

A long-exposure photograph of the Milky Way galaxy arching across a dark night sky. The galaxy's core is visible as a bright, pinkish-white band of stars and dust. The foreground shows the dark silhouettes of large, jagged rocks along a coastline, with a hint of the ocean's surface. The overall scene is serene and majestic.

# Beyond Toxics Annual Report

2022-2023

Beyond Toxics provides leadership to build a community-driven environmental justice movement for a thriving and just Oregon.



Photo credit: Barb Rumer

# A Letter From The Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Every year your commitment to Beyond Toxics propels us toward unprecedented achievements in advancing environmental justice. Together, we've shaped a movement rooted in **hope and justice**, as we moved Oregon beyond environmental harms to restore community health and ecological balance!

Our focus revolves around serving frontline communities, transitioning from a pollution-based economy to wealth derived from stewarding ecological and human health. **This year your support fueled monumental successes!**

For example, in our **battle against waste incineration** in Oregon, our expertise led to a bill requiring continuous pollution monitoring for dioxins and heavy metals, setting a national precedent. Furthermore, our advocacy paved the way for Oregon's Climate Resilience Package, driving investments in **clean energy and climate-smart forestry**.

Your backing is vital for us to continue winning with our successful formula: combine strategic local advocacy with science and grassroots organizing to develop and pursue the legal policies that benefit everyone in Oregon!



Join us to celebrate the impact of environmental justice victories!

Beyond Toxics continues to grow as we approach our 25th anniversary. We're now a strong team of twelve passionate advocates! Thinking ahead to the next generation, **we've mentored over 300 youth** to cultivate future environmental leaders, especially among BIPOC communities and low-income families.

Your generous donation upholds our 5 pillars of impact: **Environmental Justice, Climate Justice and Resilience, Pesticide Reform, Regenerative Ecosystems, and Air & Water Quality!** Donor support is the fuel enabling us to advocate with compassion at the community level, engage with state agencies, and influence legislation.

Individual donor support constitutes fully one-third of our funding for programs that combat industrial polluters, end fossil fuel dependence, and engage frontline communities in creating the healthy, thriving environments we all desire.

**Your donation is empowering and pivotal!** I thank you for contributing now, ensuring our continued fight for just and equitable environmental protections.

With Heartfelt Gratitude,

  
Lisa

# Mission & Theory of Change

## Our Mission

Beyond Toxics provides leadership to build a community-driven environmental justice movement for a thriving and just Oregon. As we look forward, Beyond Toxics envisions a future where we all have equitable access to healthy communities and a thriving environment.



## Our Theory of Change

Our Strategic Plan is visually presented in our illustrated **Environmental Justice Theory of Change**. Each of our five programmatic areas, shown in the **outer petals**, prioritizes **empowering marginalized communities** disproportionately affected by environmental hazards.

The **inner petals** detail how our work merges intentional methods such as **grassroots organizing, outreach, education, coalition building** and **law and policy modernization** to achieve our priority area goals and promote social change.

\*Our flower model was inspired by the *Climate Adaptation Model* adopted by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

# Strategic Plan Priorities



## Environmental Justice

Our focus on grassroots organizing supports the leadership of low-income, rural communities, and communities of color fighting to protect themselves from the harmful effects of hazardous pollutants in their neighborhoods.

We work to empower and involve marginalized communities in the following ways:

- Uplifting the leadership and agency of communities affected by pollution and climate change
- Holding polluters accountable to regulations in place, and striving to strengthen environmental laws
- Conducting community-focused research projects and awareness campaigns



## Climate Justice

Amidst rapid warming, increased wildfires, and drought, it's imperative that all communities have access to renewable energy, clean air and water, and healthy living environments.

Our team advocates for equitable solutions to climate change impacts in the following ways:

- Amplifying impacted voices in climate discussions
- Promoting policies to achieve statewide climate initiatives
- Educating and engaging with the public to reduce reliance on fossil fuels



## Pesticides and Communities

Exposure to pesticides correlates with a myriad of health issues and upsets the balance of nature's systems. Our goal is to establish comprehensive pesticide reforms that protect both human health and biodiversity.

We prioritize pesticide policies that guarantee full transparency and advance organic practices by:

- Protecting children's health by discouraging pesticide use at our schools, parks, and public spaces
- Conducting community-centered research and outreach on the harms of pesticides
- Providing support to Tribal community members to reduce herbicides in Tribal lands and resources



## Air and Water Quality

The air we breathe and the water we drink, bathe, and swim in affects our health. Low-income families, Tribal communities, and communities of color are more often burdened by air and water pollutants exceed public health standards, further exacerbating serious public health issues.

We stand up against air and water pollution in the following ways:

- Promoting policies to enforce polluter accountability, transparency and the community's right to know about toxics
- Advancing policies to protect the health of our watersheds and air quality
- Standing in solidarity with Tribal Nations



## Regenerative Ecosystems

Chemical management of natural resources and land poisons food systems, ecosystems, watersheds and public spaces. We're working towards a regenerative economy that values biodiversity, climate resilience and restores equilibrium to our ecosystems.

We provide leadership in many ways, including:

- Protection of native bee populations through bee surveys, our pollinator garden plot, toxics-free projects and public education campaigns
- Advocacy for resilient and climate smart forestry practices
- Introducing and defending policies to protect Oregon's ecosystems and watersheds

# Our Work Gets Results!

At Beyond Toxics, we work tirelessly to achieve our mission through community empowerment, policy advocacy, and environmental education.

We empower communities by amplifying local voices and fostering partnerships.

Our policy advocacy efforts influence legislation to promote environmental protection and social equity.

Through innovative research and education on Oregon's unique environmental risks, we raise public awareness and inspire informed decisions.

By prioritizing these strategies, we ensure every community has the tools and the knowledge to enjoy clean air, water, and a safe environment.



## IN ACTION



## PRIORITY

### Clearing the Air in Impacted Communities

- After decades of grassroots organizing, a big creosote manufacturing facility closed its doors in January, 2022.
- Our Medical Waste Incinerator Bill passed the 2023 Oregon Legislature.

### Building Community Resilience

- We provided **205 air purifiers** and **160 air conditioners** to at-risk households.
- We provided **100 Emergency "Go Bags"** to households threatened by wildfire smoke.

### Pesticides and Communities

- We worked with Springfield Parks Specialists to develop **organic land management plans** for **3 popular local parks** along the Willamette River.

### Youth Education Programs

- **43 high school and college students** completed our resilient youth leadership trainings
- **150 middle school youth** attended our environmental education summer camps.



# Financial Stewardship

We are committed to transparent financial stewardship. Our budget specifies allocations for initiatives such as fostering youth leadership, environmental education, environmental justice, community resilience, pesticide reforms, and climate justice.

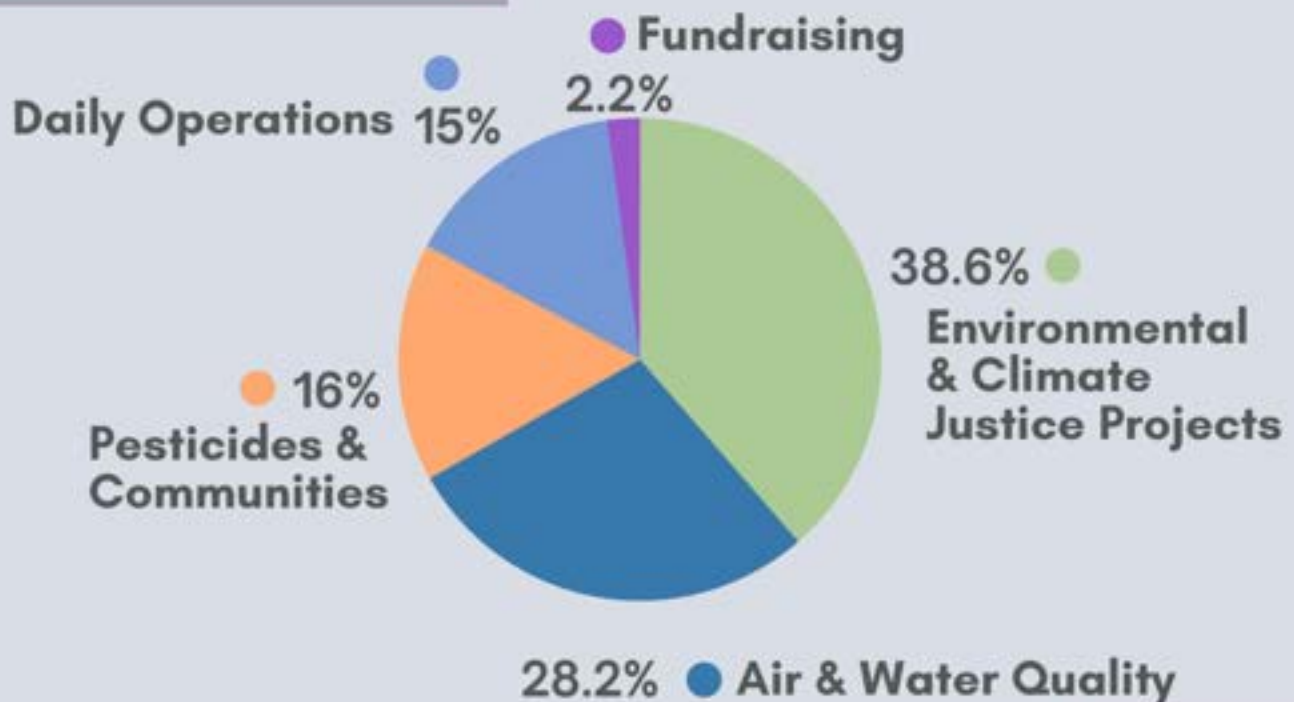
Key components include funding for grassroots campaigns, public workshops, staff training, communication, and outreach materials.

Our annual budget depends on fiscal responsibility and wise management of resources to ensure donor contributions directly support our mission. We remain committed to maximizing every dollar to create a lasting positive impact on both communities and the environment.

## 2022-2023 Budget and Fiscal Overview

Beyond Toxics' combined **2022 and 2023 Budget was \$1,517,000.**  
Here is how we allocated this budget . . .

### At A Glance



Less than 1% of our budget was used for lobbying on statewide issues.



## Bee Jazzy: A Win For Bees & People

Bee Jazzy is our biggest annual fundraiser supporting our Save Oregon's Bees campaign. Each year, we host an outdoor jazz concert at Silvan Ridge Winery, hold a silent auction, and engage with our members. The event attracts new supporters each year. From food trucks to Sweet Life desserts, from dancing to educational activities, there's something for everyone to enjoy! In 2022 and 2023, 475 folks attended to listen to jazz music under a summer evening sky and help us raise \$57,000 to Save Oregon's Bees.

**Significance for Oregonians:** Bee Jazzy supports our efforts to promote safe and healthy ecosystems for our native pollinators, conduct research on native bee species, and provide educational activities for children and adults alike on ways we can Save Oregon's Bees in our own backyards. We need bees for... well, for just about everything!

### 2023 Beauty of the Bee Photo Contest

#### 1st Place Winner

*Leafcutter at Work*

By Claudia Husseneder

1



Funds Raised

\$57,000

Tickets Sold

475

108

New Supporters

75

Silent Auction Packages Sold

# Project Updates



## Senate Bill 488

### Medical Waste Incineration Bill

**Legislative Victory:** Oregon Senate Bill 488, sponsored by Senator Patterson and supported by several legislators, became law after passing the 2023 legislature. This groundbreaking legislation centers around municipal solid waste incinerators, promising positive impacts on environmental health.

**Significance for Oregonians:** Prior to the passage of SB 488, incinerator owners only tested for dioxins and heavy metals once a year. Now the Oregon incinerator will continuously sample for chemicals and report toxic pollutants to the public. This victory achieves cleaner air, polluter transparency, and the adoption of the most up-to-date technology, showcasing Oregon's commitment to a healthier environment.

## Climate Resilience Package (HB 3409 & HB 3630) Natural Climate Solutions

**Legislative Victory:** The Climate Resilience Package (HB 3409 & HB 3630) successfully passed in the 2023 Oregon State Legislature, signifying a significant win to take action on the state's climate goals. This package ensures Oregon will leverage millions of dollars in federal funding and investments - an unprecedented opportunity!

**Significance for Oregonians:** This legislation establishes funding for natural climate solutions to mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration and soil improvements. It also leverages federal funding to build emergency networks, provide access to vital resources for impacted communities during disasters, expand support for climate-ready communities, and create family-wage jobs throughout Oregon.

## Integrating Equity, Climate, and Health into Oregon's 50-Year Land Use Goals



Since winning the landmark passage of the Oregon Environmental Justice Framework in 2021, we've made significant strides toward reshaping local and state land use laws. For example, the Eugene City Council's recent unanimous approval of our proposal for a Public Health Protection Zone is propelling our concept towards imminent adoption. As we set our sights on the next legislative session, plans are underway to introduce a concept amending Oregon's land use goals, prioritizing public health, equity, and climate resilience criteria.

Looking forward to 2024, the Eugene City Council is actively considering our initiatives to ban new gas station construction, develop an electric vehicle charging station masterplan, and stop the installation of artificial plastic turf in public parks to combat microplastic pollution. Our efforts have gained wide recognition, with invitations to speak at regional conferences and institutions like the National Academy of Sciences.

**Significance for Oregonians:** This success signifies a meaningful impact on the integration of environmental and public health into land use laws, benefiting the health of all Oregonians and safeguarding our ecosystems and watersheds.



## J.H. Baxter

### A Breath of Clean Air for West Eugene

After Beyond Toxics' persistent organizing, the J.H. Baxter creosote manufacturing facility in west Eugene closed in January of 2022, marking a significant milestone in the community's fight for cleaner air and safer living conditions.

**Significance for Oregonians:** This victory underscores the power of community activism and community-led science to stop illegal pollution. Beyond Toxics' grassroots approach is resulting in far-reaching policy changes that other communities can replicate, including Public Health Zoning, Risk Bond Requirements for fossil fuel and hazardous chemical users, a moratorium on new gas stations and renewable energy projects benefiting vulnerable neighborhoods.

## Clean and Cool Air For All Project

### Building Resilient Communities

Beyond Toxics community organizers had the incredible opportunity to work with the Oregon Health Authority to distribute over 350 free air conditioners and air purifiers to low-income and at-risk households in Eugene and Springfield to provide relief and safety during the intense summer heat.

So many of the community members we serve urgently need cool and clean air inside their homes, particularly in west Eugene where homes typically are not well weatherized and residents don't have the means to install cooling infrastructure. We prioritized the 50+ households near the J.H. Baxter site whose properties are now contaminated with high levels of cancer-causing dioxins. When the EPA begins the massive project to remove dioxin-laden soils throughout the neighborhood, these families will be better protected from dusty, polluted air with their new air conditioners and air purifiers.

## Landfill Leaks and Climate Risks

### Safeguarding Oregon Communities

Communities around the Coffin Butte Landfill, north of Corvallis, sought our assistance to help stop a plan to expand the landfill by 30% and understand the landfill's toxic impact.

Collaborating with the community, our research uncovered alarming methane leaks and millions of gallons of landfill leachate containing high levels of PFAS discharged into the Willamette River every year. The Oregon DEQ has neglected to scrutinize and update Coffin Butte's air quality permit since it was issued in 2009. We're filing complaints to prompt state and federal action for compliance.

**Significance for Oregonians:** Coffin Butte's methane emissions contribute significantly to global warming. Addressing these leaks is vital in mitigating climate change risks. Additionally, ending the practice of leachate dumping in Oregon rivers is crucial for safeguarding drinking water, salmon, and aquatic ecosystems from harmful pollutants.



**Significance for Oregonians:** By offering cooling and air filtration devices, we enhance residents' well-being, particularly those on Medicare and the Oregon Health Plan, or at elevated risk of heat-related or respiratory illnesses. The Air Conditioner and Air Purifier Giveaway project embodies our dedication to environmental justice at the community level.

# New Staff and Board Members



## Ana Colwell - Environmental Justice Policy Manager

Ana is a passionate advocate for the environment and Native American issues and holds a J.D. in Environmental Law from the University of Oregon. As a Native Environmental Sovereignty fellow, she championed environmental causes and received the Wayne Morse Environmental Law fellowship. Ana, a citizen of the Osage Nation, draws inspiration from her multicultural background. Now settled in the Pacific Northwest, she enjoys the region's outdoor lifestyle with her family.

## Rayna Viles - Assistant Director

Rayna is a long-time Eugene resident who is proud to have grown up in the Bethel neighborhood of west Eugene. With strong ties to her family's ancestral roots in Oregon, Rayna's approach uses an intersectional lens informed by Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge and practices. After receiving a B.A. in Arts Management, she gained invaluable experience working in the fundraising division at the University of Oregon. Rayna looks forward to applying her fundraising skills and her nonprofit management training to back critical Beyond Toxic initiatives.



## Kenny Watkins, President

Retired Biochemist, UO alum, an advocate for farmworker health, pollution impact awareness, and land stewardship. Avid outdoor enthusiast and conservationist.



## Miguel Corvera, Co-Vice President

Tech expert who advocates tech solutions for climate change. Formerly with Twitter and Stripe, he prioritizes equity and justice, and enjoys his collaboration with Beyond Toxics.



## Sammi Teo, Member at Large

Public Policy Advocate at Oregon Food Bank, J.D. holder from Lewis & Clark Law School, values food security and community-focused environmental solutions.



## Mary Stites, Member at Large

Legal fellow at NEDC, applies legal strategies for environmental equity and protection, specializing in water quality, air quality, and public lands. Lewis & Clark Law School graduate.



**We thank you for your ongoing support and membership!**

## **Beyond Toxics Supporters**

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*\* of the Oregon Community Foundation*

Contact Lisa Arkin or Rayna Viles  
for assistance with donor  
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[www.beyondtoxics.org/donate](http://www.beyondtoxics.org/donate)



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