

Legislative Concept

Oregon Global Warming Commission

Brief Description

Fund core activities of the Oregon Global Warming Commission through the 2009-2010 biennium.

Proposed Actions

Provide State funding in the amount of \$336,000 over the biennium to: (a) fund 1.0 FTE staff for the OGWC; (b) fund initial development of an interactive OGWC Web site and related outreach and communications activities; and (c) provide operating support for staff and Commission operations.

This proposal has two purposes:

- provide a floor level of resource support for certain core activities of the OGWC
- give the OGWC the ability to solicit private foundation and corporate funding for additional activities beyond minimum core activities by leveraging such contributions with the allocated State resources.

Discussion

The OGWC was established by the Oregon Legislature in 2007 and given broad responsibilities to oversee the State's efforts to meet its adopted greenhouse gas reduction goals and its efforts to prepare Oregon communities and ecosystems to cope with already expected climate change effects. A particular charge was to "develop an outreach strategy" to inform Oregonians on causes, remedies and coping requirements¹.

In the first six months of OGWC activities, the Commission has empanelled six Committees and several substantive subcommittees, in the process recruiting

¹ SECTION 11. The Oregon Global Warming Commission shall develop an outreach strategy to educate Oregonians about the scientific aspects and economic impacts of global warming and to inform Oregonians of ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ways to prepare for the effects of global warming. The commission, at a minimum, shall work with state and local governments, the State Department of Energy, the Department of Education, the State Board of Higher Education and businesses to implement the outreach strategy.

dozens of additional citizens, interest groups, local governments and agency personnel into its process. It has participated in multiple agency and citizen stakeholder processes, from the Big Look Committee to Transportation Vision to community and ecosystem adaptation groups, in the process shaping 2009 proposed legislation to have substantial climate content and purpose. It has initiated two crucial modeling exercises (economic effects of WCI Cap & Trade on Oregon business and labor; and ODOT's GreenSTEP modeling tool to use transportation and land use factors to solve for GHG effects).

For resources, OGWC has relied upon State agency personnel when they are available, or solicited outside resources (e.g., fundraising to pay for economic modeling; for plug-in hybrid vehicle workshop in Portland). Since Commissioners are all volunteers, the limits to this strategy are quickly reached.

OGWC has developed an initial Communications and Outreach proposal (attached), which it expects to circulate within identified funder circles. Feedback indicates (a) that sufficient funding is unlikely to be secured to cover the full costs of the minimum strategies identified, and (b) that private funders will be basing their decisions in part on whether they are augmenting, or displacing, State funding for State activities.

Thus the proposed funding package would be used to leverage sufficient private funds to permit core Communications and Outreach activities to be undertaken in 2009/2010. At least 50% of the proposed FTE would be devoted to these efforts, plus approximately \$50,000 in direct costs for web site development; the balance would provide the Commission with ongoing administrative support, including oversight of the research agenda at the Climate Institute and liaison with counterpart staff at key State Boards and Commissions with which the OGWC must engage systematically. The employee would likely be housed at one of the OUS campus facilities.

The OGWC must expand its reach beyond legislative proposals in its second year, or fail to meet its charge from the Legislature. It must assist State agencies not only with their agency-specific activities, but must provide a coordinating function to ensure that agency agendas are complementary. It must begin to convene Oregon communities and stakeholders with contributions to make and interests at risk. It must find or develop the tools those communities and stakeholders need to effectively respond to this extremely grave threat to our state.

The budget request is a minimum level of State support for this undertaking, even assuming the OGWC is successful in augmenting it with private funding.

We recognize the fiscal constraints under which the Governor and Legislature will operate in 2009 and hope they are able to recognize both the Commission's 2008 product and the scale of its challenges in 2009-10. If State funding is not available, the Commission will seek to perform its mission nonetheless.

Who is affected by this proposal?

Oregon citizens, communities, businesses, workers, ecosystems and species. Support is expected from most of the stakeholders represented on the Commission and its committees, and other Oregonians concerned with sustaining the State’s determined response to this challenge. Opposition may come from parties competing for scarce State resources, and interests that fundamentally oppose the State’s climate agenda.

Fiscal Impact?

Yes; proposed to cost \$336,000 through the next biennium.

Likely training, infrastructure or other needs?

Not applicable if the OGWC is successful in locating the FTE in an existing OUS facility.

Budget detail

Item	Annual	Biennium
1.0 FTE	\$70,000 (salary) \$23,000 (benefits @33%)	\$186,000
Commission Operations	\$50,000	\$100,000
Web Site Development	\$50,000	\$ 50,000
Totals	\$193,000 (Year One)	\$336,000 (Two Years)