

Students take on climate change

By Jim Cornelius
News Editor

Sisters High School science students got a quick shot of engagement with the issues surrounding climate change and citizenship in a visit last week by Mary Christina Wood, author, law professor and environmental law expert.

Professor Wood — a Philip H. Knight professor of law and faculty director of the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center at the University of Oregon — was in Central Oregon for a presentation for Central Oregon Community College Foundation and the Nancy R. Chandler Visiting Scholar program on what the latest science says about the stresses in the global environment and the effect on Oregon's climate and ecosystem.

"I teach people to engage government to make laws to help society. That's what I do," she explained.

She sought to inspire students to "hold society accountable for what you will inherit." The mechanism to do that, she says, is public trust doctrine, a legal doctrine that holds that government at all levels

is responsible for preserving and restoring the environment for the benefit of present and future generations.

Students identified significant impacts from climate change: rising sea levels; habitat destruction; drought due to diminished snow pack; disruption of food supplies.

There were no challenges to the assertion that climate change is underway and that mankind is a primary contributor. Student Betsy Ausman did question the (very) long-term impacts — if climate change forced humans into extinction, there would be no more carbon emission and the earth would regenerate.

Professor Wood jumped on that assertion, agreeing with Ausman's assessment.

"Nobody is worried about the planet and that's a good point," she said.

It's human life and the quality of life that's at stake, Wood asserted.

The professor queried students on how much time they believe they have to affect change. One student believes that we're already past the tipping point.

"I think you're out of time," he said.

Professor Wood did not shoot that assertion down entirely.

"Nobody can really say what the tipping point is," she said.

However, she argued that the scientists that she is in communication with believe there is still time to reduce and reverse harm — if action is taken now. She estimates that a seven percent reduction in carbon emissions is a "path downward to restoration." However, the required amount of reduction increases with inaction over time, requiring a 15 percent reduction to have the same effect in 2020.

Wood urged students to get engaged now and put pressure on legislators to pay attention. Those legislators, she said, are focused on "pot, guns, and ethics."

"They're not thinking about your climate," she said. "They're consumed with these issues."

She urged the students to get in front of their legislators and demand a plan to reduce CO2 emissions.

"You are the first generation to understand the problem," she said. "Assert your citizenship at this critical moment in time."

Learn about drying foods at workshop

Getting ready for a season of hiking and backpacking? Maybe you need some quick snacks to grab-and-go. You'll need lightweight foods that don't need refrigeration. Save some money and preparation time by making your own dried foods and herbs.

Learn the principles of drying food and how to enjoy some of your favorite foods year-round by practicing safe preparation of foods at a hands-on workshop led by OSU Extension Master Food Preservers Mary Lowe, Jenny Cliff, Gayle Hoagland and Ann Juttelstad.

Participants will see demonstrations to preserve high-quality dried fruits, vegetables, and herbs, and then help prepare and taste a variety of these food samples. The workshop will be on Thursday, June 4, at the Oregon State University Extension-Deschutes County office at the Fairgrounds in Redmond, 9 a.m. to noon. Cost for the workshop is \$15. The

registration fee includes products made in the lab, recipes, and "how-to" booklets. Class size is limited. The deadline for registration is June 2. Call to register at the OSU Deschutes County Extension office at 541-548-6088.

Not all food preservation recipes are safe. OSU Extension recommends only using up-to-date, tested recipes from reliable resources for canning. Food preservation booklets with tested recipes can be purchased at your local county Extension office, or ordered or downloaded for free online at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/fch/food-preservation>.



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