

Washington Environmental Council

Protecting our land, air and water

WINTER 2009

2010 Environmental Priorities

In these challenging economic times, our leaders in Olympia need to stand up and make smart decisions that will protect our environment and support our economy. This year, the Environmental Priority Coalition has chosen three priority proposals to support during this legislative session, which together support healthy communities and sustainable green jobs. Our 2010 Priorities focus on ensuring clean water, reducing the threat of toxic chemicals, and maintaining core environmental protections in a time of slashed budgets.

The Environmental Priorities Coalition is comprised of more than twenty leading environmental groups in Washington State that influence policy at the state level. Each year, the Coalition selects several priority issues that receive the collective support of this network during the legislative session. By narrowing our agenda, we're better able to focus our resources and succeed in Olympia. The 2010 Priorities are: Working for Clean Water, the Safe Baby Bottles Act, and Sustain Environmental Protections in the Budget.

Working for Clean Water

The Working for Clean Water campaign is about creating jobs, rebuilding our local economies, and cleaning up polluted waterways like Puget Sound and the Spokane River. Each year, millions of gallons of petroleum end up in Puget Sound through runoff pollution, a serious threat to our health and our environment. City and county governments are trying to clean it up, but don't have the resources to put people to work. What they do pay for comes through higher utility bills, not from the wealthy oil companies who create the pollution.

We are proposing a fee on polluters to fund shovel-ready, local projects all over the state to stop this contamination. Now is the time to put Washington back to work by building clean water infrastructure that will lead to a stronger economy and healthier environment.

Safe Baby Bottle Act

Bisphenol A is harmful to children's health. Laboratory studies have linked this toxic chemical (called BPA) to cancer, miscarriage, obesity, reproductive problems, and hyperactivity. Yet manufacturers can still legally use BPA in products such as baby bottles, infant formula cans, and other food containers.

The Safe Baby Bottle Act would address this problem by phasing out toxic BPA in baby bottles, food and beverage cans, and other consumer products. This campaign builds on other efforts to make everyday products safe for our families and natural environment.

2010 Priorities • continued on page 6

Get the scoop on *Live It: Celebrating our land, air, and water* — see page 8



During the upcoming legislative session, WEC will work to advance the Environmental Priorities in Olympia.



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Lighthouse on Dungeness Spit, Clallam County. Photo by Kerry McHugh.

Executive Director's Message

This has been an exciting year here at WEC. We've had some great moments recently – working with a broad coalition to defeat Tim Eyman's misleading Initiative 1033 (see page 3), gathering with friends for our successful and fun dinner and action (see page 9), and supporting the communities who are embracing our *Local Farms-Healthy Kids* campaign (page 13).

In fact the whole year has been peppered with meaningful victories. Victories like a federal judge's ruling on Maury Island that will help protect Puget Sound, standing with Governor Gregoire as she signed a forward-looking executive order on climate change, and watching the runaway success of the state E Waste recycling program, created by a campaign WEC helped spearhead three years ago.

While 2009 has brought much to celebrate, there are still very big challenges on the horizon for 2010. The continued national and international debate on next steps on climate and clean energy policy frame much of our work. On page 4, Campaign Director Becky Kelley lays out how WEC figures in the possible solutions.

And here in this Washington, we are gearing up to pass the 2010 Environmental Priorities. It won't be easy, especially as our state faces a record budget deficit. But the issues we're working on – clean water, clean air, and products that don't endanger the health of our families – are more important than ever.

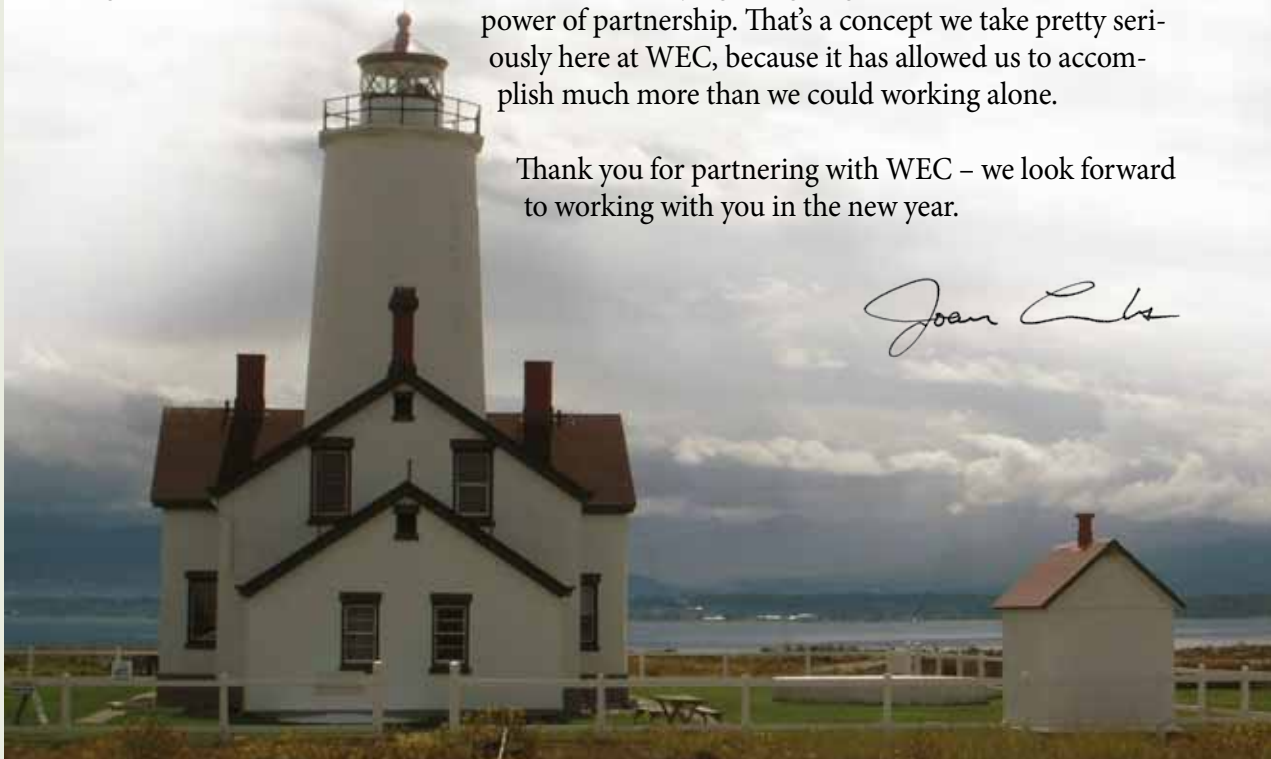
The WEC board and staff also have been looking farther ahead, thinking about Washington's environmental future. Throughout the past year, we've been reaching out and asking decision makers, environmental community partners, and our members how we can best serve Washington's environment over the next five years. We are crafting a new strategic plan that builds on what WEC does best, fills in some areas where we know we can do better and takes advantage of timely opportunities.

Throughout these conversations, a powerful thread is tying things together - the belief in the power of partnership. That's a concept we take pretty seriously here at WEC, because it has allowed us to accomplish much more than we could working alone.

Thank you for partnering with WEC – we look forward to working with you in the new year.



Joan Crooks, Executive Director, and her daughter Adelle.



Election Report: I-1033

This year Washington faced a devastating state budget deficit that forced legislators to make very tough cuts to basic services, as well as to essential environmental protection programs. Tim Eyman's Initiative 1033, on the ballot in November, would have locked in this year's budget as our baseline, threatening many things important to Washingtonians – education, public safety, environmental protections, and our economic recovery.

Faced with this frightening prospect, a diverse coalition of 250 businesses, environmental organizations, health, labor and education advocates and volunteers from across the state came together to let voters know the dangers I-1033 posed to the things we care about. Thanks to an incredible amount of hard work, I-1033 was soundly defeated by Washington voters, 57% to 42%.

Due to the misleading way Eyman framed I-1033, it initially looked very likely to pass. To prevent it, the No on 1033 campaign united leaders from across the state and political spectrum and groups as disparate as Microsoft and the Washington State Council of Firefighters. All agreed that I-1033 posed a serious threat to our state and future.

Working with our partners at Washington Conservation Voters, Washington Environmental Council was in the thick of the fight – helping to coordinate the environmental community's response and offering up our office for nightly phone banks. We recruited volunteers to help get the word out to our

members by phone banking, emailing their friends and neighbors, and writing letters to the editor. The reaction was inspiring – one night, the majority of the Seattle City Council volunteered to phone

bank, even those up for re-election.

There was a clear reason everyone was so motivated. 1033 would have had disastrous effects on Washington's ability to combat climate change and restore Puget Sound. Already this year, the state was forced to make deep cuts in funding for natural resource programs. I-1033 would have led to even further cuts on environmental protections and jeopardized natural resource agencies.

Thanks to all of you who helped defeat I-1033 by calling voters, talking to family and friend, and even just mailing in your ballot. This is a victory for all of Washington.

Thanks to all of you who helped defeat I-1033 by calling voters, talking to family and friend, and even just mailing in your ballot.

VOTE NO INITIATIVE 1033

Seattle City Council Member Jean Godden at a No on 1033 phonebank in the WEC office. Photo by Andrew Villeneuve, Northwest Progressive Institute



Climate and clean energy solutions

By Becky Kelley, Campaign Director

WEC's climate and clean energy work is as multi-faceted as the challenge of climate change itself. It is time for action and solutions, and we and our partners are working hard to deliver.

National Work

Because a cap on global warming pollution is so central to solving climate change, WEC is helping organize citizens to call on our congressional delegation for action. From visiting Senator Murray and Cantwell's offices, to writing letters to the editor, to joining 350.org's national day of action, WEC's supporters are ensuring that our elected officials know that Washingtonians want action.

We will certainly celebrate when Congress adopts a cap on global warming pollution, but our work will be far from done. Key pieces of the climate and clean energy equation are fundamentally state-based. We are researching and laying the groundwork for transformational policies in both those areas, while taking advantage of near-term opportunities and challenges in the 2010 session.

State Action

For the 2010 legislative session, WEC will be working with Climate Solutions and the NW Energy Coalition on financing tools to promote energy efficiency. Retrofitting homes and offices to save energy will be a major source of jobs, as well as saving money and reducing pollution. We are excited to be working with Representative Dunshee, business, labor, and schools on one such approach aimed at upgrading school buildings. We are also exploring with business interests how

environmental review can be made easier and more effective for urban areas to encourage compact, well-designed development.

Finally, WEC is part of broad coalition dedicated to maintaining the strength and integrity of the Citizen's Clean Energy Initiative, I-937. We will ensure that the Legislature delivers on the commitment to building a clean energy economy and supporting green jobs. By doing so, we will decrease both our fossil fuel dependence and climate pollution.

WEC is also at many tables outside the legislative process. The state is leading an inquiry into a low-carbon fuel standard. WEC is advocating a rigorous approach that delivers real climate benefits. The Governor has called for a strategy to transition the state's single largest source of global warming pollution, the TransAlta coal plant, off of coal. WEC is working with many partners to assure that transition occurs as quickly as possible, while developing new, clean energy jobs.

Making a difference

The coherent thread through this multi-layer work is you. Repowering our society to run on clean energy and reducing pollution are huge challenges. Like major changes of the past, from worker protection laws to civil rights, these changes won't happen until the public demands them. When you attend a public meeting, call your legislator, vote, or write a letter to the editor, you are helping create a healthier, safer, and more just future. We look forward to continuing to partner with you to create a clean energy future.

The perfect gift for the holidays



As the 2009 holiday season gets underway, the decorations go up, the parties start, and our thoughts turn to finding the perfect gift for everyone on our list. Many of us are also looking for ways to make our holiday celebrations more environmentally-conscious.

Rather than spend countless hours browsing the internet or in shopping malls, wouldn't it be more fun spend your time with friends and family? This year you *can* give the perfect (and environmentally-friendly) present: a gift to WEC.

By donating to WEC in the name of a family member, friend, or colleague you give them the knowledge that they contributing to the protection of our state's environment. And you will help WEC protect, preserve and restore Washington's environment.

When you honor a loved one with a gift to WEC that person will receive a greeting card explaining your gift (excluding the amount).

All you need to do is mention the honoree when you give online at wecprotects.org or call our Membership & Grants Manager, David Gorton, at 206.631.2608 for more information.

So this year, give a gift that lasts all year long, and help WEC achieve our goal of a beautiful and sustainable Washington state.

Outside Leavenworth,
Washington. Photo by Jen
Chiang



2010 Priorities • continued from page 1

Sustain Environmental Protections in the Budget

Our state budget needs to reflect our state's environmental values. We're in the midst of an economic recession that threatens the core environmental protections that keep our families safe. In the face of these tough times, we must protect our communities and build a sustainable economy. We want our drinking water to be clean, the air we breathe to be healthy, and toxic contamination to be cleaned up. We want to create jobs that will make Washington a driver in the new green economy. We cannot afford disproportionate cuts to the core environmental programs that provide the basic safeguards that we all rely on.

With the Sustain Environmental Protections in the Budget campaign, the Environmental Priorities Coalition will work to ensure that state spending decisions adequately protect our communities and promote sustainable economic recovery.

Additionally, the Environmental Priorities Coalition is dedicated to maintaining the strength and integrity of the Citizen's Clean Energy Initiative, I-937. We will ensure that the Legislature delivers on the commitment to building a clean energy economy and supporting green jobs. By doing so, we will decrease both our fossil fuel dependence and climate pollution.

If you're interested in more in-depth information on any of the Environmental Priorities, please visit the Coalition's website at environmentalpriorities.org.

If you'd like to get involved and help make them a reality, here are three easy steps:

- 1) Sign up for the Environmental Priorities email alerts (on the Coalition's website).
- 2) Attend Legislative Workshop and learn more about the Priorities and the lay of the land in the Legislature.
- 3) Let your representative know that you support the Priorities by writing, calling, or attending Lobby Day.

There's more information on Legislative Workshop and Lobby Day on the back cover of this newsletter.

The health of Washington's kids and water depends on our environmental protection programs. *Photo by Gayle Zilber.*



Bronwyn Scott: Saving water and improving public health

By Whitney Stovall, *Communications and Outreach Intern*

Ecologist Bronwyn Scott wanted to do more. Retired from Microsoft, she started teaching science courses at Bellevue College and the University of Phoenix. Then she got involved with WEC, where her skills and background in science made her a valuable asset. As a volunteer, Bronwyn has been representing WEC in a Department of Health stakeholder process on homeowner greywater regulations in Washington.

Greywater is water from residential washing machines, sinks, and showers – essentially any water used in the home that's not related to sewage. While it's often just sent down the drain, greywater can be used as an alternative to fresh, potable water for things like irrigation and indoor toilet flushing. This has a number of environmental benefits from reducing the use of drinking water to decreasing the amount of pollution being released into bodies of water like Puget Sound.

While greywater use has many up sides, there are also some public health concerns that need to be addressed by the Department of Health. For example, if you use greywater to water your vegetable garden and then eat the produce, this can increase your exposure to chemicals from laundry detergent, personal care products and dishwashing liquid. Well-meaning homeowners using greywater without input from the Department of Health can also pose an environmental risk of putting biological contaminants into the soil.

Currently, there are only non-enforceable greywater guidelines, but Bronwyn feels regulations are crucial to protect both the surrounding environment and Washington residents. The stakeholder group is working to develop regulations that would allow homeowners to use greywater in their house safely, with minimal oversight, and without having to go through a rigorous and expensive permitting process.

After the regulations are finalized, the stakeholder group expects the Department of Health to create a manual for greywater use, which would educate homeowners on how to use greywater safely. Bronwyn also advocates outreach to homeowners, so they can get more involved with what's going on in their gardens.

Eventually this outreach should extend to businesses and commercial institutions so we safely make full use of our precious and limited water resources. Bronwyn says, "We are actually making really good progress - I think we're going to get much farther than the simple regulations for homeowners."

Volunteers like Bronwyn help WEC do more for Washington's environment. If you're interested in getting more involved with WEC, please email Outreach Director Kerri Cechovic at kerri@wecprotects.org.



Bronwyn Scott

New greywater regulations will help Washingtonians safely water their home gardens. *Photo by Ursula Haigh*



Live It: Celebrati

WEC's big fundraising event for the year, *Live It: Celebrating our land, air and water* was an unqualified success. We raised over \$150,000 net – beating our fundraising goal! In these tough economic times, that is a testament to the power of the partnerships we've created, the value of our work, and the generosity and enthusiasm of our sponsors, donors, table captains and attendees.

Our new location didn't hurt either. This year, *Live It* was held at the new Hyatt at Olive 8. Certified to a LEED® Silver status, this venue encompasses many features important to WEC: energy efficiency, water conservation, and the use of local food.

The Silent Auction reception was packed as people socialized, bid on some outstanding items, and lined up to drink delicious cocktails, beer, and wine – donated by our friends at Linda's, Schooner EXACT Brewery, and Boushey Vineyards.

During dinner, guests were served local, sustainable dishes, while listening to a program that included a film featuring local rock band the Black Whales (see more on page 12). Our short live auction was lively and successful with lots of friendly competition.

Congressman Jay Inslee was scheduled as our keynote speaker, but was unable to leave DC as national health care legislation was on the floor. He kindly sent a video message and his inspirational words ended the program on a high note.

Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership (and former WEC Board Member) David Dicks offered words of hope on Puget Sound restoration and then brought down the house as he joined the band for an impromptu rendition of *Just What I Needed* by The Cars that got the whole room dancing.

The entire evening was a success – it was fun and upbeat, inspiring all of us for the year ahead. We are so thankful to all those who helped make it happen.



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Special thanks to event intern Emily Benowitz and development intern Caitlin Schaeffer.

Thanks



The Making of *Live It*

On a sunny day in September, WEC friends and supporters, along with the masterminds at GuentherMedia, gathered at the home of Ross and Lisa MacFarlane on Haller Lake to make a film for WEC.

Our goal? To show how young people are meeting environmental challenges through their energy and enthusiasm for the future, and how that matches the optimism we feel at WEC. The challenges we face aren't ones with easy solutions. But they are the ones with the essential solutions.

Helping us was local band the Black Whales. Interested in helping to get the word out on environmental issues, they'd agreed to let us film their Bumbershoot performance and then come out and play their song, *Young Blood*, for the full day shoot.

The clear blue skies and inviting lake views (so inviting that half of the people ended up in the lake) added to the energy of the day. As people danced to the music, a variety of young people told stories on how they are making positive change happen. Eva Ringstrom, former coordinator for Eat Better, Feel Better Program at Van As-selt School, talked about WEC's *Local Farms - Healthy Kids Act*, which helped her to connect kids with fresh food. Ethan Schaffer and his wife Sarita Role Schaffer talk about what led them to form GrowFood.org - a web 2.0 project connecting farmers interested in teaching with people interested in farming.

The mood was inspiring - and the music kept the energy high and feet moving. To see the film, visit WEC's website at wecprotects.org.

Thanks to Black Whales for donating their time and music to help WEC. Their EP, *Origins*, is available in stores now. Learn more at blackwhales.com or mtfujirecords.com.



Filming with Black Whales on Haller Lake. Photos by Monique Robert



Farm-to-school in Washington State: Off to great start

By Kerri Cechovic, Outreach Director

Across the country, the momentum is growing for the farm-to-school movement to strengthen family farms, improve student health, and instill awareness about the impacts of food choices. First Lady Michelle Obama invited local school kids to plant a garden on the White House lawn. Congress included farm-to-school measures in the most recent Farm Bill. And the U.S. Department of Agriculture rolled out a “Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food” campaign in support of farm-to-school programs.

Right here in Washington, from Yakima to Lopez Island, community members are working to get farm-to-school projects like school gardens and locally-grown snack programs off the ground. That progress is fueled in part by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) Farm-to-School Program. Created by the passage of the Local Farms-Healthy Kids Act in 2008, the Farm-to-School Program provides information, inspiration, and assistance for those working to supply healthy Washington-grown food to local school kids.

Thus far, the response to the program has been astounding. WSDA staff members have spoken with thousands of people including farmers, educators, public health experts, food distributors and processors, parents and community advocates to help develop farm-to-school projects. In just the past four months, nearly forty new farmers have contacted the Farm-to-School Program to learn more about how to sell their produce to schools.

**WEC's Local Farms –
Healthy Kids campaign at
work**

And communities around Washington are building on that momentum. Recently Beth Loveridge, a parent, WEC activist, and member of Port Angeles School District's Nutrition Advisory Committee, helped organize a Farm-to-Cafeteria conference in Clallam County. The conference brought together over 150 community members and key decisionmakers including local elected officials, farmers, school superintendants, tribal representatives, teachers, PTA members, school nutritionists, distributors, and local business owners. All of the attendees received *Growing Our Future*, a WEC toolkit produced with support from the Gilman Family Foundation.

The conference was met with great enthusiasm by attendees. A couple weeks after the conference, Candice Cosler, one of the organizers, wrote, “As I talk with farmers and folks around town, the enthusiasm and sense of promise continues! Some farmers have even asked for another meeting with buyers and sellers soon.”

However, significant challenges to farm-to-school projects remain: tight school budgets, school kitchen limitations, and logistics like transportation, delivery, and storage of fresh food.

To ensure our state continues to lead on this issue, we need continued support from WSDA's Farm to School Program—with its invaluable assistance, resources, and support for schools and farmers. With this program and the dedication of folks like Beth and Candice, we can keep working towards the goal of healthier food for our kids and a sustainable future for our farmers.

To learn more about farm-to-school efforts in Washington State, visit www.agr.wa/farmtoschool. If you'd like a copy of *Growing Our Future*, email Kerri Cechovic at kerri@wecprotects.org.

Photo by Anna Franz



Greening our office

By Kerry McHugh, Communications Manager

It's a conversation being held in offices around the country – what can we do to make our operations more environmentally-friendly? Here at WEC, our discussion started when Executive Director Joan Crooks sat on a panel for *Seattle Business Magazine's* Green Washington Awards, which recognized companies, non-profits and government agencies innovating to sustain our environment.

After judging, she came back and asked staff members for ideas on how to make our office practices more sustainable. Once we started brainstorming, we realized that there was a lot we could be doing better. Some of the ideas were simple, like creating a scrap paper box for notepaper. Others will take more time, such as figuring out how we can continue to keep our members active and informed, while using less paper and resources.

One step we've taken is switching from four newsletters a year to three. We're also asking all members who don't already receive emails from us, to go to our website (wecprotects.org) and sign up so we can keep them up to date electronically.

We thought we could share a few ideas for greening your office, as we head into the new year.

Location and commuting

WEC had a head start on environmentally-friendly practices due to our location in downtown Seattle. Close to our office, there's easy access to buses, ferries, and light rail. And our staff commutes by taking the bus, biking, walking, or carpooling.

While location isn't something that's easily changed, supporting staff in making smart transportation choices can be simpler. Options range from offering subsidized bus passes to staff members or getting a bicycle repair kit to help out bike commuters.

Talk to your building manager

Sometimes things aren't done in the most sustainable manner just because no one has ever asked. Your building manager can be a great resource and can help make change on a building-wide basis. Things to ask about range from fixing leaky windows to keep heat in and energy use down to adding compost collection so food scraps don't head to the landfill.

Save resources and money

Often when you make sustainable choices, you end up saving money. We replaced our old office water system of large bottles of water with a system that utilizes and filters water from the municipal source. This simple change saves WEC hundreds of dollars a year. We also switched all staff printers to automatically print double sided, decreasing the amount of paper we have to buy.

We've made some good progress, but there's still a lot to be done. If you have any questions or ideas about how we could do more to green our office, please email Leea Brady, WEC's administrative director, at leea@wecprotects.org.

WEC's office is located in a LEED Gold-certified retrofitted building.



Charles and Nancy Bagley: A legacy of commitment more than four decades long

By Tarrell Wright, Development Director

“As Nancy and I grow older, we don’t grow less interested. In fact, as we are able to witness the changes in our environment from decade to decade, we become more concerned about what has been lost. I am continually impressed by WEC and their ability, along with their partners, WCV, to bring the whole environmental community together to make progress.” – Charles Bagley

Charles and Nancy Bagley became involved with environmental protection in the 1960s through the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club in their then-home of Maryland. Mr. Bagley remembers a tour he took of an open pit mine in West Virginia that really inspired him to act. “What they were doing there was just devastating.” He’s not sure why the mine owners agreed to the tour, but he knows that the small group of folks who attended were shaken to the core.

In the early 1970s, Mr. and Mrs. Bagley moved to Seattle and became active with WEC. “I was impressed with WEC’s leadership, and it really seemed like they were the main leaders when it came to getting things done,” he says. Charles helped found WenPac (which later became our partners, Washington Conservation Voters). He’s proud of the way these two partners have brought the environmental

community together to get people talking about the same issues and getting our legislators to notice.

Charles and Nancy love hiking and canoeing and have instilled this passion in their two sons. But it’s not their interests in these activities that keep them motivated to support environmental work. When asked what inspires him to keep working, he says, “I’m thinking specifically about my granddaughter, Margaret, and the place I want her to inherit. We need to keep our state and our region as attractive, as livable, and as clean as possible. It’s good for business and it’s what makes this place so special.”

Charles carried this message to our state’s U.S. Senators in August, as part of a “Parade of Reasons”, when people from across the state brought personal messages to the offices of Senators Murray and Cantwell. He asked them to lead on passing a comprehensive climate and clean energy bill this year.

“I am continually impressed by WEC and their ability, along with their partners, WCV, to bring the whole environmental community together to make progress.”



Charles Bagley holding a photo of his granddaughter as he asked Senators Cantwell and Murray to lead on passing a comprehensive climate and clean energy bill this year. *Photo by Andy Grow*

Mark your calendar

Legislative Workshop in Seattle

WHEN: Saturday, January 9th, 9:30 AM - 2:30 PM

WHERE: Seattle Pacific University, Gwinn Commons

To register, visit wecprotects.org.

Join the state's leading conservation groups and prepare for the upcoming session of the state legislature. You'll hear from legislators, environmental leaders, and advocates regarding the community's Environmental Priorities.

Lobby Day in Olympia

When: Tuesday, January 26th, 8:30 AM – 6:00 PM

Where: United Churches, Olympia, 110th East 11th Ave

To register, visit pugetsound.org.

Join hundreds of citizen lobbyists to push for the passage of the 2010 Environmental Priorities. You'll be briefed on issues, hear from environmental champions, get trained on how to lobby, and then meet face-to-face with your elected officials.



Seattle University students waiting to meet with their legislator on Environmental Lobby Day. Photo by Karen Uffelman

Washington Environmental Council protects what Washingtonians care about — our land and water, fish and wildlife, and our special way of life. We engage citizens and decision makers to improve and enforce protections for the health and well-being of our communities. Our work ensures that we will all enjoy natural areas, clean air and clean water for generations to come.



**WASHINGTON
ENVIRONMENTAL
COUNCIL**

PROTECTING OUR LAND, AIR AND WATER

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