

Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

SOCAN

Confronting Climate Change

<https://socan.eco>

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Southern Oregon Climate Action Now

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Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, Rayfield and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

In 2012, a group of rural Southern Oregonians established Southern Oregon Climate Action Now as a grassroots organization both to promote scientific understanding and awareness about climate change and the climate chaos that it is causing, and to motivate residents to take individual and collective action to address it. Since our inauguration, we have been involved with the statewide climate activist coalition in efforts to persuade the legislature to establish a program that establishes and enforces meaningful greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the state.

We understand that climate change is already causing serious problems for rural Oregonians through warming temperatures, reducing snowpack, increasing summer / fall drought frequency, and increased fire risk of the dimensions that caused the conflagrations last summer throughout the state, but especially in the local towns of Talent and Phoenix. We understand the science and are well aware that the trajectory we are on comprises an existential threat to life as we know it. Having failed to pass the legislation we supported, we now urge our elected officials to do what they can to support agencies as they carry out the charge in Governor Brown's Executive Order (EO 20-04) to reduce emissions, promote social justice, and promote carbon sequestration in our natural and working lands.

It is time for sane Oregonians to reject the QAnonsense that argues against addressing greenhouse gas emissions and in favor of following the anti-science suicidal tendencies of those who reject science. We are certainly in the throes of two devastating crises. As we recover from the covid crisis, we should also recognize the climate crisis poses an equally profound threat. We should use funds available from the American Recovery to target both crises.

Several state agencies have been given specific charges by the EO. In order to facilitate achievement of the charge of reducing greenhouse gas emissions at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050, these state agencies require the funds to hire staff and develop necessary programs. The critical agencies charged in the EO and needing funding to allow them to take the steps needed are:

Dept. of Environmental Quality
Dept. of Forestry
Dept. of Land Conservation and Development
Dept. of Energy
Dept. of Transportation
Building Codes Division
Public Utility Commission
Oregon Health Authority

Dept. of Agriculture
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Oregon Global Warming Commission

As last year warned us; Oregon is in desperate need of relief from the threats that ongoing global warming is presenting us. Although Oregon's emissions are but a small proportion of global emissions, we cannot with any credibility or moral authority urge other jurisdictions to reduce their emissions unless we do so ourselves. For this reason, as cofacilitator, and on behalf of the 1500 Southern Oregonians who are SOCAN, I urge the state legislature to adopt a budget that funds the agencies as they actualize the Oregon Climate Action Plan and contributed fully to our global efforts to overcome this threat to the future of life on the planet as we know it, and the survival of our children and grand-children.

Notable among the efforts for which we urge financial support are:

- Development and implementation of an equitable Climate Protection Plan and Statewide Transportation Strategy by the Department of Environmental Quality,
- The electrification and generation of an equitable transportation system by the Departments of Transportation and Land Conservation and Development.
- Promotion of carbon sequestration in our natural and working lands through improvements to soil health and forest management.
- Enhancing public health by reducing co-pollutants associated with greenhouse gas emissions
- Promoting social justice through Diversity, Equity and Inclusion throughout the agency efforts addressing the climate crisis in Oregon.

Building back our economy as we emerge from the covid crisis should not result in a return to the 'business as usual' energy economy that has driven the climate crisis. We should not promote recovering from one crisis by aggravating another.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan R.P. Journet". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alan R.P. Journet
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