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we're talking about is transferring two agencies, not just one. We tend to focus on the water bureau because there are some things — that Randy Leonard did in particular — that have drawn a lot of public criticism. But, in fact, they are going after two bureaus; they are going after the Portland Water Bureau and the Bureau of Environmental Services. Those two bureaus manage \$15 billion worth of infrastructure in Portland. It's absolutely critical that that would be integrated into the City of Portland, to the degree that it needs to be reformed. There are plenty of groups working on that. We've been very effective with the Bureau of Environmental Services. There are many ways to reform a bureau, you don't have to jump into bed with corporate polluters.

This is really a two-step and in some ways a three-step effort. At the same time they brought the lawsuit they said they also might bring in the initiative, in which they not only attack some of the more notorious projects like the Portland Loos and the Rose Festival Headquarters, but every single significant green program in Portland including River Plan, Superfund, tree planting programs, street and garden protection programs. Virtually every single important environmental program in Portland was named in their lawsuit as illegal.

That lawsuit still hasn't been resolved. Rather than waiting for the lawsuit to be resolved, they brought this initiative as well. I don't think anybody would think that somehow they are separated, or that suddenly these folks have turned into populists and environmentalists, if you look at the track record.

**J.R.:** *What if the initiative passes? What do you think we would see as a result of this?*

**B.S.:** We are already seeing impacts. This is a very aggressive campaign against the environmental programs. We've already seen city council cut some of them, especially in the last budget cycle. They're feeling pressure from the big corporate polluters, both in terms of the lawsuit and in terms of the initiative. We're already seeing a chilling effect.

If this thing passes, you are going to see a perpetual battle to keep these utilities from falling into the very hands they should be protecting us from. We'll continue the fight, if it passes, and try to make sure that good people are elected. But that's going to take a tremendous amount of resources and we expect they will have very well-funded corporate campaigns backing candidates for these positions, which are much more vulnerable than our city council positions.

Portland is not just a national leader in these kinds of things, it's an international leader. People come from all over the world to see the environmental work that is going on in Portland. It is absolutely cutting edge. And not only is it green, but it's well-proven to actually save money on the things that these utilities are charged with doing. We don't just do them because they're green. We do them because they are more cost-effective than some of the great infrastructure programs.

This is masquerading as a populist movement — but they left all of East Portland out. I think it tells us something about how much these folks actually care about our community. Nobody apparently realized that the Portland School District doesn't cover East Portland.

I've spoken to a lot of people in East Portland who say maybe this is a way for us to get more of a voice. The people who are pushing this initiative forgot them altogether. I think for folks who are concerned about equity, especially equity in East Portland, it's a terrible measure. It's a total mess.

I work on forest issues and I don't think the forest service does anywhere enough to help protect the forest. But the last thing I would do is join forces with the timber industry to attack the forest service. I want to build their effectiveness. I want to build their strength and accountability and I want

them to enforce our environmental laws. I don't want to duck them at the behest of the interest of the very industry that we need to enforce against.

To me, that isn't a strategy, that is a complete and total cop out. Show up at city council, run good candidates, participate in the democratic process and adopt approaches that will improve our communities, not undermine them.

**J.R.:** *You urge people not to sign the petitions. Are there other things that people in Portland can do to influence this action?*

**B.S.:** One of the real tragedies of this initiative, for any environmentalist who might support it, is that it's drawing resources off the most important battles that are occurring this year. Get involved. You want to protect our landscape and our water resources — join the fight on Superfund. Join the fight on West Hayden Island. Get involved in organizations that are actually effecting real change on the ground. And if you want to take on the water bureau, put together a real coalition of groups that has the capacity and the depth to actually effect change there.

I would also advise people to be careful about misdirected anger. I have seen a lot of programs being attacked based on very little information. Today for example, the BES grant program — small grants that go primarily to groups representing underserved communities to get them engaged in watershed health — it was being portrayed as a corrupt program. Some of these corporate entities are doing a good job of harnessing that anger and directing it towards programs that we should be protecting.

You have to be very careful about the rhetoric. Get the facts. Don't fall into the trap of saying that everything our city government does is corrupt. Because there's a lot of very good things it does as well, and you don't want to destroy those programs. You'll set yourself back a long way. It took a long time to put a lot of those things in place. It doesn't take much time to destroy them, and once you do they don't come back very quickly or easily.

**J.R.:** *Portland's Comprehensive Plan Update puts West Hayden Island at risk of being turned into industrial-use land.*

**B.S.:** West Hayden Island has been at risk for a long time. I started fighting the annexation of West Hayden Island in 1997 and other Auduboners were working on it before me. For people to say grassroots don't have a voice in city hall, we had a long battle, but the courts have not been able to move forward for a decade and a half. They are still in the same position they were in in 1997. They have not been able to annex the island and they have not been able to re-zone it. That's because a very effective coalition of environmental groups, tribes and the local community — which is primarily a manufactured-home community of mostly low-income older people — have waged an intense battle to keep this from happening.

The Comprehensive Plan is bigger and more complex than just Hayden Island, though. What we're dealing with is the fact that the statewide land use planning goal, Goal 9, requires that the city maintain a 15-plus-year supply of industrial land. The city has determined that it has a 670-acre deficit. As a result, it's trying to find "new industrial land to fill that capacity demand." It's looking at Hayden Island, converting golf courses, converting Portland International

Raceway. It's looking at putting industry into neighborhoods. It's looking at all kinds of desperate measures to come with the 670 acres.

Portland has run out of big pieces of land. We don't have any left, we're a landlocked city surrounded by other cities. The only way we could possibly come up with those 670 acres at this point — and we don't need it, but even if you accept that we do — the only way to come up with it is to start to destroy other community values. To destroy our environment, undermine our neighborhoods, convert landscapes that are very important for other purposes. That's not acceptable.

What scares me a lot is that it's a technical, complicated process. People don't see the effects of these decisions immediately. They don't necessarily realize that this decision is going to have profound impacts on what their neighborhoods look like down the road. There's nothing on the table right here and now that's fully tangible to anybody. It's all on paper. It's important that we shift our focus to the Comprehensive Plan, Superfund, Hayden Island.

Looping back to the initiative, I suspect that the big industrial backers of this initiative in some ways already think they've won. It is taking an incredible amount of resources from the environmental community, at a time when critical decisions are pending, to fight this initiative.

Even if they lose, they will still have diverted an incredible amount of attention away from the most important environmental issues that are facing our communities right now, while everybody mobilizes to fight this water issue.

**J.R.:** *Do you think it's intentional, on some level?*

**B.S.:** There's no question in my mind, that is part of the strategy and how they have justified it to themselves. I say that because these are businesses and industries that have an incredibly long track record of fighting environmental programs and they are very sophisticated in how they go about it. We have seen long-term strategies put in place over and over again to disrupt environmental rule-making processes. Anybody who thinks these industries aren't acutely aware of the implications of the decisions over the next couple years, is kidding themselves.

Let's use Superfund as an example. Right now the feasibility for the Superfund process projects industrial costs to clean up the river that will range from \$280 million at the low end, to about \$1.8 billion at the high end. If industry can effectively fight for a very minimal clean up, they could save themselves over \$1.5 billion. That's what's at stake on Superfund for them.

Think about that — industrial stakeholders could spend \$100 million to \$300 million just on advocacy and outreach, pushing their agenda with politicians. They could spend hundreds of millions of dollars and potentially still save themselves more than a billion dollars.

When you're dealing with numbers like that, of the billion-plus dollars, you gotta believe these folks are thinking very hard about their strategy. Environmental groups are dedicating resources now to fighting this initiative. These resources would be immediately shifted back to Hayden Island, Superfund and the Comprehensive Plan. That alone is a major victory for them. The bottom line, though, is we're gonna double down and fight twice as hard so that we take care of all these things.

**J.R.:** *Sen. Ron Wyden just unveiled The Oregon and California Land Act of 2013, which will double the amount of timber harvested from more than 2 million acres of federal forest land in western Oregon. What is Audubon's stance?*

**B.S.:** We oppose it and are very disappointed in Sen. Wyden. He's done some good things for the environment over the years but this isn't one of them. This takes us back to an era of clearcutting. It's not a solution, it's a regression. Oregon rejected that approach a long time ago. This will take us backwards. We do need to deal with the county funding challenges, but this isn't the way to do it.

We need to take a much more holistic approach. That means some of these counties have to step up and increase their tax rates. They haven't done that in a long time. They have deliberately created a train wreck. So [they need to] look at their own taxing system.

We need to look at log exports. We are still exporting a tremendous number of logs to Asia and we're exporting the jobs that go with them and the tax base that goes with that. We need to get a handle on that and it's up to the state to really reign that in and make sure that we capitalize on the logs that are harvested in Oregon.

We need to move to sustainable log practices on these landscapes. The Northwest Forest Plan was an incredibly important step forward. This new proposal takes us away from that. But we need to continue to move in that direction, toward protecting old-growth ecosystems in older forests, focusing on smaller trees and plantations and sustainable logging.

We're gonna fight like hell. It's a bad piece of legislation. The environmental community tried to head it off and they still stand ready to work with Senator Wyden on real solutions. We think Oregonians are going to strongly reject a return to the era of clear cutting on federal lands. It's time to bury that dinosaur.

**J.R.:** *There's so much bad news — a slugging economy, environmental degradation, corporate encroachment on civil rights, natural disasters and climate change — how do you stay positive?*

**B.S.:** I am an optimist but we have some pretty tough, divisive issues right now. I guess the way I stay optimistic is we also have a lot to be proud of and to build upon. We are an international leader in Portland on many environmental initiatives and we continue to be a leader. And that means fixing the things that aren't working right and building upon the things that are. It doesn't mean abandoning ship and joining forces with corporate polluters.

It's important for people to take a careful look at what's working and what isn't and to be thoughtful about how they engage. It's way too easy to simply say it's hopeless or say everybody is corrupt or say we just need to throw everything we have out and start over. That's an easy escape route and it's a cop out. We've got to take a careful look at what is working and what isn't and put together good, broad, progressive coalitions to fight back. If we do that we can win, and I mean more than just environmental coalitions.

We need to be looking across the entire spectrum of social causes. How do we build complete and healthy communities? That means adequate housing, good jobs, access to good schools, transportation systems and a healthy environment. Portland has some good models to work off of, like the Coalition for a Liveable Future and other coalitions that have formed. We aren't strong enough individually to get it done, if our causes are fragmented. But if we can work together we are strong enough.

That's one of the things that worries me, maybe even more than the initiative passing, is the cynicism that it's based upon. That to me is a big threat. This is an incredibly cynical, negative, destructive initiative that says, let's just tear everything down and hope it comes out better the next time. That to me isn't a solution.