



Mt. Bachelor

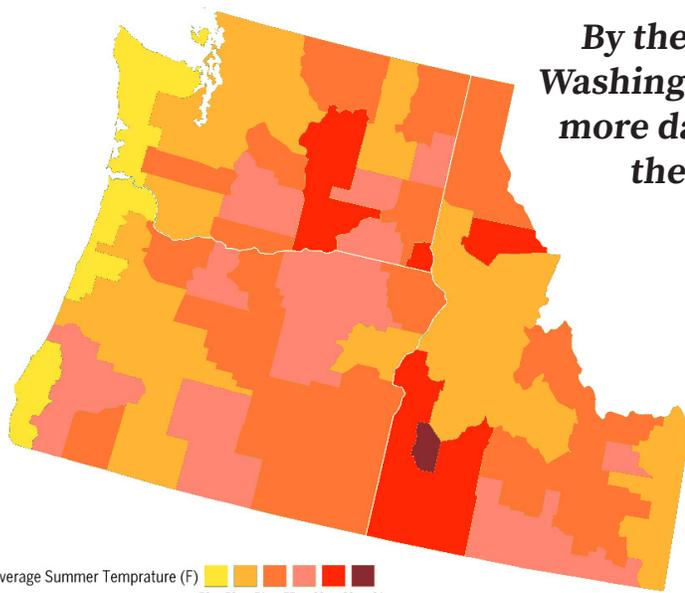
The Economic Risks of Climate Change in Oregon & the Northwest

Highlights from the Risky Business Report

Mitigating risk is an essential part of business decision-making. But while the American economy faces significant risks from climate change, most businesses are not yet taking into account the economic risks of a changed climate.

The Risky Business Report focuses on climate risks specific to multiple business sectors. It provides actionable data at a granular level for decision-makers. While many risks are quantified in this first Risky Business Report, such as impacts on coastal infrastructure and the effects of extreme heat, it is important to note that the Risky Business Project report is not economy-wide, and therefore did not quantify some important economic impacts, including potential increases in forest fire risk, decreases in western snowpack and water availability, and the subsequent risks to hydropower availability, tourism and reduction or loss of Oregon's iconic salmon. Nevertheless, we have enough information to move onto a different path, create economic opportunities and avoid many of the worst impacts of climate change.

Extreme Heat



Average Summer Temperature (F) 50 70 74 77 80 83 86

Average Summer Temperature by 2100

By the end of the century, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho could well have more days above 95°F each year than there are currently in Texas.

(Risky Business Report)



The average Northwest resident will likely go from experiencing only 5 days of extreme heat per year on average to an additional 18 to 41 extremely hot days by the end of the century. Heat will also put strains on our national energy system, decreasing system efficiency and performance as system operators struggle to cool down facilities and increasing electricity consumption and costs due to a surge in demand for air conditioning.*

As parts of the nation heat up, the worst health impacts will be felt among the poor—many of whom work or even live outdoors or can't afford air conditioning at home—and among those too elderly or frail to physically withstand the heat.*

Loss of Hydropower

Our review of the existing literature suggests that in the Pacific Northwest, hydroelectric production will decrease during the summer by 12-15%, with larger decreases in summer production of 17-21% by the 2080s. **

Increased evaporation rates & changes in snowpack may affect the volume and timing of water available for hydropower. Projected climatic changes, including more precipitation falling as rain and less as snow, reduced snowpack, and earlier peak runoff, may decrease annual water storage and runoff. The result will decrease available hydropower generation capacity. The degree of impact will vary but the West is expected to be at greatest risk.**



Bonneville Dam, courtesy of BPA

“Risk is like fire: If controlled it will help you; if uncontrolled it will rise up and destroy you.”

— Theodore Roosevelt

Forestry Impacts



Forests of the Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountains will likely experience the greatest increases in annual burn area, a threat to an \$11 billion market in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. (Risky Business Report)

The Northwest’s forests will experience significant potential impacts from climate change, in particular from wildfire—due to both increased drought and to wood damage from pests surviving warmer winters. If temperatures rise 3.2°F by mid-century, this could lead to 54% increase in the annual area burned in the western United States.*

More Information

***Risky Business (full report)**
<http://riskybusiness.org/pdf>

****American Climate Prospectus by the Rhodium Group**
<http://rhg.com/reports/climate-prospectus>

Oregon Global Warming Commission
<http://www.keeporegoncool.org/>

Oregon Climate Change Research Institute
<http://occri.net/>

The Pacific Northwest Climate Impacts Research Consortium
<http://pnwcirc.org/>

National Climate Assessment – Northwest Region
<http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/highlights/regions/northwest>

What You Can Do

Climate change is not a problem for another day. The investments we make today will determine our economic future.

It should become standard practice for the American business and investment communities to factor climate change into decision-making. With this report, we call on the American business community to rise to the challenge and lead the way in helping reduce climate risks. This is only a first step, but it’s a step toward getting America on a new path leading to a more secure, more certain economic future.

Add your company to the Oregon Business Climate Declaration (or sign on as an individual). The Declaration’s message is simple and powerful: Tackling climate change is one of America’s greatest economic opportunities of the 21st century, and it’s simply the right thing to do.



Learn more and sign on at: <http://climatedeclaration.us/oregon>

About Us

About the Oregon Environmental Council

Oregon Environmental Council protects the health of every Oregonian and the place we call home by working for clean air and water, a healthy climate, an unpolluted landscape and sustainable food and farms. Founded in 1968, OEC champions innovative, collaborative solutions to Oregon’s environmental challenges. Find out more at www.oeconline.org.

Climate Solutions works to accelerate practical and profitable solutions to global warming by galvanizing leadership, growing investment and bridging divides. For 15 years, Climate Solutions has pioneered the vision and cultivated political leadership in the Northwest for the proposition that clean energy and broadly-shared economic prosperity can go hand-in-hand. Through its Business Leaders, New Energy Cities, Northwest Biocarbon Initiative and Sustainable Advanced Fuels programs, Climate Solutions builds a powerful constituency for local, regional and national action on climate and clean energy.