

## - FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -

**Of Climate Change & Recession.** It appears to me that there are two groups of people/companies: those who believe that Climate Change, and the resulting drive to reduce greenhouse gases, will “change everything,” and those who still don’t have it on their radar (and I joke that part of the first group hopes they retire before having to deal with it). For those who haven’t been paying close attention, take my word for it, carbon Cap & Trade is in our future. While there are more questions than answers regarding the ultimate mechanics, the direction of the 9-state Western Climate Initiative and even the US Congress makes it clear that Cap & Trade is the only option on the table.

Capping carbon emissions and then allowing companies to buy or sell excess allowances is certain to have one predictable impact: higher energy prices (and sorry, renewables are decades away from having a moderating impact). Whether or not energy “bills” will go up depends on to what degree users can institute efficiency measures – either through new technology or changed behavior. But this is an uneven playing field and there WILL be winners and losers. While a great deal of attention has been paid to regulatory mechanics, surprisingly little analysis has gone into the impact on business in real-world terms. My concern is that “legacy” businesses – the low-tech bricks and mortar kind – will be poorly positioned to absorb higher costs or invest in new energy efficient equipment. Societally, as we make the legislative decisions intended to change behavior, we need to have programs that support businesses in making the transition – or we risk losing them, and their jobs.

Balance that with how our economy operates. A few weeks ago I attended enterpriseSeattle’s Economic Forecast Conference and sat through a rather dismal set of predictions by a panel of economists. A key message was that consumer (and business) attitudes determine when the U.S. goes into a recession. Simply put, uncertainty causes them to reign in spending. So to me a real quandary is how do we force up energy costs without sending the economy into a tail-spin given that most people are still on the low-end of the awareness scale, and even the rest of us aren’t yet terribly willing to make real sacrifices in the name of slowing down climate change.

**EETC is back.** As an example of how hard it is to get support for companies making changes, the Oregon Environmental Enhancement Tax Credit is on the table again. The bill we co-sponsored in the 2007 legislative failed because of opposition to some of its provisions by the environmentalist community. Amazingly, our legislative partner, the Oregon Business Association, managed to introduce a revised bill into the 2008 “short session.” This compromise bill still provides a tax credit for investments that enable a company to go “beyond compliance” with state environmental regulations (including carbon reduction), but cuts out any support for simply going above federal regulations. The remaining barrier? The modest funding requested in the face of a recession. Even if we don’t get the bill passed during the special session we are building support and will bring the bill back in 2009.

**Calling all Brownfields professionals.** NEBC is launching a Brownfields special interest group in Washington: the Brownfields Forum. The initial concept is to have an informal group, connected by an email Listserv that meets periodically to discuss and/or work on topics and issues of interest to the group. The first gathering will be a “pizza lunch.” February 26, 12:00-1:30 at the Parametrix offices in Bellevue (411 108<sup>th</sup> Ave, NE, Suite 1800,

### RENEWING MEMBERS

AMEC Earth & Environmental, Inc.  
Bergeson-Boese & Associates, Inc.  
Chenoweth Law Group, PC  
CleanWay Environmental Partners  
Environmental Services Directory for Washington State  
Environmental Strategies, LLC  
ERM  
Floyd Snider Inc.  
Mold Investigations, LLC  
NVL Laboratories, Inc.  
Professional Environmental Group, Inc.  
Stoel Rives LLP  
Titus Industrial Group, Inc.  
WesteXpress Environmental Services, Inc.

### NEW MEMBERS

GeoSyntec Consultants, Inc.  
Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt

Bellevue 98004). All are welcome, so spread the word. To RSVP, or to request the call-in phone number, or to be added to the listserv for future notices, email Lauren Stolzman at [lauren@nebc.org](mailto:lauren@nebc.org).

**Call for speakers.** Planning is already beginning for the Northwest Environmental Conference (NVEC) in Portland next December. With the demise of the NW Environmental Summit in Washington, this is THE regional industry conference (at least south of GLOBE). If you would like to suggest a session topic, send a short paragraph summary to me in the next month, including suggested speaker(s), whether yourself or others, and I will see that it gets into the hopper.

**GLOBE 2008.** I will be in Vancouver, BC March 12-14 as part of the Washington Pavilion, distributing the NEBC Resource Guide. Stop by if you are there. If you are interested in going, see the info below under *Industry News*. Also included is a link to a downloadable free pass to the trade show.



Robert Grott

## **NEBC CONFERENCES, TRADE SHOWS & MEETINGS**

### **MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

**Full list of NEBC events on page 7**

**February 14. NEBC Luncheon: Lessons in Stormwater Management-Technical Solutions. Portland.** As stormwater regulations (and their enforcement) continue to tighten, businesses need to know what technical solutions exist for their stormwater management problems. Come to learn from case studies of successful stormwater projects. Speakers: Kurt Harrington, AMEC Earth & Environmental, Frank Groznik, PBS Engineering + Environmental and Ela Whelan, URS Corp.

**March 5. NEBC Luncheon: Toxics Loading to Puget Sound, Initial Findings. Seattle.** The Puget Sound Partnership identified the need to study toxic chemical loadings to Puget Sound to understand the relative contributions from sources of contaminants in the Puget Sound ecosystem. This information will help guide decisions about how to most effectively direct resources to resolve toxic contamination issues (e.g., which sources or pathways should receive priority attention; how much of toxic reduction can be accomplished by specific actions such as sediment clean up or stormwater management). Jim Maroncelli of Washington State Department of Ecology and Mike Ehlebracht of Hart Crowser will present the findings of an initial investigation of toxic chemical loading into Puget Sound.

**March 13. Cascade Chapter Pub Mixer. Portland.** 5:30 – 7:30. Join NEBC members and guests for an evening of networking, fun, food and spirits. Invite your co-workers and clients – this is a great event to say thank you to your special customer or employee. Meet, greet and make connections with other environmental professionals. Exchange ideas about issues that affect our industry in a relaxed, casual atmosphere as you enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres and microbrews from Bridgeport Brewing & Bakery.

**March 27. Managing Stormwater in Washington: Solutions to New Compliance Regulations. Seattle.** This one day conference will provide insight to the changes with the construction, industrial and Municipal Phase II NPDES permits and how municipalities are developing programs to address all three permits. Get up to date information regarding the rulings from the Pollution Controls Hearing Board and what that may mean for your business. Space is limited so register today.

### **Special Thanks to all our Sponsoring Members!**

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*Contact your NEBC staff at 503.227.6361 to learn  
more about becoming an NEBC Sponsoring Member!*

**[April 15. Olympic Chapter Pub Mixer. Seattle.](#)** 5:30 – 7:30. Enjoy a great evening of networking, food, and spirits with fellow NEBC members and guests. The Great Nabob, in the Queen Anne district is the site of our first pub mixer in a couple of years. Shake those winter blahs and connect with other environmental professionals to exchange ideas about issues that affect our industry in a relaxed atmosphere. Eat, drink, be merry and ignore the tax man!

**[April 24. Making Renewable Energy Projects Happen. Portland.](#)** Bringing together those working to build a new energy economy. A conference addressing the specifics of renewable energy project development in the Northwest, with perspectives on what it takes to successfully design, finance, and build successful projects in both the electricity and biofuels arenas.

## INDUSTRY NEWS

**JANUARY 16, 2008 (PORTLAND) Sustainable Industries sold by Celilo Group Media Inc. to Sustainable Media Inc.** Sustainable Industries, the West Coast's leading green business magazine and media property, is a newly formed company wholly owned by *Sustainable Industries* co-founder Brian Back. The sale, which closed in January 2008, includes the monthly print and digital business magazine *Sustainable Industries*, the web site [www.sustainableindustries.com](http://www.sustainableindustries.com) and the annual Sustainable Industries Economic Forum events. Based in San Francisco, and with key employees in Seattle and Portland, the company also assists clients with authentic green business custom publishing solutions.

**New method expected to lower costs and expedite contaminated sediment cleanup.** WESTFORD, Mass. (February 5, 2008) – A new provisional analytical method co-developed by an ENSR toxicologist for assessing organic pollutants in sediments has been adopted by ASTM International. The method measures the concentration of contaminants in sediment porewater - the water filling the spaces between grains of sediment - to which aquatic organisms become exposed. This new method – in conjunction with an existing EPA protocol for predicting the toxicity of PAHs in sediment - is expected to significantly reduce the cost of managing and remediating contaminated sediments by focusing cleanup activity on sediments posing the largest potential risk. The new method also has the support of the Sediment Contaminant Bioavailability Alliance (SCBA), a multi-industry group which develops and evaluates the use of site-specific measures of contaminant bioavailability for sediment management. A free summary of the new ASTM method Designation D 7363 – 07) can be found at [http://www.astm.org/cgi-bin/SoftCart.exe/DATABASE.CART/REDLINE\\_PAGES/D7363.htm?L+mystore+mlpn5596](http://www.astm.org/cgi-bin/SoftCart.exe/DATABASE.CART/REDLINE_PAGES/D7363.htm?L+mystore+mlpn5596).

*Calendar announcements and industry news may be submitted by NEBC members & non-members. The NEBC E-News is published the second week of every month. To have a meeting or event published please submit an electronic copy to [Sue@nebc.org](mailto:Sue@nebc.org) - deadline is the first Friday of each month. NEBC reserves the right to edit copy as necessary.*

## MEETINGS & EVENTS

**February 12. International Trade Alliance Annual Meeting. Portland.** CJ Buck of Buck Knives will be the keynote speaker. This American-grown company has made some strategic decisions regarding their production - which is done overseas and at its Post Falls plant. CJ will share how those decisions helped the company grow. 11:30 - 1:30. Mirabeau Park Hotel, 1100 N. Sullivan. \$25 for ITA members, \$50 for non-members. RSVP is required - Jenifer Priest at [jpriest@intrade.org](mailto:jpriest@intrade.org) or 509-459-4124

**February 13. Using Ecosystem Service Markets to Address our Most Pressing Environmental Challenges. Portland.** Oregon Natural Step Network presents a breakfast meeting featuring David Primozich, Executive Director, Willamette Partnership. Every year businesses and communities spend tens of millions of dollars on environmental compliance – much of it mandated by regulations designed to meet a very limited range of highly visible environmental problems. The trouble with huge investments into a limited number of highly visible environmental issues is they rarely address the more complex, systemic issues that led to the problems in the first place – diverting us from a path to sustainability where healthy and resilient ecosystems are the cornerstone of a healthy economy. [Register Online](#). To assure your place, registration is required. You can fax the form to (503) 227-2917, or register via phone (503) 241-1140. For further information contact the Network at (503) 241-1140 or [events@ortns.org](mailto:events@ortns.org).

**February 19-21. Power-Gen 2008. Las Vegas.** This is a national trade show for the renewable energy industry. The Washington Technology Center (at the University of Washington) and the Northwest Energy Technology Collaborative ([www.nwetc.com](http://www.nwetc.com)) are coordinating a 30' x 30' pavilion for the Power-Gen 2008 Show in Las Vegas at The Rio Hotel and Casino. Oregon Economic & Community Development Department (OECD) is also participating.

and Northwest Environmental Business Council (NEBC) are supporting this effort. If interested, contact: Gayle Duncan [gduncan@eomarc.com](mailto:gduncan@eomarc.com) 206.728.2624 Office 425.802.7034 Mobile.

**February 20. Engineer's & Couples Night: Reaching the Summit: The Parallels of Success in Business to Mountain Climbing. Seattle.** Can parallels be drawn between mountain climbing and running a successful business? John McQuaig, the speaker of this presentation, based on his new book "Peak Parallels," says YES. The presentation explores eight key themes, vital to mountain climbing that can be applied to organizational thinking, including envisioning the summit, preparing to climb, and working with a knowledgeable team. Bring your significant other for a date night with UCAW that includes dinner, entertainment talk by John McQuaig. Register online at: <http://www.ucaw.org/EventDescription.aspx?id=104>

**February 20-22. Environmental Industry Summit. San Diego, CA.** This is a national three-day event bringing together professionals from the environmental industry. With an ideal setting, ample networking opportunities and presentations from the environmental industry's top CEOs and analysts, the Environmental Industry Summit offers a unique opportunity for perspective on today's industry. NEBC members receive a 20% discount. Contact the office for the discount code. Information at: <http://events.zweigwhite.com/eisummit>

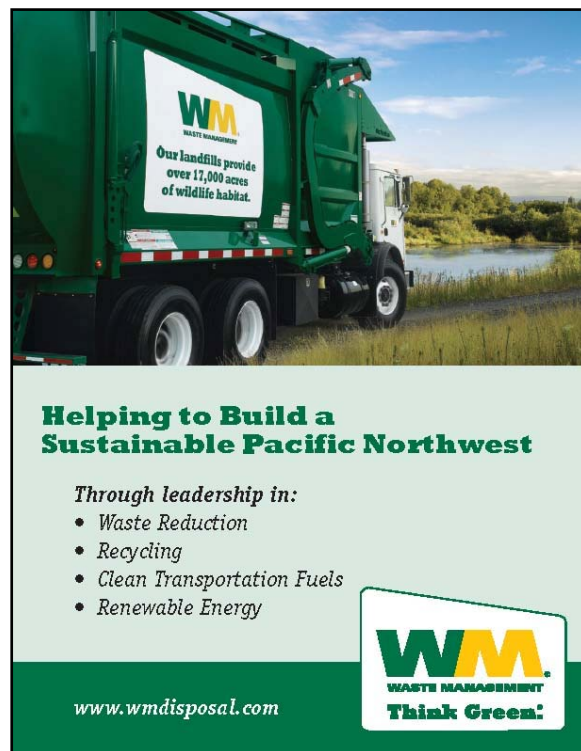
**February 26. One Call and Suggested Best Practices. Seattle.**

UCAW Office - Educational Classroom Review of excavators rights and responsibilities under RCW 19.122. Including who must call before digging and exemptions from calling, excavating techniques required around buried utilities, treatment of locate marks, what to do when there are no marks or mis-marks; plus an overview of the utilities claims process--and more. How to avoid trips and traps with the one-call center. Review of utility owner/operator rights and responsibilities under RCW 19.122. Including their three levels of locating requirements, what comprises a legal locate, and what they can and can't do if they are damaged; plus a clear description of the relationship between utilities and contract locators--and more. Speaker: Don Evans of UULC. Register online at: <http://www.ucaw.org/EventDescription.aspx?id=97>

**February 27. Doing Business in Multnomah County. February Breakfast Forum. Portland.** Ted Wheeler & Jeff Cogen. We may know why we love living in Multnomah County, but why would anyone want to do business here? Chair Wheeler and Commissioner Cogen, both elected to the County Commission in 2006, will discuss the pros and cons of doing business in this county. Perhaps they'll also show us how they plan to make it better. [More information and registration...](#)

**March 5. GREEN from the Ground Up. Stormwater management with pervious surfaces.** Gresham. 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Presentations, 2 to 4 p.m. Site Tour City of Gresham Council Chambers 1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham. Learn how pervious surfaces work, site considerations and preparation and the types of available products. Speakers: Maria Cahill, P.E., Civil Project Manager, MGH Associates, Dan Huffman, Managing Director, National Resources, National Ready Mixed Concrete Association, Jim Huddleston, P.E., Executive Director, Asphalt Pavement Association of Oregon, Gale Schroeder, Willamette Graystone, Andy Gersen, Gersen Company, Stormwater Products. Cost \$40 for attendees, \$50 for exhibitors. Pre-registration is required. Space is limited. To register go to [seagrant.oregonstate.edu/wsep](http://seagrant.oregonstate.edu/wsep) or contact Megan Kleibacker at 541-737-8715 or [megan.kleibacker@oregonstate.edu](mailto:megan.kleibacker@oregonstate.edu)

**March 6, 2008 Partnerships for Puget Sound: A Salmon-Safe Return to Washington Waters. Seattle.** This luncheon and workshop event will introduce Salmon-Safe certification and celebrate the first certifications through NBIS' Salmon-Safe Urban Outreach Initiative. These include the University of Washington Bothell/Cascadia Community College; Washington Department of Ecology Campus in Lacey; and Port of Seattle Parks. The program will provide information on the science of urban impacts on Puget Sound and provide examples of innovative management approaches and new technologies. Resources available to landowners for reducing impacts and improving stormwater and landscape management will also be presented. The program is presented by NBIS and co-sponsored by the Puget Sound Partnership, Belt Collins and Stewardship Partners. [www.nbis.org](http://www.nbis.org).



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**March 06. Sustainability Using the Natural Step Framework. Portland.** This one-day program, presented in two parts, is designed to introduce business, government, and community leaders to sustainability and The Natural Step framework. In the morning, a presentation will define sustainability and present the basic principles of The Natural Step (TNS) framework including the science behind the framework model and case studies. Attendees will participate in small group exercises around the four principles and learn how to apply the framework in the creation of a business product and service. REGISTRATION: [Download the full brochure and registration form \(PDF\)](#) and return it with your credit card information or a check made payable to Oregon Natural Step Network for \$175 (\$195 Non-Members) to 317 SW Alder, Suite 1050, Portland, OR 97204. Two or more persons registering at the same time may deduct \$15 per person. To assure your place, registration is required. For further information contact the Network at (503) 241-1140 or [events@ortns.org](mailto:events@ortns.org). Fax (503) 227-2917.

**March 11 – 12. Contaminant Forensics of Petroleum, Chlorinated Hydrocarbons, and Metals: Geochemical Applications for Assessing Contaminant Transport, Risk, and Apportioning Liability. Portland.** McMenamins Kennedy School, 5736 N.E. 33rd Avenue, Portland, Oregon 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M. Instructors: Richard W. Hurst, Ph.D. Northwest Environmental Training Center presents this course provides participants with an overview and introduction to forensic geochemical techniques that can resolve issues related to contaminant transport and associated risks. More Info: [http://nwetec.org/chem-405\\_03-08\\_portland.htm](http://nwetec.org/chem-405_03-08_portland.htm).

**March 12-14. GLOBE Trade Fair & Conference. Vancouver, BC.** This biennial event is a major international marketplace for innovative environmental technologies, products, and services. Early bird registration ends December 13. Trade Fair-only passes are also available. Simply click on the following link and print your pass for a savings of \$35.00! [http://nebc.org/Documents/GLOBE2008\\_TradeFairPass.pdf](http://nebc.org/Documents/GLOBE2008_TradeFairPass.pdf). For complete information go to: [www.globe2008.ca](http://www.globe2008.ca)

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

**RIDOLFI Inc. is seeking an administrative coordinator** for our Seattle office. Qualified applicants will have exceptional written and verbal communication skills, advanced word processing and document production skills, experience providing a full range of administrative functions, and the ability to balance several assignments within strict deadlines. Each applicant must be proficient in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. The successful candidate will have an exceptional client service ethic, attention to detail, positive attitude, and will be well organized and willing to assist with a broad range of tasks to contribute to overall company success. Minimum qualifications include an associate's degree and five years experience. Preference will be given to candidates with experience with architectural, engineering, or environmental firms or technical services administration. Qualified candidates should send a resume and cover letter to [hr@ridolfi.com](mailto:hr@ridolfi.com) or to Human Resources, RIDOLFI Inc., 1011 Western Avenue, Suite 1006, Seattle, WA 98104. No phone calls please.

## MEMBER DISCOUNTS

**Associated Technologies Council.** NEBC has partnered with the Associated Technologies Council (ATC) in order to allow you to participate in their employee benefits program. ATC provides employee benefits to companies in Computer Technology, Bioscience, Telecommunications and now Environmental Sciences. Because ATC is able to pool firms together across a wide spectrum of desirable industries, they are able to provide medical benefits up to 20% below what you are probably paying now. In addition, there are benefits available like, paperless enrollment, single invoice billing and COBRA administration all provided at no cost to you. Contact Tino Versoza, NEBC Benefits Representative (503) 626-9135 or email: [tino@get-benefits.com](mailto:tino@get-benefits.com) for a free no obligation benefits analysis.

**Financial Planning Services with Waddell & Reed.** NEBC members receive at 20% discount on financial planning services provided by Waddell & Reed, a national financial planning firm founded in 1937. Planning services include retirement planning, wealth management, tax-efficient investing, education funding, estate protection, and succession planning for closely-held businesses. Other business services include retirement plans and financial education workshops. Contact Karen Einberger, Financial Advisor, Waddell & Reed, 206.283.6661 or [keinberger@wradvisors.com](mailto:keinberger@wradvisors.com).

**Sustainable Industries Journal (SIJ).** The premier magazine for sustainable business news on the West Coast. The NEBC member discount for the Sustainable Industries Journal is better than imagined – it's still a \$10 discount, but the new annual subscription rate is only \$39, that means that NEBC members can receive this new publication for only \$29/year! For more information look to: [www.sijournal.com/prtnr](http://www.sijournal.com/prtnr)

**Oregon Insider.** NEBC members may take advantage of a \$150 introductory rate for the first year (24 issues), a savings of \$95 off their regular base rate. In addition, NEBC members will enjoy an ongoing subscription rate of \$195 per year, which represents an ongoing savings of \$50 per year. To redeem your discount please contact Oregon Insider by calling David Light at 541.343.8504 or by email at [epi@rio.com](mailto:epi@rio.com).

**Northwest Environmental Training Center.** NEBC has partnered with NWETC to offer our member companies an exceptional opportunity to provide continuing education to its employees at a 20% discount off the published rate on all of NWETC's technical training workshops, conferences, and seminars. For more information, visit their website <http://www.nwetc.org/> or contact Erick McWayne at 206-762-1976.

**Environmental Expert.** NEBC has teamed with Environmental Expert, the world's largest online marketplace and information resource serving the environmental industry. At a reduced rate of just \$1,700, NEBC members can become Bronze Sponsors and get a year's worth of cost-effective exposure to a targeted audience of over 400,000 environmental professionals. Additional levels of sponsorship and optional advertising opportunities are also available. [www.environmental-expert.com](http://www.environmental-expert.com) For more information contact Tracy Barton, [tracy@combined-resources.com](mailto:tracy@combined-resources.com).

## NEBC CONTACT INFORMATION

[www.nebc.org](http://www.nebc.org)

620 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 1008  
Portland, Oregon 97204  
Voice: 503.227.6361  
Toll Free: 800.985.NEBC (6322)  
Fax: 503.227.1007

### Executive Director

Robert Grott  
[robert@nebc.org](mailto:robert@nebc.org)

### Office Manager

Linda Sheeley  
[linda@nebc.org](mailto:linda@nebc.org)

### Program Manager

Sue Moir  
[sue@nebc.org](mailto:sue@nebc.org)

### Regional Manager

Lauren Stolzman  
206.232.0467  
[Lauren@nebc.org](mailto:Lauren@nebc.org)

### NW Biofuels Association

Nikola Davidson  
206.389.8660  
[Nikola@nwbiofuels.org](mailto:Nikola@nwbiofuels.org)

## Northwest Environmental Business Council 2008 Events & Meeting Calendar

<b>February</b>			
14	Cascade Chapter Committee Meeting	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Governor Hotel – Portland, OR
14	Cascade Chapter Luncheon – Topic: Lessons in Stormwater Management-Technical Solutions	11:30 AM – 1:00PM	Governor Hotel – Portland, OR
<b>March</b>			
5	Olympic Chapter Luncheon – Topic: Toxics Loading to Puget Sound, Initial Findings	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	McCormick & Schmick’s Harborside – Seattle, WA
13	Cascade Chapter Pub Mixer	5:30 PM – 7:00 PM	Bridgeport Brewing – Portland, OR
27	Managing Stormwater In Washington: Solutions To New Compliance Regulations	All Day	Embassy Suites Hotel, SeaTac Airport, WA
<b>April</b>			
10	Cascade Chapter Committee Meeting	10:30 AM – 11:30 AM	Governor Hotel – Portland, OR
10	Cascade Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBA	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	Governor Hotel – Portland, OR
15	Olympic Chapter Pub Mixer	5:30 PM – 7:30 PM	The Great Nabob – Seattle, WA
24	“Making Renewable Energy Projects Happen” Conference	8:00 AM – 6:00 PM	DoubleTree Hotel, Lloyd Center – Portland, OR
<b>May</b>			
7	Olympic Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	McCormick & Schmick’s Harborside – Seattle, WA
8	Cascade Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	Governor Hotel – Portland, OR
21	Ecosystem Markets Conference	All Day	DoubleTree Hotel – Portland, OR
<b>June</b>			
4	Olympic Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	McCormick & Schmick’s Harborside – Seattle, WA
12	Cascade Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	Governor Hotel – Portland, OR
17	Managing Carbon: Policy & Practice	All Day	DoubleTree Hotel – Portland, OR
23	Cascade Chapter Golf Tournament	2:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Langdon Farms Golf Course, Aurora, OR
<b>July</b>			
TBD	Olympic Chapter Rooftop Mixer	5:00 PM – 7:00 PM	TBD – Seattle, WA
<b>September</b>			
3	Olympic Chapter Committee Meeting	10:00 AM – 11:30 PM	AGC – Seattle, WA
3	Olympic Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	McCormick & Schmick’s Harborside – Seattle, WA
TBD	Cascade Chapter Summer Mixer	5:30 PM – 7:00 PM	TBD – Portland, OR
<b>October</b>			
1	Olympic Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	10:00 AM – 11:30 PM	McCormick & Schmick’s Harborside – Seattle, WA.
9	Cascade Chapter Committee Meeting	9:30 AM – 11:00 AM	Governor Hotel – Portland
9	Cascade Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	Governor Hotel – Portland
<b>November</b>			
5	Olympic Chapter Committee Meeting	10:00 AM – 11:30 PM	AGC – Seattle, WA
5	Olympic Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	McCormick & Schmick’s Harborside – Seattle, WA
13	Cascade Chapter Luncheon – Topic: TBD	11:30 AM – 1:00 PM	Governor Hotel – Portland, OR
<b>December</b>			
8 & 9	Northwest Environmental Conference & Trade Show	All Day	Red Lion Hotel on the River – Portland, OR
10	Hazwoper Training	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM	Red Lion Hotel on the River – Portland, OR

\*Event dates and topics subject to change.