

OPINION



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If we act now, we can make a difference

The signs of the climate crisis are everywhere — droughts, wildfires, extreme heat waves, flooding and more intense hurricanes. We can no longer ignore the growing costs of climate change on people and our communities.

And there can be no action to fight climate change and limit its impacts without including the ocean. The ocean



KATE BROWN

plays an essential role in climate regulation and provides solutions for adaptation and mitigation to address climate-driven impacts. Ocean-climate action must reduce those impacts and build resilience for ecosystems and coastal communities dependent upon a healthy ocean. Our ocean and coasts can help us meet our climate goals.



JAY INSLEE

Along the West Coast, our culture, traditions and economies are strongly connected to our ocean, coasts and estuaries. From fishing to aquaculture to recreation and shipping, our coasts support thousands of family-wage jobs, maintain our cultural identities and help feed people.



ELENI KOUNALAKIS

Since time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have made the rich ocean and marine coastlines of the West Coast their home. Abundant salmon, halibut, whales, Dungeness crab and shellfish remain an important foundation to Indigenous ways of life for hundreds of First Nations and tribes in our region.



JOHN HORGAN

Up and down our coastlines, we have already experienced the ravages of climate-ocean change including sea-level rise, ocean acidification, ocean warming and reduced oxygen levels. Recent marine heat waves and harmful algal blooms have killed or poisoned shellfish and marine mammals and caused temporary closures to important commercial fisheries including tribal, First Nation and recreational harvesting. Ocean acidification is damaging shell-forming species, impacting shellfish aquaculture production and ecosystem health. Iconic species like salmon and orcas and important habitats like kelp forests are suffering dramatic declines due to climate-driven impacts.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently reported that sea-level rise, ocean acidification, ocean warming and deoxygenation will continue to increase in the 21st century — how fast and how much change we experience are dependent on future emissions scenarios. The West Coast has experienced a preview of the changes to come if we do not act urgently and aggressively to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

The good news is that if we act now, we can make a difference. Our leaders have banded together to take action. We support a regional partnership called the Pacific Coast Collaborative to advance climate policies, build a clean energy economy and infrastructure and increase



Hailey Hoffman/The Astorian

Governors from Oregon and Washington say there can be no action to fight climate change and limit its impacts without including the ocean.

OUR DECISIONS MATTER. AND WE AREN'T WAITING TO ACT — ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY MUST PLAY A ROLE IN TAKING BOLD OCEAN AND CLIMATE ACTION AND INCREASING OUR RESILIENCE.

our resilience to impacts already occurring.

We are taking action by requiring more clean electricity, reducing transportation emissions with low-carbon fuels and zero-emission vehicle targets, and reducing carbon pollution by putting a price on climate-harming pollution to ensure we dramatically cut our greenhouse gas emissions.

On the ocean and coastal front, we're taking additional actions to reduce root causes and build resilience of key ocean businesses, ecosystems and communities to impacts. We're working to rein in local pollution that exacerbates stress on ocean and coastal ecosystems, including by upgrading our wastewater and stormwater systems and taking action to prevent plastic pollution and other marine debris from harming coastal waters.

We are evaluating how nature-based solutions, including some ocean and coastal systems, so-called blue carbon habitats, can contribute to sequestering carbon through targeted assessments. And we are advancing the protection and restoration of key coastal and marine natural areas with goals and targets that support ecosystem resilience and recovery.

We are emphasizing environmental justice as we work to predict risks, vulnerabilities and solutions along our coast and with our coastal communities. Social vulnerability assessments are taking shape in partnership with tribal leaders, First Nations, communities and resource managers to help determine risks to culturally and socially important species, identify information needs and support

management and adaptation actions that will increase resilience.

We've helped synthesize scientific understanding by facilitating communication among regional scientists, managers and policymakers and are increasing and coordinating investments for regional research, monitoring and forecasting. These efforts will provide information on the status and trends of climate impacts on the world's oceans. For ocean acidification, enhancing monitoring to better couple biological and chemical data has the potential to offer decision-makers with information needed to develop policy in response to worsening conditions that threaten the stability of the affected ecosystems.

On that front, we continue to learn from each other and share information such as the recently released publication, "Ocean Acidification: Insight for Policy and Integrated Management," which examines the challenges and opportunities facing state and regional governments in responding to ocean-climate impacts. The issue includes 42 authors representing government and nongovernment institutions across nine states.

And we are having global impact. In 2016, we launched the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification and issued a call to national, subnational and civil society to protect oceans from the impacts of rising carbon emissions and help do our part to meet the goals of the Paris climate agreement. Today, we have over 100 members including nations such as Fiji, Chile, New Zealand, France, Canada and Sweden along with many U.S. states, tribal government and

First Nations, cities and ports. Members are committed to addressing ocean acidification and elevating the importance of integrating the ocean in climate policy frameworks such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

As part of our leadership role at COP26 — we are calling for bold ocean-climate actions that:

- Implement aggressive climate action through carbon emissions reductions. Achieving ambitious emission reductions targets is the most important step in turning the tide of climate impacts on our ocean.

- Create ongoing opportunities to integrate the ocean into international climate policy efforts. Sharing information on ocean solutions and actions can help us all do more to reduce ocean and coastal impacts and build resilience faster.

- Increase international and domestic finance for science-based ocean mitigation and adaptation strategies.

- Integrate ocean actions into climate policies at the domestic level.

- Ensure tribal sovereigns, First Nations and Indigenous peoples' knowledge, leadership and priorities as well as those of overburdened communities are reflected across ocean and coastal climate change response strategies and processes, including consideration of tribal treaty rights and responsibilities.

Our decisions matter. And we aren't waiting to act — all levels of government and society must play a role in taking bold ocean and climate action and increasing our resilience. We are leading by harnessing the power of regionally coordinated action to help defeat the climate crisis and to help our coastal communities and ocean resources endure for generations to come.

Kate Brown is the governor of Oregon. Jay Inslee is the governor of Washington. Eleni Kounalakis is the lieutenant governor of California. John Horgan is the premier of British Columbia.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Beating boredom

Is your life too predictable? The same routine every day? I guess we all need a routine. But it seems to me the secret for taking boredom out of our lives is by programming lots of surprises into our lives.

One morning I told my wife I was going to take her on a cruise. I drove to the ferry landing in Westport, and we cruised across the Columbia River.

We on the North Coast have no excuse for being bored. Surprises galore are everywhere. We live in an area full of surprises. Trips to Cape Disappointment, to North Head, and just crossing the Astoria Bridge, can be a surprise.

Boredom ceases when we get into action and look for surprises all about us. Where in the world can you look out your window and see elk nibbling in your grass? Or go to the store and find fresh seafood — surprise!

Listening to the crash of waves from our Pacific Ocean surprises; the Columbia River Maritime Museum and the Astoria Column, all surprises!

Beat boredom! Every day is brand new

— look for all the surprises!

JIM BERNARD
Warrenton

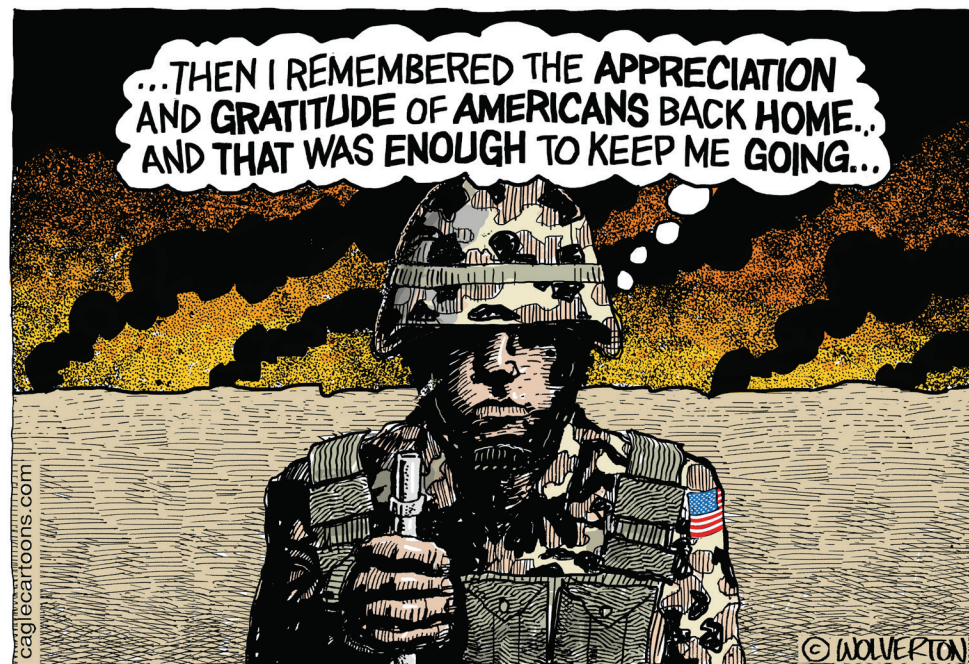
Outstanding performance

There was an outstanding performance Sunday afternoon at the beautifully unique and recently renovated Liberty Theatre.

After a year hiatus because of COVID-19 health measures, the North Coast Symphonic Band opened its 42nd concert season with a marvelous repertoire of songs celebrating American music. The Sunday show was led off by the familiar Astoria Tuba Quartet.

The North Coast Symphonic Band is made up fellow citizens from our North Coast, consisting of professional and volunteer musicians from different walks of life who put in many hours of practice to bring high level music to our area. We are fortunate that they dedicate their time and talents to entertain us.

Visiting guest conductors Joan Paddock and Seth Wollam are both from Linfield



University. During two numbers, the audience was treated with delightful dancing from Astoria's Sparrow Dance Co.

Two songs were accompanied with a stand-out performance by local Amanda McClure, who clearly sang with an

opera-quality voice.

The North Coast Symphonic Band has another concert planned for Feb. 6, again at the Liberty Theatre.

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