



PHOTO BY PFC. LEVI READ/COAST GUARD

Rail cars burn near the Columbia River Gorge after an oil train derailment June 3 near Mosier, Ore.

Local climate activists plan their response to oil train derailment

The impending 'mass direct action' follows a global climate change campaign led by 350.org. Its founder, Bill McKibben, is coming to Portland to speak.

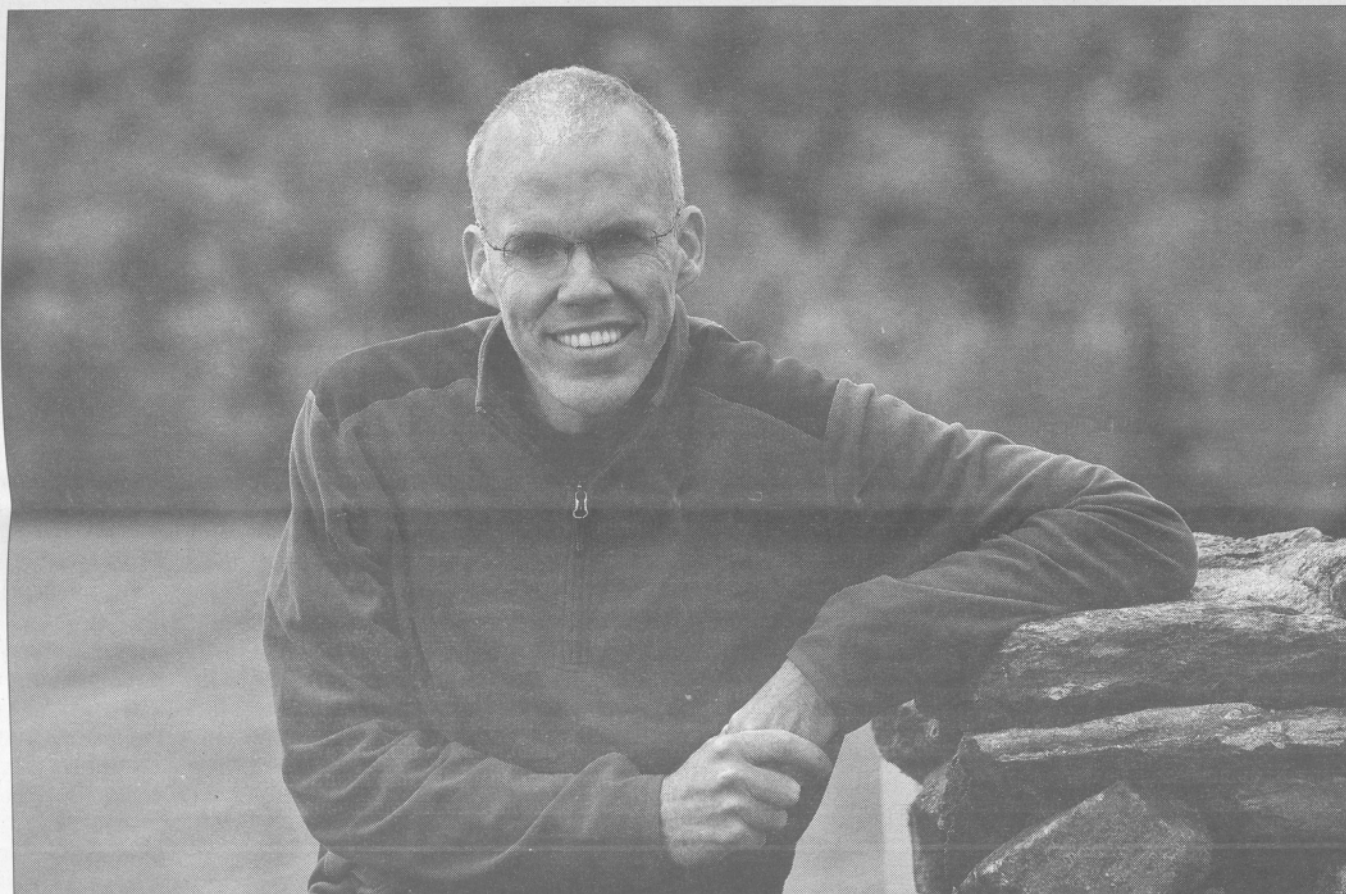


PHOTO BY NANCIE BATTAGLIA

Bill McKibben is the founder of 350.org, a global organization at the forefront of the climate movement. He'll speak June 16 at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall in Portland as part of World Affairs Council of Oregon's 2016 International Speaker Series.

BY EMILY GREEN
STAFF WRITER

On the evening of June 6, more than a hundred climate activists met at the First Unitarian Church in downtown Portland to discuss their response to the oil train derailment in the Columbia River Gorge three days earlier, said 350PDX director Adriana Voss-Andreae.

"The call for a temporary moratorium on oil trains is a call for a shred of decency for the Mosier community, but it does nothing to meet the magnitude of the problem," she said. "If the government won't stop the bomb trains, then we must do so ourselves. There will be a mass direct action in the coming two weeks. We encourage all to join."

Details will be posted at 350.pdx.org or portlandrisingtide.org as they develop.

The derailment and ensuing outrage in Oregon comes on the heels of what was a

mammoth month for the climate change movement.

In early May, tens of thousands of climate activists across six continents took part in the most expansive global civil disobedience action in history against the burning and extraction of fossil fuels in history. These actions followed April, the 12th consecutive month of record heat according to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

For 12 hours, they shut down the United Kingdom's largest coal mine in Wales. In Australia, more than a thousand protesters blocked one of the world's largest coal ports with kayaks obstructing the harbor while others lay across rail crossings. In the U.S., thousands marched through downtown Los Angeles; hundreds protested at two oil refineries in Washington; activists disrupted an auction in Colorado where public lands were being sold for oil and natural gas drilling; in Washington, D.C., they called on the White House to stop offshore drilling;

and in Chicago they gathered at an oil refinery and at the site of a 2014 oil spill at Lake Michigan. They marched in Africa, New Zealand, South America, Canada and the Philippines, where 10,000 people showed up for a march in Batangas City to demand the closure of a coal plant.

These coordinated events were all part of a 12-day-long call to action under the banner "Break Free" and targeted what organizers say are the world's most dangerous fossil fuel projects.

Break Free was largely orchestrated by 350.org, a global organization at the forefront of the climate movement, with roughly 40 other climate action organizations from around the world joining in.

Sitting on the board of 350.org is founder and senior adviser Bill McKibben, and he'll be in Portland on Thursday, June 16, to give

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