

Name of preparer:	Michelle Manger Keip
Email Address:	michelle@wellspringai.com
Who is responsible for this proposal (can be a collection of people, a person, a social justice team or a congregation.) ?	Michelle Keip
What is the Issue?	Clean Air Oregon
Why do you want to work on this issue?	<p>As a public health nurse (retired) I have life-long interest in how environmental factors impact both individual and collective human health. As an environmental activist/ community organizer, I empower people, especially families, to steward their environment for the benefit of all life. The last 10 years i concentrated on Creek Stewardship in Santa Rosa California. Since moving to Grants Pass, Oregon last year I've wondered about the focus of my service in my new home.</p> <p>A few months ago a neighbor told me she might be moving because the industrial air pollution in our neighborhood was hurting her health. I invited her to come to our UU originated group, Sustainable Rogue Valley, to share her concerns. Soon we were in touch with Neighbors for Clean Air (NCA) in Portland, learning about the new regulations for industrial air pollution proposed by Cleaner Air Oregon (CAO)and motivated to make our voices heard in the current rule-making process. We became aware that our neighborhood has environmental justice issues, being located next to the Heavy Industrial Zone of Grants Pass and several public schools.</p> <p>NCA continues to mentor our small "Cleaner Air Grants Pass" group as we pursue shared goals of pushing for the best environmental protections in the rule-making process of CAO, of controlling the narrative regarding clean air so it doesn't get undermined by opposing political and economic interests, and of building community support for Clean Air in Oregon in all areas of concern (industrial pollution, diesel, environmental justice, wood smoke etc.)</p> <p>Grants Pass is somewhat isolated and predominantly conservative, motivating me to reach out to other Oregon communities for support and collaboration. A member of the UU Fellowship of Grants Pass since I moved here in 2015, I am excited about joining the Oregon UU Voices for Justice to work together to create change and promote solutions. Much of the community activism regarding Clean Air in Oregon is in the Salem/Portland area, and I'd love for the UU Voices to take this timely opportunity to influence the protection of Clean Air in Oregon for the future of all.</p>

How is this issue grounded in Unitarian Universalist values? (See Grounding)

This issue goes beyond respecting the interdependent web of all existence to taking responsible action to ensure the restoration and protection of the web of life, which depends upon clean air.

My mentor at NCA, clean air Attorney Nick Caleb, tells me he's worked with many UU folks over the years. New to UU myself, I'm not aware of UU engagement.

Regarding spiritual, philosophical, historical and ethical basis for this issue, I think it all comes down to the understanding that if we don't take care of the health of our environment and reverse our trend to harm our earth, water and air, we won't have a future for human life on Earth. If instead we come together with love, respect and commitment to act on behalf of future generations, we will have the peace of mind knowing we have played our part for the greater good.

Who are potential partners? (See Allies)

The following organizations are part of the Big Tent Clean Air Coalition in Oregon: Oregon Physicians for Responsibility, Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Northwest Environmental Defense Center, Crag Law Center, Beyond Toxics, OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon, South Portland Air Quality, Eastside Portland Air Coalition, North Portland Air Quality, Cully Air Action Team, Neighbors for Clean Air, and 350 PDX. Others are joining.

I'm not aware of Oregon UU's who are actively engaged in the Clean Air Oregon issue. I hope to hear about and even meet such UU's at the annual Voices meeting on 10/15!

As an issue that impacts everyone and all life, the Clean Air issue needs many more voices to be heard. UU Voices are sure to be respected partners in the public dialogue.

Does this have an Oregon focus and Oregon UU interest and support? (See Fit)

The Big Tent Clean Air Coalition of Oregon is open to including UU voices

Although Environmental Justice is not the only dimension of the Clean Air issue, we could focus on it.

Again, being somewhat new to UU and in the relatively isolated congregation of Grants Pass, I can't answer most of the FIT questions. I do feel confident that if Voices chose this as one of our campaigns we could make a real difference because of what is going on NOW regarding Clean Air in Oregon.

What Campaign is this a part?

Environmental Justice

What makes this an issue to work on NOW? (Opportunity)

Clean Air is a universal need of all life that is threatened by industrial pollution. It is a timely issue in Oregon because our industrial air toxics regulations are being rewritten over the next 2 years with the Cleaner Air Oregon reform effort promised by Governor Brown. New air quality regulations will be based on protecting human health, demanding that regulators set enforceable air quality standards based on what is clean and

safe, departing from the current system of relying on technology only standards.

The Big Tent Clean Air Coalition plans a major Clean Air event in February when the new session of congress begins.

NCA plans to hire an Environmental Justice organizer soon and in the next year will be bringing in experts from outside of Oregon for public forums in Portland.

Clean Diesel coalitions have been growing for years in Oregon and will keep growing. There is an opportunity to have our voices heard NOW because Oregon must pass a diesel bill soon in order to accept the massive VW settlement money.

The primary groups that oppose Clean Air are the Association of Oregon Industries, the Oregon Truckers Association and of course conservative legislators who support industry.

The last year has been big in Portland for toxics monitoring getting in the news. Near my home, Medford discovered lead in city and school pipes this year. With environmental toxics more in the public awareness, there will surely be more reporting of newly discovered toxic hot spots. We can be part of growing that awareness and offering avenues for effective action in our congregations and communities.

I am new to the Clean Air issue and this kind of community organizing. It is my hope that UU Voices will reveal others who are also passionate about this issue so we may co-create a "champion team" for this issue.