MINUTES October 15, 2026, 5:30-7:00 pm – Palouse Citizens' Climate Lobby

Community Congregational United Church of Christ, Pullman or via Zoom

(Zoom link and contact info for individuals mentioned below are at the end of this Agenda)

Values Statement: We are committed to working towards fair, effective, and enduring policies to address climate change, and to a process that is inclusive, non-partisan, and respectful of diverse points of view.

Introductions

Simon Smith, Kent Keller, Shannon Scott, Mary DuPree, Kyran Kunkel, Leonard, Kathy Prout, Margaret Davis, Paul Spencer, France Ménard, and Susan James.

Announcements

- CCL -Palouse members sent 150 post cards to low-propensity voters who are CCL members in WA
- **Palouse Basin Water Summit**: 3-7 p.m., Thursday, October 29, SEL Event Center, twentieth annual summit https://palousebasinwatersummit.org
- **VOTE!** Election Day is Tuesday, November 3; Climate signs for Election Day? Pullman and Moscow teams? Contact Simon for signs.
- **Carbon Pricing Education Series, Part 3:** 5-6 p.m., Thursday, November 5, https://community.citizensclimate.org/events/item/24/21465 Worth checking out.
- **CCL November National Monthly Meeting:** 10-11 a.m., Saturday, November 14, https://community.citizensclimate.org/events/item/23/20021
- **CCL Fall Lobby Week (Senate Nov 9 and House Nov 16-20) and Virtual Conference Dec 4-5:** https://community.citizensclimate.org/events/item/23/21533
    - Lobbying and the conference won't be at the same time this year to give time to lobby for permitting reform. You can contact liaisons if you are interested in being on a lobby team. The goal is to pass the BAAJA permitting reform bill before the holiday recess.

Updates and Opportunities

1 **Friends of the Clearwater** – Kyran Kunkel, Executive Director

Kyran connected with CCL-Palouse via Annette Bridges. Next year is FOC's fortieth anniversary. They have so far been successful at protecting the Clearwater basin, 1.5 million roadless acres. We are currently in the sixth extinction crisis, the first one that's human caused. We have lost two thirds of our wildlife since the 1970s globally. The current administration has taken away the role of the public while whittling down national environmental policy. Rather than being on the defense we must now be proactive. The Big Wild will be larger than Yellowstone and Glacier Parks together. The Big Wild campaign includes three initiatives: (1) a wild salmon sanctuary, (2) connectivity for large carnivores with a focus on grizzly bears, and (3) a biodiverse forest and climate reserve. The Big Wild will include Clearwater country to the north and Salmon River country to the south and four large corridors connecting to Yellowstone, Glacier, Hells Canyon and the Selkirks. The goal is to secure 30% of the land by 2030 (the 30 X 30 initiative).

FOC is aligning with other partners like the Nimiipuu, the Idaho Conservation League, the Sierra Club, Friends of the Bitterroot and the Kootenai Environmental Alliance among others. You can join FOC for $35 a year and get the newsletter. FOC's annual celebration will take place Nov 14 from 5-9 p.m. at the 1912 center in Moscow.

2 **City of Moscow Community Solar** – Mac (sent by email).

The anonymous generous donor won't be working with the city but rather will work separately and find another organization to do community solar to benefit lower income people. The city, however, is now interested in developing its own solar to supply their own electricity.

3 **Whitman County Solar Update** – Simon and Kent

Whitman County Commissioners have been developing policies for solar and BESS (Battery Energy Storage Systems); they have had a hiatus since June. The intent now is to have one meeting per month to review draft guidelines and regulations that were developed before June. The deadline for this review is June 27, 2027. The main content of the meeting ten days ago was a statement of these timetables and some comments which were all in favor of a sensible approach to regulations to encourage solar. Encouraging solar is in the Whitman County Comprehensive Plan. There was no Commission discussion. The planning commission meets twice a month, and a meeting each month will be devoted to solar and battery.

4 **CCL October Monthly Call** – Mary

The guest speaker was Sara Peach, editor-in chief of the Yale Climate Connections. Many major news outlets, including NPR and the *Washington Post*, have eliminated climate bureaus, so it's important for us to keep the conversation going through letters to the editor, opinion pieces, etc. Climate Conversations is a ninety-second radio program available to radio stations. You can subscribe to the newsletter at Yale climate connections.org/newsletters. Right now, an important topic is the climate effects on weather.

5 **U of I Arboretum and Botanical Garden Sustainable Practices Fund, Moscow SEC** – Leonard

Running a gas lawnmower for an hour causes more emissions than driving a gas-powered car or pickup 300 miles! Leonard Garrison suggested to the arboretum to electrify their equipment. As a result, they have set up a Sustainable Practices Fund that people can donate to. Aqualawn uses only electric equipment and is currently saving a lot of money. The City of Moscow is gradually electrifying its equipment as well, and Leonard is working with the Moscow Sustainable Environment Commission to develop a plan to lower emissions from gas-powered lawn and garden equipment.

6 **Legislative Update: Bipartisan American Affordability and Jobs Act (BAAJA)** – Leonard

BAAJA has been introduced in the senate by two Democrats and two Republicans. The house has passed a couple of not very good permitting reform bills, but they have not been approved in the senate. BAAJA is still in committee, and they want to get it done in November. During the lame duck sessions some republicans who have lost their seats may vote for it. However, it is dividing some environmental and climate groups. CCL predicts that it will benefit clean energy more than fossil fuels. Call and email your senators and write letters to the editor. Go to the action link (easiest thing to do).

Action link: **cclusa.org/baaja**

https://community.citizensclimate.org/topics/permitting-reform-toolkit
BAAJA Training: https://community.citizensclimate.org/events/item/24/21842

7 **Attend candidate forums, phonebank with Environmental Voter Project**:
https://www.environmentalvoter.org

Candidate forums. See league of women voters for times and places.

8 **Penstemon Path Tree Planting** – Leonard

Trish Hartzell donated a conservation easement on her land that starts from where an Idler's Rest trail ends. There are some meadows that used to be forest and are perfect places to plant trees. Trish wants to do it in the fall; she will get 20 trees. This has been scheduled for Saturday, October 31 at 11 a.m. Meet at Trish's house, 1009 Restful Lane north of Moscow.

8.5 **Possible spring electric lawn equipment fair?**

9 **Communication Exercise** (near end of agenda) – Leonard

Ongoing Palouse CCL Initiatives

- **Lobbying Congress** - Ian (Senator Risch ID), Judy (Rep. Baumgartner, WA)
- **National CCL Initiatives: local team leaders:**
  - **Carbon Pricing and Carbon Border Adjustments**– Margaret Davis (lead)
  - **Building Electrification and Efficiency**—Mary DuPree and Mac Cantrell (leads)
  - **Healthy Forests**—Leonard Garrison (lead)
  - **Permitting Reform**
- **Pullman City** –Marilyn Von Seggern, Stephan Flint
- **Moscow City –** Mary DuPree
- **Tabling** – Simon Smith
- **Agriculture and rural issues—**Judy Meuth, Bill Voxman, Kathy Dawes
- **Publications** – Judy Meuth; Website – Joe Pallen; Facebook—Margaret Davis
  - Saving Green, LTEs
- **Presentations** – Simon Smith, Judy Meuth

Continuing Actions

- Watch the **CCL National Monthly Mtg** on the 2nd Saturday of the month https://citizensclimatelobby.org/monthly-speakers/
- **CCL's Live Informational Session**: Every Wed at 5 pm on Zoom. Learn more about CCL's work. https://citizensclimatelobby.org/informational-session/
- Log actions on CCL's Action Tracker: ttps://community.citizensclimate.org/actions/home
- Send photos and info about CCL and our activities to Margaret Davis

COMMUNICATION SKILLS EXERCISE: Helping BAAJA sound like a blast! - Leonard

With any new piece of legislation, it's important we understand how to talk about it in ways that will resonate with people. Here are two quick "elevator pitches" so you can practice highlighting the benefits of BAAJA to a left-leaning audience or to a right-leaning audience.

Instructions:

1. With a partner, read the first elevator pitch aloud.
2. Afterward, share the points you remember from the paragraph. What phrases stick in your mind?
3. Swap until everyone has had a chance to read the elevator pitch aloud.
4. If time allows, repeat with the second elevator pitch.

Elevator pitch 1 - Left-leaning audience:

I'm excited about BAAJA because it will help us build clean energy much faster. Renewables and other clean technologies are ready to go, but too many good projects still get stuck waiting years to connect to the grid or get permits. This bipartisan bill helps tackle those bottlenecks so we can build more clean energy, modernize our grid, and cut climate pollution faster. At the same time, it will lower energy costs nationwide, which is something I think we all can agree on.

Elevator pitch 2 - Right-leaning audience:

What I like about BAAJA is that it helps America get back to building things. Right now, it takes way too long to permit the energy projects, power lines, and infrastructure our country needs. This bipartisan bill cuts through some of those barriers so we can produce more energy here at home, strengthen our grid, create good American jobs, and keep up with growing energy demand. To me, it's a practical way to make America more energy secure and competitive. At the same time, it will lower energy costs nationwide, which is something I think we all can agree on.

Next meeting: Thursday, November 19, 5:30 pm, Fiske Room of the 1912 Center, Moscow

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