As I began writing this article in September in Shady Cove, I smelled smoke. The Chetco Bar fire was burning in the Illinois River Valley, Chetco River corridor, and Kalmiopsis Wilderness. The Milli fire was burning in and near the Three Sisters Wilderness. At home, the Eagle Creek fire in the Columbia Gorge was growing. Friends recently evacuated from the west side of the Gorge were returning home, while those to the east prepared to leave.

At the same time, communities in Texas and Florida were suffering from hurricanes and flooding. Over a thousand people had died in floods in south Asia. Today, Puerto Rico reels from the impacts of Hurricane Maria. Extreme weather and massive storms fueled by warming oceans are clear signs that global climate chaos is upon us. Have we hit our tipping point?

It can be difficult to maintain hope in these dark times. But a recent victory — the denial of a key permit for the largest coal export facility in the nation — renewed my hope. The Millennium Bulk Terminals project, which from the mines to the power plants would have pumped 55 million tons of greenhouse gas pollutants into our atmosphere each year, will not be built!

Washington State found that this project would bring terrible and unavoidable impacts that couldn’t be mitigated, including an increase in cancer rates. Powerful coalitions of organizations, individuals, and frontline communities join with Tribes stretching from the mines to the ports to protect our health, our environment, and tribal treaty rights. Our team of health professionals contributes mightily to regional efforts to keep coal and other fossil fuels in the ground, protect those most vulnerable, and push for a rapid transition to a healthy energy economy.

Growing Cost and Safety Problems at CGS Nuclear Power Plant
Chuck Johnson, Nuclear Power Program Director, and Damon Motz-Storey, Program Assistant

On August 20th of this year a valve in the Columbia Generating Station (CGS) nuclear power plant’s condenser froze shut, stopping its ability to cool the reactor core and forcing plant operators to rapidly shut down the nuclear plant. It remained at zero power for nearly two weeks. This loss of power generation gives us an insight into how the years have taken their toll on this aging GE Boiling Water Reactor, the last remaining commercial nuclear power facility in the Pacific Northwest.

According to plant operator Energy Northwest officials, the stuck valve problem was fixed within a couple of days of initial shutdown, but they discovered additional valves that needed repair. Then, when attempting to bring it back up to full power, they discovered that their coolant water contained too much iron, which can cause breakdowns in the zirconium cladding surrounding the nuclear fuel inside the reactor.

Water chemistry problems and stuck valves have been a consistent theme with the CGS reactor in recent years. This indicates that the plant, which is nearing the end of its designed life in 2023, is showing its age. This reactor has design flaws similar to those that caused the meltdown in Fukushima, Japan, and should be shut down as soon as possible due to safety concerns.

This latest unplanned shutdown, the third within the last 18 months, comes on the heels of another failure in the Energy Northwest’s low-level waste shipping program. On August 11th, Susannah Frame of Seattle’s KING-5 News broadcast an exposé on recent repeated errors in radioactive waste
Dear Oregon PSR Supporter:

With the threat of climate chaos and nuclear war feeling all the more tangible as fires, floods, and hurricanes wreak havoc and tensions rise with North Korea, I am more grateful than ever to be part of an organization making progress on tackling these existential threats.

We’ve had some incredible victories for climate health in recent months. Oregon PSR has been in the leadership of winning campaigns including halting construction of what would have been the nation’s largest coal export facility (page 1), convincing Metro to abandon a plan to ship municipal waste for incineration (page 4), and stopping PGE from building two fracked gas plants (page 5). As we hold the line on these disastrous projects, we also lead in supporting a just transition to a renewable energy economy. There was no better place to be on the day that Trump pulled out of the Paris climate accord than in Portland and Multnomah County as we won two of the strongest and most equitable 100% renewable energy resolutions in the country.

While the threat of nuclear war looms larger than I can ever remember, Oregon PSR and our partners celebrated a major milestone this summer with the negotiation of the United Nation’s Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which makes the production and use of nuclear weapons illegal under international law. Staff, Board, and work group volunteers have begun an incredibly rich and useful process of examining how our social justice values can be better expressed throughout the organization in the past year. We’ve become more intentional about showing solidarity and standing up with those most affected by systemic injustice in a variety of ways: participating in the One Oregon coalition’s environmental committee to expose the greenwashing of anti-immigrant hate groups (see page 6), raising our banner at events to counter white nationalism, and supporting the leadership of communities most impacted by climate injustice.

We’re growing in strength this year, as we’ve had many new members join and long time members re-engage. Whether it’s making a larger gift this year-end, joining one of our work groups, or spreading our message through social media, I encourage you to find a way to increase your engagement with our vital work to create a healthy, just, and peaceful world for all.

In Peace and Health,

Kelly Campbell, Executive Director
In the spirit of hope, I want to share with you just some of the many accomplishments of Oregon PSR’s Healthy Climate Action Team and our community partners over the past year:

**Power Past Coal in the Pacific NW**
- Co-directed coalition efforts to prevent the construction of the largest coal export facility in the country in Longview, WA, securing the denial of a key WA Dept. of Ecology permit
- Supported the Health Impact Assessment Steering Committee
- Worked to prevent coal exports from British Columbia
- Strengthened relationships with tribal nations and frontline communities
- Helped deliver over 250,000 comments opposing coal and oil export proposals to Washington’s Governor Inslee

**Fossil Fuels in Portland**
- Pushed Portland City Council to set a national precedent in adopting zoning code changes that ban the construction of new major fossil fuel terminals and the expansion of existing ones
- Defended Portland zoning ordinances from a legal challenge by the Western States Petroleum Association

**100% Renewable by 2050 in Portland and Multnomah County**
- Passed sister resolutions, focused on a just transition away from the use of fossil fuels, nuclear power, incineration of medical and municipal waste, and the burning of biomass, on the very day that Trump abandoned the Paris Climate Accord

**Methanol Export**
- Provided testimony opposing a proposal for the world’s largest fracked gas methanol refinery and export facility in Kalama, WA

**Covanta waste-to-energy in Brooks, OR**
- Led successful efforts to secure the denial of the proposed incineration of 200,000 tons of Metro Portland waste annually, protecting our communities from toxic air and climate pollution (see page 4)

**PGE Carty in Boardman, OR**
- Halted PGE’s plans to build new fracked gas power plants in Oregon, which would have added more than 2 million tons of carbon pollution annually (see page 5)

**Jordan Cove and Pacific Connector Pipeline in SW Oregon**
- Joined efforts to prevent a Canadian company from seizing property to build a 235-mile pipeline and a massive liquefied natural gas export facility

**Renew Oregon**
- Supported the Clean Energy Jobs campaign by providing health professional testimony, rally speakers, and media support for efforts to cap greenhouse gas pollution and invest in a just transition to clean energy

Huge thanks to each of our volunteers and donors that make our work possible! Oregon PSR provides a home for you to express your concerns, exercise your skills, and engage deeply in efforts to protect Pacific Northwest communities and our climate.

For more information or to get more involved with our Healthy Climate Program, email regna@oregonpsr.org.

### Volunteer Spotlight: Akash Singh

Akash Singh (pictured left) is a Student Fellow at the Institute for Sustainable Solutions, a scientist with PSU’s STAR Research Lab, and the Environmental Justice Organizer at Neighbors for Clean Air. He represents the NAACP and the Environmental Justice Task Force for the Cleaner Air Oregon regulatory program. He also represents Oregon PSR on the One Oregon coalition and is currently working to develop factsheets on the health implications of immigration, the refugee crisis, and police brutality. Throughout his work, Akash has realized that an unfortunate deficit exists in highlighting how critical social issues have public health consequences. He sees Oregon PSR as a community champion in bridging that gap by connecting critical social issues and public health, and he is ecstatic to bring his skills to an organization committed to social justice in these trying times.
Growing Cost and Safety Problems at CGS Nuclear Power Plant (continued from page 1)

shipping at the CGS. The plant had its waste shipping rights suspended by the WA State Department of Health, the third suspension of the plant’s shipping rights in the past three years.

Ms. Frame’s story would not have been possible without being in contact with brave, anonymous whistleblowers at the CGS who have been reporting on problems at the plant to board members and the media for the last two years. Her reporting exposes numerous health and safety concerns at the plant dating back to 2014, including, in November of 2016, “contaminated filters arriving at the state’s dump measuring a radiation level seven times greater than what was listed on the shipping manifest.” “Incorrect details within the shipping manifest can increase risk to the health and safety of the public,” wrote Robby Peek, Energy Northwest Quality Services supervisor, in an interoffice memo.

Portland-based economist Robert McCullough believes that the growing number of breakdowns and errors at the plant may be due to pressure to reduce costs at the aging nuclear facility. McCullough’s studies have shown that the CGS costs regional ratepayers $100-200 million more annually than the cost of replacement power available on the market, and Energy Northwest itself has acknowledged that it will need to reduce its costs considerably to remain competitive.

Augmenting McCullough’s work, regional economist Philip D. Lusk recently published a market test report that suggests Pacific NW electricity customers could pay $1.64 billion more for power from the CGS than by purchasing it from the wholesale power market through 2028. For example, utility purchasers in Clark County and Eugene are projected to lose $66 million and $53 million respectively between 2006 and 2028 by sticking with CGS nuclear power instead of Mid-Columbia market purchases.

Energy Northwest is a publicly-owned company with seats on its board nominated by Governor Inslee of Washington and the utilities that buy its power. Now is the time for residents of Clark County, Eugene, and other communities to contact their utilities and demand that their representatives call for a shut down of the Columbia Generating Station. Health and safety concerns, as well as economic ones, will only be finally resolved by replacing the Northwest’s last nuclear power plant with clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Celebrating Metro’s Decision to Abandon Waste Incineration Proposal

On August 8th, health, environmental justice, and community groups celebrated as the Metro Council voted to proceed no further with a proposal to send 200,000 tons of waste per year to the Covanta Marion incinerator in Brooks, OR. This amount equals one-fifth of the tri-county area’s solid waste. Fifteen organizations led by Oregon PSR, the NAACP Portland Branch, and Neighbors for Clean Air sent a letter to the Metro Council in August urging them to abandon the proposal.

Based upon EPA data, waste-to-energy incinerators produce more pollution and global warming emissions per unit of electricity produced than coal-fired power plants. Communities that already face socioeconomic and health inequities, including youth, elders, people of color, and low-income communities, would have been most severely impacted by the proposal. Waste-to-energy still requires landfilling, since one ton of ash is produced for every four tons of solid waste burned.

“Waste-to-energy incineration is an outdated, dirty, high-carbon technology that is inconsistent with the climate action, environmental justice, and sustainability policies embraced throughout our region. Today’s decision allows Metro to more intensely focus on its excellent waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting programs, and its current emphasis on getting food scraps out of the waste. No one likes landfills, or the air emissions produced by them or by transporting waste to them, but the way to reduce both is to reduce our total waste as well as food scraps waste.” said Joseph Miller, PhD of Oregon PSR and the Metro Stakeholder Advisory Group for the project’s Health Impact Assessment.

The groups who joined Oregon PSR, Portland NAACP, and Neighbors for Clean Air include 350 Salem, 350 PDX, APANO, BARK, Beyond Toxics, Climate Action Coalition, Eastside Portland Air Coalition, Onward Oregon, Sierra Club Oregon Chapter, North Portland Air Quality, PCUN, and Verde.
Victory in the Movement for Clean Energy, Not Fracked Gas

Damon Motz-Storey, Program Assistant

At the beginning of this year, Oregon PSR joined a new campaign to shut down Portland General Electric’s plans to build new gas power plants at the Carty Generating Station near Boardman, OR. The plants would have increased imports of fracked “natural” gas from Canada into the state, replacing the soon-to-be decommissioned Boardman Coal Plant with another climate-busting fossil fuel. Thanks to your help, the campaign was a success. PGE responded to public demand for clean, renewable energy and suspended their permit application process for the plants. The Oregon Public Utility Commission hammered the last nail into the coffin by refusing to give their stamp of approval to new gas plants in PGE’s future plans.

So-called “natural” gas is mostly methane, a fossil fuel that traps heat 86 times more effectively than carbon dioxide during the first 20 years of its lifespan. It is not fully known how many fugitive methane emissions leak into the atmosphere during its extraction, transportation, and burning, but scientists agree that even a small percentage of leakage would make the climate impacts of gas comparable to the use of coal. Fracking accounts for well over half of the “natural” gas imported into Oregon, and its wastewater has been known to contain dangerous chemicals such as benzene, formaldehyde, and petroleum distillate.

Health professionals know that fracking is too dirty and too dangerous to be considered a viable energy source. Moving from coal to gas fails to adequately address our need for clean, renewable energy in the face of climate change. The effects of climate change are already manifesting in the form of hotter, drier summers and stronger, wetter storms. Climate change is not on the horizon; it is happening here and now. Low income communities and communities of color contribute least to climate change but are being hit first, and hardest, by its effects.

The voice of public health was essential in turning the tide on the proposed Carty gas plants in Boardman. Health professionals were also key in making Portland and Multnomah County’s commitments to 100% clean, renewable energy among the most progressive and equitable in the country. Journalists said that PGE faced “a buzzsaw of opposition” to building new fracked gas plants. With your continued support, we can ensure that buzzsaw remains strong in cutting away fossil fuel interests so that we may build the healthy and just future that we all deserve.

Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki

On Wednesday, August 9th of this year, hundreds gathered in downtown Portland for Remembering Hiroshima & Nagasaki: From Despair to Hope, a memorial coordinated by Oregon PSR to honor the victims of the 1945 atomic bombings. The event came one month after 122 countries voted in the United Nations to approve an historic ban treaty on nuclear weapons. Our sincere appreciation to the event speakers and performers, the planning committee, the co-sponsoring organizations and donors, and to everyone who attended. Thank you!

Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship Focuses on Nuclear Weapons

Now in its tenth consecutive year, the Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship is an opportunity to hear from young Oregonians on some of the most pressing issues of our time. Over the past decade, we have heard from thousands of Oregon high school juniors and seniors on issues ranging from creating a more peaceful world, addressing climate change, confronting the epidemic of gun violence, and more. In 2018, we are asking students to respond to the following question: “What would it take to eliminate nuclear weapons in your lifetime?” Submissions must be essays, narratives, or poems of 600 words or fewer, and 11th and 12th grade students residing or going to school in Oregon are eligible. Entries must be received by March 5th, 2018. Please help us in spreading the word regarding this opportunity to any Oregon high school students, parents, teachers, and youth groups in your network.
Meet KellyAnn Cameron, Our New Program Assistant

In September, we welcomed KellyAnn Cameron (pictured right) as our new Program Assistant through a collaboration with Quaker Voluntary Service, an organization that supports young people in giving a year of work for social movements nationwide. Raised in Spokane, WA, KellyAnn graduated in 2017 from Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts with majors in Middle Eastern Studies and Religion. During her time at Mount Holyoke she spent a summer interning with Network, a national lobby for Catholic Social Justice, which inspired her to continue engaging with lobbying as activism. While in college she was most engaged in anti-racist conversations and faith-based organizing while supporting other campus and community events and campaigns. KellyAnn's first project with Oregon PSR has been helping organize the 2018 Greenfield Peace Writing Scholarship. We are thrilled to welcome KellyAnn to Oregon PSR!

Oregon PSR Opposes Anti-Immigrant Initiative Petition 22
Damon Motz-Storey, Program Assistant

Oregon PSR opposes Initiative Petition 22 (IP 22), an attempt by the anti-immigrant hate group Oregonians for Immigration Reform (OFIR) to repeal our state’s 30-year-old inclusivity law (ORS 181A.820) prohibiting the use of state and local resources to enforce federal immigration law. OFIR is recognized by the Southern Poverty Law Center as a nativist extremist group with ties to white nationalism. If successful, IP 22 would put repealing our 1987 inclusivity law, which is strongly supported by state and local law enforcement, onto Oregon’s November 2018 ballot.

IP 22 is presented as a law-and-order measure to require local authorities to assist federal immigration enforcement. The 1987 inclusivity law that IP 22 would repeal was put into place because law officers were racially profiling Latinos and conducting raids in their homes, workplaces, and houses of worship. OFIR’s main marketing ploy in general and with this bill is that immigration is bad for the environment. There is no factual basis for such a claim.

In keeping with our social justice values, Oregon PSR is a member of the One Oregon Coalition that defends against anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim policies and ballot measures and works to ensure that all Oregonians, regardless of country of birth, are treated with dignity and respect. Along with our fellow members of the One Oregon Environmental Committee, we believe that all people, wherever they were born, deserve a healthy environment with clean air, clean water, and a stable climate.

We stand with other leading environmental groups in Oregon to make it clear that environmentalism is about both healthy people and places, without exception. As a peace organization, we are called to speak out against a measure that involves racial profiling and scapegoating of a vulnerable population. We know that hateful rhetoric leads to hateful actions, increasing violence and diminishing public health and safety.

In addition, deportation of immigrants presents a many-faceted threat to public health. Deportation and the threat of deportation negatively affect both mental health and access to health care. Children of deportees are at risk of increased health problems due to loss of economic support and familial relationship. The threat of deportation erodes trust in local institutions including law enforcement, which erodes public safety for everyone. Lack of trust in institutions also reduces people’s likelihood to seek timely medical treatments, which can negatively affect the health of all people.

If you are asked to sign an IP 22 petition to get this initiative on the ballot, refuse to sign, and let your friends and family know that they should decline to sign, as well. If this anti-immigrant initiative does make it on the ballot, we believe that a “no” vote will be in keeping with best practices for public health and safety.

Stay tuned for more updates from Oregon PSR and our partners as this campaign unfolds.
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