing;
- Programs that support the establishment of permaculture, bee production, and organic farms;
- Legalizing, regulating and recognizing industrial hemp as an agricultural commodity.
- Encouraging the use of locally grown food in our schools;
- Farmers who do not grow genetically modified crops to be protected from liability and to have standing to recover their economic losses resulting from the drift of genetically modified materials;
- Review of and updates to all farm programs;
- Rapid phase-out of federal farm subsidies for all large-scale, corporate farms;
- Vigorous enforcement of antitrust laws that apply to agribusiness;
- Support of energy production and efficiencies on farms such as manure digesters, wind turbines, etc.
- Significant public input and oversight into major transportation public works;
- Policies and public funding that make travel as safe and efficient as possible for all modes of transportation, whether motorized or non-motorized;

- Expanding and enhancing accessible, safe, affordable and efficient public transportation, including bus, rapid transit and light rail;
- Investments in public infrastructure that broaden individuals' multimodal transportation choices;
- Increased state appropriations, local funding authority, and loan programs to address infrastructure needs in accordance with state, regional, and local plans and policies;
- Using emerging technologies and developing policies that encourage alternative energy for transportation;
- Instituting measures to reduce pollution and dependence on fossil fuels, including increased fuel efficiency standards for all vehicles;
- Land use planning that decreases the need to drive;
- Policies that increase use of rail for passenger service and shipment of agricultural and manufactured products while managing our rail system to prevent its domination by coal and oil shipments;
- Washington's executive agencies and Legislature to adopt policies and laws to minimize public safety dangers to our state caused by transportation of fossil fuels and other hazardous materials;
- Development and funding of a statewide infrastructure to support use of electric vehicles;
- A dual-track national high-speed rail system, with a dedicated right of way;
- An integrated partnership for travel through ridership jurisdictions;
- Maintaining existing public right-of-way for future public use;
- Expansion of the Regional Reduced Fare Permit to all transit agencies throughout the State, to facilitate transfers between such agencies;
- Incentives for public transit agencies to join a common statewide payment-card system, to make it easier for travelers to transfer between jurisdiction;
- Governments to invest in continued local access to needed transportation infrastructure, including rural road and highway maintenance and improvement, to ensure consideration of cities and counties outside the I-5 and I-90 corridors;
- Consideration of freight mobility in all proposed transportation infrastructure projects;
- Adequately staffed, maintained and funded publicly-operated ferry systems, as a critical part of our overall transportation system;
- Supporting river navigation that does not degrade the environment;
- Consideration, in all transportation planning, of the effects on climate change; health; and environmental impacts including water, earth, and air pollution;
- A strong US Merchant Marine and support of the Jones Act, and abolition of the Flag of Convenience System that shipowners use to avoid labor, tax, and environmental laws.
- A re-start of the Bi-State I-5 Bridge from Portland to Vancouver, to benefit each of those communities and encourages efficient transit between them by road, rail, and bicycle;
- Fringe land-use policies that enable innovation and improve land use for local communities' benefit;
- Actions that improve the safety and efficiency of transporting radioactive material for storage and recycling;
- Improving public and commercial transportation in rural parts of Washington.

### **We Oppose:**

- Production of fossil fuels and natural minerals through destructive techniques such as, but not limited to, hydraulic fracturing and mountaintop removal, and offshore drilling;
- Any privatization of publicly owned utilities;
- Weakening or elimination of our environmental laws such as the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act and weakening or elimination of the Environmental Protection Agency.

- Privatization of any and all public water holdings or diversion of agricultural water for private commercial use;
- Importing of commodities below their production and transportation costs.
- AG-GAG Bills which restrict whistle blowers and any other unethical abuses in the agricultural industry.
- Privatization of transportation infrastructure;
- Coal and oil transport by rail or road without meaningful environmental safeguards, and without provisions for safe traffic management through towns and cities.