

Tacoma Citizens' Climate Lobby



Creating political will for a livable planet

Core values: focus, optimism, relationships, integrity, personal power, being non-partisan

CCL NEWS

CCL has organized an [Inclusion Conference](#) on Zoom, Sept 15-16

[CCL's Fall Conference](#) (virtual) is scheduled for Nov. 4-5

The [Inflation Reduction Act](#) is a year old! Such a game-changer for climate, yet so many people are still unaware of its benefits. CCL helped to pass it, now we need to continue to publicize it and educate others about it for fuller implementation.

CCL volunteers played a part in winning the [Held v. Montana](#) case, where a judge ruled in favor of 16 youth who sued the state for violating their constitutional rights re: climate change, a groundbreaking victory! Full story [here](#)

The bipartisan [House Climate Solutions Caucus](#), tasked with finding common ground on climate legislation, has relaunched. [CCL's statement](#)

STATE CONFERENCE

The WA State CCL Conference will be held in person on Sept. 22-24 at the beautiful [Rainbow Lodge Retreat Center](#) in North Bend. [Details and registration](#)

PREVIOUS MEETING

Our July meeting was the annual [Potluck Picnic](#) in the park. So relaxing, delicious, and fun—be sure to join us next year for this social time! (no minutes)

Visit us on [Twitter \(@CCLTacoma\)](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, August 26, 11-7, Tabling at Hilltop Street Festival, Contact [Linda Cohan](#).

Wednesday, August 30, 7pm, Monthly Chapter Meeting on Zoom. Program: Local council and Port candidate interviews [Zoom link](#)

Wednesday, Sept. 6, 1pm on Zoom, CCL Study Group meeting discussing articles that we email ahead of time. Contact [Sue Lepore](#)

Thursday, Sept. 7, 6-8 pm, Tacoma Green Drinks networking for local environmental groups, check [website](#) for location

Sept. 15-16, [CCL Inclusion Conference](#), “Building Community Beyond Barriers,” virtual

Saturday, Sept. 16, 10:30-1:30, Tabling at the [Drive Electric Steilacoom Festival](#)

Wednesday, Sept. 20, 7pm, Monthly Chapter Meeting on Zoom. Port of Tacoma Commission officer candidate interviews.

Sept 22-2, in person [WA State CCL Conference](#), [Rainbow Lodge](#), North Bend WA [register](#)

and [Instagram \(ccl_tacoma\)](#).

MEMBER ACTIVITIES

Our Aug and Sept meetings' programs will feature interviews with several candidates for local office. These are so valuable in many ways, but *a lot of work*; many thanks to [Barbara Menne](#) for her advance preparations!

From [Elly Claus-McGahan](#)—note the [recent op-ed](#) by [Climate Pierce County](#) member and chair of the [Sustainable Tacoma Commission](#), [Evlondo Cooper](#). On p.2

And a reminder from [Elly](#) to advocate for climate solutions in the [Pierce County Comprehensive Plan](#), see p.3

It has been a busy tabling month! [Fircrest Night Out](#), another visit to [Owen Beach](#), the [Green Transportation Summit & Expo](#), and the [Hilltop Street Festival](#). You can join us [Sept.16](#) for the [EV event!](#) Contact [Linda Cohan](#).

[Climate Talk](#) and [Climate Minute](#) radio programs, interviews and commentary by [John Doherty](#), is on KTAH & KVSH 101.9 FM, and archived on our [website](#) and [Tacoma Public Library](#).

You can help [Ginny Lohr](#) post on our [Facebook](#) page by sending her photos (captioned, please). Want to help post on our social media sites? Contact [Sue Lepore](#)

[Past newsletters](#) are archived on the website

The Northwest is choking on wildfire smoke. Residents deserve better national coverage

Op-ed by Evlondo Cooper

August 6, 2023, [The News Tribune](#)

Before moving to Tacoma, Washington, in 2018, I'd never experienced wildfire smoke, but in September 2020, I vividly remember stepping outside to the smell of burning wood and the taste of ash. A thick orange haze had settled over my neighborhood, a smoky blanket suffocating the life out of the vibrant early-fall days. The two HEPA air filters I purchased on a whim worked overtime to filter the air inside my home. Cleaning them required the removal of a slick, grimy film that filled me with disgust. People were breathing this.

Now, in 2023, smoke events have become all-too-familiar during wildfire season in the Pacific Northwest and, increasingly, across the country. The Tunnel 5 fire, which has burned more than 500 acres in southern Washington, is just the latest wildfire to threaten homes and businesses here. But the story we're missing amid these recurring apocalyptic scenes is the untold health burden from wildfire smoke, particularly its pernicious effect on socially marginalized communities. Wildfire smoke, laden with harmful particulates, takes a toll on our health. Its myriad harms include respiratory distress, exacerbation of heart conditions, and premature death. The effects these wildfires have on our health also amount to billions of dollars in costs for both Washington and Oregon.

However, despite numerous studies showing how wildfire smoke contributes significantly to public health problems, this narrative is often missing from national news discourse, especially when it comes to discussions of who bears the brunt of this burden. A Media Matters analysis found that national TV news shows aired a combined 9 minutes of coverage about the heat wave that scorched the Pacific Northwest in May. None of them mentioned climate change. And, during the more than 3 ½ hours of national TV news coverage on June 7 of the Canadian wildfire smoke event that created dangerous air quality conditions for large swaths of the East Coast, not only was climate mentioned just 15 times, the coverage also rarely contextualized the prohibitive cost of mitigation for socially marginalized communities.

The similarities between heat waves and wildfires are alarming: Both are climate disasters, both have grave health impacts, and both disproportionately harm the most disadvantaged among us. Media narratives fall short of capturing this inequality. The flames, evacuations, burned structures, and apocalyptic skylines make headlines. Meanwhile, the less visible but equally deadly health effects of the smoke, and the systemic disparities they underscore, are lost in the haze. This is not just a reporting failure, but a clear demonstration of how the news media neglect their responsibility to highlight the broader social implications of extreme weather events.

It's past time for news outlets to harness their considerable influence and do more than report the obvious. Our collective engagement with these issues, fueled by comprehensive reporting, can pressure policymakers to take meaningful, targeted climate action aimed at sustainability and resiliency. As someone who lived through Hurricane Katrina and now confronts the climate realities of my new home, my thoughts go to those bearing the worst of the climate crisis. The elderly woman who lives alone down the street, the low-income families struggling to make ends meet, the communities on the front lines of our climate emergency. They are the unseen victims of these increasingly frequent and devastating disasters, their struggles neglected even when the media direct their fleeting attention to the existential crisis of our time. Their stories, hardships, and resilience cannot continue to be obscured in the climate narrative; only by acknowledging the full scope of these climate disasters can we take the first step toward meaningful action.

Evlondo Cooper is a Tacoma, Washington resident and a senior researcher on the Climate and Energy Program at Media Matters for America.

From **Elly Claus McGahan**:

Did you know that all **Pierce County** cities have to update their **Comprehensive Plans** by 2024? **Comprehensive Plans** are roadmaps to the future on how the city wishes to develop through the next 20 years. They're updated every 5 years. Many cities and **Pierce County** actively seek public input. On the Climate Pierce County Resource page [Pierce County Comprehensive Plans](#), you will find links to the existing city's comp plan, links to their update pages, and links or information to where they have climate actions.

Browse and learn, then...Make yourself heard, participate and advocate for climate solutions!

By 2029 all Comp Plans will be required to include a climate element because of the **Growth Management Act** update. To see what that means check out the [Climate Program page](#), WA Dept.of Commerce.

We can help words become action!

WA 27th District Reps. Laurie Jinkins and Jake Fey are holding two more Community Conversations, on Aug.29 and Sept. 5. These are not specifically focused on climate topics but our presence and comments there are important to bring climate issues to attention.

27th District Community Conversations

Thurs, July 13: 2-3:00PM, Fife Pierce County Library Branch

Thurs, July 27: 6-7:00PM, Center at Norpoint

Tues, August 29: 11:30AM-12:30PM, Heritage Coffee & Plant House

Tues, September 5: 12:30-1:30PM, South Tacoma Library Branch

