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Governor Kate Brown Issues Statement Marking One Year of Climate Action

March 10, 2021

State agencies show a year of progress implementing Governor's Climate Executive Order

Salem, OR—Governor Kate Brown issued the following statement today, one year after issuing Executive Order 20-04

(https://www.oregon.gov/gov/Documents/executive_orders/eo_20-04.pdf), which directed state agencies to take action to reduce and regulate greenhouse gas emissions in Oregon:

“One year ago, I stood shoulder-to-shoulder with young Oregonians from across the state to announce I was taking decisive action to address one of the greatest challenges facing this generation and the next: climate change. Since then, so much has happened. In addition to the pandemic, Oregon has been struck by floods, wildfires more intense than any in recent memory, and severe winter weather. It has never been more clear how urgent the need is to take climate action.

“I would like to thank all the state agency leaders and staff, business leaders,

(<http://www.oregon.gov>)

environmental advocates, and others who, in the middle of a worldwide pandemic, have remained focused and worked hard to put Oregon on track to hit our climate goals, as we endeavor to protect Oregon's clean air and water, and to grow our economy for a clean energy future.

"The impacts of climate change disproportionately fall on historically-disadvantaged and vulnerable communities: Black, Indigenous, Tribal, Latino, Latina, and Latinx, Pacific Islander, and communities of color, as well as low-income and rural Oregonians. I am committed to environmental justice and to addressing the disproportionate impact of climate change on these communities."

State agencies remain focused on a 30-year plan to drive down carbon emissions, and have moved forward with state rulemaking and other processes to implement the Governor's executive order, finding ways to engage stakeholders despite being unable to conduct in-person meetings during the pandemic. Agency accomplishments from the last year include:

- The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality has begun the process to develop rules for its Climate Protection Program

(<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/ghgp/Pages/capandreduce.aspx>) to exercise its authority under state law to cap and reduce emissions from some of the state's largest emitters.

- Release of the Climate Adaptation Framework

(https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/NN/Press%20Releases/20210309_Climate%20Framework_press_release.pdf), Climate Equity Blueprint, and the Climate and Health in Oregon Report

(<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/ph/HealthyEnvironments/climatechange/Pages/profile-report.aspx#:~:text=Climate%20and%20Health%20in%20Oregon%202020&text=It%20documents%20cross%2Dcutting%20health,importance%20of%20building%20social%20resilience>), which will inform future actions to protect Oregon's most vulnerable communities from the impacts of climate change.

- The creation of a new Climate Policy Office

(<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Programs/Pages/Climate-Office.aspx#:~:text=The%20omission%20of%20the%20ODOT,of%20climate%20and%20extreme%20weather>) at the Oregon Department of Transportation, that provided data on the climate impacts of ODOT's major investment decisions, resulting in a historic 60% increase in allocation of federal funding for biking, walking, and public

transportation for 2021-2024

- The launch of a statewide public electric charging plan which aligned statewide electrification efforts and incentivizes charging infrastructure in rural and historically-underserved communities.
- Continued progress implementing of the Every Mile Counts (<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Programs/Pages/Every-Mile-Counts.aspx>) statewide transportation plan to reduce emissions from the transportation sector equitably through improved land use and transportation planning.
- Wildfire prevention and mitigation work by the Public Utility Commission.
- Agency work is underway to expand the state’s successful Clean Fuels Program (<https://www.oregon.gov/deq/ghgp/cfp/Pages/default.aspx>) , strengthen rules on methane emissions from landfills, and increase energy efficiency standards for buildings and appliances in Oregon to highest national standards.

More information on state agency progress reports is available here (https://www.oregon.gov/gov/Pages/carbonpolicy_climatechange.aspx) .

“The climate crisis remains an emergency that impacts frontline communities and those who live and work closest to our land and waters the most,” said Jim Desmond, Oregon State Director for The Nature Conservancy. “On the anniversary of Governor Brown’s bold executive order, we celebrate the last year of hard work undertaken by Oregonians from varied backgrounds and different parts of the state to address this pressing issue. With the work ahead including a dedicated focus on natural and working lands, we remain committed to collaborating with the governor and others to advance solutions that protect the people, ecosystems and economies of Oregon.”

“The Governor’s Executive Order on Climate expressed a holistic commitment to impacted communities,” said Oriana Magnera, the Energy, Climate, and Transportation Manager at Verde. “This is significant because it isn’t a mere aspiration. It is embedded in implementation processes. There are more environmental justice organizations at rulemaking tables than I’ve ever seen before, and points of accessibility and resources that remove barriers to participation. If agencies truly listen to our organizations and the communities they serve, if they follow our lead, then we have the opportunity to make landmark policy that centers the voices of people who are most impacted by the climate crisis.”

the climate executive order
(<http://www.oregon.gov>)

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previous state carbon emissions goals to reflect current science, setting a standard of 45% reduction from 1990 levels by 2035, and an 80% reduction from 1990 levels by 2050. The order outlined a variety of ways for state agencies to contribute to those goals under existing state law, including:

- Directing the Environmental Quality Commission to set and enforce sector-specific caps on climate pollution.
 - Expanding the Clean Fuels Program to reduce carbon emissions from cars and trucks.
 - Increasing energy efficiency requirements for new buildings, as well as appliance efficiency standards.
 - Creating a statewide public electric charging plan to accelerate the transition to zero-emission vehicles.
 - Evaluating transportation planning and projects through the lens of greenhouse gas emissions.
 - Helping utilities to meet emissions goals.
 - Adding climate action as a top priority for agencies across state government in decision-making and spending.
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