

# *Eastern Oregon Climate Change Coalition*

EOC3 Newsletter, July 2022, Pendleton, Oregon

## **Thinking globally and acting locally**

**From the Editor:** One day last month, during a EOC3 advocacy task force meeting, we were talking about the importance of local efforts to affect climate change. Jeff made the point that local change is currently the only change we can really count on due to the state of dysfunction at the state and federal levels of government.

Coincidentally, I read in the East Oregonian the next day about an effort going on in Pendleton to change more than 1,000 streetlights to more energy efficient LED fixtures; these fixtures are about 50% more efficient than the current high pressure sodium fixtures and have a longer lifespan. According to the city's press release, the lights are expected to save more than 500,000 kilowatt hours per year, which Google and I calculated to be about the energy used by 46 average American households. The project is expected to be revenue neutral for the city, thanks to an incentive payment from Energy Trust of Oregon and projected savings in energy and maintenance costs.

This is a good example of an economically

responsible local effort to reduce energy use and our collective carbon footprint. The benefits extend beyond energy use and climate change, as scientists have been sounding the alarm about migrating birds becoming disoriented and exhausted by bright city lights. These new lights direct less light into the sky and more onto the ground, which could reduce impacts on birds - as if we needed another reason to reduce our energy consumption.

This newsletter is intended to help members of EOC3 identify places and times to reach out to legislators and other policy makers about climate change concerns. It should also be seen as a way for us to identify and celebrate those positive changes that are happening. Kudos to the City of Pendleton and Energy Trust of Oregon for making this change happen.

Thinking globally and acting locally!  
Bill Aney, Newsletter Editor

P.S.

*If you no longer desire to be included on our mailing list, you can unsubscribe by sending a note to our Gmail account at [EastOregonClimateChange@gmail.com](mailto:EastOregonClimateChange@gmail.com).*

## **EOC3 is about to launch a new website!**

**For months**, we've been fundraising, and for weeks, the board & volunteers have been working with Level Four Development to create our new website. It will feature all the videos of our virtual Climate Conversations, lots of interesting links & other resource materials, and much more.

We plan to add new content regularly, so if something catches your eye that you think others might like to see, send it to us at [info@EOC3.org](mailto:info@EOC3.org).

The new website will launch any day, so watch your Inbox for an announcement!

*Thanks to Pendleton Foundation Trust and Energy Trust of Oregon for helping to make EOC3's new website possible. And thanks to all the EOC3 members, donors &*

*for on-*  *volunteers your going support!*

### **Climate Change Resources from Blue Mountain Land Trust**

*By Dave Powell*

**There are few programs** in the climate-change realm with more influence than Project Drawdown. This project's mission is to help the world reach a point in the future where greenhouse gas levels have stopped climbing and started to steadily decline, or drawdown. At this point, catastrophic climate change should begin to moderate, slowly reversing as existing greenhouse gases work their way out of the atmosphere.

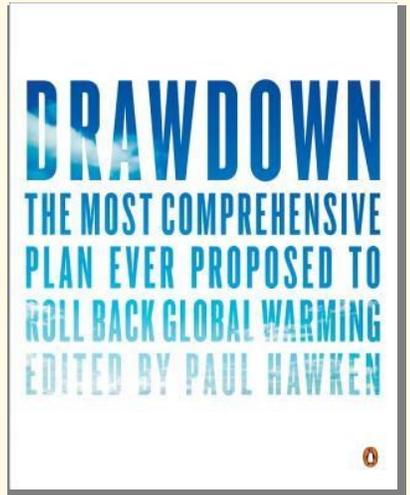
An important resource supporting this effort is a book entitled *Drawdown, the Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming* (2017; edited by Paul Hawken; 240 pp).

This Project Drawdown initiative has spawned its own cottage industry, and the Drawdown book is certainly a title we need to be aware of

Blue Mountain Land Trust (BMLT), headquartered in Walla Walla, Washington, was formed in 1999 to protect the scenic, natural, and working lands that characterize the Blue Mountains region through collaboration with communities and landowners. They provide conservation easements and other services to landowners across eleven counties in SE Washington and NE Oregon.

Recently, BMLT set up a new webpage called Learning on the Land Online. Two of the resources they provide from that webpage will be of interest to some EOC3 members.

Project Drawdown (<https://bmlt.org/climate-series-project-drawdown>) is focused on solutions by providing a 6-unit video-based course based on the Drawdown book and associated resources. This course is presented in video units and in-depth conversations and combines Project Drawdown's trusted resources with the expertise of several inspiring voices from around the world. Check it out, especially if you already own the Project Drawdown book.



The second resource available from BMLT's Learning on the Land Online webpage focuses on climate change educational offerings from a group you know well – Eastern Oregon Climate Change Coalition (EOC3).

EOC3 hosts Climate Conversations that use scientific, research-based information to seek a sustainable future for the communities, individuals, businesses, and families of eastern Oregon. This webpage provides 16 edited and annotated programs presented by EOC3 during 2020 and 2021. Check them out at: <https://bmlt.org/climate-series-eoc3> .

Dave Powell, EOC3 Board Member

**W**e live in a representative democracy, where elected officials appoint judges and make law and policy that affect us all. These officials need to hear from us to know what is important.

For example, the recent Supreme Court decision restricting the Environmental Protection Agency's ability to reduce greenhouse gases is a serious set-back in meeting national climate change goals. It also begs the question about other agencies' abilities to regulate for the public good. Following on the heels of this Supreme Court decision, the U.S. Senate was unable to muster the votes for the bold action needed to combat climate change. It appears that this Congress is now giving up trying to pass meaningful climate change legislation.

Whether on these developments or other climate change concerns, you can make yourself heard. Write a letter, send an email, make a phone call – individual citizen voices do count!

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*(Continued on p.7 with Washington contacts)*



### ***EOC3 Continues Third Tuesday Climate Change Conversations***

The next monthly presentation, on August 16, will be by Jack Simons and is titled "Is Climate Change Affecting Our Bird Populations?"

The remainder of the Calendar Year 2022 Program developed by the Board follows:

- September 20** Karen Wagner/Mary Davis — Food waste, Oregon green schools, etc.
- October 18** Mike McHenry — Oregon's new recycling bill; briefing & implementation.
- November 15** Bob Carson — Our Special Blue Mountains (capstone event at BMCC) includes an EOC3 fundraiser (silent auction); catered appetizers; and participation by Blue Mountain Land Trust (including a book sale and signing).
- December 20** Holiday party (no program/presentation)

### **Contact Us At....**

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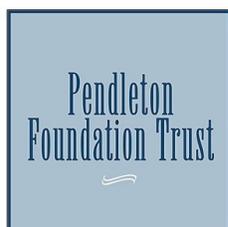
<https://www.facebook.com/EasternOregonClimateChangeCoalition/>



### EOC3 THANKS OUR GRANTORS



Wildhorse Foundation provided a grant for technology equipment.



Pendleton Foundation Trust provided a grant for website development.



# Oregon Energy Trust and the Next 20 Years

By Norm Cimon

OUR understanding about a changing climate is not new. The possibility was brought up in [the earliest part of the last century](#) and research in the 1970s confirmed that the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere [had been increasing](#), fueling concerns about fossil fuels. One of the earliest states to take action by moving to renewable energy was Oregon.

In 1996, a comprehensive review of future energy needs by Northwest governors recommended that a percentage of utility revenues be dedicated to renewables and to conservation. In 1999, the Oregon legislature responded by adopting that idea as part of broader legislation. The Energy Trust was created to help fund the transition, and it's been operating since 2002. Funding comes from the two largest utilities serving Oregon (PacifiCorp and PGE), which collect a 3% charge on their customer's bills dedicated to the Energy Trust.



The Energy Trust is non-governmental, acting as an independent public purpose non-profit supporting energy conservation in K-12 schools, low-income housing energy assistance, and energy efficiency and renewable energy programs for residential and business customers, all part of the move away from fossil fuels. Over 20 years the \$2.6 billion investment by the Trust has resulted in nearly \$10 billion in savings on customers' energy bills according to the [Trust's website](#).

There is an added benefit for utilities and their customers, perhaps the most important one of all: the learning curve for private utilities. Widespread adoption of renewable energy results in a very different electric grid, one equipped with digital controls such as smart meters and smart inverters. Power can be aggregated across the customer base and marketed to the utility. But a grid with storage capacity provides significant value beyond the electric energy it delivers. All utilities must ensure that the power they provide is properly conditioned: considering frequency, power imbalances, delivering the right load to different parts of the grid and much more. These [ancillary services](#) are crucial to grid reliability.

As participants in the Energy Trust, the two investor-owned utilities have been taking a crash course in the technology and policies needed to support these emerging power sources and services. That's the key to what comes next. So far utilities have been reluctant to fully engage with their customers, many of whom are very interested in rooftop solar, as the utilities have preferred instead to build and own those energy resources themselves. But [new research](#) has shown enormous long-term savings to be had by supporting rooftop solar and storage. A summary of that research is [available](#) online, as well as the [full report](#) and a [slide presentation](#).



This will be a very different looking grid, one where power is flowing in two directions locally, and with digital controls to meter and market the excess power on the fly. There are efforts under way to determine [the best way to develop such a grid](#). With a twenty-year head start, Energy Trust utilities have a significant advantage in leveraging that knowledge. Oregon did them a big favor, providing funding

to build out renewable energy and allowing utilities to learn how to integrate that energy smoothly into their operations.

When the enabling legislation for the Energy Trust was being created, public utility districts and electric co-operatives asked to be excluded (as did Idaho Power which has a small customer base in Oregon). They were not comfortable asking their customers to chip in for

Continued on Next Page.

## ***(Oregon Energy Trust and the Next 20 Years, continued)***

renewables, and now the unintended consequences of that exclusion loom large.

PUDs and co-ops serve 25% of Oregon's population, many located in the places where the sun shines brightest. Those places are prime candidates for the benefits which the Energy Trust has offered up to private utility customers for a while, but they are not available to most of those places with some very significant exceptions. Lake County, which is in the PacifiCorp service area, has made it the center piece of a [comprehensive renewable energy strategy](#) and the county is working its way up that learning curve. Pendleton (also in PacifiCorp territory) has developed a close working relationship with the Trust, taking advantage of the benefits it offers to help fund the city's solar initiatives.

Left to work it out for themselves, co-ops such as Oregon Trail Electric Cooperative serving Union, Baker, Grant and Harney counties have just started to slowly integrate renewable energy into their local grids. For OTEC this has taken the form of community solar which customers can choose to subscribe to.

But a strong argument can be made for a comprehensive approach to renewable energy for all of Oregon's utilities. The money available to Energy Trust customers places them in an excellent position to benefit from the coming changes. Everyone in Oregon should be along for the ride.

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## **Accessible Reading on Climate Change – Not all Climate Change Reading is Heavy**

I have about a half dozen climate change books in my library that are published for general folk. I'm not talking about book-length reports from government agencies (I have hundreds of those!). Rather, these are published by the popular press for everyone.

My library contains several how-to guides – they provide nuts and bolts of how to adapt to climate change. A good example is *Climate Savvy: Adapting Conservation and Resource Management to a Changing Climate* (2011; Lara Hansen and Jennifer Hoffman; 245 pages).

Climate Savvy is an excellent book and provides good advice about options for dealing with invasive species, pests, and diseases in a climate-changed future. It has helpful, well-researched information presented in 16 chapters in an attractive format.

Then there are books about the history of the climate change movement. An example is *Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth About the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity* (2009; James Hansen; 320 pages). Dr. Hansen is regarded by some as father of the climate change movement.

Dr. Hansen was a NASA scientist when he testified in the US Senate on June 23, 1988, the first Congressional testimony about climate change. He reported he was 99% certain that the earth was warmer than it had ever been before. This book includes lots of charts and graphs and some of it was tough sledding, but I read it nonetheless because Hansen is worth listening to.

There are also books I'd recommend on climate change policy. Not just facts and figures, but also those addressing questions like: what does climate change mean for us, in this time and place? What kind of future should we expect? And what will life be like for our children and grandchildren?

My library includes several of these titles, including a thoughtful work entitled *Big World, Small Planet: Abundance Within Planetary Boundaries* (2015; Johan Rockström and Mattias Klum; 206 pages). Another example of a policy work is the Bill Gates title from last year – *How to Avoid a Climate Disaster: The Solutions We Have and the Breakthroughs We Need* (2021; Bill Gates; 257 pages).

*Big World, Small Planet* does a good job of examining weighty issues centered on the repercussions of climate change, rather than presenting a series of climate change metrics. It includes chapters about planetary boundaries, big whammies, the great mind-shift, no business on a dead planet, and my personal favorites – rethinking stewardship, sustainable solutions, and solutions from nature.

Dave Powell, EOC3 Board Member

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Energy Trust of Oregon is a 2022 Sponsor



Blue Mountain Land Trust hosts  
EOC3 Climate Conversation videos:  
<https://bmlt.org/climate-series-eoc3>

## Support EOC3 Through AmazonSmile

**AmazonSmile is a simple way to support** your favorite charitable organization. Every time you shop on the Amazon website, Amazon donates a small percentage (.5%) of the total purchase amount to your charity at no cost to you. When you shop with AmazonSmile, you'll find the exact same prices, selection, and shopping experience as Amazon, all while helping support the charitable organization of your choice. There are more than one million organizations to support - and EOC3 is one of them.

Please consider using EOC3 as your AmazonSmile charitable organization. Eastern Oregon Climate Change Coalition is a nonprofit, 501c3 organization. We have no paid staff, and all EOC3-sponsored activities are completed by volunteers. However, EOC3 does have ongoing costs including:

- > Administrative fees with the state of Oregon (nonprofit renewal fees);
- > Website domain fees to maintain the eoc3.org domain name;
- > Website hosting and maintenance fees as we use a vendor for some website maintenance;
- > Event catering for occasional in-person events at BMCC with catered appetizers;
- > Monthly program food service (EOC3 provides a buffet luncheon for in-person programs held at noon at a local venue, like Prodigal Son.) Some of this cost is covered by donations;
- > Copy/print charges, mainly for monthly program fliers to be posted around town;
- > Technology charges (email service for our website; annual fee for a professional Zoom account;
- > Vimeo software charges to edit monthly Zoom recordings before posting them to our website; we use the nonprofit TechSoup program to obtain the lowest possible cost for these technology services.

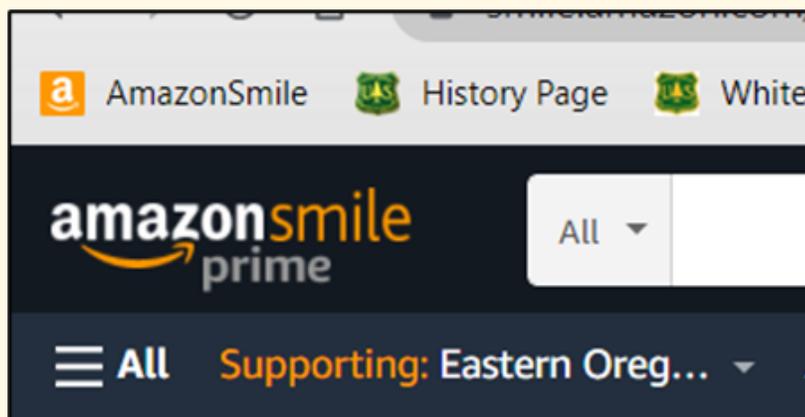
Annual membership dues provide our primary income, but not all. We receive donations from several programs designed to help nonprofits including Benevity and Costco's Frontstream program, but most gratifying of all, many EOC3 members donate above and beyond their annual membership fee.

The AmazonSmile program provides a relatively painless way for those of us who use the Amazon website for some of our purchases to provide a little additional income for EOC3. While the donation coming from each purchase is quite small, if we can get quite a few of the 300 EOC3 folks to participate in the Smile program and designate EOC3 as their charity our combined impact will definitely make a difference!

You can support EOC3 through AmazonSmile by following the link to EOC3's listing as a registered Smile charity: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/81-5102134>

If you have questions about how to make this work (it is all done from the Amazon website), please email us, [eastoregonclimatechange@gmail.com](mailto:eastoregonclimatechange@gmail.com), and we'll be happy to give you a hand.

Submitted by Dave Powell, EOC3 board member

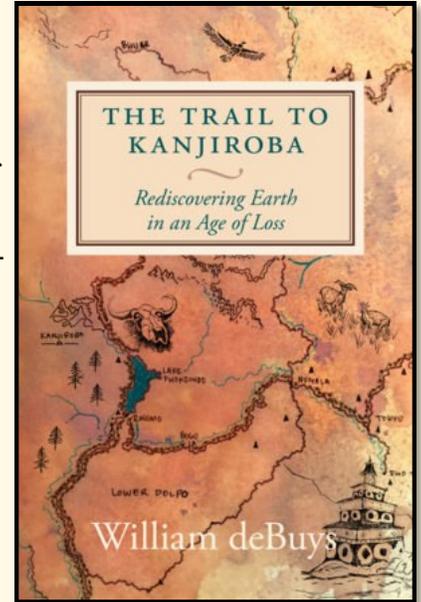


Amazon website masthead showing Eastern Oregon Climate Change Coalition as the recipient of the user's AmazonSmile donations.

## ***The Trail to Kanjiroba by William deBuys***

**Book review by Terry Templeman Ph.D.**

During a weeks-long hike through northwestern Nepal William deBuys ponders the effects of human activity on climate and environment. He has hiked these Himalayan trails before and observes changes in the landscape (e.g., receding glaciers) and atmosphere (dustier) that disturb him. In this remote and high plateau the climate is warming faster than at lower elevations. The flora and fauna appear stressed. He also notes the political changes in Tibet, and how the “One China” policy is threatening the local culture. DeBuys journals his thoughts as he goes along, pondering the destruction of habitats around the globe. He concludes that efforts to restore earth’s changing climate to pre-industrial levels of carbon dioxide and return landscapes to their natural states are not going to be successful, and that many current species on land, in water and air, will eventually die off. He is clearly troubled by this realization.



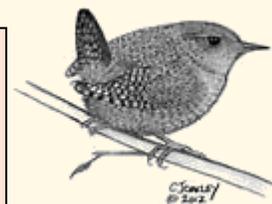
DeBuys travels with a contingent of health care providers who are bringing medicine and other treatments to the Himalayan medical clinics. As he observes their care toward the sick and elderly, some with terminal illnesses, deBuys begins to see the earth as a patient in need of such care. He notes that the medical professionals prioritize “care over cure” and he wonders if such an approach might be appropriate for our planet. He recalls a phrase from the American surgeon and writer Atul Gawande that “you live longer when you stop trying to live longer.” DeBuys begins to think caring for the earth is more realistic than saving the earth. He acknowledges that many species are becoming extinct, but not all life on earth is dying. Species will continue “cycling on” (a phrase from Charles Darwin) into other life forms. He begins to consider letting go of attachment to ultimate outcomes, which means not getting too attached to current life forms.

Along his journey DeBuys’s musings broaden to consider the origins of life on our planet, its evolution and the spectacular diversity of life on earth. He also thinks about the massive environmental disruptions and extinctions that have occurred in the past. He ponders the future of our planet, especially the effects of climate change such as droughts, floods, rising seas, tempestuous storms, and the problems they will cause, such as displacement of human populations and disruption of governments which will likely “elicit both the best of people and the worst.”

DeBuys invokes Darwin’s Theory of Evolution as a lens through which to view climate change. Darwin’s theory challenges the belief that life on earth is always progressing toward something better and that civilization will eventually achieve some sort of universal utopia. Instead, Darwin’s theory basically asserts that “the future has no pre-selected destination.” Successful life forms adapt to changing environments. Thus creation is never finished, and there will be new forms of life to replace those that become extinct. (continued on page 10)

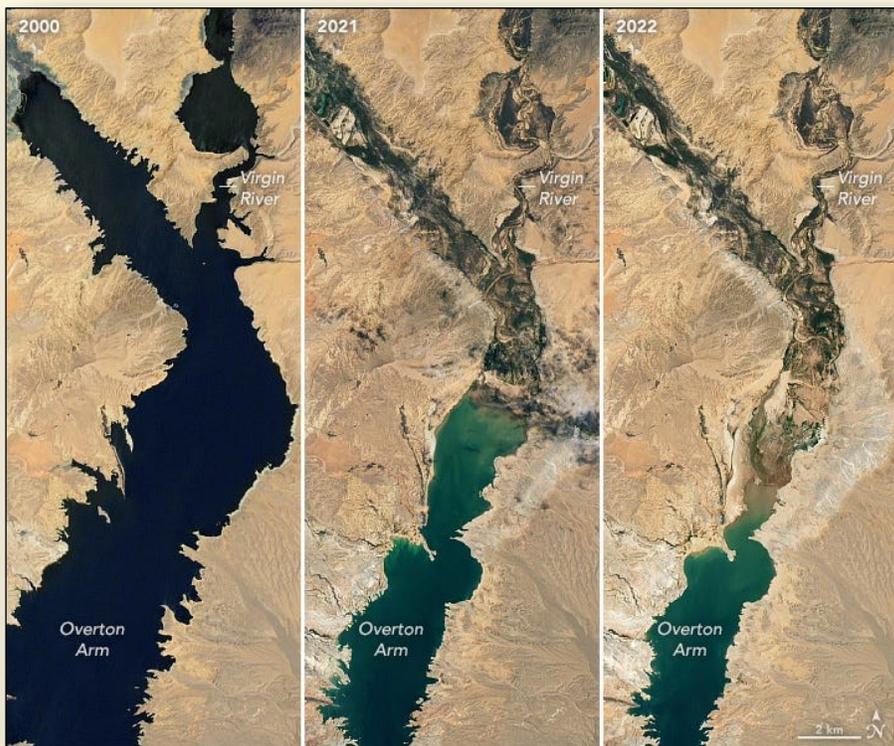
Looking for a few books to read while the “Summer Doldrums” settle in? Here’s a link to see/read — ***“13 Must-Read Books on The Environment and Climate Change”***. To read a short description of each book click on the link below and browse through the “library” of titles dealing with the environment and climate change.

**[13 must-read books on the environment and climate change - Earth Day](#)**



DeBuys also acknowledges that many people around the world are not focused on climate change or the losses that will occur as a result of environmental disruptions. At the other extreme are climate activists who are becoming depressed and view the world as an “environmental dystopia.” DeBuys acknowledges his own dysphoria about climate change but challenges his depression by reminding himself that “all things are impermanent, both within the universe we construct from our senses and in the physical world that is subject to time.” Later in the book he invokes the power of faith and religious beliefs which help people be hopeful about the future even when faced with catastrophe. He cites the prayer mills used by the Nepalese to ward off drought and other environmental disasters. He notes that most religious rituals elicit hope and act as both a means of healing and a form of action that bring solace to the believers.

As he climbs higher and approaches his final destination deBuys becomes more hopeful about his Himalayan expedition and the future generally. He quotes Vaclav Havel that “hope is definitely not the same thing as optimism” but is “the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.” He begins to “trust in the uncertainty of the future, believing in the possibility, however remote, of beneficial change.”



### NASA documents drought severity

The three images to the left were taken by NASA satellites in 2000, 2021, and 2022, and show the effects of climate change and long term drought on the Overton Arm of Lake Mead in Nevada. Lake Mead provides water to over 25 million people, and is now at its lowest level since it began filling in 1937 - less than 27% of capacity. The image below shows a vicinity map view with local landmarks such as Hoover Dam and Las Vegas.

