

"GOLD STANDARD" PROPOSAL FOR Beyond Fossil Fuels Initiative in 2016

(Important Note: By "gold standard" we mean that this feels like a comprehensive strategy that addresses both what is already happening in BFF and what we see needs to happen and why. Because BFF is volunteer-led, however, we also need to ask the capacity questions. How do each of these build our capacity? Do we have deep interest in and capacity for this gold standard? If not, do we move to silver or bronze? Or do we increase our capacity by intentionally inviting others to join in this clear work? Or both?)

BFF will engage our work in these significant ways in 2016 in service of the vision to...

- a) transition Oregon from fossil fuels to renewables and move Oregon BEYOND FOSSIL FUELS,**
- b) organize our congregations, neighborhoods and networks to participate in this movement, and**
- c) awaken our leadership, strengthening our congregations and the movement, using the Practices for Awakening Leadership as we work toward the two goals above.**

To accomplish this vision, we see four primary strategies to engage people and congregations/communities at varying levels of involvement in BFF and the movement:

1) Bringing EcoFaith Recovery's Practices for Awakening Leadership to every action, meeting, or gathering in which BFF members/congregations participate either collectively or individually.

What does this mean? Through our monthly Grounding for Action meetings, we practice and get comfortable facilitating the Practices for Awakening Leadership so that any one of us can bring these practices to every aspect of the climate change movement. We share the practices with other organizations and look for opportunities to incorporate the practices into the planning stages of any/every action.

Rationale: This is long-haul work we are part of, and the practices are key ingredients for enlivening and sustaining the movement and our own souls. The practices also strengthen the movement significantly by connecting people relationally, offering grounding in a deeper source of power and imagination, and developing more powerful leaders through story sharing and reflection/evaluation.

2) We invite our congregations/neighborhoods and the entire BFF network to participate in ONE action a month (in addition to our monthly G4A meetings).*

What does this mean? The BFF Action Team synthesizes all the opportunities for action in the coming month and recommends one for strong invitation to the BFF network, while also sharing information about all the other opportunities as well. (For example, what Bonnie and Emily have already begun doing: Emailing about a specific call to action, while including information about other opportunities for action below it.)

Rationale: As we all know there is so much happening, and so many opportunities for action. So much so that even those who are doing this work nearly full time are feeling overwhelmed at times! For the rest of us, particularly those within congregations who are concerned but not yet engaged, the sheer volume is simply too much to handle. And as Lenny says, people move from fear to denial. So by discerning a call to ONE action per month (while informing about the other actions) we are making engagement more accessible.

- **One important caveat:** The nature of this movement often requires quick turnaround and response for urgent actions. There will be times when one action has already been recommended but another significant action arises on very short notice. This strategy is not a hard and fast rule, but a general practice to avoid “the overwhelm” and focus our actions effectively.

3) We engage in the Renew Oregon-sponsored state-wide ballot initiative for Nov. 2016 that would make Oregon coal free by 2030 and 50% renewable energy by 2040. (And possibly other ballot measures that come from the climate change movement.)

What does this mean? A 10-month focused campaign on ballot initiative/s will mean engaging with our congregations and neighborhoods through 1-1 conversations, coffees, house parties, presentations, and events to discuss the initiative/s as well as open up opportunities for deeper reflection and discernment on other climate change issues affecting Oregon, our congregations, neighborhoods and families.

Rationale: Presently one third of Oregon's energy comes from coal plants in Montana and Wyoming. Combined with our existing hydro power Oregon would be 90% renewable by 2040. Internationally 350 has a goal of 100% renewable by 2050 so Oregon will be well on the way. Oregon would become the first state to publicly vote to eliminate coal.

BFF has struggled to discern how we engage the many in our congregations and neighborhoods, who are concerned about climate change, but aren't presently involved in the climate movement. While people already engaged in the movement can easily participate in a variety of actions in multiple areas of the climate change movement, most people in our congregations/neighborhoods need an easier and more gradual on ramp to the climate movement. This campaign becomes an entry point to educate about climate change in general, and the need to oppose fossil fuel exports and invest in renewables specifically. For example, we will have an opportunity to talk about the largest greenhouse emitter in Oregon being proposed for Coos Bay or the mammoth oil facilities being proposed for Vancouver bringing 100 dangerous trains a week coming down the Gorge. Very possibly this will motivate additional opposition to fossil fuel exports.

4) We begin to explore how to bring the Practices and our BFF Sources of Strength to those in the movement (particularly people of faith) who are already preparing for Nonviolent Direct Action (civil disobedience) if and when the need arises.

What does this mean? We begin to have 1-1's with members of the faith community who are already committed to civil disobedience, and explore together how to support them to collectively prepare for NVDA from a faith perspective, and learn together how to engage our congregations/denominations in the moral aspects of climate change.

Rationale: One of the five sources of strength that BFF has claimed is “Kingian Nonviolence.” The call to be ready for civil disobedience has already been out in the climate change movement for some time, and many within the BFF network have already responded to that call. As we move forward, the need for such actions will likely be increasing. This fourth strategy is to explore together how to bring this particular source of strength - faith-based nonviolent direct action in the tradition of MLKing - to the movement, and particularly to the people of faith who feel called to live out their faith in this way.

Concluding note: We see these four strategies as powerful means by which to engage congregations and networks that are currently in varying levels of engagement with the climate change movement. There is not one right way to participate in this movement. But this four-part strategy offers multiple ways to enter and participate in climate justice work through EcoFaith/BFF, strengthen the movement, awaken our leadership, engage our congregations/communities, and discover our collective power for the recovery of human life and the healing of God’s creation.