2013 LEGISLATIVE FACT SHEET

Reducing Climate Impacts

Every year, humans are responsible for releasing 3 million metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. As a result, we are experiencing unprecedented climate change around the world. Seven of the last nine years were the warmest on record, sea levels are rising, and many species, including salmon and orca whales, are threatened. It’s critical that we take action here in Washington State to help reverse these trends.

During the 2013 Washington State Legislative Session, Sierra Club will work with Environmental Priorities Coalition to promote legislation to reduce energy consumption in our homes and promote the use of renewable energy such as wind and solar power.

LEGISLATIVE GOAL #1: Making solar panels affordable for all Washington homeowners

Sierra Club will support legislation this session to allow solar energy lease agreements in Washington.

All Washington homeowners deserve the opportunity to install solar panels:

- Home solar panels reduce energy bills and climate changing pollution
- High installation costs prevent many Washingtonians from installing solar panels on their homes

Under a solar lease agreement, the solar company owns the panels and sells the electricity to the homeowner at less than the utility rate—so the homeowner doesn’t pay installation costs and saves money on their electricity bill.

Unfortunately, solar energy leases, which are growing in popularity across the nation, are not allowed under current Washington law.

Photo: Grow Bainbridge (http://growbainbridge.com)
LEGISLATIVE GOAL #2: Promoting Energy Efficient Products
In 2013, Sierra Club will support legislation to include several additional commonly used products under state energy efficiency standards.

This legislation is important because:
- Energy efficient appliances are cheaper to operate
- Energy efficient appliances result in fewer greenhouse gas emissions.
- Energy efficiency standards for household appliances such as refrigerators have dramatically reduced energy consumption in this country and around the world.
- States efficiency standards can be stricter than federal standards.

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?
Please contact Cody Young at (206) 378-0114 or cody.young@sierraclub.org to learn more about our legislative program and how you can help.

Since initiative 937 was passed, we have seen repeated attempts in the legislature to undermine the law.

In 2013, we expect to see more bad legislation meant to undermine Initiative 937. Sierra Club will work to defeat these proposals.

LEGISLATIVE GOAL #3: Protecting Initiative 937 - Promoting Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
Washington's landmark Initiative 937, passed by voters in 2006, is still under threat. I-937 requires the state's major utilities to gradually increase the amount of renewable energy in their electricity supply to 15 percent by 2020.

The Initiative also requires that utilities develop new programs to encourage energy efficiency.

I-937 delivers real economic and community benefits through:
- continued investment in energy efficiency
- new renewable energy sources (7 billion and counting)
- health and environmental benefits that come with clean energy.

The Sierra Club's members are 700,000 of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization.