



PHOTO: JOHN WESTROCK

# 2018 ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

After years of gridlock in Olympia, new leadership in the Senate provides a critical opportunity for progress on urgent issues like climate change. To create jobs, reduce air pollution, and ensure reliable and affordable clean energy future for all, the Environmental Priorities Coalition will be working hard to promote efficient and healthy buildings, electrify transportation systems, and diversify our clean energy sources. For the 2018 legislative session, we have adopted four priorities essential for healthy communities and a thriving environment.

## ACT ON CLIMATE

Despite the fact that climate change impacts are already here at home, many in the fossil fuel industry are working to undo years of climate progress, especially at the federal level. That's why the State of Washington must step up as the faster we act we can show what is possible. We need to charge major polluters for the harm they cause and reinvest those dollars for a better future. Stronger, climate-driven investments will create good home-grown jobs, accelerate clean energy solutions to compete in a global market, protect our health and safety, and ensure a resilient environment. We must also prioritize investments where communities are disproportionately impacted by air pollution and climate change threats, and ensure a just transition for workers currently reliant on the fossil fuel economy. In the face of serious and escalating climate change risks – devastating wildfires, water shortages, flooding catastrophes, sea level rise, ocean acidification – 2018 is the year for meaningful action that moves Washington forward.

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## SUSTAINABLE WATER MANAGEMENT

We've known for many years that the state's water management system is broken. The environmental community seeks to pass legislation to implement the law and provide more certainty for instream and out-of-stream uses. Water legislation must have three elements: 1) planning for residential development in accordance with available water resources; 2) fully offsetting water usage by mitigating impacts – particularly those that are harmful to salmon; and 3) metering and monitoring water usage to help homeowners, local governments, and the state manage a finite resource. These elements have been successfully applied in the Dungeness basin and upper Yakima watershed in Kittitas County and can help in the many water-short basins of the state.

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## HEALTHY FOOD PACKAGING ACT

The Healthy Food Packaging Act protects our food, health, and environment from an extremely persistent, cancer-causing class of chemicals called “PFAS chemicals.” Used in food packages like microwave popcorn, fast food and bakery wrappers to repel grease, these toxic nonstick chemicals escape from the packaging into food through normal use. PFAS chemicals also pollute the environment when the food packaging is landfilled or composted and spread on the ground. The Healthy Food Packaging Act phases out the use of PFAS chemicals in food packaging in favor of safer alternatives.

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## OIL SPILL PREVENTION ACT

Washington faces many risks to our communities and waterways from oil spills from pipelines, trains, and vessels. Puget Sound refineries are receiving heavy oils that sink and are hard to cleanup. The state is falling behind in implementing proven prevention measures for oil spills like inspecting marine vessels. A good government tool that requires the state to publish information on oil moving through our communities – by rail, pipeline, or marine vessel – is threatened by a lack of funding. The state has to do better by ensuring that the Department of Ecology’s Oil Spills Program has what it needs to fully implement the laws designed to keep us safe.

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### about the coalition

The Environmental Priorities Coalition is a network of over twenty leading environmental groups in Washington state that influence policy at the state level. For over a decade, the Coalition has selected joint priority issues to work on during legislative session to help focus environmental community resources and best achieve our shared goals.

