

HIGHER MARKS FOR OREGON'S ENVIRONMENT

An Environmental Policy and Action Plan

By Steve Marks

Our planet is in crisis and global warming is a threat to our existence. Our ocean and our rivers are in dire need of strategies to ensure their sustainability. Oregon's timber-dependant communities need to get their fair share of timber payments. Food prices are surging to record highs and agriculture producers face unbearable competition.

The United States Congress needs to address these issues. And we can start right here – and we can start right now.

Higher Marks for Oregon's Environment is a comprehensive outline to address these critical issues. This outline lets voters know where I stand and what I will do in Washington to help.

ADDRESS GLOBAL WARMING

We must take action now to face global warming. Our pursuit of alternative energy that lowers CO2 emissions not only will help in this fight, it also will help end our dependence on foreign oil. Below, I outline specific initiatives and actions I will take in Congress:

- I will support Oregon's efforts and vote to finance new national incentives for renewable and sustainable energy sources and technologies. I will support policies that advance energy conservation.
- This country needs a national system of "caps and trade" to ensure that we have a policy to reduce carbon emissions. I support the auction of credits at the initiation of the program to "jump start" the system.
- Fuel efficient and alternative energy vehicles are vital to ending our dependence on foreign oil and fossil fuels. In Congress, I will work to

provide substantial incentives for further development and production of these alternatives.

- The government, at all levels, must set the example for responsible environmental action. At the federal level, I will fight to increase funding for environmentally-friendly public transportation through increased advocacy for the Surface Transportation Act. This type of public transportation will help us manage growth in sustainable ways and contribute to reductions in carbon emissions.
- The investments we make in infrastructure and housing play a large role in shaping our ability to contribute to climate change reductions in the future. I will work tirelessly to create incentives, in both public and private sectors, to promote sustainable development.
- Under the Bush Administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has been decimated. The EPA's ability to address clear air and clean water policies has been severely compromised. I will work to restore the EPA, fund its budget, and ensure the integrity of its mission.
- America must be a full and active participant in international treaties on global warming. I will encourage our new President advocate and fiercely defend international treaties and agreements with countries when those countries and their industries pollute Oregon's coast and degrade our environment.
- Peak oil is upon us and gas prices are sky-rocketing. We must take immediate action to change our inevitable and, regrettable, dependence on fossil fuels. We must invest in renewable and sustainable energy sources now. I will fight for efforts that maintain the health of our planet's atmosphere and help us achieve energy independence. (For those watching actual proposals before Congress, I will work to enact the Apollo Act.) A supply of sustainable energy is critical to American's long-term economic future. Today's investments in the development, manufacture and installation of such technology creates jobs. Today and tomorrow.
- Oregon must have a strong voice in all proposals to locate and transport natural gas within our borders. Liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities on our coast and ideas for new pipelines through Middle America – and through Oregon's rich farmland – require a far more complete assessment than has occurred so far.
 - I will work to ensure that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has the authority to actually approve decisions about LNG

within Oregon. FERC's purported authority must be curbed and must take Oregon's – and Oregonians – views into consideration.

- I believe the Oregon Department of Energy is best suited to lead our state's effort to analyze LNG proposals for the energy needs of the region, the impact on the land base, and the overall benefit and cost. These kinds of analyses must account for the impact of carbon emissions and global warming. From my work with the career professionals in the state Department of Energy, I am confident they understand the scope of the importance of this lead work.
- Oregonians must have an understandable and public process that insures their voice and concerns are a part of the decision. I will work to be certain that both the private section interests and public interest are balanced in considering LNG alternatives.

RESTORING OUR FISHERIES AND SUSTAINING OUR NEARSHORE RESOURCES

Oregon's coastal communities boast of some of the most thriving fishing industries in the country. These communities also take profound pride in the beautiful beaches and a bountiful marine life. Yet, this has begun to change. And change dramatically.

The west coast has lost its salmon. The fleet has dramatically declined. Nearshore marine resources are uncertain. Wind and wave energy are under development and the implications are yet to be fully understood. All of these conditions, on top of the general economic turbidity, are a severe threat to Oregon, our coastal communities, our economy, our families, and our Oregon way of life on the coast.

- I am well prepared to continue my work with fishermen, coastal communities and statewide interests that want to create a comprehensive management plan for sustaining our ocean. This includes a determination of marine reserve designations, wave energy sites and insuring access for fishermen to the bounty of fisheries in our ocean.
- One of my top priorities in Washington will be to secure funding for ocean mapping and evaluation. This technology is important to planning for the ocean and it is critical to ensuring that coastal communities can plan for and understand the impact of tsunamis.

- I will work to maintain funding for research vessels based at Oregon's Hatfield Marine Sciences Center. Research vessels do important work to help our understanding of the ocean off Oregon's shore.
- I will introduce legislation to limit the nearly unchecked power of the Federal Energy Regulator Commission to site wave energy projects in state or federal waters off Oregon's coast. Oregonians must have a voice in the process.
- I oppose oil drilling off Oregon's coastal shore. Our next Congressman must ensure the integrity of our ocean environment and pledge to support this position.

Restoring Pacific salmon will require us to recognize our interdependence on investments made to restore Sacramento Delta salmon runs and to focus on repairing fragile Klamath River systems.

- I pledge to work with the California congressional delegation to build support for investments we must make to recover salmon stocks that Oregon fishermen need.
- Coastal businesses and fishermen that have been devastated by the recent season closure need immediate aid and I will be there to help. I will continue Congresswoman Darlene Hooley's actions for federal aid and I pledge my efforts to get the support Oregonians deserve now and in the future should similar disaster strike.
- With my background in fisheries protection and development, I will work with coastal communities to identify key investments in Oregon upland management of watersheds. This will support a future of healthy waterways and habitat that support growing salmon populations in the Fifth Congressional District and beyond.

CARING FOR OUR WILLAMETTE RIVER SYSTEM AND RESTORING ITS HEALTH

In Oregon's Fifth Congressional District, we enjoy the beauty and resources provided by the Willamette River system. In Congress, I pledge to ensure its natural beauty and help restore its health.

- I have worked with watershed councils throughout Oregon as they strive to restore the health of our river and watershed systems. I will continue these important efforts as your Congressman and I will seek federal funding to help our communities with high priority restoration efforts.

- We must not allow our aging infrastructure, such as water treatment and sewage systems, to fall into neglect and disrepair. They are important to controlling pollution within our communities. I will include these in my broader fight to secure vital federal funding to restore our aging infrastructure.
- I will work with conservation groups and ensure the protection of critical habitats of aquatic species throughout the Willamette Valley.

SUSTAINING OUR TIMBER-DEPENDENT RURAL COMMUNITIES

I grew up in Sutherlin, one of our state's many timber-dependent communities. When I graduated from high school, unemployment was about 22 percent. Many of my friends' parents were out of work and our economy was hurting. I know how vital timber payments are to our rural communities in the 5th Congressional District and I will fight for Oregon's fair share in Washington.

- Oregon deserves a multi-year county timber payments plan that reduces payments over time as revenues grow from thinning and harvest of forests as they mature. The sustainability of our rural communities requires a policy that matches and replaces revenue on a sustainable basis. We have the expertise right here in Oregon to create such a plan. We must work to ensure that federal forest policies solve problems instead of creating problems.
- I oppose the Bush Administration's preferred alternatives that call for an unsustainable harvest level in Western Oregon, the cutting of old growth forests, and resulting damage to forest health. This plan raises false hopes for higher harvest and will be tied up in court before a single tree is harvested. How in the world does that help our Western rural timber-dependent communities? We have been down this path before and it is the wrong course for creating a sustainable future.
- We need to provide incentives for time to grow to maturity. In Congress, I will work to create economic benefits for private landowners to grow trees for carbon sequestration and harvest.
- I know from my work on Oregon's Forest Practices Act that it is possible to create a sustainable timber economy while preserving critical forests and the habitat they need. I understand that forests are a sustainable resource and will work to provide stable harvest levels that communities can plan on year-in and year-out.

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Global food prices are surging and we are starting to feel the effects here in Oregon. A trip to the local grocery store will tell you all you need to know: basic commodities like rice and milk are more expensive than last month. The price of vegetables is creeping even higher. We need to meet the growing demand for food and Oregon, with its long agricultural heritage, is ready to step up.

- I propose an Oregon Sustainable Agriculture Resource and Research Center to help farmers respond to marketplace demands. I have outlined a detailed description of the center and its work, which I propose be established at Oregon State University. This policy initiative and action plan will be available at my website stevemarksforcongress.com.
- I will work with other members of the Oregon delegation to get federal funding for innovative water storage and conservation efforts. We must form a broad coalition of farmers, ranchers and conservationists that share a common vision about the importance of a productive farm base. For example, we must work together to develop efficient water systems for the long-term productivity of our agricultural lands.

I am passionate about Oregon, our communities and our people. The policies I have described here are among the actions we can take to restore our environment, protect our natural resource heritage and sustain our economy. When it comes to these challenges, change starts right here in Oregon.