

Experts discuss global warming

Speakers at a recent conference on campus called for U.S. action to end global warming

By Ben Garvey
Freelance Reporter

The United States is not taking an active stance to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, several environmental scientists and politicians said during a University Solar Information Center conference held Monday to discuss the problem of global warming.

Last week, President Clinton introduced a proposal that would reduce greenhouse gasses, such as carbon dioxide, to 1990 levels by the year 2012.

"The policy is too little, too late," Oregon Rep. Cynthia Wooten said. "We need to encourage the Clinton administration to have a more forthright plan."

Greenhouse gases trap the solar heat in the Earth's atmosphere.

Jason Wilkinson, a senior at the University and co-director of the Solar Information Center, said the

slightest rise in temperature could be catastrophic.

"The implications [of global warming] worldwide will be the spreading of diseases, the survival of many species that depend on the environment, and the destruction of our own environment," Wilkinson said. "Scientifically, it's about the biggest issue concerning humanity."

The United States produces 20 percent of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, while it makes up only 4 percent of the total population. The U.S. proposal to cut greenhouse gasses was compared to that of the European Union, which plans to cut its emissions to 7 percent below the 1990 levels.

"We need to get out in front of the greenhouse gas reduction and become leaders," said Rhys Roth, director of the Northwest environmental group Atmospheric Alliance. "We need to seize the economic opportunities of the global warming process."

Roth said the lack of U.S. action to reduce carbon dioxide could interfere with the signing of a world-

wide treaty for global warming. Some environmentalists are critical of Clinton's proposal because they believe America should be the leader of carbon dioxide reduction since it produces more than any other country.

Although people may think the issue of global warming is out of individual control, Wooten said they can empower themselves to make a change in how the United States deals with global warming.

"It is the industrial emissions and corporate life that needs to make changes," she said. "We have to rethink the way that we manufacture our goods. We need to invite the corporate companies to compromise. It can happen. It requires a will. It is not mutually exclusive. We can work together."

Wilkinson said he believes people can reduce greenhouse gas emissions by living simpler lives, such as replacing a car with a bike and using solar and renewable energy. By reducing the use of energy and fossil fuels, he said people can greatly reduce the threat of global warming in the future.

Lectures: Lapin to lecture at University

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"I'm impressed," Scott said. "I'm looking forward to looking at his ideas."

In addition to Lapin's lectures, Gutenberg College President David Crabtree will speak on "What Has Jerusalem to Do with Athens?" McKenzie Study Center teacher Ron Julian will also present "When will these things be? What Jesus teaches about the end of the world." Oktoberfuss will

take place Nov. 1 through Nov. 3 at the Willamalane Senior Adult Activity Center in Springfield. Registration begins at 1 p.m. on Nov. 1. Prices depend on the number of lectures attended.

In conjunction with Oktoberfuss, Lapin will deliver a free lecture in 150 Columbia at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 3 sponsored in part by the Young Americas Foundation. His lecture, "Morality in the Marketplace," will discuss the relation-

ship between political freedom, economic freedom and the Judeo-Christian tradition.

"The basic problem of human existence is our wants become our needs, and they are almost infinite, yet the material resources available are limited," Lapin said. "How does each person strike a balance between what we want and have? I believe the two answers to be guns and money. I believe God prefers the latter."

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