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Pictured Beyond Toxics staff members (L to R back row): Krystal Abrams, Wendy Mintey, John Jordan-Cascade, Arjorie Arberry-Baribeault, and Ephraim Payne, (L to R front row) Grace Brahler, Haley Case-Scott, Jennifer Eisele, Lisa Arkin, and Ana Molina | Photo by Emily Cook

Coalition for Statewide Climate Action

by Grace Brahler

In addition to local efforts, Beyond Toxics engages at the state level to support Governor Brown's Executive Order on Climate Action (EO 20-04). With a legislature unwilling to meaningfully address the defining challenge of our time, Governor Brown boldly charted a path forward. Signed in March 2020, EO 20-04 established new science-based emissions reduction goals for Oregon and directed certain state agencies to mitigate the impacts of climate change. EO 20-04 also drew attention to communities who have been underserved by and under-

represented in decision-making processes. These communities are the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change yet the least prepared to withstand them.

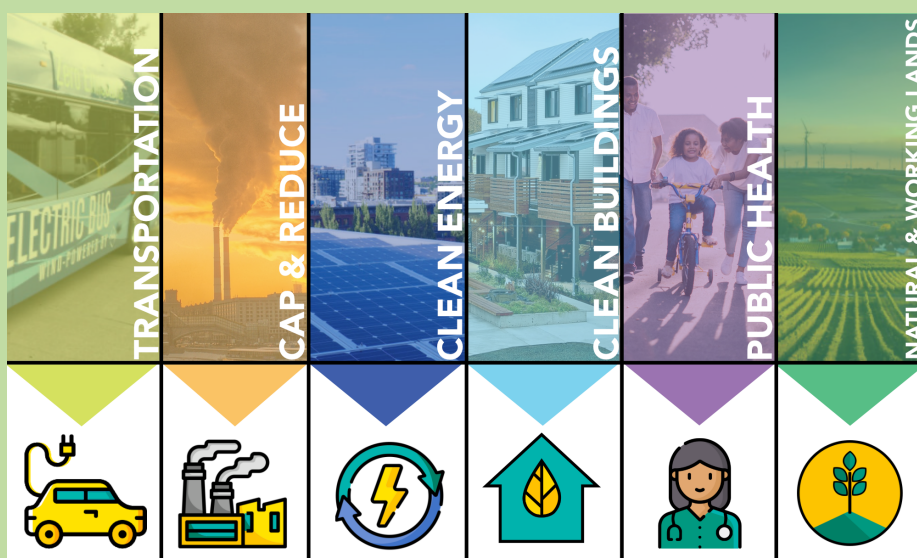
Assessing the risk of failing to take immediate action on the climate crisis, organizations from around the

state formed the Oregon Climate Action Plan (OCAP) Coalition. Coalition members have been working on climate issues across a wide variety of environmental and public health interests ranging from climate-smart forestry practices to carbon storage on agricultural lands to strong workforce protections. We all agreed it was crucial to ensure EO 20-04 resulted in meaningful outcomes for our climate, our communities, and our economy. I'm responsible for Beyond Toxics' role as a co-leader of the OCAP Coalition's efforts focused on carbon sequestration and storage on Oregon's natural and working lands, including forests, agricultural lands, and wetlands.

Since joining our team, I've connected with advocates all across the state to develop

transformative policy recommendations for Oregon's natural resource agencies. We've worked hard to form bonds with the Water Resources Department, Watershed Enhancement Board, Department of Agriculture, and Department of Forestry by communicating regularly with their staff and participating in focus groups to discuss equity and climate needs. Over the past few months, I've testified on behalf of Beyond Toxics or the OCAP Coalition twelve times targeting decision-making bodies like the Oregon Global

Warming Commission, the Environmental Quality Commission, and legislative committees evaluating agency budget proposals. I'm also spearheading a grassroots outreach group to increase public involvement at the nexus of forestry and climate.



The six main issue areas addressed in EO 20-04, which have been the focus of the OCAP Coalition's advocacy, include: transportation, cap and reduce, clean energy, clean buildings, public health, and natural and working lands.

The OCAP Coalition will soon gauge how successful our efforts have been, as several agencies must submit reports to the Governor this summer. I'll be part of the team tracking these reports to evaluate state agencies' commitments to reduce emissions from our transportation sector; protect workers from exposure to smoke and excessive heat; and sequester and store carbon on natural and working lands.

Next, we must actualize the progress imagined by EO 20-04 or risk a climate system that spirals out of control and devastates our most vulnerable communities. Beyond Toxics will continue our leadership advocating for a just, equitable, and climate-smart future for all Oregonians.

Persistence reveals the truth

Nearly a decade ago, Beyond Toxics organized Oregon's first environmental justice bus tour in West Eugene to highlight the connection between pollution and community health. Dozens of residents met with elected officials and agency representatives who took the bus tour. These local neighbors described how their quality of life and health were severely impacted by intense noxious fumes coming from nearby factories. The stench of creosote and naphthalene topped the list of odors that forced people indoors on hot summer days, curtailed birthday parties in backyards and discouraged people from taking walks in the neighborhood.

People complained repeatedly about smelling emissions in the middle of the night. They said they felt they were being choked by intense, gaseous fumes. However, regulatory agencies were deaf to what they were told by the local residents.

We refused to accept the indifference of the local air agency, and continued to organize and collect data. The results of two Community Environmental Health Surveys (2011 and 2020) conducted by Beyond Toxics revealed the truth in stark terms. The data from both surveys showed that residents living near the J.H. Baxter creosote manufacturing plant on Roosevelt Blvd. reported high rates of cancer and other serious diseases.



Arjorie Arberry-Baribeault,
West Eugene EJ Community
Organizer

Community outreach continued to grow when we hired Arjorie Arberry-Baribeault in 2020 to join our team as the West Eugene Environmental Justice Community Organizer.

In 2021 the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality announced that J.H. Baxter had intentionally and repeatedly violated their environmental permits. Community members

by Lisa Arkin



J.H. Baxter

Top chemical released:
Pentachlorophenol

Research links to:
cancer, miscarriages,
neurological effects

J.H. Baxter creosote factory in West Eugene.

were aghast to learn that the polluter had emitted the fumes of 1.7 million gallons of creosote polluted wastewater to the air by trying to "boil it" away. This illegal practice seems to verify the reports of horrific late night odors residents have been reporting for years. The DEQ slapped the polluter with a \$223,000 fine. Two toxic trespass lawsuits have recently been filed in the courts.

Arjorie is organizing a community coalition of impacted residents that meets monthly. The community team sent a letter to the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency demanding community engagement and inclusion, as well as full transparency about J.H. Baxter's history of pollution. We're happy to report that the new agency director agreed to initiate a community engagement process. Community consultation is a benefit of the statewide Cleaner Air Oregon program we've championed.

It's past time for agencies to address community needs and repair the trust that was lost due to years of dismissiveness towards neighbors. We must improve the quality of life by reducing pollution in West Eugene's air, water and land.

To learn more about how you can get involved, visit our **Clean Air for West Eugene Action Guide**: beyondtoxics.org/CleanAirForWestEugene/

For details about the **NEW** West Eugene Storymap project, "**Hairdresser turned Environmentalist**" see page 8.

4th Annual Bee Count

Have you ever walked or rolled through east Alton Baker Path and enjoyed the scenery of that big upland prairie just north of the Knickerbocker Bike Bridge? Well, that prairie used to be an unsightly pile of trash, literally! Around 50 years ago that very site was a municipal landfill; even years after the garbage was hauled away, it was still a wasteland. However, in 2008 community volunteers and several organizations launched an effort to rehabilitate this abandoned land. Today, this natural area is a healthy prairie habitat supporting a wide variety of thriving native flora and fauna.

Since 2014, the **Walama Restoration Project** has worked with local communities to create a mix of connected habitats: upland prairie, wetland prairie, and seasonal wetlands that host numerous native birds, pollinators, reptiles, amphibians, and over 70 species of native plants! Once the rehabilitation efforts were completed in 2017, Beyond Toxics, Walama Restoration Project, and Oregon Bee Atlas joined forces to determine if the rehabilitation project indeed rebuilt a habitat that could support Oregon's vast diversity of wild bees and insects. It is critical to re-establish healthy habitat for pollinators that serve as the very foundation of our ecological food chain.

Together we initiated the first citizen science Bee Survey in the Whilamut Natural Area (WNA) to determine if native bees were using the flowers and grasses that were planted and seeded on the site during rehabilitation. We organized this small



Community volunteers search for insect activity in the Whilamut Natural Area. | Photo by Krystal Abrams



A young volunteer observing a bee caught in a collecting jar. | Photo by Krystal Abrams

by Krystal Abrams

survey with the intent to grow our understanding of native pollinators, and their foraging patterns in urban parks. This

Bee Survey has since become an annual event taking place in the spring or early summer. The identification of bee species, (and often genera) is a difficult task that takes years, if not a lifetime, of practice. We relied on local expert, August Jackson with the Oregon Bee Atlas, to help with identifying each bee collected during the survey. Since not all bees can be identified down to the species (which is the lowest taxonomic level) without killing the bee, we opted to identify each bee to the level that fit with respectful treatment of the bees. We were usually able to identify

the bee genus, which is the second-lowest taxonomic level and identifies a closely related group of species. Bug nets were used to trap bees, which were then placed into jars. Sometimes bees were cooled until bee activity slowed in order to photograph and examine them more closely. No bees or humans were harmed in the process! The results of this survey will help us continue to understand the impacts of habitat restoration and build our knowledge about the bees of Oregon so that we can continue to make decisions that best support our pollinator communities.

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Amplify Environmental Protection! Our Partnership with Crag Environmental Law Center

by Lisa Arkin

Over the years, a unique partnership between a nonprofit law firm and a feisty environmental justice nonprofit has exposed some dire environmental issues and brought them to the attention of the public.

Years before Cleaner Air Oregon regulations were adopted, Crag and Beyond Toxics were already a team fighting for environmental justice in air quality laws. We joined together in 2012 to file a Title VI US EPA Civil Rights Complaint against the Lane Regional Air Protection Agency.

Our complaint led the EPA to conclude that the Oregon agency had not properly considered the disproportionately high adverse human health and environmental effects of air toxics on an environmental justice community in West Eugene. As a result, the regulatory agency had to correct inadequacies in their public outreach and communications practices, staffing and administration.

In the following years, Crag and Beyond Toxics worked on modernizing pesticide regulations in the Oregon Forest Practices Act. Crag lawyers came to our aid when, in 2015, Beyond Toxics' proposal for Oregon's first-ever legislation on aerial pesticide spray was derailed by the timber industry. Our two organizations have been partnering on timber herbicide sprays and water quality protections ever since.

Courtney Johnson, Executive Director of Crag is upbeat about our shared projects. "We're proud to partner with Beyond Toxics to uplift

voices from Oregon communities disproportionately impacted by pollution and climate change. We share an understanding that the health of our communities and the health of our environment

are inextricably linked. Our aim is to balance the scales of justice by providing legal support to the environmental justice movement that Beyond Toxics is helping to build."

Our newest project is filing a petition to adopt new rules on common pesticide mixes containing the



Beyond Toxics and Crag teamed up to file a petition to adopt new rules on common pesticide mixes containing 2,4D and triclopyr.

highly volatile ingredients 2,4D and triclopyr (2,4D is half of Agent Orange, the Vietnam War defoliant that sickened countless US service personnel and Vietnamese people). This combo product, often sold under the name **Crossbow**, can produce poisonous fumes that travel long distances, strong enough to contaminate an entire house or kill acres of grapes. After a number of people contacted us with devastating stories of property damage and sickness from the fumes, we discovered that the 2,4D-Triclopyr combination was a frequent problem in Oregon. Anticipating a fight from the chemical corporations, Crag and Beyond Toxics are ready to stand our ground to protect your family's health. Crossbow is an example of a pesticide that should never have been allowed on store shelves! Stay tuned for updates on this pesticide regulatory challenge.

For more about our ally and partner, Crag Environmental Law Center, visit their website: crag.org.

Climate Justice is Environmental Justice!

by Haley Case-Scott



In early 2020, Beyond Toxics, in coordination with our partners at the NAACP Eugene/Springfield came together to work towards uplifting the voices of underserved and under-represented communities in the Lane County Climate Action Plan.

We were successful in creating a strong partnership with the County's Public Works Department through a memorandum of understanding (MOU). This MOU recognizes us and the NAACP Eugene/Springfield as community partners and tasked us with creating the Lane Climate Equity and Resilience Task Force. The Task Force, which is composed of community representatives and stakeholders who live and work with diverse communities in Lane County, is working to ensure that the climate actions developed by County staff and approved by its Board are equitable and promote climate-resilient communities.

The Task Force recently launched a Lane Community Climate Survey to identify what's important to our communities and what they are concerned about.

The Task Force will recommend strategies and actions to the Lane County Board of Commissioners to address climate change and ensure equity for the following communities: Low-income and working populations; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; Immigrant communities; Tribal Governments; mental health and disability representatives; LGBTQ communities; and Rural communities.



To make sure we prioritized the voices of Oregonians and those communities who experience the brunt of pollution and the hazards of a changing climate we're paving the way towards sustainable and equitable solutions. Thus, we launched the Environmental Justice Pathways project.

In the Spring of 2020, Beyond Toxics and the NAACP Eugene/Springfield were preparing to host the first Environmental Justice Pathways Summit at the University of Oregon. As April approached and the Coronavirus pandemic grew, we postponed the EJP Summit to Spring of 2021. However, we didn't want to wait an entire year to hear from the inspiring group of speakers and from frontline communities! With a quick pivot to virtual gatherings, the EJP Summit planning team decided to host an EJP webinar focused on the Historical Intersections of Race, Economy, and Environment in Oregon. This event turned out to be a huge success! To help our community members stay engaged in the movement to achieve environmental justice we developed the EJP Webinar Series. These webinars prioritized the most pressing environmental justice concerns impacting Oregon's communities and highlighted ways to collaborate on solutions.

We had hundreds of folks from throughout the state and abroad attend the Pathways Webinar series. The webinar series helped us create a "pathway" to the long-awaited Summit in April 2021.

The two-day EJP Summit featured a new partnership with the University of Oregon's Climate Change and Indigenous People's Lecture. Working together, we featured Sheila Watt-Cloutier, the former President and Chair of the International Circumpolar Council as the first keynote speaker. On the second day, we hosted one of our nation's foremost leaders in the environmental justice movement, Dr. Mustafa Santiago Ali. Dr. Ali delivered a stirring and inspirational speech, lifting our hearts and guiding our future work. Scholars, students, policymakers, institutions, and NGOs joined the Summit and held critical conversations and sparked ideas to address environmental justice concerns across our state.

We were pleased to hear the overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees in our EJ Pathways Summit survey. I believe the Summit has so far been, as we intended, a catalyst for the unique and meaningful grassroots work we are seeding throughout Oregon.

Special thanks to the supporters of our first EJ Pathways Summit!

The Environmental Justice Pathways Summit could not have happened without the generous support of our partners and sponsors: Meyer Memorial Trust, Center for Environmental Futures, University of Oregon, City of Eugene, The Spring Creek Project, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, Ceres Trust, Western Environmental Law Center, Crag Law Center, Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, Woodard Family Foundation, Institute for Natural Resources, and We the People Eugene.



Special thanks also to Dr. Mustafa Santiago Ali (left) and (right) keynote moderator, Michelle DePass, President & CEO of Meyer Memorial Trust.

2021 Legislative Report by Lisa Arkin



This past year revealed the interconnected nature of environmental justice, climate action, health and land. Across the state, Oregonians personally experienced how climate intersects with health as we

breathed record-breaking sooty and smoky air throughout the September wildfires. At the same time we witnessed the myriad of ways climate problems manifest as environmental justice problems. Essential workers, many of them people of color were hit hardest by COVID-19, heat stress, smoke inhalation and housing displacement.

These realities call out to us all to demand that 2021 be THE year for environmental justice victories. We aimed our sights on tackling three big policies in the 2021 legislative session.

Climate Action: First we identified that racial equity and climate planning are absent from Oregon's system of land use laws. With our partners throughout the state, we built a dedicated coalition to propose the language for HB 2488, the Climate Justice in Land Use bill. This bill amends our 50 year-old system of land use laws by adding equity and climate criteria. As we go to press, HB 2488-A passed in the House Energy and Environment Committee and is awaiting its turn to get votes in both the full House and Senate and on to the Governor for her signature.

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2021 Legislative Report, *cont.*

Environmental Justice: Secondly, we recognized that in response to today's serious issues, future Oregon Legislatures must be prepared to correct centuries of historical inequities embedded in our social, economic and environmental frameworks. Thus, we proposed Senate Concurrent Resolution 17, a guiding set of principles for elected officials to acknowledge and challenge the legacy and impact of environmental injustice in our State. SCR 17 establishes shared understandings that cleaning up our environment and reversing climate change requires addressing systemic inequalities that have produced unequal environmental, health and socioeconomic outcomes.

We are proud to announce that SCR 17 received strong bipartisan support and passed in both the Senate and House chambers. Its passage advances the values and merits of environmental justice throughout the policies and practices of our state. This is a **resounding** victory!

Pesticide Right to Know and Right to Protections: We believe people have the right to know where and when pesticides are applied. We also believe that people have the right to keep their families and property safe from pesticide drift and residues. That's why we are cheering the successful passage of a bill we supported that achieves both of these rights. HB 2409 is the first bill to pass in Oregon

that entitles residents in home owner associations to request advance notification of pesticide sprays and to opt out of pesticide applications on their own property.

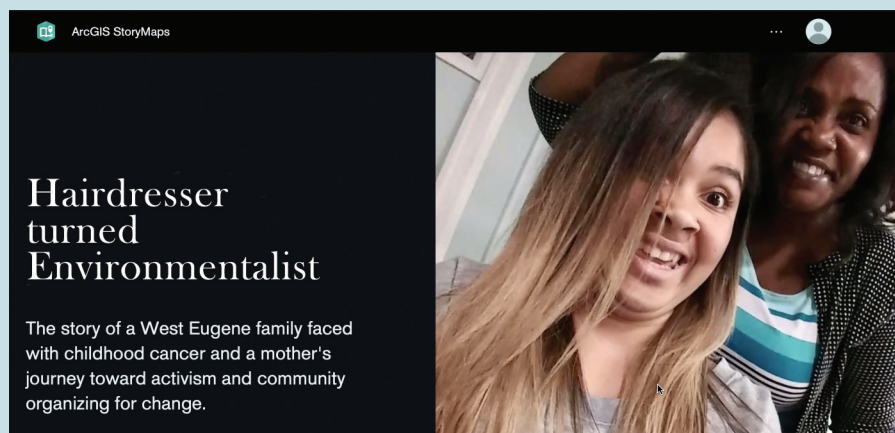
We also worked with the Chair of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee to hold a 2-hour Pesticide and Health Informational Hearing. The purpose of the hearing was to invite experts in toxicology, children's health, soil science and regenerative agriculture to present their findings on risks of pesticide use and safer alternatives. Bringing modern science to the attention of law makers is the pivotal to bring about future policy change to reduce pesticides in the environment.

Building Power to Make Change: The result of Beyond Toxics' legislative campaigns is equipping our State Legislature with policies and principles to embrace the universal obligation to ensure everyone's basic right to clean air and water, non-toxic foods, a healthy living environment and thriving communities.

You are our close partners in this work. Please donate today with the enclosed envelope or online at beyondtoxics.org/donate. With your help, we can provide the next 20 years of leadership for a clean and just Oregon climate.

Beyond Toxics staff members, Mashal Rahmati Copperman and Arjorie Arberry-Baribeault published a powerful and deeply moving interactive production using ArcGIS digital mapping, along with photographs and interviews. The new production, "*Hairdresser turned Environmentalist*," has been shared as a live performance and will go live on our website in June. It tells the survival story of two teenagers raised in West Eugene who overcame the threat of Hodgkin's Lymphoma, a rare and deadly form of cancer.

Telling a Life Story using ArcGIS mapping by Lisa Arkin



Screen shot from the interactive publication, "*Hairdresser turned Environmentalist*," featuring Arjorie Arberry-Baribeault's story (right).

Collaboration is spelled L-O-C-A-L!

by Ana Molina

LOCAL (Liberation of Communities and Land) is a collaborative project with Beyond Toxics, Unete Farm Worker Advocacy Center and NAACP of Lane County, which grew out of a desire to build stronger relationships between the Black and Brown communities across different regions in Oregon.

The organizations are exploring how to empower and support BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities as they work on environmental and climate justice while advocating for what's needed in these communities.

The first big event LOCAL sponsored was a West Eugene Environmental Justice Bus Tour in Fall 2019. The participants, primarily Latinx and Black youth, boarded a chartered bus and took a narrated ride through Eugene learning about the effects of air pollution on vulnerable communities and the history of displacement and unjust land use zoning in Eugene. LOCAL's most recent project was the Rise As Leaders Environmental Justice Cohort training that took place throughout March and April. Over the course of six

weekends twenty BIPOC people across Oregon came together to learn about and discuss environmental topics and participate in other activities with the primary goal of helping to build community resilience.



The West Eugene Environmental Justice Bus Tour in Fall 2019 brought together young people from throughout Lane County.

The meetings provided an interactive and bilingual space to discuss several key issues including Land Use, Emergency Management, Climate Resiliency, Food and Water Systems, and Transportation. The aim was to look at these issues through an environmental justice lens and help participants build skills that could be used when they go back to their own communities, build their political activism and organize for change.

We will be building upon this training, starting new LOCAL Rise as Leaders Cohorts and continuing to support young people from communities of color. It's exciting to see them expand their skills and join in our ongoing advocacy work.

4th Annual Bee Count, *cont.*



August Jackson, a community volunteer, and Krystal Abrams, identify a bee caught during the survey.

In addition to the European honeybee (*Apis mellifera*), we identified 19 species of native bees during the bee count:

Bumble bees

California bumblebee
(*Bombus fervidus/californicus*)
Yellow-faced bumblebee (*Bombus vosnesenskii*)
Hunt's bumblebee (*bombus huntii*)
Red-belted bumblebee (*Bombus rufocinctus*)

also:

Long Horned bees, Mining bee, Nomad Bees, Blood Bees, Small Carpenter bees, Mason bees and Sweat bees.



A yellow-faced bumblebee in a modified collecting jar to help with identification. | Photo by Krystal Abrams

We're excited to report on the species we identified at the 2021 4th Annual Eugene Bee Survey in the Whilamut Natural Area.

Beyond Toxics welcomes three new team members!



Wendy Mintey,
Environmental Justice Grassroots Organizer for Southern Oregon

As a lifelong resident of the Pacific Northwest, Wendy has focused her education and career on regenerative agriculture and land stewardship. Over the last 15 years, she has dedicated her professional life to serving Oregon communities in a variety of capacities ranging from community relations to agricultural compliance – advocating sustainability for both the land and those that inhabit it at every opportunity. As a founding board member of a local non-profit, relationship manager for a global feminist network and children's garden club instructor, Wendy thrives in empowering those around her through education and connection. When she's not advocating for her community, she can be found playing recreational sports, exploring nearby wildlands or cooking up farm fresh confections.

Charles Haller, III
Development and Events Manager

Charles has extensive experience working for nonprofit organizations, from international youth development in Europe to working for his Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. A Kalapuya Tribal member concerned about land and water rights, combined with a past experience working on environmental issues in non-industrialized countries, his passion and dedication for environmental justice brought him to Beyond Toxics. He holds University of Oregon Bachelor's of Arts degree in International Studies and two Masters of Arts degrees, one in Nonprofit Management and one in Public Administration.



Grace Brahler,
Oregon Climate Action Plan & Policy Manager

Grace studied environmental science as an undergraduate and earned a law degree with a concentration in environmental and natural resources from the University of Oregon School of Law. As a law student, Grace served as a co-director for the 2019 Public Interest Environmental Law Conference and worked for Lincoln County, the Oregon Clean Water Action Project, and the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center. Having recently worked with the Oregon Water Futures Project under Dr. Alai Reyes-Santos, Grace focuses on water law and policy with a desire to promote just management and encourage culturally-mindful climate resiliency. When she's not researching and writing about water, you'll find Grace hiking to the nearest stream or throwing a frisbee to her dog Brutus.



Beyond Toxics welcomes 2 new board members!



Kathleen Sullivan

Kathleen moved to Oregon in 2003, and lives on the North Coast. She recently served as a Clatsop County Commissioner (Chair 2020), and the Clatsop County representative on the Forest Trust Lands Advisory Committee and the Northwest Senior and Disabilities Services Board. During her service as a commissioner, Clatsop County became the lone forest trust land county to opt out of the Linn County Lawsuit. She currently serves on the Governor's appointed North Coast Regional Equity in Recovery Council. Kathleen believes community involvement is an essential factor in good governance.

Felice Kelly, Ph.D.

Felice is a senior scientist studying the basic biology of parasitic diseases at Oregon Health and Science University. She's also deeply concerned about the climate crisis and is an active volunteer leader for 350 Portland. Felice wants to see Oregon's forests reach their potential for globally significant carbon sequestration, as well as their value for protecting community drinking water. She holds a Ph.D. in Biology from Rockefeller University and completed postdoctoral studies at Stanford University School of Medicine. When she's not nerding out about microbiology or forests you can usually find her trail running.



Beyond Toxics welcomes 3 new interns!

Xitlali Torres, Environmental Justice Legislative Intern



Xitlali is an undergraduate student at the University of Oregon with a major in Public Policy, Planning, and Management. She grew up in Eugene and is always seeking to give back to the community. She is passionate about the intersectionality of human rights and social issues with the environment and climate change. Xitlali is also an assistant at the PNW Tribal Climate Change project. In her free time, Xitlali likes to make art in a variety of forms, from painting to crochet.

Morgan Snow, Development and Events Intern



Morgan grew up in Napa Valley, California, and is currently finishing her last term of undergraduate studies at the University of Oregon and the Clark Honors College. She is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and will graduate with membership in Phi Beta Kappa. Her research interests include the bridging of intersectional eco-feminism and environmental justice to uncover the link between human and environmental health disparities.

Jenna Travers, Water Quality Intern

Jenna is currently a marine biology major at the University of Oregon. She grew up in fishing and coastal communities across the US. At UO, she works in an environmental humanities lab, researching the impacts of glacier retreat on salmon populations in the PNW and the resulting impacts on communities, Indigenous communities, and the economy. She joined Beyond Toxics at the start of 2021 to work on water quality research.

