Washington’s Environmental Priorities

A look back at 12 years of leadership by the Environmental Priorities Coalition

FEBRUARY 2015

The Environmental Priorities Coalition is a network of more than twenty leading environmental advocacy groups in Washington state. Each year, the Coalition comes together to select between two and four issues to advance in the state legislature. Over the last twelve years, the Environmental Priorities Coalition has emerged as a national model and inspired similar coalitions in other states. The following report provides high level analysis of all past Priorities and a more in-depth review of four case studies involving six Priorities.
Executive Summary
The Environmental Priorities Coalition has achieved significant success, delivering on a wide range of benefits to the environment, the public, and the economy.

Introduction
The Coalition was formed in 2002 and adopted its first set of legislative Priorities in 2003.

Findings
Over the past decade, the Environmental Priorities Coalition has proven a reliable vehicle for collaboration.

Insights
Campaign leads are able to offer unique insight on particular Priorities, beyond what press releases and other communication pieces are able to offer.

Case Study #1
2005 High Performance Green Buildings & 2009 Efficiency First

Case Study #2
2005 Sound Solutions & 2006 Clean Up Puget Sound

Case Study #3
2007 Elimination of Toxic Flame Retardants

Case Study #4
2011 Coal Free Washington

Conclusion

Appendix A
Past Priority Categorization

Appendix B
Summary of Past Priority Campaigns
The Environmental Priorities Coalition is a network of more than twenty leading environmental advocacy groups in Washington state. Each year, the Coalition comes together to select between two and four issues to advance in the state legislature. Over the last twelve years, the Environmental Priorities Coalition has emerged as a national model and inspired similar coalitions in other states.¹

With more than a decade of experience, now is an ideal time to reflect on the Coalition’s history, analyze results from particular Priorities, and use this information to enhance the Coalition’s efforts in the future. To serve this purpose, the following report provides high level analysis of all past Priorities and a more in-depth review of four case studies involving six Priorities. Each case study provides a cross section of issues regularly selected as legislative Priorities.

high level analysis

Of the 43 past Priorities, 30 achieved measurable success, 16 Priorities passed legislation, and over $600 million in funding was secured for environmental protections. While some legislation required multi-year campaigns, others were successful within one legislative session. A Priority typically encompassed a range of environmental concerns. For example, High Performance Buildings addresses water quality, land use, and energy efficiency. When viewed from this perspective, the Coalition worked to advance issues multiple times and in multiple ways. Climate and energy issues were tackled 20 times, land use and transportation issues 23 times, water resource issues 17 times, wildlife and recreation issues 13 times, and eliminating toxics nine times. Additionally, there were nine budget oriented efforts.

case study #1

The 2005 High Performance Green Buildings and 2009 Efficiency First campaigns promoted energy-efficient infrastructure, leading to healthier and more productive built environments. As a result, Washington has been ranked one of the top three states for energy codes by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy.

case study #2

The 2005 Sound Solutions and 2006 Clean Up Puget Sound campaigns improved water quality and prevented pollution from thousands of septic tanks in the Puget Sound region. As a result, shellfish harvest areas were expanded by 1,656 acres and a source of funding to help address failing septic systems was established.
executive summary continued

case study #3

The 2007 Elimination of Toxic Flame Retardants campaign helped Washington pass the first legislation in the nation to ban all three forms of the toxic flame retardants known as PBDEs. Washington’s legislation proved a catalyst for change. Experts are now seeing scientific evidence that PBDE levels are decreasing in our natural environment.

case study #4

The 2011 Coal Free Washington campaign proved a historic success that will lead to the retirement of Washington’s last coal-fired power plant, our state’s single largest source of nitrogen oxide, carbon dioxide, and mercury pollution.

Overall, the Environmental Priorities Coalition has achieved significant success, delivering on a wide range of benefits to the environment, the public, and the economy. While not every Priority passed intended legislation, each provided unique insight into the Coalition’s potential. The Coalition learned crucial lessons along the way, from the importance of budget expertise to the value of thorough stakeholder outreach prior to a legislative session.
The Environmental Priorities Coalition was formed in 2002 and adopted its first set of legislative Priorities in 2003. The Coalition combines the voices of Washington’s strongest environmental policy organizations to pass and defend critical environmental laws and programs.

The Coalition provides a forum for coordinating and communicating a shared vision for environmental action and pooling together the unique resources of each organization to maximize the voice of the environmental community. Each year, the Coalition adopts between two and four priorities to convey a common agenda, educate the public and key stakeholders on urgent issues, and hold elected officials accountable.

In addition to providing a clear set of expectations for decision makers and being able to hold them accountable for their decisions, the Coalition coordinates its activities to identify key opportunities and challenges and maximize the effectiveness of each member organization. For example, environmental community lobbyists communicate often and organize shared meetings with the Governor’s staff and key legislative members during session. As a result, Coalition member organizations can also unite around important issues that may not be identified as a Priority in a given year. Defending critical environmental laws like I-937, providing needed support for product stewardship bills, and securing needed funding in the budget have all benefitted from the Coalition’s efforts during years when those issues are not formally adopted as a Priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Priorities Coalition Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Rivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audubon Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cascade Bicycle Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate Solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation Northwest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith Action Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuse Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Futurewise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>League of Women Voters of Washington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NW Energy Coalition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the forty-three past Priorities, thirty achieved measurable success and sixteen passed legislation.

findings

Over the past decade, the Environmental Priorities Coalition has proven a reliable vehicle for collaboration. Of the forty-three Priorities the Coalition has supported during the last twelve legislative sessions, thirty achieved measurable success, sixteen Priorities passed legislation, and over $600 million in funding was secured for environmental protections. While not every Priority proved a success, each provided unique insight into the Coalition’s potential. High-level analysis provides a broad assessment of all past Priorities, while four case studies offer a better understanding of the tangible impacts after a Priority proved a legislative success.

methodology

In an effort to capture institutional knowledge gained over these last twelve years, a survey was conducted on each of the past priority campaigns. Campaign leads were surveyed by electronic questionnaire, by phone, and/or in person about: the campaign’s original objective; the outcome; the real world impact; the legislation’s current status (if legislation passed); if the Priority continues to require the Coalition’s support; whether the Priority inspired further action in Washington state or action in other states, at the federal level, or in corporate practices; any lessons learned from the campaign.

In addition, past Priorities were categorized by overarching issues, success rates, crosscutting themes, and other relevant factors. Success was defined by the Washington Conservation Voter’s biannual scorecard, along with press coverage, whether legislation passed, and discussions with campaign staff. Funding was determined by review of the biannual and supplemental state budgets along with feedback from campaign staff.

Patterns emerge when reflecting on the Coalition’s twelve-year history, as well as evidence of what efforts have proven most effective. Thematic take aways include:

- **Victories are not automatic with the passage of legislation.** Lack of enforcement, ineffective reporting mechanisms, and limited funding can defeat the true intent of a Priority even if a bill is passed. This lesson was reflected in 2008 Climate Action/Green Jobs campaign. The bill that passed looked similar to what the Coalition had campaigned for except the greenhouse gas limits lacked an implementation mechanism. Without this mechanism, the law, including the green jobs training program, was ineffective.

- **Build relationships beyond the Coalition’s membership.** A prime example of this can be found with the 2008 Local Farms/Healthy Kids campaign. This campaign was built around issues of children, hunger, agriculture, and the environment. Bringing together such a diverse set of interests fostered robust support for the legislation. This broader coalition that developed continues to meet and has fought against programming cuts to the legislation over the years.
findings continued

- **Victories can be had without legislation, but often require budget expertise and creativity.** In 2010, the Sustain Environmental Protections in the Budget campaign prevented some of the most egregious cuts to environmental programming originally included in the initial draft of the budget. Understanding the state budget and developing solid relationships with budget staff was crucial. In addition, it is critical to have an ongoing strategy for collecting engaging stories that will help the public better understand the value of specific environmental programming and legislation.

Budget priorities include:

- **2003 Conservation Budget Priority**—Prevented deep cuts in natural resource spending, preserving priority programming including shorelines, Neah Bay rescue tug, WWRP, the Trust Land Transfer program, and new investments in clean air.
- **2003 Transportation Budget Priority**—Secured funding to clean up school buses relying on dirty diesel.
- **2004 Stopping Toxic Pollution Priority**—Restored funding for the Department of Ecology's program to eliminate and clean up toxic chemicals.
- **2007 $100 Million for WWRP**—Secured $100 million in funding from the capital budget for state and local parks, protected shorelines, wildlife habitat, and a farmland preservation program.
- **2009 Invest in Clean Water Priority**—Attempted to raise $100 million for clean water infrastructure by imposing a per-barrel fee on petroleum products that contribute to water pollution though, unfortunately, did not pass.
- **2010 Sustain Environmental Protections Priority**—Prevented deep cuts to environmental programming, including significant portions of the Department of Ecology’s budget.
- **2011 Budget Solutions for Our Environment Priority**—Prevented deep cuts to environmental programming, including investments for parks and preservation, but was unable to gain revenue generating streams from polluting businesses.
- **2013 Conservation Works Priority**—Secured increases in the capital budget spending for natural resources, specifically for protecting the Puget Sound, reducing toxic runoff, expanding recreational opportunities, and improving habitat and forest health.
- **2014 Big Oil Tax Loophole Priority**—Attempted to close an “accidental” loophole from 1949 never intended for oil companies. Although this legislation did not pass, it changed the conversation on tax equity and reform and provided an opportunity for galvanizing public support on efforts to generate needed state revenue through tax structures that directly relate to the environment.
Multi-year campaigns are required when striving for systemic change. Take for instance the multi-year effort to ban toxic flame retardants. The Coalition has adopted several campaigns to ban PBDEs and their harmful replacements. Challenging the chemical industry, who had the resources to manipulate public perception under the guise of fire safety, required a cultural shift. Building relationships with firefighters and healthcare providers took time. Educating legislators and the public as to detrimental impact of these toxics took time as well.

A defensive Priority can be a powerful tool, but a tool that should be used sparingly. A defensive campaign seeks to prevent anti-environmental legislation or cuts to environmental programming. This type of campaign should be used sparingly to remain effective and, more importantly, stay true to the environmental community’s mission of progress.

Campaigns may prove more effective at starting a dialogue, educating the public, and developing strategic messaging framework than passing a particular piece of legislation. When that is the case, there is a different strategy and a different measure of success. For example, the Big Oil Tax Loophole campaign may not have been successful in closing an unintended tax loophole for big oil companies, but the underlying intent of the campaign was to create a conversation about what our priorities truly are in Washington state: protecting unsustainable energy practices or ensuring our schools are adequately funded? This conversation lays groundwork for vital climate legislation in the future.

Overall, while the Coalition has experienced significant successes and failures on the campaign level, the Coalition as a forum for coordinating a shared vision has learned from its experiences and evolved to make environmental action more effective. Pooled resources have allowed campaigns to succeed where they may not have otherwise. A shared vision and communication strategy has allowed legislators to confidently champion environmental issues rather than feel overwhelmed by the environmental community’s varied and various expectations. These past twelve years have revealed this overarching success as well as the Coalition’s further potential.
Campaign leads provided unique insight on particular Priorities, beyond what press releases and other communication pieces were able to offer. Some of this insight included:

**Define what you want, don’t hide the ball, and don’t change course.**

Clifford Traisman, campaign lead for the 2003 Transportation Budget Priority
State Lobbyist for Washington Conservation Voters and Washington Environmental Council

**Water resources are among the most esoteric and difficult, yet most important, Priorities the community advocates.**

Josh Baldi, campaign lead of the 2004 Health Streams Priority
Now the Northwest Regional Director for WA’s Department of Ecology

**I do know that it was a long-shot campaign, and we were surprised to win in our first year – so one lesson is that sometimes unexpected victories can happen.**

Sarah Jaynes, campaign lead for the 2005 Clean Cars/Clear Air Priority
Executive Director of Progress Alliance of Washington

**The Environmental Priorities Coalition is essential to maintaining support for the WWRP in the Governor’s budget. In the legislature, EPC’s support is particularly helpful with swing districts and moderate Republicans because the bond bill that implements the capital budget requires a super majority.**

Joanna Grist, campaign lead for the 2007 $100 Million of WWRP Priority
Executive Director of Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition (WWRP)

**The Priority was pulled by us late in session as we saw the possible passage of the bill (a 50-50 shot a best) as something that would actually have made things worse.**

Rob Johnson, campaign lead for the 2009 Transit Oriented Communities Priority
Executive Director of Transportation Choices

**The capital budget should remain an important use of our Coalition’s capacity... Technical expertise on how the capital budget works is something we need more of in our community.**

Darcy Nonemacher, campaign co-lead for the 2013 Conservation Works Priority
Legislative Director of Washington Conservation Voters and Washington Environmental Council
2005 High Performance Green Buildings &
2009 Efficiency First

Background
The Environmental Priorities Coalition has worked towards a sustainable future in Washington by supporting high performance, energy-efficient infrastructure. This work not only supports a reduced dependence on fossil fuels, but a more thoughtful use of finite water resources, better air quality, cost savings, healthier work environments, and a reduced impact on our natural environment. This work also helped to grow the green building movement here in Washington through increased demand. Two campaigns in particular, High-Performance Green Buildings and Efficiency First, have made progress towards an energy-smart Evergreen State.

2005 Campaign
In 2005, the High Performance Green Buildings campaign passed legislation requiring all major public building projects achieve high-performance building standards, either LEED certification or certification under Washington Sustainable Schools Protocol (WSSP). This requirement applies to state agencies, higher education institutions, and school districts receiving state funding for new construction and major renovations, and certain recipients of capital funds through the Department of Commerce.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples ³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thoughtful Site Selection</td>
<td>Avoid environmentally sensitive spaces, promote on-site filtration of stormwater, provide bike lanes, and/or locate ¼ mile from public transit in urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Efficiency</td>
<td>Reduce potable water use by 20% using water-efficient fixtures or reduce irrigation water use by 50% with planning and use of native vegetation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy Savings</td>
<td>Achieve a certain percentage below the state energy code baseline, install controls on HVAC systems to be more responsive to user activity, and/or utilize on-site renewable energy for a portion of a school’s energy use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewardship of Resources</td>
<td>Reduce construction waste by 50%, maintain a minimum of 50% of the buildings original structure and shell, and/or use recycled materials and sustainably certified wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved Indoor Environmental Quality</td>
<td>Ensure a significant number of classrooms are day lit, offer ventilation able to continuously delivery outside air, and/or use low-VOC-emitting interior finishes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Beyond simply requiring efficient fluorescent lighting and automatic faucets, standards use a holistic points-based scorecard. For example, with WSSP certification (and similarly to LEED certification), a certain number of points must be earned over several different categories including water efficiency and indoor environmental quality.
Findings

A 2014 report from the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) provides evidence of the legislation’s early legacy. The DES report summarized data from 52 public agency projects that have received LEED certification as a result of High Performance Green School legislation, ranging from correctional facilities to college lecture halls. The DES report found:

- Estimated energy savings ranged from 12% to 46%.
- For 75% of the projects for which complete data is available, the payback for LEED related costs is between 0 and 18 years.
- Construction waste recycling in 16 projects diverted over 93% of construction debris, totaling 15,722 tons, from landfills.
- Added cost for LEED certification ranged from -1.4% to +3.4%, indicating that certification does not always cost more.

The Office of Superintendent for Public Instruction (OSPI), who reports back to the legislature separately, named 155 public school construction projects as either completed or are in progress to meet high performance certification. In the agency’s 2014 report, OSPI described the success of particular school construction projects:

- At Columbia Basin Technical Skills Center, the building is designed to operate 29% more efficient than a code-minimum building and water for irrigation needs has been reduced by over 50% with the incorporation of native grasses, elimination of turf-type grasses, and use of point-source irrigation.
- At Riverview Elementary School, in the Snohomish School District, site design incorporated significant wetland areas into the landscape and 17% of the facility’s energy needs are generated by renewable energy sources.

The OSPI report also found the added costs of high performance certification ranged from a deferred cost of $39 per square foot to an additional cost of $26 per square foot. Again, offering proof that certification does not always cost more.

Meeting high performance building standards has a real impact on users of the building. Poorly built and operated facilities have been linked to user ailments such as headaches, dizziness, forgetfulness, nausea, and drowsiness, in what is sometimes referred to as “sick building syndrome.” Much of what makes for a better learning and working environment is determined in initial building design and construction, from the amount of natural lighting throughout the day to the amount of VOC-emitting materials inhabitants will be exposed to routinely. Studies have shown student performance is linked to their classroom environment, students even performing 25% better in a better built environment. High Performance Green Schools has supported a happier and healthier community in Washington along with a sustainable energy future.
Lessons Learned

Reporting from DES and OSPI as to these real world impacts has been limited, which is one lesson that can be learned from this Priority. While the law’s reporting requirement has a value in ensuring accountability and transparency, both government agencies have found the metering and reporting of actual energy and water use as well as actual building performance post occupancy to be challenging. DES and OSPI have cited technical problems, limited funding, and lack of resources as part of that challenge. Furthermore, DES and OSPI reports have been unable to offer insight on the health and productivity of building users post occupancy. Steps to bolster reports would include mandatory post occupancy surveys and interviews with building operators.

In addition, some projects have failed to realize the energy savings predicted from design. As DES describes this issue in the agency’s 2014 report:

Green buildings are often a mixture of systems that respond to natural forces, such as daylight and natural convection, and mechanical HVAC systems and artificial light. These buildings have operating plans that change based on time of day and time of year. Systems can be automated and designed for occupant involvement. As a result, it is important that building operators and occupants understand these systems and the strategies to preserve comfort and maximize efficiency. Visits to some of the early state LEED projects have shown that green buildings are not always operated optimally. This can lead to higher energy use and uncomfortable occupants.

Operation of LEED buildings, as with all buildings, requires well-trained staff to continuously adjust building systems to ‘dial down’ energy consumption while maintaining occupant comfort. This diligence helps the state realize maximum savings.

The 2014 OSPI report had similar findings:

Industry-wide, many buildings that perform below design expectation can trace that performance back to building operations and operators, which can also be correlated to training. Often building operators (and even staff) are not clear on their role in operating and caring for their new building.

Despite reporting challenges and operational limitations, this legislation had a significant impact and paved the way for progress in the green building industry. Between 2004 and 2009, the market share of new green building construction projects in Washington increased from 4.6% to 17.9%. The rest of the country looks to the Pacific Northwest for leadership in sustainable design and green infrastructure. The value of green building is expected to reach between $204 billion to $248 billion by 2016. While Seattle may have been on track to develop high-performance facilities, this legislation pushed that trend to all corners of the state and created a new baseline to strive beyond. Private industry has accepted this challenge, and now construction often goes above and beyond what is required under the High Performance Green Buildings legislation.
2009 Campaign

Following up on the 2005 legislation, the Coalition adopted the Efficiency First Priority in 2009 with an aim to enhance our state’s energy code. Legislation passed as a result of this campaign requires the Washington State Energy Code (WSEC) incrementally achieve a 70% reduction in energy use by 2031, using the 2006 WSEC as a baseline.\textsuperscript{12} WSEC establishes requirements for all new construction and applies to both residential and non-residential buildings.

Findings

As of 2011, the residential and commercial buildings sector accounted for 31% of energy consumption and 26% of energy costs in Washington.\textsuperscript{13} WSEC is a crucial regulatory tool when striving for energy savings and a tool taken seriously by Washington builders and building inspectors. A recent study of 2009 residential code compliance in Washington showed compliance at an all-time high of 96% to 97%.\textsuperscript{14} This is the highest rate for single-family homes in the nation and evidence that progress realized with the state’s energy code will be realized on the ground.\textsuperscript{15} And progress with the WSEC has been realized since 2009. According to a 2014 Department of Commerce report on the 2009 legislative directive, the 2012 energy code will reduce residential energy use by 24% and commercial building energy use by 18%, compared to the 2006 edition of the WSEC.\textsuperscript{16} Below is a chart indicating progress made to meet the 2031 goal.\textsuperscript{17}

While the commercial building sector lags slightly behind, the residential building sector is currently ahead of pace with meeting the 2031 goal, in comparison with pro-rated improvements between different code cycles.

Lessons Learned

The legislative directive has also been used as a guiding light for state agencies when challenged to leave the code alone for a code review cycle or two. Officials can cite their professional obligation to make incremental progress toward the 2031 goal, which can help mute opposition to change.\textsuperscript{18} As a result, Washington has been ranked one of the top three states for energy codes by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, a ranking that compared both stringency and compliance.\textsuperscript{19}
case study #2

2005 Sound Solutions & 2006 Clean Up Puget Sound

Background
Failing septic systems have long been recognized as a source of pollution in Puget Sound, linked to the closure of shellfish beds and other water quality violations. Washington state has an estimated one million on-site septic systems, with more than 600,000 of these systems found in the Puget Sound region. Prior to 2005, there was limited guidance on how to properly maintain and repair septic systems and little was being done to track which septic systems were failing.

2005 Campaign
In 2005, the Sound Solutions Priority was selected to improve existing laws governing septic systems. The proposed bill focused on the following:

- Provide clear authority for the state to regulate on-site septic pollution along with tools to help local jurisdiction develop solutions for failing septic tanks.
- Establish clear water quality objectives with direction given to local jurisdiction on how to address non-point source pollution.
- Make new investments in projects that address failing septic tanks and stormwater issues.

While the bill passed the House, it died in the Senate. Funding of $6 million was secured in the budget for clean water projects, including $1.3 million to assist the local health jurisdictions around Puget Sound in developing management plans to track septic systems in their jurisdiction. In the summer of 2005, the Department of Health was able to adopt new standards and expectations to help strengthen the management of septic systems. This adoption included a requirement that private landowners regularly check on and maintain their systems and directs local health jurisdictions around Puget Sound to adopt comprehensive management plans for septic systems under their purview.

2006 Campaign
In 2006, the Clean Up Puget Sound Priority was introduced to, once again, address failing septic systems along Puget Sound. The 2006 legislation included designation of marine recovery areas to record (1) threatened and downgraded shellfish beds, (2) areas where septic system leaks have amounted to water quality violations, and (3) “dead zones” in Hood Canal. This time the legislation passed. A bill was passed requiring all 12 counties surrounding Puget Sound to map their marine recovery areas and include these areas in their comprehensive management plans. In addition, grant and loan programs were authorized to assist low-income homeowners in replacing or repairing failing septic systems.

Quick look

Lead organizations
American Rivers, Futurewise, WashPIRG, People For Puget Sound, Washington Conservation Voters, Washington Environmental Council

Funding secured
$7.5 million

Current status
All 12 counties surrounding Puget Sound have developed management plans for on-site septic systems in their jurisdiction, and efforts to secure additional funding for failing septic systems is underway.
Findings

All twelve counties have since enacted management plans and many have made significant progress in addressing failing septic systems in their jurisdiction. Funding for the grant and loan program was made available through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, Centennial Clean Water Fund, the Water Quality Capital Account-State appropriation, along with a couple of federal programs. As a result of the 2005 and 2006 Priorities:\(^\text{22}\)

- $7.5 million in funding was secured for on-site sewage system financial aid assistance in the 2005-2007 Biennial Capital Budget and 2006 Supplemental Capital Budget.
- 258 septic systems were repaired or replaced.
- Over 44 low-income families received grants to assist them with the financial burden of a failing septic tank.
- All 12 counties surrounding Puget Sound developed active management plans by 2008, with nine formally identifying at least one marine recovery area.\(^\text{23}\)
- Five shellfish areas were upgraded after problem septic tanks were repaired.\(^\text{24}\)
- In December of 2010, harvest restrictions on most shellfish growing areas in Henderson Inlet were lifted for the first time since the 1980s due to reduced fecal coliform pollution from onsite sewage systems, along with efforts to reduce runoff to Woodard Creek.\(^\text{25}\)
- Septic repairs along the Wauna shoreline near Burely Lagoon helped lift a swimming restriction on the Purdy Sandspit in July 2010.\(^\text{26}\)

The loan and grant programs have continued to evolve. A 2007 rule change allows the Department of Ecology to utilize Centennial Clean Water Program funds to assist local governments with the administrative costs of the grant programming, which still exists today.\(^\text{27}\) Currently, the Department of Health has convened a committee dedicated to building a more robust funding effort and regulatory infrastructure to build upon the success of the 2005 and 2006 Priorities, including a request to require Puget Sound counties collect an annual fee from septic system owners.\(^\text{28}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Growing Area</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Harvestable Acres Gained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yukon Harbor</td>
<td>Kitsap</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Orchard Passage</td>
<td>Kitsap</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Similk Bay</td>
<td>Skagit</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henderson Inlet</td>
<td>Thurston</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynch Cove</td>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Washington State Department of Health, October 2014
 Lessons Learned

These two campaigns highlighted the value of finding incremental success and planning for a multi-year campaign. While the 2005 campaign did not result in passing legislation, it laid the groundwork for success in 2006. Furthermore, both campaigns helped build momentum for the 2007 Priority that resulted in the creation of the Puget Sound Partnership.

Some implementation limitations were highlighted as well during these campaigns. Much of the work needed to address failing septic systems proved to be educational. On-site septic systems are located on private land in rural areas, making it difficult for state and local agencies to track the status of each system. A more effective method proved to be educating landowners on the impacts of a failing septic system and how to conduct their own inspections. Pairing this information with funding programs helped deliver solutions for failed septic systems. Overall, the need for life-cycle management of on-site septic systems has been realized.

Benefits of a Multi-Year Campaign

  **Build political pressure.** Displaying a strong commitment to an issue over multiple years can stress the intent to reach a meaningful outcome, demonstrating the issue will not fade away when the legislative session comes to a close.

  **Increase familiarity with the issue.** Allowing time, education, and publicity to raise the profile of an issue can increase the level of investment from legislators and key leadership.

  **Achieve more robust environmental protections.** Passing a complicated or progressive piece of policy can be difficult within one legislative cycle. When strategy and outreach can be developed over a few years, bigger and better things may be realized.
case study #3

2007 Elimination of Toxic Flame Retardants

Background

For decades, common household goods were treated with toxic industrial chemicals known as PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers), all in the name of fire prevention. This exposure raised serious health concerns from experts and regulators.

PBDEs are not chemically bound to consumer products. As a result, these toxics are able to leach from our couch cushions into our bodies and have been linked to hormone disruption as well as developmental disorders. Exposure to PBDEs can impact learning, memory, behavior, even reproduction. In 2004, alarmingly high levels of PBDEs were detected in Pacific Northwest mothers’ breast milk, 20 to 40 times higher than levels found in Sweden and Japan. These flame retardants are able to break down and accumulate in our natural environment, similarly to PCBs, and have been detected in fish, grizzly bears, and Puget Sound killer whales.

2007 Campaign

With the support of the Environmental Priorities Coalition, Washington passed the first legislation in the nation to ban all forms of flame retardants known as PBDEs. Other states had banned some forms of PBDEs (penta-BDE and octa-BDE), but failed to address the much more prevalent form, deca-BDE. Washington’s legislation covered all three forms:

- Banning the use of the penta and octa forms of PBDEs, with limited exceptions, by 2008.
- Banning the use of the deca form in mattresses by 2008.
- Banning the use of the deca form in televisions, computers, and residential upholstered furniture by 2011, as long as a safer, reasonable, and effective alternative has been identified by the Department of Ecology and Department of Health and approved by fire safety officials.

Under the legislation, a ban is defined as a prohibition on the manufacture, sale, or distribution of in-state, non-edible products.

The ban was supported by several major Washington state health associations including the Washington State Medical Association, Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Washington Academy of Family Physicians, the Washington State Nurses Association, Washington Association of Occupational Health Nurses, the National Association of Neonatal Nurse Practitioners: Washington State Chapter, the School Nurse Association of Washington, and the Washington State Public Health Association.
The ban was also supported by the Washington State Firefighters Association, the Washington State Council of Firefighters, and many other health and environmental organizations.32

Findings

After two prior Priority campaigns to eliminate these toxic flame retardants failed to pass legislation, success was realized in 2007 and Washington’s new ban on PBDEs became a national leader. Other states followed suit, including Maine and Maryland.33 The private sector converted as well, with Wal-Mart banning any goods containing PBDEs.34 In December 2009, major deca-BDE suppliers agreed to a voluntary phase-out,35 which eliminated approximately 19,000 tons of deca-BDE from the market place in the United States.36 Washington’s legislation proved catalyst for change. Experts are now seeing scientific evidence that PBDE levels are decreasing in our natural environment.37

Lessons Learned

This campaign was developed over many years. Relationship building with legislative leadership in both chambers was spearheaded by Washington Toxics Coalition and Environmental Priorities Coalition partners. This commitment allowed for broad support, including the support of fire safety groups, firefighters, health care professionals, state health and environmental agencies, the Governor’s office, along with many others.38 One example of this broad support was a letter signed by 300 Washington state physicians, nurses and other health professionals citing to the harmful health impacts from PBDEs and supporting a ban on the flame retardants.39 This broad support proved critical in the face of deceptive campaign tactics.

The chemical industry’s engagement in deceptive campaign tactics was documented in depth by a Chicago Tribune investigation.40 The 2012 expose confirmed what many environmental advocates had long experienced, that the chemical industry was willing to mislead legislators to benefit the financial goals of the PBDE manufacturers like Chemtura, Albemarle and ICL Industrial Products. Makers of flame retardants had created phony watchdog groups to stoke fears of house fires and distorted scientific studies in an attempt to claim flame retardants were essential. As a result of the investigation, Dr. David Heimbach, a Harborview burn doctor who offered expert testimony against bans of flame retardants at legislative hearings on behalf of a phony watchdog group (in several states including Washington), is being charged by the Medical Quality Assurance Commission with misrepresenting himself in legislative testimony and relating false statements about burn victims.41 Before these tactics became widely known, the

For decades, common household goods were created with toxic industrial chemicals that are able to leach from our toys or couches into our bodies.
Coalition had to combat this deception by developing trust with local firefighters, nurses, and healthcare providers.

Although the ban on PBDEs was a step in the right direction, it provided an important lesson on the need for a systemized regulatory approach to screen and ban harmful chemicals in the first place. An all-out ban sends a strong message, but it is unable to address harmful substitutes added to the commerce stream. For example, newer replacements to banned PBDEs, such as Chemtura’s Firemaster 550, have been linked with obesity and early puberty among other potential health risks.\textsuperscript{42} Moreover, Washington faces a challenge in regulating the recycling of home furnishings and other goods containing banned flame retardants. Ideally, regulators would have the ability to screen for harmful chemicals, identify safer alternatives, and have authority to ban or prevent toxic chemicals from being used in a range of products from upholstery to children’s products.
case study #4

2011 Coal Free Washington

Background

Climate and energy are environmental challenges regularly championed by the Coalition. In 2011, the Coal Free Washington campaign proved a historic success with the retirement of Washington’s last coal-fired power plant, TransAlta Centralia Generation, LLC.

Coal combustion is one of the leading contributors to climate change and has a direct impact on our health, contributing to asthma, lung cancer, heart disease, and stroke.\(^{43}\) In 2010, TransAlta was the largest single source of nitrogen oxide, carbon dioxide and mercury pollution in the state.\(^{44}\)

Back in 2009, EarthJustice filed an appeal challenging the renewal of TransAlta’s air quality permit for failure to impose limits on mercury and greenhouse gas emissions and not requiring best available control technologies for nitrogen oxides. At the same time, the Sierra Club was mounting a national campaign to shut down coal plants all over the country, a campaign referred to as Beyond Coal.

Campaign

In 2011, under threat of lawsuit, negotiations between TransAlta, the state, and relevant stakeholders—representing the environment, labor, and the local community—culminated in a settlement agreement to close the coal-fired power plant by 2025. To safeguard accountability during these negotiations, the Environmental Priorities Coalition, with leadership from Northwest Energy Coalition, Sierra Club, and Climate Solutions, launched the Coal Free Future campaign. The goal was to ensure Washington transitions off coal while providing transitional assistance for the local community and ensuring TransAlta was held accountable for the damage it has caused.

Originally, the hope was to close the power plant by 2017. However, developing a just transition plan for the plant’s workforce and ensuring stability for the local community extended the timeline. TransAlta Centralia Generation employs roughly 250 people and 40% of those individuals will reach retirement prior to the plant’s official 2025 shut down date.\(^{45}\) The local community was also experiencing 12% unemployment at the time of negotiations.

The negotiations resulted in an agreement that was reflected in the passage of Senate Bill 5769 in April of 2011, and the bill included language to have one boiler shutting down by 2020 and the second by 2025. This extended timeframe to allow a better opportunity for the plant to shift to a more renewable resource for
power production, other than natural gas. Beyond laying out a timeline to shut down coal-powered energy production, Senate Bill 5769 requires TransAlta to:

- Significantly reduce haze pollution by reducing nitrogen oxide emissions prior to shut down using Selective Noncatalytic Reduction (SNCR) pollution control technology.\(^{46}\) Pollution at TransAlta had been linked to limited visibility of some of our State’s more beautiful landscapes: Mount Rainier, Olympic National Park, and the Goat Rocks Wilderness Area.

- Pay $55 million for economic development and other assistance to ensure a sustainable and just transition, with $30 million designated or financial assistance to the affected community for economic development and energy efficiency and weatherization and $25 million for energy technology with the potential to create considerable energy, economic development, and air quality and environmental benefits.\(^ {47}\)

Findings

While the power plant will continue to burn coal for the next decade, haze reduction and distribution of funding can be tracked when considering the success of the Coal Free Future campaign.

- Selective Noncatalytic Reduction (SNCR) pollution control technology was put in place on both boilers in 2012.\(^ {48}\) SNCR transforms nitrogen oxide (post combustion), into molecular nitrogen and water vapor. This technology is intended to reduce harmful smog formed from nitrogen oxide emissions and has achieved a 67% capture rate since installed.\(^ {49}\) Based on modeling conducted just prior to installation of the pollution control technology, the new additions should reduce visibility impairment at Mount Rainier, Olympic National Park, and the Goat Rocks Wilderness Area by 1.13 to 1.45 deciviews. A change in visibility of 1 deciview can be noticed by the human eye.

- The implementation and distribution of funds has proven complicated. The payments to the fund began in January of 2012, with equal investments to be made through December 2023. Only funds for energy efficiency and weatherization may be spent prior to Dec 31, 2015. None of the funds have been distributed yet, but energy efficiency funding is expected to move in the next couple of years.

Lessons Learned

Given the scale and complexity of the TransAlta agreement, the negotiations have offered a template for future efforts to retire coal plants nationwide. The success of the negotiation has also demonstrated the Coalition’s broader potential for influence outside the legislative building. Though, the Coalition’s success should be reviewed critically as well.
“Even though we stayed very close to the implementation process of the state’s development of the subsequent MOA with the company, we should have insisted more strenuously to see any draft before the 11th hour deadline. And we should have pushed labor unions harder to ensure they were being included in the process.” – Doug Howell, Sierra Club

Coal Free Washington proved a unique Priority for the Coalition because of the emphasis on finding a just transition for the local community and embracing the power of collaboration with labor unions during the negotiation process. However, the local community has still struggled since the settlement was reached. TransAlta has reduced operations more rapidly than expected. As a result, local fire stations have experienced layoffs and turned to bond initiatives for much needed support that once came from TransAlta’s tax base. These are lessons worth remembering.

Over the last decade, the Environmental Priorities Coalition has empowered a critical shift in the Evergreen State’s environmental advocacy. The Coalition has experienced success on many levels, delivering on a wider range of issues with different scales of victory. The Coalition’s efforts have helped to upgrade our state’s energy code, improve water quality in the Puget Sound, reduce the amount of toxics found in our homes, and retire our state’s single largest source of nitrogen oxide, carbon dioxide and mercury pollution. The Coalition’s biggest success, however, was demonstrating the power of collaboration.
## Past Priority Categorization

Priorities typically encompassed a range of environmental concerns. The following table provides an overview of the categories each priority addressed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Water &amp; Puget Sound</th>
<th>Energy &amp; Climate</th>
<th>Land use &amp; Transport</th>
<th>Wildlife &amp; Recreation</th>
<th>Toxics</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003 Mercury Reduction</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESHB 1002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 Conservation Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Partial Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 Environmental Rollback Defense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 Transportation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partial Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Stopping Toxic Pollution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Sustainable State Forests</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, SHB 2753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Protecting Stream Flows</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, HB 2393/HB 2396</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Efficient and Renewable Energy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Partial Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 High Performance Green Building</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESSB 5509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 Cleaner Air - Cleaner Cars</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESHB 1397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 Sound Solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Partial Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 Phasing Out Toxics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, HB 1488/SB 5515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 Launch Electronic Waste Recycling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESSB 6428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 Clean Up Puget Sound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESSB 5432/3SHB 1458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 Promote Energy Independence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESSB 6508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 Protect Kids’ Health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, ESSH 1488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Clean-Air/Clean Fuels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, E2SHB 1303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Save Our Sound</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESSB 5372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 $100 Million for WWRP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Eliminating Toxic Flame Retardants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESHB 1024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 Climate Action &amp; Green Jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, E2SHB 2815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 Local Solutions to Global Warming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, ESSB 6580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 Evergreen Cities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, E2SHB 2844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 Local Farms – Healthy Kids</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, 2SSB 6483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Cap and Invest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, E2SSB 5735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Transit Oriented Communities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, SSB 5687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Efficiency First</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, E2SSB 5854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 Invest in Clean Water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, PSHB 1614</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continues...)
## Priority

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Water &amp; Puget Sound</th>
<th>Energy &amp; climate</th>
<th>Land use &amp; transport</th>
<th>Wildlife &amp; recreation</th>
<th>Toxics</th>
<th>Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 Working for Clean Water</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, ESHB 3181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Sustain Environmental Protections</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Safe Baby Bottle Bill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, SB 6248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Clean Fertilizers, Healthier Lakes and Rivers</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, HB 1489</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Coal Free Future for Washington</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Passed, E2SSB 5769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Budget Solutions for Our Environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Partial Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Clean Water Jobs Act</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, SB 5604/HB 1735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Pollution Free Prosperity</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Fulfill Our Clean Energy Initiative</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Toxic-Free Kids Act</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, EHB 2821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Clean Energy Solutions</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Partial Success, E2SSB 5802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Toxic-Free Kids &amp; Families</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, ESHB 1294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Conservation Works</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 Big Oil Tax Loophole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, ESHB 2038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 Oil Transportation Safety Act</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not pass, SB 6262</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Totals | 17 | 20 | 23 | 13 | 9 | 9 |

Each category includes more detailed aspects of environmental issues, and a single priority may contain more than one of these sub-categories. For example, High Performance Buildings addresses water (nonpoint source), energy (energy efficiency), and land use (infrastructure).

Sub-categories include:

### Water & Puget Sound
- In Stream Flows
- Nonpoint Source Pollution
- Point Source Pollution
- Puget Sound

### Energy & Climate
- Emissions
- Efficiency
- Oil
- Coal
- Natural Gas
- Renewables

### Land Use & Transportation
- Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Urban and Rural Planning
- Forests
- Farms

### Toxics
- Mercury
- Flame Retardants
- Other Toxics
- E-Recycling

### Wildlife & Recreation
- Parks and Recreation
- Wildlife
summary of past priority campaigns

2003 priorities

Mercury Reduction

Goal—Phase out the sale of products containing mercury, a potent neurotoxin which can harm human health and wildlife even at very low levels. Proposed legislation would, (1) require manufacturers of goods containing mercury to take financial responsibility for disposal and recycling, (2) require health care facilities to phase out use of mercury products, (3) support consumer education with labeling requirements, and 4) establish state leadership by purchasing non-mercury products where feasible.

Result—Passed. A bill was passed that reduced mercury in schools, hospitals, and homes by banning the sale of certain mercury consumer products and requiring hospitals to develop plans for reducing the use of products that contain mercury. The bill prohibits the sale of most products that contain mercury in 2006. The legislation gained broad support when a Republican legislator was able to submit his own version of the bill that had minimal impact on electronics industry. Governor Locke’s signing of the bill made Washington one of only 13 states to enact such legislation as of 2003.

Funding—$144k from Department of Health’s operating budget; $100k from Department of Ecology’s operating budget.

Conservation Budget

Goal—Identify key programs in the operating and capital budget as priorities for the environmental community’s support, including support for capital budget requests from Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) and Trust Land Transfer Program. For the operating budget in particular, prevent deep cuts in natural resources spending by utilizing revenue-generating options such as user fees for dirt diesel machinery and fish habitat permit fees, as well as eliminate harmful tax credits. In addition, support cuts to controversial expenditures such as the $3 million legal settlement with the timber company to prevent the destruction of owl habitat.

Result—Partial success. Critical programs were funded in the face of a $2 billion shortfall. Natural resource agencies took several million dollars in cuts, but not a disproportionate share compared to other government agencies. This was an improvement from the prior year’s budget. Several priority programs were adequately funded, including shorelines, the Neah Bay rescue tug, WWRP, the Trust Land Transfer program, and new investments in clean air. This particular Priority highlighted the importance of implementing and enforcing existing programming. Traditionally, there had been a focus on capital investments, but this Priority showcased effective work done with operating budgets.

Funding—$2 million from Department of Natural Resource’s operating budget for shoreline master programs; $45 million from capital budget for WWRP; $44 million from the Trust Land Transfer Program (capital budget) for public schools; $2.7 million from the transportation budget for the Neah Bay rescue tug; $10 million from the transportation budget per biennium through 2008 to retrofit school buses and reduce air pollution.

Environmental Rollback Defense

Goal—Oppose efforts to weaken existing environmental protections being attacked under the guise of creating a more business-friendly Washington. A host of bills were introduced to
undermine existing public involvement and permitting processes, including (1) elimination of “duplicate” permit requirements, notably for hydrological projects and (2) requiring of permits be issued within a specific timeframe regardless of agency resources and restrictions on public participation.

Result—Success. Virtually all of anti-environment bills were defeated, as were a dozen bills intended to weaken the Growth Management Act (GMA).

**Transportation**

Goal—Advocate for a balanced transportation budget, with a third of the budget designated for broader transportation choices such as public transit and HOV projects. Revise the state project list to “fix it first,” making safety and maintenance of existing infrastructure the first priority when funding road projects. Reform the Regional Transportation Investment District (RTID) to allow funding for bus and train service, trip reduction programs, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Result—Partial success. A $4.2 billion transportation package passed that will spend 89% on highways and auto ferries and 11% on passenger and freight rail and public transportation. While the package is short on transportation choices, the road projects are, generally, not as damaging as those proposed in 2002’s Referendum 51. Additionally, $10 million was secured to clean up school buses that currently use dirty diesel. One lesson learned was to tailor a Priority to a few key elements. Trying to pack too many elements into one Priority can create confusion for advocates and legislators alike.

Funding—Approximately $50 million for public transportation, $500 million of ferries, and $80 million for rail; $10 million per biennium through 2008 to retrofit school buses and reduce air pollution.

**2004 priorities**

**Stopping Toxic Pollution**

Goal—Fund the Department of Ecology’s program to eliminate and clean-up persistent toxics. Persistent toxic chemicals including mercury, dioxin, and PCBs build up in the food chain and in our bodies. These chemicals have been linked to birth defects, reproductive failure, learning and behavioral problems in young children, cancer, and other health problems. Washington is the only state in the nation to pursue such a program that generates a list of toxic chemicals and then creates a chemical action plan for each. Funding was eliminated for Ecology’s program in 2003, due to strong opposition from the chemical industry, pulp and paper industry, and other Washington businesses. Effective campaign strategies included public health messaging and utilizing the pediatric and nurses network.

Result—Success. This Priority restored funding and obtained an Executive Order directing Ecology to move forward with developing plans to phase out toxic flame retardants (polybrominated diphenyl ethers or PBDEs) and implementing the state’s mercury reduction plan. The governor’s Executive Order provided emergency funding for Ecology to continue implementing the state’s mercury plan and start work on a phase out plan for toxic flame retardants. Governor Locke also allocated $436,000 in his budget for the program in 2005. The Executive Order makes the state a leader in purchasing products that do not contribute to persistent toxic pollution and directs Ecology to
incorporate the state policy into its programs.

Funding—$325,000 from Ecology’s operational budget (both general and other). The Executive Order provided $100,000 in emergency funding; Gov. Locke allocated $436,000 in his budget for the program in 2005.

Sustainable State Forests

Goal—Require state-owned forests achieve Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. Certification would ensure environmentally sensitive logging and help distinguish Washington’s forest wood products in a crowded, global marketplace. This year was a critical time for Washington’s forest policy because the state was in the midst of setting new logging targets for the next decade.

Result—Did not pass. The proposed bill would have required the Department of Natural Resources to assess the costs and benefits of independently certifying Washington’s 2.1 million acres of state forests as sustainably managed. Unfortunately, the bill died early in the legislative session. Campaign efforts were immediately refocused on the passage of a Capital Budget provision that required the Department of Natural Resources to complete an inventory and assessment of old growth state forests, an important step in the protection of the last remaining old growth on state lands.

Protecting Stream Flows

Goal—Safeguard water levels in Washington streams for vital fish habitat, water quality, irrigation, power, and recreation. Legislation enacted over the prior four years resulted in less protection for streams. Protecting stream flows had taken on added urgency due to population pressure and the listing of salmon and other fish under the Endangered Species Act. The fact that only one instream flow (the Skagit) had been set in two decades underscores the neglect of this work.

Result—Did not pass. A bill to restore and protect stream flows did not make it through the legislative process, but neither did legislation which would have eliminated a state law aimed at preventing the hoarding and speculation of the public’s water. One million dollars was secured in the supplemental budget to improve stream flows and water management. The campaign also provided an opportunity to proactively frame the discussion of instream flow protection. Since 2004, the Department of Ecology has established instream flows in several watersheds, including provisions to address permit-exempt wells and mitigation options.

Funding—$1 million from Department of Natural Resources’ operating budget (general fund) to (1) establish instream flows by rule for main stem rivers and their key tributaries, (2) work with counties that have existing geographic information systems to map existing water rights and document current ownership, and (3) assign one water master to a basin that has been adjudicated.

Efficient and Renewable Energy

Goal—Foster a more reliable and sustainable energy system by encouraging electric utilities to include energy-efficiency savings and renewables such as wind, biomass, and solar in their mix of power sources. Increasing efficiency and use of renewables would stabilize electricity prices. Implementation of these standards would also mean jobs. Efficient and renewable energy
industries in Washington employ 4,000 people and generate annual revenues of $1 billion, revenues comparable to our apple crop.

Result—Did not pass. Although legislation did not pass the full legislature, the bill did pass two House committees. Fortunately, a bill was passed requiring new power plants mitigate 20% of their carbon dioxide emissions, the principle pollutant responsible for global warming (SHB 3141).

2005 priorities

High Performance Green Buildings

Goal—Require new state agency and high education buildings 5,000 square feet and larger, as well as significant remodels, achieve a LEED Silver Certification. The requirements for K-12 school buildings will be phased in over time, and schools can choose between the LEED Silver Certification and a local rating system tailored to public schools. These “green buildings” will save energy, conserve water, minimize waste, and improve indoor air quality. Studies have shown these buildings can increase student test scores and employee productivity while reducing absenteeism. All of these benefits have shown to save $50 per square foot over a 20 year period, with just a minimal increase in construction costs.

Result—Passed. Legislation passed adopted California’s motor vehicle emission standards. All new cars sold in the state after 2008 will produce less air pollution. Some compromises were made; for instance, action was tied to action in Oregon. However, what seemed like a long shot campaign proved successful within one legislative cycle. In the end, this legislation supported a shift in national policy.

Cleaner Air - Cleaner Cars

Goal—Reduce cancer-causing auto emissions and global warming pollution from new cars, increase consumer choice, and save people money at the gas pump. The proposed legislation would require cars in Washington to meet the same strict emissions standards as California. These standards would apply to auto manufacturers, not individuals.

Result—Passed. Legislation passed adopted California’s motor vehicle emission standards. All new cars sold in the state after 2008 will produce less air pollution. Some compromises were made; for instance, action was tied to action in Oregon. However, what seemed like a long shot campaign proved successful within one legislative cycle. In the end, this legislation supported a shift in national policy.

Sound Solutions (Saving Hood Canal and Puget Sound)

Goal—Pass legislation that would enhance management and control over on-site septic systems, establish clear water quality objectives, provide direction to local municipalities, and fund clean water projects.

Result—Partial success. While the major bills did not pass, $6 million was secured for local clean water projects including funds to clean up Hood Canal and a grant/loan program to help homeowners along Puget Sound fix failing septic systems.
Funding—$600,000 provided in the Office of the Governor’s budget for corrective action for Hood Canal, including implementing alternative septic system technology; $200,000 provided to implement management program for Hood Canal rehabilitation; $1.3 million provided in the Department of Health’s budget to assist the 14 local health jurisdictions with marine shorelines to develop and implement management plans and data systems to assure that septic systems are properly inventoried, monitored, and maintained.

Phasing out Toxics
Goal—Prohibit the sale of products containing toxic flame retardants (PBDEs). These chemicals are leaching out of products and rapidly building up in our bodies and the local environment. Washington’s draft PBDE phase out plan, released in 2004, recommended a ban on the sale of new products containing all three forms of PBDEs (penta, octa, and deca) over the next 3 years. The Coalition recommended a phase out plan by 2006. Legislation should also include labeling requirements and encourage state leadership by requiring government offices purchase PBDE-free products, including computers, electronics, and carpets.

Result—Did not pass. The Coalition was able to secure some funding for the Department of Ecology’s toxics phase-out program. During this campaign, Coalition members faced aggressively deceptive campaign tactics from the chemical industry. One lesson learned was the need for broader support, beyond legislative champions.

Funding—$1,403,000 from Department of Ecology’s operating budget (“Reduce PBTs in the Environment”)

2006 priorities

Launch Electronic Waste Recycling
Goal—Require a manufacturer-provided recycling program for electronic waste that offers a convenient, free-of-charge, and responsible way to recycle old computers and televisions. When electronics reach the end of their life, there is growing concern that these goods are not being handled in an environmentally sound manner. The e-waste recycling program would (1) be free-of-charge to households, small businesses, small governments, schools, and charities, (2) be a statewide program, (3) include no fees or taxes, all costs internalized by manufacturers, and (4) have a limited governmental role focused on oversight and enforcement.

Result—Passed. Legislation passed creates a responsible and convenient manufacturer-funded recycling system for computers, monitors, and televisions that will be available to all households, small businesses, small governments, schools, and charities. E-waste recycling will prevent toxic substances found in electronics, such as lead and mercury, from polluting the environment and will recover materials for use in commerce. This legislation was based on the idea of a producer responsibility system and became a national leader. Several years of watchdogging implementation have cemented this Priority’s success.

Funding—$475,000 from Department of Ecology’s operating budget in 2007, by a fund paid for by the manufacturers of the covered electronic goods. Manufacturers pay for the operation of the recycling program and also pay an annual administrative fee to cover Department of Ecology’s oversight costs.
Clean Up Puget Sound

Goal—Endorse Governor Gregoire’s initiative to clean up Puget Sound. Governor Gregoire set a deadline for a clean and healthy Puget Sound by 2020. Specific elements included stormwater pollution prevention, septic system repairs, creosote log removal, oil spill prevention, and estuary habitat restoration.

Result—Passed. Legislation to identify and correct failing septic systems passed, which will reduce non-point source pollution. In addition, gained $54 million to accelerate toxic cleanups and prevent new pollution.

Funding—$54 million in the capital budget for Puget Sound and Hood Canal cleanup projects, including $30 million from higher earnings in the toxic control accounts and $13 million from a new bond authority. Projects included: cleanup of toxic waste in Bellingham Bay and the Port of Tacoma, on-site sewage repair and replacement grants, wastewater treatment and water quality improvements at state parks, creosote log removal, and innovative stormwater project grants.

Protect Kids’ Health by Eliminating Toxic Flame Retardants

Goal—Prohibit the sale of products that contain toxic flame retardants (PBDEs). This was the Coalition’s second attempt to ban toxic flame retardants.

Result—Did not pass. This specific bill would have phased out penta and octa forms of PBDEs within one year, and phased out deca (the third and most prolific form) by 2010. This adjustment was a compromise made while working with the firefighters, who wanted to ensure safe alternatives existed before a ban on deca-BDE was enacted.

Promote Energy Independence through Renewable Fuels

Goal—Reduce Washington’s dependence on foreign fuels and provide a new market for Washington crops building biofuels for the economy of our state. Legislation would grow a new biofuels industry by including a minimum percentage of fuels in the statewide fuel mix, replacing 2.5% of gasoline with ethanol and 2% of diesel with biodiesel.

Result—Passed. Washington became one of only two states to fully embrace a new biofuels economy by including a minimum percentage of biofuels for both diesel and gasoline. The bill (1) establishes minimum fuel content requirements for biodiesel and ethanol of at least 2% by 2008, (2) requires the Department of Agriculture to adopt fuel quality standards for biodiesel and rules for ethanol, and (3) creates and defines the responsibilities of the Biofuels Advisory Committee.

Funding—$140,000 from Department of Agriculture’s operating budget (general fund, ongoing); $98,000 from WSU’s operating budget (general fund) to establish a Biofuels Consumer Education and Outreach Program at the WSU Extension Energy Program.

2007 priorities

Clean-Air/Clean Fuels

Goal—Reduce global warming pollution and encourage in-state production of sustainable biofuels, helping build new jobs and a clean energy economy. The proposed bill included: (1) investments and incentives to keep more of our
energy dollars in the state by reducing oil imports; (2) incentives for cleaner fuels like ethanol blends, plug-in hybrids, and clean diesel school buses; and (3) incentives to support Washington-grown biodiesel crops, like Canola.

Result—Passed. This bill requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to implement a school bus replacement incentive program; moves the Energy Freedom Program from the Department of Agriculture to CTED; and requires all state and local fleets, where practicable, to satisfy fuel needs with electricity or biofuels by the year 2015. The bill directs DCTED and the Department of Ecology to work with various stakeholders and agencies to develop strategies for vehicle electrification, develop a framework for Washington to participate in emerging markets to mitigate climate change, and complete other activities identified by Executive Order 07-02. University of Washington is provided funding for the Climate Impacts Group to conduct climate assessments. The College of Forestry Resources is provided funding for identification of barriers to using the state’s forest resources for fuel production. Washington State University is provided funding to analyze options for market incentives to encourage biofuels production.

Funding—$4 million from DCTED’s operating budget (general fund).

**Save Our Sound**

Goal—Establish a new agency to take charge of Puget Sound recovery, increase state funding to immediately put Puget Sound on the path to recovery, and take bold new actions in 2007 to clean up pollution.

Result—Passed. Legislation establishes a new Puget Sound agency to achieve strong recovery and protection goals, an independent science advisory committee, and important accountability measures to make sure state funding delivers action and results. Additionally, there was a down payment on Puget Sound recovery in the biennial budget.

Funding—$75,000 from the Joint Legislative Audit & Review Committee’s operating budget for a Puget Sound Partnership study (general fund); $6.6 million of DNR’s operating budget (general fund) for the Puget Sound Partnership, of this amount $5.6 million represents a transfer of the funding and staff from the Puget Sound Action Team, which was dissolved by the bill; $347,000 from Ecology’s operating budget; $150,000 from State Conservation Commission’s operating budget (general fund); $249,000 from DNR’s operating budget (general fund); $150,000 from Agriculture’s operating budget (general fund).

**$100 Million for Wildlife and Recreation Program**

Goal—Double the state’s appropriation to the Wildlife and Recreation Program: funding 135 new state and local parks, protected shorelines, and wildlife habitat, plus the state’s first ever funding for a farmland preservation program.

Result—Success. The full $100 million was secured, which could have easily been lower since the Governor started the conversation at $70 million. The Coalition’s support was particularly helpful in swing districts and with moderate Republican’s because bond bills that implement the capital budget require a super majority. This campaign also raised the bar for future requests. One lesson learned was that the state capital budget can be an enormous resource for environmental projects.
Funding—$100 million from the capital budget ($36 million from Outdoor Recreation Account, $9 million from the Farm Preservation Account, $19 million from the Riparian Protection Account, and $36 million from the Habitat Conservation Account).

**Eliminating Toxic Flame Retardants**

Goal—Ban two forms PBDE (penta and octa) in consumer products, with limited exceptions, by 2008. Ban a third form of PBDE (deca) in mattresses by 2008, phasing out the toxin from televisions, computers, and upholstered furniture by 2011 if safety requirements are met. Also, requires Department of Ecology to report back on other uses of PBDE products and work with state to purchase PBDE-free items.

Result—Passed. This legislation makes Washington the first state in the nation to ban the use of all three forms of PBDE, a toxic flame retardant) and ensure safer alternatives that provide fire safety protection while reducing risks to people and the environment.

Funding—$200,000 from Ecology’s operating budget to develop safe chemical alternatives.

**2008 priorities**

**Climate Action & Green Jobs**

Goal—Create mandatory limits on greenhouse gases in the state and create the first statewide green jobs training program.

Result—Passed. The bill set responsible limits on climate pollution, set a path for creating a green jobs economy, and reduced miles traveled. This legislation makes Washington the fourth state in the country to adopt comprehensive limits on global warming pollution, and the first state to feature as an integral part of its climate policy, a statewide effort to train the workforce for the clean energy transition. Recognizing the importance of the transportation sector, it also makes Washington the first state to set specific targets for reducing the amount of vehicle trips in the state. The focus on jobs and partnership with labor and social justice allies was great for our work. However, there was no enforcement mechanism for the GHG limits, which undercut the legislation’s effectiveness.

Funding—$1.3 million from Department of Ecology’s operating budget (general fund); $57,000 from Department of Agriculture’s operating budget (general fund); $76,000 from UW’s operating budget (general fund); $75,000 from WSU’s operating budget (general fund); $140,000 from Transportation’s operating budget (general fund).

**Local Solutions to Global Warming**

Goal—Develop tools to help local governments make land use and zoning decisions that reduce driving and meet the growing demand for green, walkable communities. By focusing on developing the necessary tools, this bill supports those municipalities that are taking action at the same time as we lay the ground work for the future.

Result—Passed. The legislation requires CTED to develop and provide counties and cities with advisory climate change response methodologies, a computer modeling program, and estimates of greenhouse gas emission reductions resulting from specific measures. The legislation also establishes a local government global warming mitigation and adaptation program and requires CTED to provide
a climate change report in cooperation with the policy and advisory committee created in the legislation to make recommendations on the possible inclusion of climate change elements to the Growth Management Act (GMA).

Funding—$317,000 from DCTED’s operating budget (general fund).

**Evergreen Cities**

Goal—Preserve urban canopy to help reduce stormwater flooding and air pollution, as well as increase quality of life. Trees in our cities are one of the most cost-effective ways to improve our urban environment. Primary elements of the proposed legislation include (1) calling for Department of Natural Resources to conduct urban tree inventory statewide, (2) requiring most cities develop tree ordinances, and (3) creating a funding mechanism so this legislation does not become an “unfunded mandate” for which cities must comply.

Result—Passed. A bill passed that will help retain and replant trees in urban areas, calling for an inventory of urban trees statewide and providing financial incentives for cities that adopt tree management plans. However, funding only lasted a short period of time, not long enough for DNR to conduct a statewide assessment and fund cities’ development of tree ordinances.

Funding—$134,000 from CTED’s operating budget (general fund).

**Local Farms - Healthy Kids**

Goal—Support the local food movement and healthy diets of our children. The legislative included programs that would allow schools to buy food from local farms and build their own gardens, as well as allow farmer’s markets to accept food stamps.

Result—Passed. The legislation directs CTED to create the Farmers-to-Food Banks Pilot program by selecting pilot sites statewide and to use the food bank system to contract with local farmers to provide fruits, vegetable, dairy, and meat products for low-income people at locally-designated food banks. In other agencies, the legislation creates the following new programs: Farm-to-School program administered by the state Department of Agriculture; a Washington Grown Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grant program administered by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and a Farmers Market Technology Improvement Pilot program administered by the Department of Social and Health Services. This legislation establishes Washington as a national leader in promoting locally-grown food. Groups from Hawaii and Minnesota reached out to Coalition members to learn about how to accomplish similar legislation in their own states. Another benefit was the broader coalition that developed around the local food movement, who still meets regularly and challenges any cuts to program funding.

Funding—$350,000 from CTED’s operating budget (general fund); $1.1 million from DSHS’s operating budget; $100,000 from Department of Health’s operating budget (general fund); $290,000 from Department of Agriculture’s operating budget (general fund); $600,000 from Public School’s Education Reform’s operating budget (but not on-going).
2009 priorities

Cap and Invest

Goal—Put our state on a firm path to meet global warming pollution reduction goals. The proposal would have Washington join the Western Climate Initiative’s cap and trade program (in development). By putting a cap on greenhouse gas emissions, this bill would reduce fossil fuel dependence, spur investment in new clean-tech innovation, and create new green jobs.

Result—Did not pass. Washington may have also been looking to a federal solution that did not pan out. Governor Gregoire did issue an Executive Order to agencies to proactively address climate change.

Transit Oriented Communities

Goal—Require transportation and land use planning to account for climate change, and specifically leverage investments in light rail by requiring transit oriented development with affordable housing. This bill would have revised the state’s transportation and land-use planning framework to help local jurisdictions plan for growth in a sustainable and climate-friendly way, rezoned density increases around major transit investments like light rail, and created affordable housing close to those stations.

Result—Did not pass. Legislation was pulled late in session by the Coalition because alternations had undermined the bill’s original intent. One positive element was the partnership developed with the affordable housing community while pursuing this proposal.

Efficiency First

Goal—Save money, create jobs, enhance energy security, slash global-warming pollution, and speed economic recovery while reducing the need to invest in costly new generation, all through energy efficiency. This Priority provides incentives to maximize energy efficiency: requires energy use information on buildings offered for sale or lease, and makes our public buildings models of energy efficiency. This policy also helps to ensure that low-income consumers can cope with rising energy costs.

Result—Passed. Legislation passed to make homes, businesses, and public institutions more energy efficient. Funding provided to develop and implement a strategic plan for enhancing energy efficiency and reducing greenhouse gas emissions from homes, buildings, districts, and neighborhoods.

Funding—$102,000 from Commerce’s operating budget (general fund).

Invest in Clean Water

Goal—Raise $100 million for clean water infrastructure by imposing a per-barrel fee on petroleum products that contribute to water pollution. Stormwater projects are expensive (millions of dollars), so it will take time to turn things around with stormwater pollution, but this would have been a big step in the right direction.

Result—Did not pass. The bill passed the House but not the Senate. However, a significant amount of funding was secured in the biennial capital budget.

Funding—$30 million for the Centennial Clean Water Program in the capital budget (Ecology).
2010 priorities

Working for Clean Water

Goal—Stormwater is the most important water quality concern facing the state. The Working for Clean Water bill would have increased the MTCA tax and allowed for the increase in revenue to pay for stormwater retrofit infrastructure projects.

Result—Did not pass. The bill passed the House but not the Senate. Through a polluter-pay approach, this bill would have funded local projects to stop toxic stormwater contamination in Puget Sound, the Spokane River, and other waterways across the state by increasing the Hazardous Substance tax for the first time in two decades. A significant amount of funding was secured in the biennial Capital budget.

Sustain Environmental Protections in the Budget

Goal—Protect critical environmental programs from state budget cuts. Environmental programs had already received significant and disproportionate cuts in prior legislative sessions. Through conversations with agency staff and key legislatures, it was anticipated that more slashing to environmental programming would be attempted in the 2010 session. While environmental protection programs are a small part of the state budget, they are critical in terms of public health, economic opportunity, and quality of life.

Result—Success. The Environmental Priorities Coalition ensured core environmental protections were sustained that we depend on to keep our communities healthy and safe. Some of the most egregious cuts to environmental programming were prevented. Department of Ecology was grateful for the Coalition’s support and credited the Coalition with preventing the worst cuts. This Priority, once again, elevated the importance of the budget in terms of environmental policy work.

Safe Baby Bottle Bill

Goal—Protect our health and the environment by phasing out the chemical bisphenol A (BPA) in Washington in baby bottles and sports bottles. Originally wanted to phase BPA out of all liquid and food packaging but the canning industry proved a formidable opponent.

Result—Passed. Legislation passed phasing out chemical bisphenol A (BPA) in baby bottles, sports water bottles, and other consumer products, thus protecting children from this chemical that is harmful to their health.

* In addition to the three 2010 Priorities, the environmental community maintained the strength and integrity of the Citizen’s Clean Energy Initiative, I-937.

2011 priorities

Clean Fertilizers, Healthier Lakes and Rivers

Goal—Prevent phosphorous from entering our waterways. Phosphorous from residential lawn fertilizers is a major water quality pollutant that if not managed could require local governments to spend millions on wastewater treatment plant upgrades. When phosphorus in fertilizer washes off our lawns into lakes, rivers, and the Puget Sound, it causes rapid growth of algae blooms that can harm fish, wildlife, and public health.
Result—Passed. This bill will restrict the use of fertilizers containing phosphorous and manage the sale of phosphorus lawn fertilizers in our state. To achieve success, the Coalition worked with Spokane Riverkeeper, Scott’s Miracle-Gro, the Washington State Lake Protection Association, Fred Meyer, Washington Retail Association, Avista Corp., Inland Paper Company, the City of Spokane, and dozens of local governments across the state to pass this bill into law.

**Coal Free Future for Washington**

Goal—Retire the TransAlta coal-fired power plant in Centralia and provide a just transition for workers and the community in the process. TransAlta Centralia LLC is the state’s largest single source of air pollution.

Result—Passed. Legislation was passed and a settlement agreement was reached to phase out TransAlta’s 1460MW coal-fired power plant between 2020 and 2025. As a result, 10 million tons of CO2 will be eliminated annually. We are now one step closer to a truly coal-free Washington. A $55 million fund was also established to support the local community during this transition, as well as a requirement TransAlta install certain pollution controls prior to shutting down the boilers. This campaign helped jumpstart the fight against coal export terminals by developing a grassroots base for coal issues.

Funding—$99,000 from the Attorney General’s operating budget.

**Budget Solutions for Our Environment**

Goal—Sustain core environmental programming, continue investments in parks and preservation, and generate revenue from polluting businesses. The economic recession has already caused billions of dollars in cuts to state services that protect the health and safety of our communities. Over the past two years our environmental protections have been cut to the bone. The Coalition worked to strike a balance that will protect public health, economic future, and quality of life in Washington, even in hard times.

Result—Partial success. Efforts were able to prevent some of the worst cuts to environmental programs, but did not gain any revenue generating elements. This showcased how difficult it is to gather political will around revenue generating legislation that imposes fees on polluters. Industry is consistently able to translate these proposals into a direct cost on consumers/individuals who are currently facing tough economic times. One key lesson was the need for personal stories when trying to convey the direct harm from cutting environmental programs and funding. With budget Priorities, the power of the Coalition is on full display because all hands are needed on deck even before it is known what cuts will be made, which is also a testament to the trust built within the Coalition.

**Clean Water Jobs Act**

Goal—Directly fund local projects to clean up toxic runoff before it enters our water. Create thousands of good-paying, new jobs in our communities on projects like retrofitting urban streets in Bremerton or building storm drains in Puyallup. Jobs included heavy labor positions such as paving concrete and building rain gardens and culverts.

Result—Did not pass. For the third year in a row, the legislature failed to act on an opportunity to
create jobs, clean up our water, and protect our quality of life. The legislature did provide $30 million of helpful stop-gap revenue for clean water projects in the capital budget. However, in order to fully address our state’s biggest water pollution problem we must have a significant and sustained funding source for local projects that clean up toxic runoff before it enters our water.

2012 priorities

Pollution Free Prosperity

Goal—Prevent passage of anti-environmental bills, especially Senate Bill 6406. Powerful interests were using the recession as an opportunity to attack environmental protections that have been in place for over 60 years. The 2012 session began with over 75 bills threatening to undo some of the most basic laws that protect Washington’s environment. A defensive campaign proved critical after Republican leadership published an op-ed in a Washington newspaper blaming the environment on endless economic woes. A unique strategy was undertaken by the Coalition in taking out a full-page ad in the Seattle Times in response. The Coalition took a uniquely harsh stance against Senate Bill 6406 in being fundamentally against the bill, rather than seeking adjustments.

Result—Success. Despite significant pressure from industry groups, our state’s environmental protections were maintained due to the efforts of our legislative champions and significant grassroots pressure from people across Washington. The Coalition prevented what would have been historic rollbacks to major environmental protections, including the Growth Management Act, the Shoreline Management Act, the State Environmental Policy Act and the state energy code. One bill that reflected compromises struck this session was SB 6406. It began as an attack on several core environmental laws, including the Growth Management Act, but evolved, due to unprecedented grassroots pressure, to a much more limited bill that updates forestry practice regulations, hydraulic permits and the State Environmental Policy Act, and establishes a schedule for the implementation of certain clean water protections.

Fulfill Our Clean Energy Initiative

Goal—Protect Initiative 937. The Clean Energy Initiative voters passed in 2006 (I-937), requiring the state’s major electric utilities gradually increase the amount of new renewable energy serving their customers to 15% by 2020. I-937 is essential to building a vital, job-creating new energy future. There was significant pressure to gut this initiative.

Result—Success. Despite significant pressure, the goals remained intact. The environmental community joined with utilities in support of SB 6414, which gives public utilities a process to determine whether a proposed renewable energy of energy efficiency project is eligible to count toward I-937’s targets.

Toxic-Free Kids Act

Goal—Ban toxic flame retardants that have entered the market to replace PBDEs. After our successful ban of PBDEs, the industry switched to using cancer-causing Tris flame retardants without considering health or environmental impacts. This proposed bill would ban the use of two cancer-causing Tris flame retardants in children’s products. TCEP and chlorinated Tris, have been detected in children’s items made of polyurethane
foam, including car seats and changing table pads. One of the flame retardants, chlorinated Tris, was recently found in 80 percent of children’s products tested.

Result—Did not pass. Even with the support of more than 45 health, community, and environmental organizations, the Senate ultimately failed to pass the legislation before the end of special session.

2013 priorities

Clean Energy Solutions

Goal—This multi-component campaign would have driven Washington’s climate policy by accelerating energy investments and helping consumers navigate the new energy layout. The four big components included: (1) the Governor’s Climate Action Bill, (2) expanding solar power, (3) equipment efficiently standards, and (4) closing the big oil tax loophole.

Result—Partial success. The Governor’s Climate Action Bill passed while the other three components did not. Nevertheless, the campaign helped develop a grassroots movement able to better support climate policy legislation in the future. The Climate Action Bill evaluates the climate pollution reduction programs of other states and Canadian provinces, and then convenes the Governor and legislative leaders to develop policies to ensure we achieve our climate pollution limits for 2020 and beyond (set in statute through a 2008 environmental Priority bill).

Funding—$258,000 from Office of the Governor’s operating budget (general fund); $350,000 from Office of Fiscal Management’s operating budget (general fund).

Toxic-Free Kids & Families

Goal—Ban toxic flame retardants that have entered the market to replace PBDEs. These substitutes included Tris Flame (TCDPP and TCEP). The ban would focus on removal of these toxic chemicals from children’s products and furniture found in our homes. A similar ban was also attempted in 2012.

Result—Did not pass. The bill was weakened by the Senate in committee. The gutted version did not grant authority to state agencies to prevent equally worse chemicals from replacing the banned ones and did not address a large source of harmful flame retardants in our homes, couches, and other furniture. However, $600,000 was secured to help expand the toxics program to include testing, with an obligation for the Department of Health to test and report back to the legislature. National legislation is now in play that may create process for government agencies to phase out chemicals when proven to be toxic and dangerous. If successful, we could avoid having to propose new legislation each year to deal with toxic substitutes, creating as systemic change.

Conservation Works

Goal—Secure increases in capital budget spending for natural resources. Specifically, secure funding for Puget Sound recovery, WWRP, and forestry projects. These projects preserve the incredible natural resources that make our state a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

Result—Partial success. This Priority secured funding for fiscally-responsible projects that benefit the entire state by protecting Puget Sound, reducing toxic runoff, expanding recreation opportunities, and improving habitat and forest
health. Overall, a little less funding for WWRP and forest projects than hoped for, but everything on the list was partially funded. This Priority highlighted why the capital budget should remain an important use of our coalition’s capacity and how technical budget expertise is a valuable skill in our community.

Funding—$289.3 million in funding secured.

2014 Priorities

Close Big Oil Tax Loophole

Goal—Close an “accidental” oil tax loophole from 1949, which was never intended for oil companies, and provide that funding to Washington public schools. Closing the loophole would have allowed legislators to reinvest $59 million back into K-12 classrooms and our communities. There was an additional aim to start a dialogue about climate issues and Washington’s priorities.

Result—Did not pass. The campaign was successful in building public awareness for future climate legislation and engaging the legislators in a conversation about the big picture of climate policy, laying ground work for a multi-year climate campaign.

Oil Transportation Safety Act

Goal—Provide important tools to promote transparency of oil moving by rail, pipeline, and vessel; improve or establish tug escort requirements to prevent oil spills and accidents in Puget Sound, the outer coast, and Columbia River; increase penalties for reckless tug and barge operations; and identify prevention and response gaps statewide. The transport of oil in Washington is dramatically and rapidly changing, leaving many communities at risk of spills and rail accidents. The proposed bill included a “Right-to-Know” provision to help communities statewide know how much and what type of oil is moving through areas where they live, work, and play.

Result—Did not pass. This Priority passed the House with bipartisan support, but strong oil company opposition prevented the bill from being heard in the Senate. Legislative leaders committed to the Oil Transportation Safety Act successfully included a budget proviso in the operating budget that directs the Department of Ecology and other state agencies to study the risks and vulnerabilities in the current oil transportation and oil spill prevention systems. This is an important first step to keep attention on this important issue and better understand the serious risks oil poses to our communities and waterways.

Funding—$300,000 from the State Toxics Control Account is provided to Department of Ecology to conduct a study on oil transportation in the state, including potential impacts on public health and safety.
footnotes


[12] RCW 19.27A.160


[18] Personal communication with Todd Currier, Assistant Director of WSU Energy Program.

footnotes


[27] WA Dept. of Ecology, Local Government Loan Programs for On-Site Sewage System Repair and Replacement, Publication no. 01-10-024, revised August 2012.


footnotes


[47] RCW 80.80.100


[49] Id.
