

A Look Back

A report on our 2010 - 2015 Strategic Plan

WEC's strategic plan guides our work, from how we raise the profile of Washington's most pressing environmental challenges to how we raise our funds. This look back at the past six years chronicles how we've grown, adapted, and strengthened to achieve our mission.

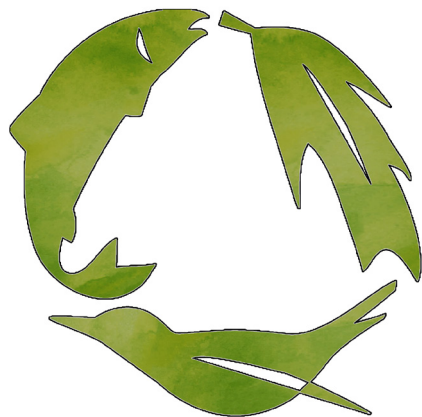


**WASHINGTON
ENVIRONMENTAL
COUNCIL**



OUR MISSION IS TO

PROTECT, RESTORE, & SUSTAIN WASHINGTON'S ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL



We learn from the past to set our course for the future.

LOOKING BACK

When we looked back at what we accomplished over our last strategic plan, two things stood out. First, we had done an amazing job of meeting the vision and goals we laid out in 2010. Second, we had no idea what was coming at us when we wrote that plan. To us, that is the essence of an actionable strategic plan – to have a clear roadmap that also allows us to meet new challenges as they arise.

THANKS TO THE **STRENGTH
AND SUPPORT** OF OUR
MEMBERSHIP, WE WERE ABLE
TO RISE TO THE CHALLENGES
OF THE PAST SIX YEARS.

OUR SIX YEAR VISION

- Provide expanded, strategic, and powerful statewide leadership to craft solutions for Washington's environmental future.
- Build and lead broad, diverse coalitions and successful partnerships that bring together the environmental community and other allies to achieve clear wins.
- Increase public support and civic power by engaging people in environmental issues that affect their everyday lives.
- Sustain a healthy and well-financed organization to effectively protect Washington's environment.

The four elements of our vision overlap – we can't provide leadership to craft solutions without working in broad, diverse coalitions. So we thought the best way to convey what we accomplished over our last strategic plan was through a few stories.



SNAPSHOTS >

Strengthening Protections & Avoiding Lawsuits

We came to agreement with the timber industry and the state government to ensure implementation of the “Forests & Fish” law, a 50-year plan designed to protect 60,000 miles of streams on nine million acres of forests.

Older, Better, Stronger

We’re working with the EPA to scientifically show how letting trees grow older can improve water quality and stream flows. We’re leveraging these scientific findings to improve state policies and access to funding.

Keeping Score

We helped Public Lands Commissioner Peter Goldmark develop his plan for managing the state’s environmental future, but over his two terms he strayed from this vision. To daylight the situation, we produced two scorecards to grade the Commissioner, outlining where significant room for improvement remained. Much remains to be done, and we are committed to working with the new commissioner to accomplish it.

WEC PROGRAM

EVERGREEN FORESTS

PROBLEM >

FORESTS ON THE BRINK OF OVER-HARVESTING DEMANDED NEW STRATEGIES...

Privately-owned forestland in Washington faces a high risk of being heavily harvested or lost to development, which would wipe out natural carbon sinks and critical habitat as well as posing water quality and quantity problems for communities downstream.

SOLUTION >

...SO WE RE-ENVISIONED WHAT FORESTRY COULD LOOK LIKE TO ENSURE WASHINGTON'S EVERGREEN FUTURE.

For decades, WEC has fought tirelessly to ensure Washington’s iconic forests are managed sustainably, but it has become apparent that is not enough. We doubled down on our commitment to protect our forests by developing incentives for landowners go further in protecting forestland. We teamed up with the Nisqually Land Trust and other groups in the watershed at the base of Mt. Rainier to develop two pilot projects that demonstrate the viability of sustainable forest management.

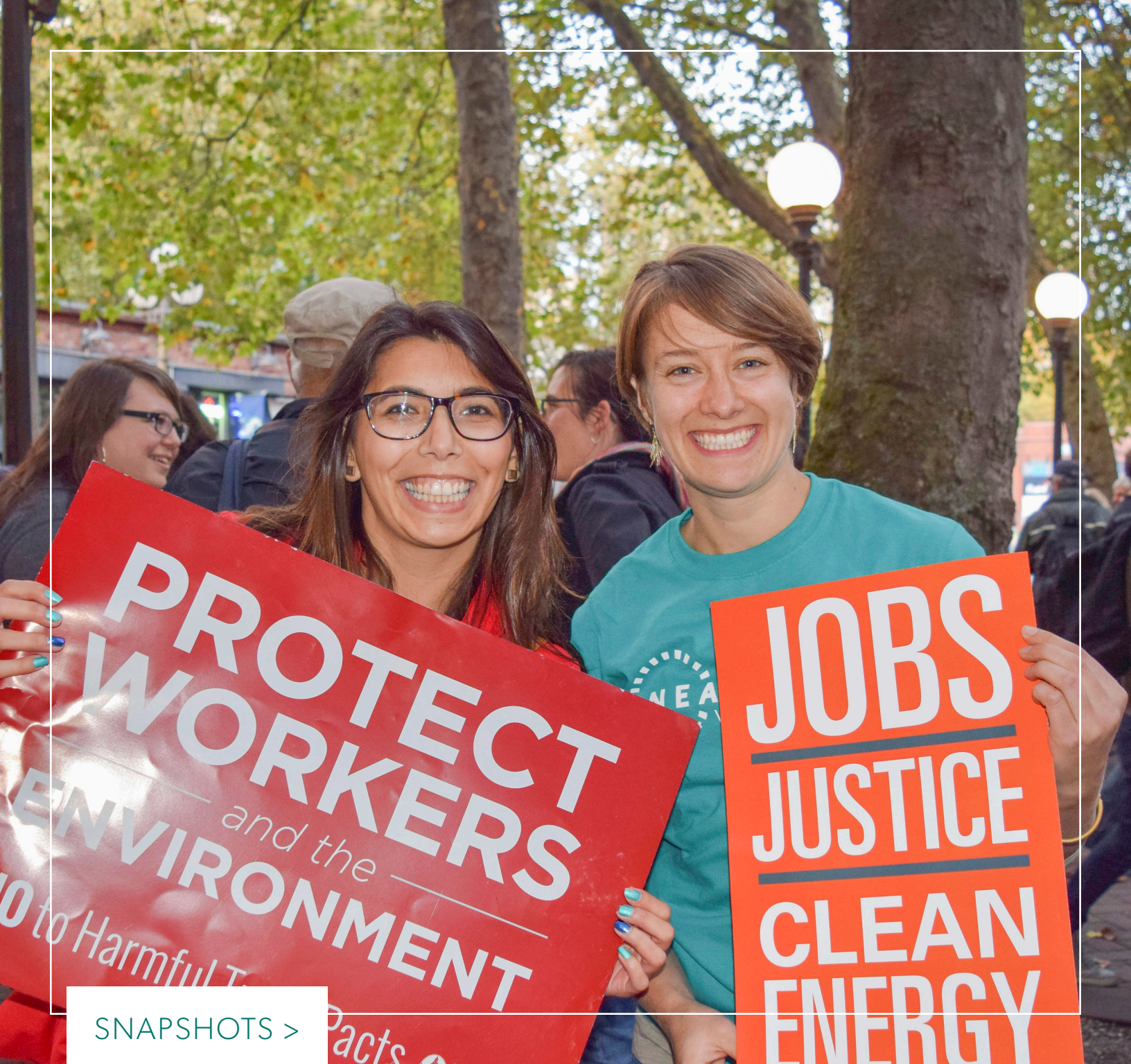
We protected 520 acres of forest through the Nisqually Carbon Project - the state’s first forest verified under California’s rigorous standards. We brokered a deal and sold 37,000 carbon credits to Microsoft. This project received national attention and is a scalable tool that can protect more of Washington’s forests.

In helping to create the Nisqually Community Forest, we’re working toward a 30,000 acre forest that will be sustainably managed and harvested under local ownership. WEC secured state funding (and protected it from budget cuts) to acquire the first 1,900 acres and we’re supporting the community in developing the management and future acquisition plans.

WHAT’S NEXT >

Building on these two successes, we are working to find new sources of reliable funding for community forests and other landowners who want to manage forests for benefits beyond timber production. Our goal is to transform one million acres of privately-held forests to a more sustainable model of management.





SNAPSHOTS >

New Allies

From improving energy efficiency standards with Climate Solutions, to gathering community input on climate impacts with Washington Community Action Network, to creating racially equitable climate policy with Front and Centered, we're making real change because we're doing it together.

Out with the Old & In with the New

Through the collaboration of the Environmental Priorities Coalition, we passed legislation to close the state's only coal-fired power plant while planning for a just transition for the community. Meanwhile, in conjunction with our partners we repeatedly defended our state's clean energy law, which has so far resulted in \$8 billion of investment in Washington's renewable energy sector and created more than 3,800 jobs - all while avoiding the carbon emissions of nearly 520,000 automobiles.

The West Coast is the World's Fifth Largest Economy

The leaders of Washington, Oregon, California, and British Columbia are committed to advancing climate and clean energy policies along the West Coast. With collaboration and advocacy from WEC, Oregon Environmental Council, Climate Solutions, and Better World Group in California, we have the opportunity to transform a powerful, influential market into the clean energy future.

WEC PROGRAM

CLIMATE & CLEAN ENERGY

PROBLEM >

THE INCREASING IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND DIFFICULTY ACHIEVING POLICY SOLUTIONS CHALLENGED US TO FIND NEW TACTICS...

While climate change is impacting the lives of people across the state – from ocean acidification's toll on shellfish farms to wildfires that ravage our forests, farms, and ranches – the legislature has repeatedly failed to take action.

SOLUTION >

...SO WE BUILT A COALITION WITH NEW PARTNERS TO BROADEN AND DEEPEN OUR STATE'S POWER TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE.

We know that in order to make progress on big, hard, complex issues like climate change, we need to build broader coalitions, framed beyond each member's own climate concerns. Strengthening relationships with communities of color, labor, businesses, health groups, faith communities, and others who are affected by climate change helped us launch a collective movement for climate action and climate justice.

WHAT'S NEXT >

We are working with our partners to continue building a stronger movement for climate action, and together we are developing an equitable and effective carbon pricing policy. Through a collaborative effort, we all dug in and worked hard to understand each other's priorities and concerns. With a bigger base of advocates, we can move our shared solutions forward in the legislature or at the ballot box and have a fighting chance of securing a durable policy and a just transition to clean energy.





SNAPSHOTS >

Stronger for the Sound

WEC adopted the policy, advocacy, and grassroots work of People For Puget Sound in 2012, which expanded our work to include habitat protection and building a broader base of Puget Sound activists.

People Powered Science

Working with local groups from the north Sound to the south Sound, WEC helped to form six citizen stewardship committees with 72 active committee members to monitor the state's Aquatic Reserves. The committees recruited and trained nearly 100 volunteers to participate in baseline monitoring projects and conducted outreach efforts reaching over 1,500 interested people.

Removing Abandoned Vessels

In the wake of an abandoned vessel that caught fire and closed shellfish beds near Whidbey Island, we strengthened Washington's laws to address abandoned or derelict boats. Now the state can board and drain fuel and oil from these boats before they sink, and they have more resources to help dispose of boats that pose a real threat to the environment.

WEC PROGRAM

PEOPLE FOR PUGET SOUND

PROBLEM >

SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS ONE OF PUGET SOUND'S LARGEST SOURCES OF POLLUTION WERE UNUSED...

The rain that runs over the roofs, roads, and sidewalks in our cities and towns picks up pollution and flows right into our waterways. This polluted runoff harms Puget Sound and the waters where we work and play. Nature-based solutions to filter polluted runoff are available, affordable, and sustainable, but not yet implemented to scale.

SOLUTION >

...SO WE TOOK A WHOLE-SYSTEM APPROACH TO REVOLUTIONIZE GREEN OPTIONS FOR CITIES AND COUNTIES.

We took a good hard look at the reasons why so much polluted runoff was still running straight into Puget Sound and found we needed to make two major changes: to strengthen our stormwater regulations across the state, and to fund local government efforts to think bigger and greener when it comes to retrofit solutions. We raised the bar for stormwater management by requiring new building projects to include green infrastructure. And we helped to secure over \$224 million in state funding, so that cities and counties can update their aging infrastructure using innovative, green approaches that treat polluted runoff before it reaches the Sound. We're making changes today that will undo a century of harm done by paving over nature and, instead, will reduce polluted runoff for years to come.



WHAT'S NEXT >

With successful green infrastructure projects in place from Bellingham to Spokane, we are increasing the visibility of these projects' impact and advocating more funding to transform Washington's stormwater landscape. Our sights are set on strengthening the next round of stormwater regulations and making green infrastructure a standard practice in development from here on out.





SNAPSHOTS >

Unified Voices

Over 50 Tribal Nations, cities, counties, firefighters, and other communities across the region have passed resolutions and made statements opposing or expressing concerns about the dangers of oil trains and proposed terminals.

Breaking Records

The Power Past Coal campaign set a record with over 120,000 comments submitted in opposition to the proposed coal terminal at Cherry Point in 2013. A few years later, the Stand Up To Oil campaign set a new one by turning out 2,000 people to public hearings across the state and generating 289,000 public comments on the proposed Tesoro Savage oil terminal.

Safety First

In addition to stopping new infrastructure, improving public safety around the existing transport of oil is important. As a starting point, we increased the transparency of oil transport and strengthened spill response requirements. Now first responders and local jurisdictions have information about how much and the type of oil moving through their communities.

WEC PROGRAM

COAL & OIL INFRASTRUCTURE

PROBLEM >

FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES TARGETED THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AS A HUB FOR TRANSPORTING UNPRECEDENTED QUANTITIES OF COAL AND OIL...

The coal industry originally proposed six terminals to move 136 million metric tons of coal by train and ship. At the same time, the oil industry planned to move millions of barrels of dangerous crude oil by rail along our waterways and through our communities to terminals on our coast. This infrastructure would not only wed our region to fossil fuels for generations to come, but also put us at risk every day – instead of moving us toward a clean energy future.

SOLUTION >

...SO WE STEPPED UP TO THE PLATE AND DEVELOPED PEOPLE-POWERED CAMPAIGNS THAT ARE DEFEATING THESE PROPOSALS.

With Climate Solutions and Sierra Club leading the first wave of challenges to the coal companies and WEC following shortly thereafter to counter the oil industry's plans, we and partners have developed a large movement to unite communities in opposition. With shared leadership, the Power Past Coal and Stand Up To Oil coalitions work with Tribal Nations, city and county jurisdictions, local organizations, businesses, faith leaders, health professionals, and others to amplify hundreds of thousands voices that say no to coal and oil – we can do better. We've helped defeat nine of the fourteen coal and oil terminal proposals (at time of writing) and will not stop until the last ones go down.



WHAT'S NEXT >

With more momentum than ever before, we will stop the remaining coal and oil proposals while also turning all of that people power towards advancing climate policy and building a clean energy economy. We'll also be advocating additional safety measures for oil transport to ensure what does pass through our communities does so as safely as possible.



WEC is known for leadership, innovation, and partnership.

STRONGER BY SHARING

Washington Environmental Council and Washington Conservation Voters are stronger together. In 2014, the boards of WEC and WCV decided to move to a shared staff leadership model and appointed long-time WEC Executive Director Joan Crooks to become the CEO. With staff shared across both organizations, we are able to effectively deploy all of the tools in the advocacy tool box to achieve our mission.



MY, HOW WE'VE GROWN!

The combination of broad community campaigns and our partnership with WCV has resulted in a much larger staff – essentially our team has doubled in size, with many staff working across both organizations.

We've significantly grown our organizing capacity. At the start of this plan, WEC's organizing was primarily around the legislative Environmental Priorities and was generally handled by one person with the support of policy staff. We now have five additional WEC/WCV staff members devoted to organizing the environmental base and the broader interested public.

We've built a strong internship program which provides pathways into the environmental movement and builds the next generation of environmental leaders. Three of our former interns now have full-time jobs at WEC/WCV. Several have jobs elsewhere in field, and many continue to return to help as volunteers and refer their siblings and friends to the program.



GROWING THE MOVEMENT

Our email list of supporters and activists has grown substantially from about 4,000 in 2009 to over 28,000 at the end of 2015.

28,000 supporters on our email list

In addition, we have a list of an additional 30,000 people who have taken action specifically on coal and/or oil issues.



MAKE NEW FRIENDS, KEEP THE OLD

The Environmental Priorities Coalition continued to be an effective forum to move proactive measures while protecting our bedrock environmental laws from being undermined. With 23 participating groups, the Coalition is a prime example of the power of collaboration. Pooling resources, leveraging the varied strengths of different organizations, and having a shared vision and communication strategy allowed legislators to confidently champion our issues. This resulted in a number of important wins – many of which are described throughout this document.

We deepened our commitment to contacting voters, working first with El Centro de La Raza during four election cycles and in 2015 with Washington Citizens Action Network to run targeted nonpartisan Get Out The Vote programs in communities of color. Over the course of this work we tested a number of engagement and outreach techniques to encourage people to vote and deployed a first-of-its-kind bilingual program with El Centro.



Finances: increased strength for the long haul.

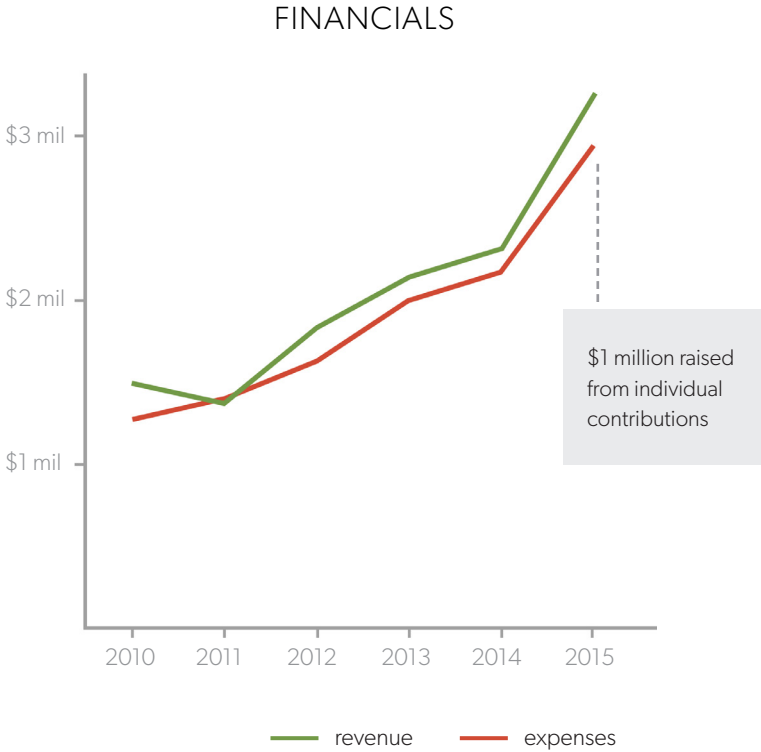
ON THE UP AND UP

In the first year of our strategic plan, we raised \$1.2 million and in 2013 crested the \$2 million mark.

In 2015, we raised \$3.1 million and it was the first year we raised over \$1 million in contributions from individuals.

We received 81 bequests and gifts in memory totaling more than \$1.83 million over the course of this plan.

Our endowment totaled \$2.8 million in 2015.



2015 FINANCIALS



Net Assets Beginning	\$2,668,648
Net Assets Ending	\$4,200,485
Held in Reserve	\$1,391,118
Net Increase in Assets	\$140,719

Washington Environmental Council is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Financial information in this report is drawn from audited statements by the accounting firm of Watson & McDonell, PLLC. WEC maintains a four-star rating from Charity Navigator, the highest possible ranking.

Joan Crooks
CEO

Becky Kelley
President

Jay Manning
Current Board Chair

WEC's board provided guidance and leadership to help us achieve the goals of this strategic plan. We'd like to thank all of those who served on the board during the duration of this plan.

John Arum	Jim Hanna	Aiko Schaefer
Jabe Blumenthal	Laura Hastings	Amy Scott
Rod Brown	Laura Henderson	Christian Sinderman
Margaret Clancy	Nancy Hirsh	Stephanie Solien
Diana Craig	Janice Huseby	Sapna Sopori
Marc Daudon	Ken Lederman	Peter Steinbrueck
Carrie Dolwick	Chandra Lewnau	Toby Thaler
John Edwards	John Littel	Alex Thompson
Dan Evans	Melissa Mager	Jim Timmons
Aaron Fairchild	Jay Manning	Todd Vogel
Kathe Fowler	David McCaughey	Colin Wagoner
Hilary Franz	Rashad Morris	Daniel Weise
Darren Gray	Patrick Neville	
Brian Gruber	Claudia Newman	
Deborah Hagen- Lukens	Tony Peacock	
	Lisa Pelly	



**WASHINGTON
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Washington Environmental Council
1402 Third Ave, Suite 1400
Seattle WA 98101

wecprotects.org