

THE FOLDED CRANE

Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility | Spring 2014

Legislative Update from our Healthy Food Program

Gretchen Miller, Healthy Food Program Coordinator

The ability for the health care sector to positively impact our food system through policy advocacy is immense. Health care professionals, with their health authority and firsthand experience in treating diet and food related disease, have a crucial voice in the struggle for healthier, more sustainable food policy. This, combined with the purchasing power of health care food service, provides a great opportunity here in Oregon as well as nationally to increase production of, and access to, food that promotes and protects public and environmental health. This February the Oregon legislature was in session and a number of food related bills were reviewed and voted on, including some that the Healthy Food Program at Oregon PSR encouraged our members to support. Learn more about how they fared, what will happen next for



Dr. Ted Schettler, Sam Adams, State Rep. Ben Unger, and Dr. Philip Wu at Food Matters.

each of them, and updates on federal food legislation below:

SB 5141: Oregon Crop Donation Tax Credit

This bill extends the sunset for tax credit for crop donation from Oregon

farmers. It also increases the percentage of wholesale price allowed as amount of credit from 10% to 15%. Oregon PSR formally supported the passage of this bill. Offering donation tax credits to farmers with excessive product increases access to fresh food by Oregon citizens

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Ratepayers Could Save \$1.7 Billion if Aging Nuclear Plant is Closed

Chuck Johnson, Nuclear Power Task Force Director

Ratepayers could save at least \$1.7 billion over the next 17 years if the Columbia Generating Station nuclear power plant on the Hanford Nuclear Reservation near Richland, Washington is closed, according to a report issued this past December by McCullough Research of Portland.

The Columbia Generating Station, the only nuclear power plant completed of the five plants begun by the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS), contains a General

Electric boiling water reactor similar to those destroyed during Japan's Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear disaster in March of 2011.

"We believe this report demonstrates clearly that aging nuclear reactors, in addition to having safety problems, are having trouble competing in the electric power market," says Dr. Catherine Thomasson, PSR National Executive Director. The report was commissioned by the Washington and Oregon PSR chapters.

The report makes four recommendations: the plant should be displaced by less expensive market solutions; Bonneville Power Administration should ask suppliers for firm bids to displace the plant; the displacement power should be purchased by plant owner Energy Northwest and supplied to BPA under an existing contract; and Energy Northwest should use a combination of training and employing current workers in plant decommissioning.

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Dear Oregon PSR Supporter:

Spring is in the air, and Oregon PSR has already sprung into action in all of our program areas. As you can read more about in this issue of *The Folded Crane*, we are making real progress in our efforts to block the transport of toxic coal through our region, shut down the dangerous and costly Columbia Generating Station nuclear power plant, protect and improve our food supply through legislative actions, and reduce spending on outdated and unnecessary nuclear weapons. The continued support from members like you makes this important work possible. Thank you!

We have had some fantastic events over the past few months, and I would like to share with you some of these success stories. In December, our Healthy Food Program organized the well-attended *Food Matters* training, which introduced an audience of clinicians to practical skills for becoming effective advocates for healthy food policy. And, speaking of food, our thanks go out to John Olmsted and Joel Shapiro for cooking up a feast of local bounty at our Cascadia Supper Club fundraiser in early March. It was a fun, informal gathering of PSR members old and new which raised nearly \$7,000 to support our vital work.

We have a number of upcoming events at which we hope to see many of you. On April 8th, we are cosponsoring the 6th Annual Northwest Environmental Health Conference at PSU, which includes Oregon PSR speakers on Hanford clean-up, mercury, climate change and antibiotic resistance.

The submission deadline for our annual Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship for Oregon high school juniors and seniors recently passed, and our panel of judges are busy scoring the entries. We will be presenting the scholarships to the winning students at an awards ceremony on April 25th at the Ecotrust building in Portland, and we hope that you will join us for what is always an inspirational highlight of the



Kelly Campbell and her son, Finn Amundson, speak at a recent youth rally against coal exports in Portland.

year: celebrating youth leaders for a more healthy, just and peaceful world.

One elected representative who is taking a proactive stance to reduce nuclear weapons is Oregon's own Congressman Earl Blumenauer. With our encouragement, the Congressman has introduced legislation to limit spending on nuclear weapons. We have been invited to participate in his forum on nuclear weapons, which will be held on June 4th at 5:30 PM at First Unitarian Church in Portland.

Planning is well underway for our annual commemoration of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Scheduled for August 6th at the Japanese American Historical Plaza on the Portland waterfront, we will gather with community partners to commemorate the tragedy of the bombings and to discuss the concrete steps we can take to create a nuclear-free future.

We hope to see you at one or more of these events, which you can find out more about on our website, Facebook page, or by following us on Twitter @OregonPSR. In reading the stories in this issue I am reminded of how lucky I am to work with such talented and passionate volunteers, board and staff to bring an effective health voice to the most critical issues of our time. Thank you for your generous support, which makes this work possible.

In Peace and Health,

Kelly Campbell

Legislative Update from our Healthy Food Program *(continued from page 1)*

in need, reduces food waste and supports resilient food systems that keep local farms in business and Oregon food on our tables. This bill unanimously passed both the state House and Senate and the law is now effective for tax years beginning on or after January 1st, 2014

HB 4100: Oregon Genetically Modified Food Labeling

This bill relates to labeling genetically modified raw agricultural commodities and food offered for retail sale in the state after January 1st, 2016. If passed, the proposed law would have been put up for vote in the 2014 general election. Oregon PSR has not yet taken a formal position on this legislative bill nor GMO labeling in general, though National PSR recently endorsed mandatory GMO labeling. The bill was read in the House and a public hearing was held on it, but it never came up for vote in the 2014 Regular Session. While HB 4100 didn't move out of the

legislature, there will likely be a voter initiated ballot measure relative to GMO labeling in the 2014 general election.

HR 1150: Federal Preservation of Antibiotics for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA)

This federal bill bans the use of non-therapeutic uses of medically important antibiotics in animal agriculture. Oregon PSR formally supports the passage of PAMTA. Eighty percent of antibiotics used in the U.S. are used in animal agriculture to prevent, rather than treat, disease caused by poor living conditions and to promote rapid growth. This overuse and abuse is a major factor in the antibiotic resistance health crisis we currently face. The bill was introduced for the fourth time since 2007 in March of 2013 and is currently sitting in the Subcommittee on Health of the House Energy and Commerce Committee. Passage of the bill is not expected in 2014. Oregon PSR's Healthy Food Program will continue

its advocacy efforts in the policy, regulatory, and purchasing realms in hopes of working to address antibiotic overuse in animal agriculture and help protect these drugs for medically important purposes.

Health professionals interested in learning more about healthy, sustainable food advocacy can do so through *Food Matters*, a clinical education and advocacy project launched by Health Care Without Harm's Healthy Food in Health Care Program in 2010. There you will find archived webinars and educational resources that can support you in becoming a sustainable food advocate. Through Oregon PSR's partnership with Health Care Without Harm we host *Food Matters* trainings and events in our state. You can learn more about regional initiatives by contacting Gretchen Miller, Healthy Food Program Coordinator, or by visiting the Oregon Food Matters Project webpage, which you can find a link to at www.oregonpsr.org.

Making Progress on Eliminating Nuclear Weapons

Kelly Campbell, Executive Director

With an issue as large and seemingly distant as creating a nuclear weapons free future, it is not often that we feel we are making progress. But over the past eighteen months, Oregon PSR has made significant inroads in raising the issue with the public and in Congress.

In December 2012, we met with Oregon Congressman Earl Blumenauer's staff to discuss the nuclear weapons budget and we left them with information, which they shared with the Congressman. We were pleased to see that one of our statistics on nuclear weapons spending ended up in a speech he gave on budget issues, and we learned that

he was considering becoming a leader on nuclear weapons issues in Congress. We responded by collecting more than 300 postcards from Oregonians encouraging him to step into this new leadership role, which we delivered to him at a meeting with the Congressman in August of last year. At that meeting, he asked us to participate in a public forum in Portland to discuss the costs and risks of nuclear weapons.

In February 2014, with the support of PSR and our partner groups around the country, Congressman Blumenauer (OR-03) introduced HR 4107, the Reduce Expenditures in Nuclear

Investments Now (REIN-IN) Act of 2014. The bill would save \$100 billion over the next 10 years by reducing or eliminating unnecessary nuclear weapons programs. Senator Edward Markey (D-MA) has introduced companion legislation in the Senate, the Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act, S. 2070. Oregon Congressman Peter DeFazio and Senator Jeff Merkley were initial cosponsors of these bills.

Today, the United States spends more for nuclear weapons and programs than it did at the height of the Cold War.

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Ratepayers Could Save \$1.7 Billion if Aging Nuclear Plant is Closed *(continued from page 1)*

“The Columbia Generating Station (CGS) analyzed by McCullough is one of the most uneconomic of the aging regulated reactors,” said Dr. Mark Cooper, economist with the University of Vermont Law School and author of a recent report on US nuclear power plant economics.

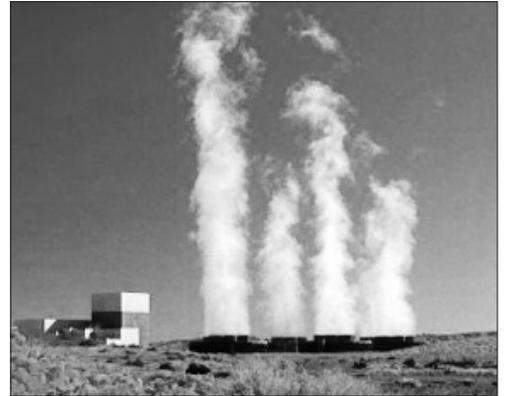
McCullough notes that BPA paid \$418,939,000 for operating the plant in FY 2013. “If BPA had purchased the same energy from the Mid-Columbia market at Dow Jones daily on-peak and off-peak prices, it would have paid \$218,515,000. In sum, BPA paid \$418,939,000 for \$218,515,000 worth of energy. The difference, \$200,424,000, would have had the impact of reducing BPA’s rates by 10.67%.”

“It would have been irresponsible not to address the economic cost of closing this nuclear plant,” said Dr. John Pearson, Oregon PSR’s immediate past president. “Naturally, we are pleased that it turns out we will save money. We question the continued operation

of the plant due to our concerns about the faulty GE nuclear plant design and recent scientific data of greater seismic activity in the Mid-Columbia basin.”

The report also states that although the plant is considered “carbon free,” its owner, Energy Northwest, purchased nuclear fuel worth \$700 million from a now-closed fuel enrichment plant in Paducah, Kentucky. “The dirty carbon footprint of nuclear power is not as well known as it should be,” notes Susan Corbett, Chair of the Sierra Club Nuclear Free Campaign. “The fact that Energy Northwest served as the broker to run the dirty Paducah nuclear fuel plant for an additional year is a black eye for them and the industry as a whole.” Sierra Club and the Max and Anna Levinson Foundation assisted in the funding of McCullough’s study.

A coalition of groups in Washington and Oregon has come together over the last year questioning the continued operation of the CGS nuclear plant, including Heart of America Northwest,



The Columbia Generating Station nuclear plant

Columbia Riverkeeper, the Loowit Chapter of the Sierra Club, Alliance for Democracy, No Nukes Northwest, and Washington and Oregon PSR.

“This economic study requires serious consideration,” said Washington State Senator Maralyn Chase (D-Shoreline). “We have not paid enough attention to the costs of a nuclear power plant many people have never heard of.”

For more information contact Chuck Johnson, Oregon/Washington PSR Joint Nuclear Power Task Force Director, at 503-777-2794 or chuck@oregonpsr.org.

Oregon PSR’s Upcoming Events

- **6th Annual Northwest Environmental Health Conference**
Tuesday, April 8th at Portland State University
Designed to help public health practitioners, researchers, naturopaths, administrators, non-profits, and students interested in understanding how their own areas of practice affect and are affected by environmental and health challenges.
- **2014 Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship Awards Ceremony**
Friday, April 25th at the Ecotrust Building
Awarding the Oregon high school student winners of our 2014 Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship, who shared with us their thoughts on the following question: “What can young people do to create a more healthy, just and peaceful world?”
- ***The Risks and Costs of Nuclear Weapons* forum with Congressman Earl Blumenauer**
Wednesday, June 4th at 5:30 PM at First Unitarian Church (1034 SW 13th Avenue in Portland)
Speakers will include Oregon PSR Board Member Dr. John Pearson and Executive Director Kelly Campbell.
- **Public Tour of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation**
Thursday, July 31st at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Richland, WA
We have reserved a number of spots for the public tour of the Hanford facility. Contact us at info@oregonpsr.org for additional details and to register to join us.
- **Annual Hiroshima and Nagasaki Commemoration Event**
Wednesday, August 6th at the Japanese American Historical Plaza on the Portland Waterfront
Our annual commemoration of the 1945 bombings of these two Japanese cities, featuring speakers, performers and opportunities for you to get more involved in creating a nuclear-free future.

Making Progress on Eliminating Nuclear Weapons *(continued from page 3)*

A recent report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that, between 2014 and 2023, the costs of the Administration's plans for nuclear forces will total \$470 billion. Other ten-year estimates come closer to \$700 billion, which is more than the federal government will spend on education over the next five years. Worse, there are plans in the works that would commit the U.S. to decades more of waste by spending billions of dollars to modernize our nuclear stockpile of missiles, submarines, and bombers.

"We cannot afford these weapon systems and we don't need them," said Blumenauer in his press release announcing the legislation. "They are dangerous and costly to store and maintain. As we've seen in recent stories, the human beings who control them

can be unreliable. We can make the world, and our country, safer by reducing the number of ICBMs on 24-hour high alert and reducing spending on these programs that we haven't used in 69 years and are better suited for the Cold War than the strategic challenges we face today."

Oregon PSR is pleased to be playing a role in bringing this conversation about the absurdity of nuclear weapons spending to Congress and to the public. Here is how you can get involved:

Help us get all of Oregon's delegation to support these bills. In the House, thank Congressmen Blumenauer and DeFazio for cosponsoring the REIN-IN

"Today, the United States spends more for nuclear weapons and programs than it did at the height of the Cold War."

Act. Ask Congresswoman Bonamici and Congressmen Schrader and Walden to add their names as cosponsors. In the Senate, thank Senator Merkley for cosponsoring the SANE Act and ask Senator Wyden to cosponsor.

Join us at Congressman Blumenauer's forum, *The Risks and Costs of Nuclear Weapons*, on Wednesday, June 4th at 5:30 PM at First Unitarian Church, 1034 SW 13th Avenue in Portland. Speakers will include Oregon PSR Board Member Dr. John Pearson and Executive Director Kelly Campbell. More details will be available on our website as they develop.

A Critical Time for Preventing Coal Exports

Regna Merritt, Prevent Coal Export Campaign Director

This is it. We've reached the most critical stage in the Oregon struggle to prevent coal exports and halt exacerbation of related climate change.

Ambre Energy wants to move 8.8 million tons of coal through Oregon and the Columbia Gorge by train and barge every year. Coal will then be shipped to China and Korea and burned, dumping millions of tons of carbon pollution into our atmosphere.

In February, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality issued three permits that allow construction of Ambre's coal export terminal in Boardman. Over 16,000 comments, the vast majority in opposition to these permits, had been submitted. We were stunned.

Now the Oregon Department of State

Lands is poised to make a decision (due no later than April 30th) on a more critical permit for this project.

For two years, Oregon PSR and partners in the Power Past Coal coalition have requested an Environmental Impact Statement to disclose the risks associated with this proposal. The Army Corps of Engineers has told Oregonians "No."

For two years, we've asked for a Health Impact Statement to disclose the related health risks. We have been told "No."

Now it's time for Governor Kitzhaber and the Department of State Lands to say "NO!" to coal exports.

More than 2,000 medical professionals and public health advocates, the board of the Oregon Academy of Family

Physicians, 10 Oregon municipalities, Metro Regional Government and the Governor's Environmental Task Force have requested further health studies before permits are issued.

Environmental Justice communities, including the Yakama Nation and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs of Oregon, clearly oppose Ambre's coal export plans.

News and Events

On March 3rd, atmospheric scientist Cliff Mass described the work of Professor Dan Jaffe of the University of Washington (Bothell) on air quality impacts from coal trains. As Mass points out, coal trains are bad news from so many viewpoints:

- The diesel effluent greatly degrades

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A Critical Time for Preventing Coal Exports *(continued from previous page)*

the air quality in neighborhoods around the tracks.

- There is clearly coal dust coming off the trains, even when it is not visually apparent (like in north Seattle).
- The trains cause substantial increases in traffic jams, worsening pollution from cars and impacting public safety and the local economy.



Young people express opposition to coal exports at the March 8th rally at Portland's Pioneer Square. Photo by Alex Milan Tracy.

- The planned coal on these trains would substantially contribute to CO₂ increases in the atmosphere that will change the climate of our planet.
- A significant portion of the pollution from the burning of coal in Asia will make its way back to the Northwest, further degrading our air quality.”

On March 8th, nearly 500 people witnessed the moving testimony of children and families in Portland's Pioneer Courthouse Square.

Visit Oregon PSR's Facebook page for photos and video of this experience. Big thanks to those who attended!

Take Action to Prevent Coal Exports

Please call Governor Kitzhaber's representative today at (503) 378-4582.

Let him know that we need his leadership on this critically important issue as soon as possible. He and the Oregon Department of State Lands

must reject this project now.

This is the single most important action that you can take this year to prevent new coal exports through the Pacific Northwest.

If you've already submitted an official public comment or made this call recently, please encourage your friends and family to call the Governor today.

Thank you!

We need your financial support to continue this critical work. The great news? The Energy Foundation will support Oregon PSR's coal export work through a matching grant. They will match new gifts, dollar for dollar, up to \$10,000.

We are on a short timeline, so please make your gift today by visiting our website at www.oregonpsr.org and clicking the "Donate Today" icon, or by mailing your check to: Oregon PSR, 812 SW Washington Street, Suite 1050, Portland OR 97205. Please make a note in the memo line that your donation is intended for the "Coal Match."

Together, we have the responsibility to defend and protect current and future generations. Your support today makes this work, and future success, possible. Thank you!

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