# Materials Management in Oregon

## 2050 Vision and Framework for Action

Nov. 1, 2012
DRAFT

State of Oregon
Department of
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# Acknowledgments

DEQ gratefully acknowledges the valuable contributions and insights of the Materials Management Workgroup. Members are listed in **Appendix D**.

Many individuals within DEQ contributed to the development of this project, including major efforts from Abby Boudouris (project manager), David Allaway, Bob Barrows, Cheryl Grabham, Loretta Pickerell and Peter Spendelow. Leslie Kochan, Bruce Lumper, and the Solid Waste Program Management Team also contributed.

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More information on the *2050 Vision and Framework for Action* appears on the project website: **www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/materialsmgmtplan.htm**

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# 2050 Vision

## for Materials Management in Oregon

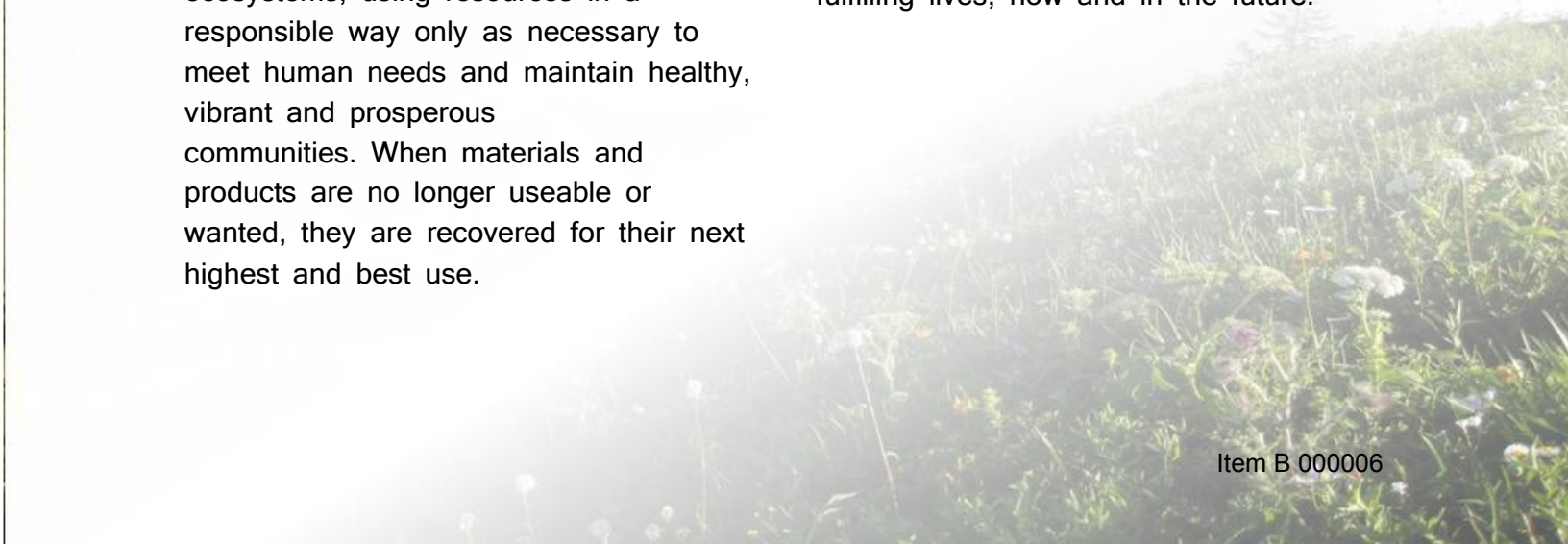
***Oregonians in 2050 produce and use materials responsibly***
*conserving resources • protecting the environment • living well*

**Recognizing that Earth's resources are finite, Oregonians live within the limits of our sustainable share of the world's natural resources.** We make and use materials and products in a manner that maintains and restores a healthy environment and fertile soils. Materials and products minimize the use and release of toxins, the release of greenhouse gases and pollutants, the use of energy and water, and the extraction of nonrenewable materials.

**We take into account the full impacts of materials throughout their life cycle.** We minimize harmful disturbance of land and natural ecosystems, using resources in a responsible way only as necessary to meet human needs and maintain healthy, vibrant and prosperous communities. When materials and products are no longer useable or wanted, they are recovered for their next highest and best use.

**We use renewable resources at levels that can be sustained in perpetuity while maintaining the resiliency of natural systems.** Wherever they are made, the materials and products we purchase in Oregon similarly are made in a manner that supports human health, well-being and healthy, resilient environments and communities.

**All Oregonians have access to the knowledge, capabilities, resources and services required to use materials responsibly.** This Vision provides for a prosperous and clean economy that allows all people to live fulfilling lives, now and in the future.



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# Executive Summary

Global demand for materials and products is increasing rapidly, bringing significant impacts to Oregon residents, businesses, communities and the environment. Oregon law cites the need to conserve resources and energy and acknowledges limits in the environment's ability to absorb the impacts of increasing consumption. Oregon is recognized as a leader in conserving resources through recycling and proper management of wastes. Yet this focus on managing discards has limited potential to address the full impacts of materials and the challenges they present for Oregonians and the environment. To guide state policy and programs and to achieve the best environmental results at the lowest cost to society, DEQ convened a workgroup to help develop this *2050 Vision and Framework for Action*.

## What is Materials Management?

The **materials management** approach includes waste prevention and discard management, while seeking to reduce environmental impacts by managing materials through all stages of their life. It identifies impacts and actions to address those impacts across the full cycle of materials and products as they move through the economy—from raw material extraction to product design and manufacture, transport, consumption, use, reuse, recycling and disposal.

**Figure 1. Life Cycle of Materials and Products**

A more holistic materials management approach will help DEQ shape state policies in a changing world with new jobs, new opportunities and new challenges.

# Creating a Vision for Materials Management

In 2011, DEQ convened a **workgroup** to help develop this long-term *Vision and Framework for Action*. DEQ applied the process of "backcasting"—starting with a future vision and then looking back to identify steps needed to achieve it. The resulting *2050 Vision and Framework for Action* also serves as an update to Oregon's *State Integrated Resource and Solid Waste Management Plan (1995-2005)*, which guides statewide policy.

The *2050 Vision* describes a desired future where Oregonians live within the limits of their sustainable share of the world's natural resources:

*Oregonians in 2050 produce and use materials responsibly*
*conserving resources • protecting the environment • living well*

Materials and products—both made in Oregon and used in Oregon—support human health, well-being and healthy, resilient environments and communities. Sustainable use of materials allows all people to enjoy a prosperous, clean economy and fulfilling lives, now and in the future.

This document envisions an Oregon in 2050 where:

- **Producers make products sustainably. Every option is a sustainable option.**
- **People live well and consume sustainably.**
- **Materials have the most useful life possible before and after discard.**



**Oregonians in 2050 will produce and consume much differently than today. We will produce less waste and recover more materials in a smarter way.**

Together, we will manage materials wisely, while strengthening economies at the local, regional, national and global levels.

# Framework for Action

Taking action early in the life cycle—in design and production—offers the best opportunities to realize the *2050 Vision*. While producers shift to more sustainable actions, consumers also have important roles to play in the types of products they demand and how they use them. Effective management of materials at the end of their lives redirects resources back into productive use.

To help achieve the *2050 Vision* in Oregon, DEQ must take several different types of actions. The *Framework for Action* includes pathways to lead Oregon to desired outcomes, including the following:

- **Foundations**. This work will create the solid foundation necessary to achieve the *2050 Vision*. Foundational work includes setting goals and measuring outcomes, supporting and performing research, and securing stable funding.
- **Policies and regulations**. DEQ will evaluate and develop policies and regulations that put Oregon on the path toward achieving the *2050 Vision*.
- **Collaboration and partnerships**. Coordination throughout the life cycle of materials and products will support innovative solutions. DEQ will collaborate with other state agencies, businesses, local governments and nongovernmental organizations.
- **Education and information**. DEQ will share information it develops with partners for distribution to appropriate audiences.

This *2050 Vision and Framework for Action* document is available online at **www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/materialsmgmtplan.htm**.

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# Creating a Materials Management Vision

## What is Materials Management?

The **materials management** approach seeks to reduce environmental impacts by managing materials throughout all stages of their life cycle. Materials management includes **waste prevention** and **discard management**. More broadly, it identifies impacts and actions to address those impacts across the full life cycle of materials and products as they move through the economy–starting with design and continuing through raw material extraction, manufacture, transport, consumption, use, reuse, recycling and disposal.


**Figure 2. Life Cycle of Materials and Products**



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# Why use a Materials Management approach?



Managing materials holistically is important because life-supporting resources are declining globally, while consumption of these resources is increasing.

**Materials matter.** Global demand for materials—from rare earth metals to agricultural products—is increasing rapidly, with significant economic impacts to Oregon businesses and households.[1] At the same time, the types of materials are also changing, with most materials coming from nonrenewable—and ultimately, unsustainable—sources.[2]

Demand for these materials has led to significant environmental impacts, including toxic chemicals in the air and water; damage to ecosystems; unsustainable use of energy, water and other natural resources; and global warming. Making, transporting, selling and disposing of the materials consumed in Oregon contributes between 35 and 48 percent of Oregon's **consumption-related greenhouse gas emissions**—on par with the state's emissions from the direct consumption of electricity and fuels combined.[3] For an excellent overview of the growth in materials use—and associated impacts—see the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's 2009 report, *Sustainable Materials Management: The Road Ahead*.

"It is becoming increasingly clear that how we use materials is a large factor in energy use, climate change, and the economy, and an important issue in its own right."

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Sustainable Materials Management: The Road Ahead* (2009)

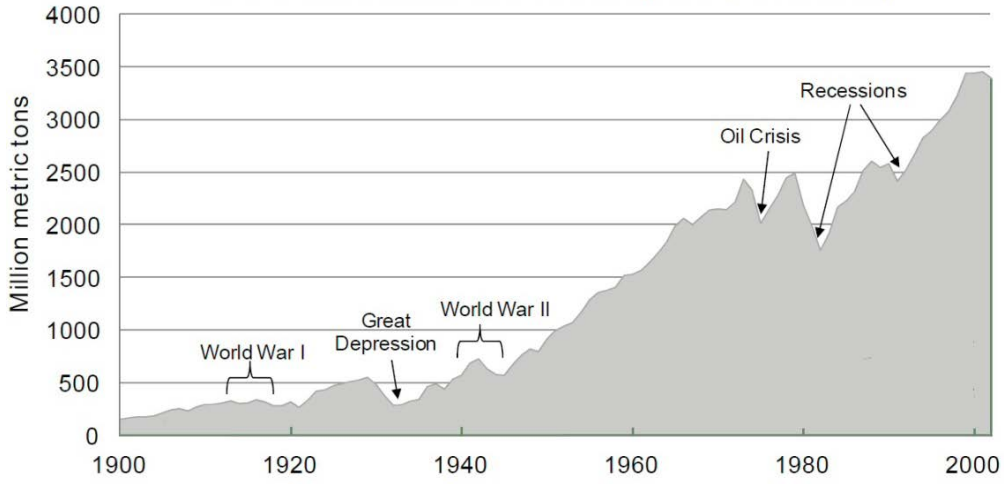


**Figure 3. Use of Materials in the United States, 1900-2002.**
*Modified from Center for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan (2011), based on Matos and Wagner, 1998, and Wagner, 2002.*[4]

Great progress has been made in discard management in the past 20 years, yet Oregon can do even better.[5] It is now clear that the vast majority of environmental impacts result from decisions made in design, production and consumption—not **end-of-life management**.[6] Accordingly, producers and consumers have important roles to play.

## From Managing Discards to Managing Materials

DEQ's historic focus on materials management at end-of-life is largely a consequence of problems identified—and legislation passed—20 to 30 years ago. At that time, many landfills were poorly located, operated and regulated, and new federal standards made the closure of many landfills imminent. These factors added to a perception of a "garbage crisis"—that we were running out of places to dispose of our waste. The 1970s energy crisis and growing environmental concerns also led to public support for resource conservation through recycling.

Oregon today looks much different in some ways. We now have an abundance of disposal capacity, in landfills that are better operated and less polluting than their predecessors. Recycling programs are firmly established, conserving resources, reducing pollution and providing green jobs.[7] Some producers are sharing responsibility for managing their products at end-of-life and for reducing the presence of toxic chemicals in products that enter consumers' homes and eventually become solid waste. Recycling is now second nature for many Oregonians, and interest in "reduce" and "reuse" is growing.

The limits of this solid waste management framework are becoming more apparent, even as our overall consumption of resources continues to grow and our **environmental "footprint"** becomes more globally dispersed.[8] We have learned much in the past 25 years. We now understand that smart decisions—ones that are good for the environment, economy and society—require thinking about impacts across the full life cycle of materials. Focusing on only management of discards limits options to protect the environment and can lead to decisions that are penny-wise but pound-foolish.[9,10] In contrast, materials management offers a framework to address the integrated nature of materials, guide state policy and programs, and achieve the best results at the lowest cost to society.

Existing policy also points in the direction of materials management. *Oregon Revised Statute 459* calls out the need to conserve resources



**Materials management:**

**Identifies impacts throughout the life cycle**

**Focuses on high-impact actions across the life cycle**

and energy, and also acknowledges limits in the environment's ability to absorb the impacts of increasing consumption.[11] These issues transcend the narrow framework of solid waste management. Even the so-called "**waste management hierarchy**" emphasizes practices that have little to do with the management of discards. "Reduce" and "reuse" primarily involve the consumption and use of materials, not the management of wastes. And while recycling is commonly thought of as a method for managing discards, the economic and environmental value of recycling lies primarily in the provision of lower-cost feedstocks that industry can use to make new products and the reduced need for extracting and processing virgin materials.[12]

Although progress has been made, all stages of the life cycle of materials are currently unsustainable. While improvements are needed in end-of-life management, starting as far **upstream** as possible—in resource extraction, design and production—offers the best opportunities to realize the vision of a sustainable society, economy and environment. As producers shift to more sustainable actions, consumers also have important roles to play—in the types of products they demand, how they use them, and how items are managed once they are discarded. Effective management at product end-of-life redirects resources back into productive use while helping to reduce the negative impacts of disposal.

The world is changing, and Oregon will be different in 2050. Materials management offers a holistic approach that will help DEQ shape state policies—and help Oregon thrive—in a world with new jobs, new opportunities and new challenges for government, businesses and the public.

## The Business Case for Materials Management

Rising commodity prices, increasing global population, pollution and the depletion of natural resources all pose significant threats to businesses and the historic model of economic growth. But with these challenges come new opportunities.

For example, representatives of adidas, Coca-Cola, General Motors, Nokia, Philips, Procter & Gamble, Sony, Weyerhaeuser and other businesses—working through the World Business Council for Sustainable Development—recently concluded that "current global consumption patterns are unsustainable." These businesses recognize the importance of industry being more efficient and less polluting, and

they go further, noting that "efficiency gains and technological advances alone will not be sufficient to bring global consumption to a sustainable level." They observe that "changes will also be required to consumer lifestyles, including the ways in which consumers choose and use products and services." They call for businesses to play a leadership role in fostering more sustainable levels of consumption, through practices such as innovation, communications, and working in partnerships with consumers, governments and stakeholders. These businesses call for governments to provide the right policies and regulations, fiscal structures and incentives, infrastructure and services, guidance for businesses and consumers, monitoring and enforcement.[13]

DEQ's *2050 Vision* calls for the responsible production and use of materials. In a world bumping up against limited resources and other constraints on growth, businesses that produce responsibly—and help consumers live responsibly—will enjoy the greatest viability and reap the highest rewards. The path forward is not fully mapped, but the *2050 Vision* is clear. DEQ is committed to working with businesses—both producing in Oregon and selling into Oregon—to achieve a prosperous and clean economy that allows all people to live fulfilling lives, now and in the future.

# The Vision Process

To address the changing world of materials management, DEQ convened the 2050 Vision for Materials Management Workgroup in 2011. The broader approach focusing on the full life cycle of materials requires a breadth of knowledge and a variety of experience, skills and perspectives. DEQ invited a diverse group of stakeholders representing businesses, nongovernmental organizations, local governments, state agencies and individuals to participate in the visioning process. Workgroup members met for five facilitated day-long workshops between fall 2011 and spring 2012 to identify ways to make our design, production, use and management of products and materials more sustainable. Workgroup members were engaged and provided input on draft documents throughout the process. **Appendix D** lists workgroup members.

With the workgroup's input, DEQ developed this long-term vision for sustainable materials management in Oregon. This *2050 Vision* and *Framework for Action* – together with biennial reports to the Oregon Legislature - also serves as an update to Oregon's *State Integrated Resource and Solid Waste Management Plan (1995-2005)*, which guides statewide policy.

## Developing a Vision

To develop the *2050 Vision*, DEQ applied The Natural Step approach, which involves a science-based definition of sustainability and a strategic planning framework to help make choices that advance sustainability. A key element of the Natural Step framework involves "**backcasting**"—starting with a future vision and then looking back to identify the steps needed to achieve it. This framework provides the tools to look at the big picture, understand the rules of the game, define success, and move toward it together.

The scientifically rigorous Natural Step framework is prominent in strategic decision-making by organizations such as the U.S. Army, Nike, H.J. Heinz Company and Amazon.com. DEQ adopted the Natural Step approach in 2008 and identified it as a robust process for developing the *2050 Vision* for materials management in Oregon. DEQ worked with Cascadia Consulting Group and Sustainability Partners to facilitate workshops and integrate the Natural Step framework into this visioning and action-planning process.

## Considering Sustainability Principles

DEQ's *2050 Vision and Framework for Action* provides a platform to bring materials management in Oregon into closer alignment with **sustainability** principles. The *2050 Vision* sits within the larger context of future economic, social and environmental systems. These three systems affect DEQ's work, and DEQ's policies and programs also influence these systems to some degree. During the workgroup process, DEQ identified **systems and capabilities** broadly needed to achieve the *2050 Vision*. **Appendix C** summarizes that work.

In 2001, the Oregon Legislature adopted the Oregon Sustainability Act (**ORS 184.423**), which established the state's overall sustainability policy. Among other efforts, the legislation created the Oregon Sustainability Board and set legislative goals for sustainability.

DEQ has an agency-wide sustainability vision: **We live in a way that balances our actions with nature's ability to maintain a healthy environment.** The materials management *2050 Vision* supports DEQ's agency vision, through a specific focus on materials.



**The *2050 Vision* for sustainable materials management sits within the larger context of economic, social and environmental systems.**




# Welcome to 2050

In the *2050 Vision*, Oregonians live within the limits of their sustainable share of the world's natural resources. Materials and products support human health, well-being and healthy, resilient environments and communities—whether those goods are made in Oregon, used in Oregon, or both. Sustainable use of resources allows all people to enjoy a prosperous, clean economy and fulfilling lives, now and in the future.

## Desired Outcomes for 2050

- Producers make products sustainably. Every option is a sustainable option.
- People live well and consume sustainably.
- Materials have the most useful life possible before and after discard.

The **materials life cycle** begins early in the process before the consumer (**Upstream, Design and Production**), with designers and manufacturers making products and using materials in a sustainable way. In 2050, every product is made to be a sustainable option.

Materials are fully sustainable, because people use them in a sustainable manner and sustainable consumption is easy. The **Consumption and Use** element addresses decisions related to the materials and products people acquire, how they obtain them, and how they use them.

Both producers and consumers continue to discard unwanted materials, so the **End-of-Life Management** element aims to direct these materials to their next highest and best use.

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This process is iterative throughout the life cycle of materials—from upstream, through use, through recovery and end-of-life management, and back into production. Each element builds on success in the previous elements.

### Oregon in 2050

- We are wiser. Knowledge and innovation brought us here.
- We are connected. Coordination and communication make the system work.
- We invest resources wisely.
- We share responsibility. Everyone has a part.
- We are accountable. We set goals, measure success and learn from experience.

Achieving this vision means that Oregonians in 2050 will produce and consume much differently than today, and we will recover more materials in a smarter way. Together, we will manage materials wisely, while strengthening economies at the local, regional, national and global levels. We will have tackled our materials challenge together, and everyone will be part of the solution.

The next sections of this chapter provide more information on desired outcomes for materials management and where we are today. The following chapter, *Framework for Action*, outlines pathways forward from our current reality to the desired outcomes for 2050.

# Upstream, Design and Production in 2050

**Producers make products sustainably**—from design and production through packaging, intended use and end-of-use management. Design minimizes environmental impacts across the product's life cycle and materials are selected based on their highest and best use. Cradle-to-cradle or closed-loop design, which addresses full life cycle impacts, is common practice. Products are designed to be durable, repairable, disassembled, or recycled, and single-use products are obsolete or used only as absolutely necessary. In 2050, green building is the norm.

**Materials are not used at a rate faster than can be renewed or recovered**, and dematerialization has reduced the impacts of products and services. Risks of chemicals are fully assessed before they are used. Products and production do not use toxic chemicals or, when necessary, toxics are minimized and then recaptured for their highest and best use. Packaging is limited to what is necessary, and environmental impacts of packaging are minimized. During use and after discard, materials leach little or no toxins and emit few greenhouse gases.

**Research and innovation fuel unprecedented technological advances and economic vitality in Oregon.** Our state is a leader and a national center for green businesses and jobs. Oregon makes and exports sustainable products, goods and services—creating sustainable jobs here at home. Businesses use unwanted materials from other businesses as inputs for new products. Our educational system supports and drives this success: Oregon universities are vital in supporting the green economy through pioneering research and technology transfer. Our universities are recognized leaders in green chemistry and technology, and the private sector values the critical role of research institutions in supporting innovation.

**Producers make products sustainably.**

**Every option is a sustainable option.**

**Coordination throughout the life cycle of products leads to innovative solutions.** Producers, retailers and government work together to support sustainable product choices. Innovation exchange and cross-sector cooperation between producers and suppliers expand opportunities for sharing resources and ideas.

**Complete and transparent information on product contents and life cycle impacts is readily available.** Producers know the impacts of their products and processes both upstream and downstream in the supply chain. Information on impacts of products and processes is accurate, transparent, and readily shared throughout the supply chain. Information disclosure and accounting standards make it easy to compare impacts across products.

**Responsibility is shared for full life cycle impacts.** Those involved with a product across its life cycle share responsibility for all impacts. Prices reflect environmental and social costs, and incentives and regulations support sustainable producers and products. Oregon businesses and our global competitors share a level playing field.

## Upstream, Design and Production Today

About 40 percent of domestic greenhouse gas emissions result from producing and transporting materials and products.

**Reuse and repair of products is often difficult and discouraged.** Planned obsolescence is part of the design for some products. Lack of infrastructure or financial incentives for repairing and recycling products discourages design for repair and recycling. Toxics and mixed materials in products and packaging can impede recycling and harm public health.

**Products sold in Oregon are produced globally.** Production standards, regulations and environmental impacts vary nationally and globally. Supply chains are complex and may cross numerous borders.

**Prices do not reflect all environmental impacts, and full information is not available on environmental impacts.** Extraction of raw materials is often subsidized, and the public bears the "external" costs of environmental impacts.

**Sustainability is not clearly understood or uniformly defined.** Environmental impacts are not commonly understood, especially by small and medium-sized businesses. Many "green" claims involve some form of "greenwashing."[14]



**"Backcasting" starts with a future vision and looks back to the present to identify steps to achieve the vision.**

**Complete information is not available on environmental impacts.** Producers are not required to investigate and disclose impact data—such as toxic chemical use—to government, the supply chain or the public. While data are available for permitted and reported emissions, information on impacts of product use is lacking. Relevant knowledge resides in the private sector, academia and in Europe.

**Government lacks some tools to identify, prioritize and take action to reduce the health and environmental effects of toxic chemicals**, and product stewardship is limited. Many environmental policies were written 20 to 30 years ago. Regulations mainly address production processes rather than products. Investment in green chemistry research, development and education is limited.

**Some market leaders are innovating to reduce impacts during production.** Design and innovation tools are becoming more common. Product design involves tradeoffs in life cycle impacts such as toxicity, greenhouse gas emissions and water use. Green building has growing support in the commercial and public sectors.

# Consumption and Use in 2050

**All Oregonians live well in communities where materials are used sustainably.** Oregonians of all backgrounds and experiences enjoy high-quality lives, including rich social and community relations, without requiring high levels of acquisition of material goods. Oregonians see themselves first as community members, rather than mainly as consumers. Social norms, infrastructure and communities—neighborhoods, regions, families, friends and social groups—make low-impact consumption easy and rewarding. Collaboration, sharing, repair and reuse are all normal, and sustainable consumption is a social norm that is easy to live by.

**Oregonians actively seek to live "within the limits of our sustainable share of the world's natural resources"** and engage other community members, including producers, to do the same. Oregonians are meeting their needs, and quality of life is high, with a minimal environmental footprint. All choices are good choices; highly unsustainable products are no longer sold. Public agencies lead by example and build capacity through model practices for sustainable procurement and use of materials.

**Sustainable product and material choices are desired and readily available.** Sustainable products, materials and services—including renting, sharing, collaboration, reuse and repair—are easily accessible and affordable. Products sold in Oregon are sustainable choices, regardless of where they are made. Environmentally superior products perform as well as or better than their higher-impact alternatives. Public, private and nongovernmental systems support access to sustainable choices. Full life cycle costs are internalized into prices, so lower cost is yet another benefit of greener products.

**Complete product and environmental information is accurate and readily available.** Accurate information on the environmental impacts of products is available to consumers in a meaningful way. Oregonians share a common understanding of sustainable consumption, including the "limits of our sustainable share of the world's natural resources" and whether we are living within them—both individually and collectively.



**People live well and consume sustainably.**

# Consumption and Use Today

**Many factors influence consumption today.** People make consumption choices to fill physical, emotional and recreational needs and to signal their social status. Reduced durability, reduced product quality and planned obsolescence drive increases in consumption. Cultural norms involving reuse, repurposing, repair, renting, sharing and buying are also influential. Subsidies encourage some consumption, and product prices do not reflect their full costs, including environmental impacts.

Increases in work hours tend to result in increased consumption, while work decreases lead to lower consumption. The United States has a long-term trend of increasing house sizes with fewer people per home. Regulation of advertising, including marketing to children, is limited.

Research suggests that Oregon's population in general may be less materialistic and more egalitarian than the United States as a whole.

**A sustainable level of consumption and how to achieve it are typically not well-understood** by policymakers, business leaders or the general public. Demand for sustainable product choices is moderate, but options are not always equitably available or affordable. Above a threshold, more consumption (of "wants") does not lead to commensurate increases in well-being for households with higher incomes, on average.

**Information on environmental impacts is rarely accessible, easy-to-use or trusted.** Consumers are confused about product impacts, and greenwashing - misleading claims about a product's environmental benefits -- makes it more difficult to discern accurate product information.

**Some impacts of consumption, such as greenhouse gas emissions, are fairly well-understood, while others are not.** Oregonians' consumption-related greenhouse gas emissions in 2005 were three times larger (21.5 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, $CO_2e$, per person) than the unsustainable global average of 7.1 metric tons of $CO_2e$ per person. Other environmental impacts of Oregon's consumption, such as toxics, are not well-quantified.

**Many Oregonians believe that overconsumption undermines the well-being of families and children, and threatens the environment and both personal and national financial security.** A majority of Oregonians (72 to 82 percent) agree that "our country would be better off if we all consumed less." More than 60 percent of Oregonians agree that "consuming less" would make people more self-reliant, provide more time to spend with family and friends, be better for the environment, and be "painful in the short term but better for us long term."[15] Some consumers, particularly households with lower incomes and education, indicate that they want information on how to consume more sustainably but lack access to such information. In the private sector, larger businesses are increasingly discussing "sustainable consumption."

# End-of-Life Management in 2050

**Materials have a useful life after discard.** The large majority of products, materials, food scraps and yard trimmings are captured for reuse, recycling or reprocessing. High-quality recovered materials are available to be made into useful products. Few materials are disposed of in landfills or incinerated.

**Stable infrastructure and markets support highest and best use of discarded materials.** Well-developed markets for recovered materials contribute to Oregon's economic success. Systems for recovering materials and managing discards, including for the few toxic products remaining in commerce, are available and cost-effective. These systems are convenient for consumers and businesses throughout the state. Effective sorting systems add value to recovered materials, and new technologies use materials and energy that had previously been discarded. High-quality feedstocks help keep regional mills viable and competitive. A strong, networked industry for reuse and repair exists. Many reuse, repurpose and recovery jobs add to a prosperous economy, and these businesses are stable.

**Oregonians are engaged in making better materials choices for end-of-life management of materials.** Residents understand that materials have value after discard. Oregon's social norm is to conserve, reuse, repair and recover.

**Materials have the most useful life possible after discard.**

**Health and environmental risks from disposed wastes are minimized.** Legacy waste and landfills, including stockpiled wastes, are managed safely.

**Public policies support sustainable materials management at product end-of-life**. All prices including recovery and disposal prices reflect full costs and support directing recovered material to its highest and best use. Producers share responsibility with governments and the public for managing materials after discard. Government sets and enforces standards and evaluates results of key recovery and discard management programs. Local governments have a role in designing programs to best serve their populations.

# End-of-Life Management Today

**The economic recession beginning in 2008 resulted in decreased waste, recycling and consumption.** The mixture of discarded content is changing over time, such as recent drops in newsprint and magazines.

**Of discarded materials, 48 percent are recovered for other uses.** Recovery rates vary broadly across materials. Paper, metal and glass all have recycling rates above 65 percent. About 15 percent of plastics are recycled, and food, carpet and textiles have recovery rates below 10 percent.

**Infrastructure and markets for discard management and recovery of materials vary by material and location.** Local governments have established infrastructure to collect discards and recyclables. Recycling is often available at home but not readily available outside the home. Curbside recycling is mainly available in urban areas and cities with more than 4,000 residents. Multifamily and commercial recycling collection is optional in certain cities. Options are limited for food scraps collection, composting and distribution of leftover edible food. Long-term landfill capacity is ample statewide.

**Export markets play a significant role, particularly for plastics, metals and mixed paper.** Paper has strong but threatened local markets. Metals, glass and compost have moderate local markets, while plastics and carpet have limited local markets. Recycling services in urban areas have better access to markets than rural areas. Concerns about contamination of recyclables and finished compost are growing.

**Disposal and recovery prices do not reflect indirect and opportunity costs.** Funding for DEQ and some local government programs comes from disposal fees, which change with quantities disposed.

**Discard management systems continue to develop.** Solid waste collection operates under an established franchise system in most of the state. Some reuse businesses and nonprofit organizations exist.

**Oregonians have a strong recycling ethic, but confusion exists** over waste prevention, recycling, biodegradability and composting. State and local governments and collectors help inform and engage residents. Oregonians have growing interests in energy recovery technology.

**Existing policies and regulations set priorities**, provide residents with recycling opportunities, and set a precedent for product stewardship of difficult-to-manage or harmful materials. A statutory solid waste hierarchy sets clear priorities. Local governments are required to provide residents the opportunity to recycle. Landfill bans are in place for selected materials. Oregon's bottle bill, electronics, and paint laws set a precedent for product stewardship. Mandatory business recycling in the Portland metro area is required but poorly enforced. Recycling is not mandatory outside the metro area, except that certain materials are banned from landfills. Generally, the regulatory structure is focused on managing wastes at end-of-life. DEQ measures tons recovered and disposed, and state waste generation and recovery goals are based on waste tonnages. State law sets recovery percentage goals that wastesheds (counties) were required to meet as of 2009 and also set a statewide recovery goal for 2009. State law also sets a statewide goal that the annual tons of solid waste generated in Oregon shall not increase beginning in 2009.

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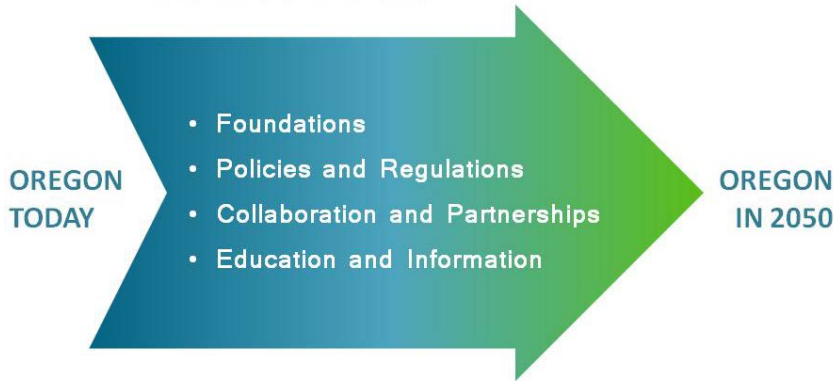
# Framework for Action

Taking action upstream—in design and production—offers the best opportunities to realize the *2050 Vision*. While producers shift to more sustainable actions, consumers also have important roles to play in the types of products they demand, how they use them, and how items are managed once they are no longer wanted. Effective management at end-of-life then redirects resources back into productive use, while helping to reduce the negative impacts of disposal.

To help achieve the *2050 Vision* in Oregon, DEQ must take several different types of actions. The *Framework for Action* includes pathways to lead Oregon to the desired outcomes for 2050. These pathways include:




Within the pathways, this document lists potential actions for DEQ and others to pursue and leaves room to develop new actions over time. The framework is intended to serve as a flexible platform for action to guide progress toward the *2050 Vision*; it is not designed as an implementation plan for specific actions. The framework is structured to allow adaptability in implementation and detailed action planning as it steers overall efforts in the direction of the vision and desired outcomes for 2050.



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**Identifies impacts throughout the life cycle**

**Focuses on high-impact actions across the life**

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State of Oregon
**Department of Environmental Quality**

# Implementing the Framework for Action

The *Framework for Action* lists about 50 actions without prioritization. DEQ will begin prioritizing actions by the end of 2012. It will consider factors such as the staging and relative timing of actions that build sequentially on each other, internal resource availability, opportunities to partner with other organizations and efforts, and other factors such as initiatives by key stakeholders that might facilitate certain actions.

DEQ will begin work on the highest priorities within the next five years as resources allow. Implementation of other actions will follow. The framework includes both foundational work needed to achieve the *2050 Vision* as well as work specific to different stages of material life cycle.

The framework will serve as a flexible platform to guide progress toward the *2050 Vision*; it is not designed as an implementation plan. For specific items in the framework, DEQ will scope projects, work with stakeholders as appropriate, and develop project plans. The actions are focused on areas of DEQ's potential influence and control. Implementation will include continuing opportunities for stakeholder involvement, and actions may be conducted by both DEQ and others.

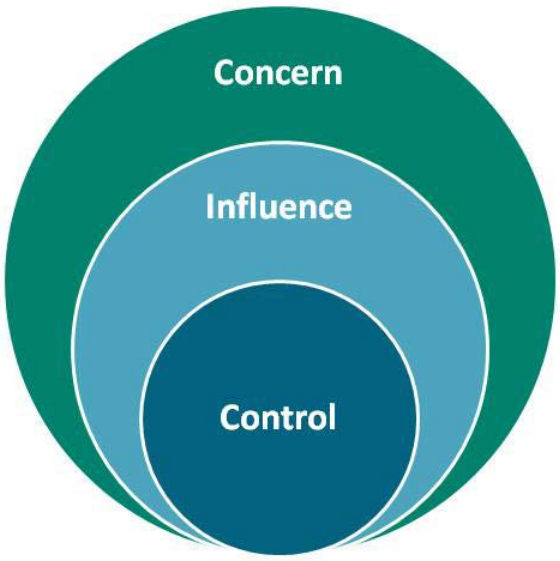


**Figure 4. Spheres of Control, Influence and Concern**

DEQ will reevaluate the entire *Framework for Action* every six years to foster continuous improvement and adaptive management, to ensure it effectively guides actions found in the *2050 Vision*. DEQ will update

actions and may identify new actions over time, following the guiding principles listed below.

## DEQ's Guiding Principles for Materials Management

**When prioritizing, planning and implementing actions, DEQ will consider the following guiding principles:**

- **Develop and implement policies and programs based on robust research.**
- **Lead when appropriate.**
- **Coordinate and collaborate with partners.**
- **Ensure that actions complement one another.**
- **Build on what's already working, such as using existing infrastructure when possible.**
- **Focus on high-impact materials and processes.**
- **Be flexible and adaptable.**
- **Continuously use the *Framework for Action* and update as necessary.**
- **Consider environmental and other impacts of policy options, including:**
  - **Social equity**
  - **Quality of life**
  - **Economic viability**
  - **Potential unintended consequences**

# Foundations (F)

This pathway builds the solid foundation necessary to achieve the *2050 Vision*. Foundational work includes setting goals and measuring outcomes for the broader effort as well as specific projects, supporting and performing research to inform work in all four pathways, building the work into DEQ operations, and securing stable funding. Foundational work, especially research, can act as a catalyst for new processes and initiatives, and supports the shift from managing discards to managing materials. As with other pathways, DEQ will perform much of this work in concert with its partners.

## F1. Establish goals and measure outcomes

**a.** Establish new **goals for sustainable materials management** and update existing goals.

**b.** Establish and track appropriate **sustainability measures** in coordination with the Oregon Sustainability Board and other relevant entities.

## F2. Identify and secure sustainable funding for materials management programs

**a.** Identify and **evaluate potential funding models** and convene stakeholders to collaborate and **develop funding strategy**.

**b.** **Secure funding** for DEQ and other programs, such as state entities charged with fulfilling the materials-related sustainability goals under the Oregon Sustainability Act.

**Icons indicate which life cycle stage action addresses.**

Full life cycle

Upstream, Design & Production

Consumption and Use

End-of-Life Management

## F3. Support and perform foundational research

**a.** Identify **high-impact materials and processes**, and disseminate information on easy-to-use life cycle **metrics** for high-impact product categories as well as lower-impact alternatives.

**b.** Perform research to **identify highest and best use at end-of-life** for discards with high environmental impacts (e.g., food, metals, paper, plastics, carpet and wood), and conduct analysis to determine barriers, program and policy options, and steps needed to increase and improve recovery. Research collection methods and better ways to separate and preserve the value of collected material.

**c.** Conduct a study of **regional standards** and opportunities for **carbon and environmental footprinting**.

**d.** Research and evaluate **definitions and criteria for addressing sustainable consumption** for Oregon.

**e.** Study **relationships between materials management and social** value of reuse, borrowing and renting; employment and community impacts of materials management; and understanding the values, preferences and motivations that support and promote community-scale sustainable consumption.

**f.** Research **material subsidies** to identify opportunities to reduce environmental impacts.

**g.** Identify and evaluate barriers to designing **infrastructure and products for repair, reuse and lifespan extension** in Oregon. Identify and evaluate options to **determine when product reuse is appropriate** based on environmental impacts.

**h.** Perform research on **product and disposal prices** to determine environmental and other potential costs not reflected in prices; develop tools, methods and standards for **determining full costs**; study feasibility of incorporating environmental costs into prices (e.g., carbon tax) as a tool to encourage product design changes or discourage products with higher impacts.

**i.** Conduct periodic updates to **consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions inventory** and evaluate inclusion of additional (non-climate) **environmental impacts.**



**Icons indicate which life cycle stage action addresses.**

**Full life cycle**

**Upstream, Design & Production**

**Consumption and Use**

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**j.** Evaluate **value of local production**, and identify products for which local production benefits the environment.

## F4. Build *2050 Vision and Framework for Action* into DEQ's operations

**a.** **Organize DEQ's programs to effectively implement this** *Framework for Action*. Evaluate current solid waste program work, including permitting, and realign staff priorities to be consistent with the *2050 Vision*. Align resources with risks for permitting, inspections and oversight.

**b.** **Review and update** *2050 Vision and Framework for Action* every 6 years.

**c.** Adopt a DEQ policy to **include environmental costs** in internal department decisions.

**d.** **Support implementation of DEQ's** *Toxics Reduction Strategy*, which includes a list of priority toxic chemicals and actions to reduce and assess toxics in Oregon.



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# Policies and Regulations (P)

DEQ will develop, evaluate, implement and measure effectiveness of policies and regulations that move Oregon on the path toward achieving the *2050 Vision*.

## P1. Evaluate and adopt incentives to help Oregonians produce and consume more sustainably

**a.** Support policies that offer incentives for **developing sustainable manufacturing techniques and goods**, including **green chemistry**, in Oregon.

**b.** Evaluate potential changes to tax policy to **shift consumption and support natural capital**.

## P2. Reduce life cycle impacts through product stewardship

**a.** Identify opportunities and establish **programs for producers and retailers** to support sustainable production and minimize life cycle impacts of products, such as greenhouse gas reductions and phase-out of persistent, bioaccumulative toxics.

**b.** Improve **information dissemination** across the life cycle of products such as credible **eco-labels** to foster reduction of environmental impacts of products; standardized **environmental footprint** information for products; comprehensive **hazard information** for chemicals; and **end-of-life instructions** for certain categories of products.

**c.** Evaluate and select products for suitable **environmental standards** ("choice editing") and implement **product standards for high-impact products** including phase-outs or bans.

**d.** **Prioritize products and materials for product stewardship** programs based on DEQ's product stewardship principles and support legislation consistent with these principles.

**e.** Develop and enforce **management standards for extended producer responsibility (take-back) programs**.

**f.** Coordinate with other states and provinces to **harmonize product stewardship efforts**.



**Product stewardship refers to a broad umbrella of actions to minimize harmful impacts across the entire life of their product.**

**Extended producer responsibility (EPR) is a specific application of product stewardship that shifts responsibility for end-of-life management of products and materials to the producer.**

**Icons indicate which life cycle stage action addresses.**

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## P3. Achieve the highest and best use at product end-of-life

**a.** Develop a strategy to **increase recovery of food, yard waste and metals and to limit them from entering the disposal stream** of wastes destined for landfill or incineration, where appropriate. Consider the use of incentives to increase recovery. Consider mandates for food scrap collection in areas with composting or anaerobic digester capacity at a reasonable price. In consultation with local governments and other partners, ban food scraps and metals from entering the disposal stream (destined for landfill or incineration) by 2025, with exceptions as appropriate.

**b.** In consultation with partners, evaluate **potential bans** at a state and local level to prevent other recoverable materials from entering the disposal stream destined for landfill or incineration.

**c.** Evaluate legislation, other authority, or other program approaches to **direct materials to their highest and best use** (e.g. limit feedstock sent to energy recovery and conversion technology facilities to non-recyclable material, as appropriate; send used petroleum products to their highest and best use; improve collection and processing to maintain the high value of the material collected).

**d.** **Increase recycling collection opportunities** in Oregon through review and update of the Opportunity to Recycle Act including considering additional incentives or mandates for increased multi-family and commercial recycling service as well as expanded education and promotion programs; reviewing the definition of "recyclable material" to consider other costs not reflected in recycling and disposal prices; and updating recyclable materials lists through rule adoption. When adding programs and/or recyclable materials, consider availability and distance to markets as well as size and location of communities.

**e.** Set ambitious yet achievable **recovery goals** for specific materials and products, such as rigid plastic containers.

**f.** In consultation with local governments and other partners, provide incentives for or mandate **post-collection sorting** for dry waste loads in large-volume markets.

**g.** Support efforts to set **revised ASTM standards** for product compostability and to **clarify product labeling** for compostability and biodegradability.

## P4. Safely manage materials that have been, and will be, disposed.

**a.** Establish and maintain appropriate **performance standards, permitting and other requirements** for environmentally protective management of wastes at disposal facilities.

**b.** Ensure **compliance with requirements** for environmentally protective management of materials through permitting and other oversight.



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# Collaboration and Partnerships (C)

Achieving the 2050 vision will require collaboration – both with DEQ's traditional partners as well as new partners who are essential to effectively managing the impacts of materials across the full life cycle. DEQ will collaborate with other state agencies, the Oregon Sustainability Board, businesses, nongovernmental organizations, local governments, individuals, the research community, federal agencies and other states to foster innovative solutions. DEQ will identify, convene and participate in cooperative partnerships; share information among partners; seek opportunities for collaboration on research; and play a leadership role and endorse other efforts, where appropriate.

## The Value of Collaboration and Partnerships – A Recent Example

**DEQ's recently-started residential green building initiative offers one example of the value and importance of collaboration and partnerships. DEQ got involved in green building at a time when the field was already busy and heavily populated. But DEQ filled a significant gap: researching and communicating information about the environmental impacts of materials and various methods of reducing environmental impacts through changes in material selection and use.**

**Working with partners as diverse as the Oregon Home Builders Association, numerous private builders, Energy Trust of Oregon, Earth Advantage, City of Portland, Cascadia Green Building Council and AARP, DEQ has rapidly leveraged its own limited resources to re-prioritize broader green building efforts and achieve greater environmental benefits, leading to changes in building codes, green building rating systems, and local incentive structures. New partnerships and collaboration have been critical elements of achieving these changes.**

## C1. Foster business and industry collaboration and innovation

**a.** Evaluate needs and opportunities for **business-to-business** processes. Support improvements in supply-chain reporting and information management including development of standardized methodologies for data collection and evaluation of product impacts, life cycle assessment standards, product category rules, and rating systems for manufacturing.

**b.** Support **Oregon Green Chemistry Innovation Initiative** to build awareness in the business community about the economic, environmental, and public health benefits of green chemistry.

**c.** Engage with research organizations such as the Oregon Nanomaterials and Microtechnologies Institute to **ensure that nanomaterials pose minimal harm** to human health and the environment.

**d.** Evaluate and engage in potential partnerships with industry to adopt incentives, grants, tax changes and other state and local policy alternatives to **support repair and reuse**, including product repair and building material reuse.

**e.** Evaluate and engage in potential partnerships with industry to adopt incentives, grants, tax changes and other state and local policy alternatives to **support collaborative and sustainable consumption**.

**f.** Investigate methods and technologies to better **sort and preserve value of recovered materials**.

**g.** Support efforts to set **standards for finished compost quality**.

**h.** Support efforts to **encourage the use of products made from recovered materials**, such as the use of food waste compost by agricultural producers.

**i.** Support **voluntary business accounting efforts** to monetize environmental impacts.

**j.** Support higher standards for new buildings (e.g., "net zero" plus offset of materials) and improvements to materials-related elements of **green building** certification systems.



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## C2. Work with government agencies to advance sustainable materials management

**a.** Work with Oregon's Department of Administrative Services, the Oregon Sustainability Board and others to assess and build upon existing **sustainable procurement policies and materials management programs**, including indicators and reporting, for state and local government and institutional purchasers.

**b.** Coordinate with Business Oregon, the Oregon Business Development Department, to identify and **support innovation in manufacturing**.

**c.** Support improvements to Oregon Reach Code and baseline **building codes**, such as material selection, preferences, restrictions, incentives for space-efficient homes, and removal of barriers to adopt lower-impact practices.

**d.** Support **expanding the State Energy Efficient Design requirements** for construction and renovation of state buildings to include energy impacts of materials.

**e.** **Coordinate** work with other states and local governments, economic development agencies and universities on **research of mutual interest**.

**f.** Support policies of other state and local agencies that align with the *2050 Vision*.

## C3. Support sustainable consumption "early adopters"

**a.** Evaluate and pursue opportunities to support **space-efficient housing**.

**b.** Engage with other partners to research feasibility and efficacy of reducing consumption by facilitating voluntary adoption of **shorter work weeks**.

**c.** Evaluate existing **food waste prevention programs** (such as "**Love Food Hate Waste**" and others) for application in Oregon. Partner with others to implement efforts in Oregon including efficient food redistribution systems.

**d.** Support opportunities for consumers to effectively **opt out of receiving unwanted mail**, if desired.

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# Education and Information (E)

Much of DEQ's work related to education and information will involve others. For example, DEQ will share information it develops with partners for distribution to appropriate audiences.

## E1. Engage communities in sustainable materials management

**a.** Develop information that can be used to **help consumers understand relative impacts of actions and choices**, and partner with others to disseminate the information.

**b.** Embed sustainable consumption concepts into existing **public** Recycle Act. Revise "Rethinking Recycling" curriculum and supporting materials; expand the curriculum to include grades 6 to 12 and a broader materials management perspective.

**c.** Encourage and facilitate public and private **demonstrations of successful material management** practices and strategies.

## E2. Develop a communication plan focused on sustainable end-of-life management

**a.** Develop **consistent statewide messaging** on the benefits of reuse, repair, composting, recycling and disposal, taking into account differences in programs throughout the state.

**b.** **Work with partners** such as grocery and retail stores and libraries **to deliver messages** related to sustainable end-of-life materials management.



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# Endnotes & Appendices

## Endnotes

[1] For example, the International Monetary Fund reports that global commodity prices for primary metals (an index of copper, aluminum, iron ore, tin, nickel, zinc, lead, and uranium) rose 47% between 2006 and 2011. Prices for food and beverage commodities rose 64%; agricultural raw materials (an index of timber, cotton, wool, rubber, and hides) rose 41%; and energy rose 62% during the same time period.

[2] In 1900, 41% of the materials used in the U.S. were renewable (agricultural, fishery, and forestry products); by 1995, only 6% of materials used were from renewable sources. The majority of materials consumed in the U.S. now are nonrenewable, including metals, minerals, and fossil-fuel derived products. Lorie A. Wagner, "Materials in the Economy—Material Flows, Scarcity, and the Environment," *U.S. Geological Survey Circular* 1221 (February 2002), **http://pubs.usgs.gov/circ/2002/c1221/c1221-508.pdf**.

[3] Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, *Supplemental Technical Report: Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Emissions Intensities for Consumption of Materials, Services, Fuels and Electricity* (2011), **http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/consumptionbasedghg.htm**.

[4] Figure 2 was modified from Center for Sustainable Systems, University of Michigan, "U.S. Material Use Factsheet," Publication Number CSS05-18 (2011), **http://css.snre.umich.edu/css_doc/CSS05-18.pdf**. The University of Michigan graphic was based on a figure from G.R. Matos and L.A. Wagner, "Consumption of Materials in the United States 1900-1995," *Annual Review of Energy and the Environment* (1998), version 23, pages 107-122. Also based on Lorie A. Wagner, "Materials in the Economy—Material Flows, Scarcity, and the Environment," *U.S. Geological Survey Circular* 1221 (February 2002).

[5] Oregon's calculated recovery rate for solid waste (excluding statutory "2 percent credits") has grown from 27% in 1992 to 48% in 2011. At the same time, solid waste landfills and incinerators have implemented more rigorous pollution controls.

[6] For example, among domestic sources of greenhouse gas emissions in 2006, roughly 2.2% of emissions came from landfills and wastewater treatment, while "upstream" sources were roughly 20 times higher: 32.2% of domestic emissions are associated with resource extraction and production processes, and 7.1% are associated with the movement of freight. These figures do not account for the transnational emissions associated with foreign supply chains satisfying domestic consumption; doing so would further increase the "upstream" emissions (relative to disposal-related emissions). Similarly, a rough analysis of sources of air toxics in the Portland Air Toxics Inventory found that the vast majority of sources of air toxics are associated with production or consumption activities, rather than management of wastes at end-of-life.

[7] Waste recovery activities in Oregon in 2011 saved approximately 31 trillion British thermal units (Btus) of energy—the equivalent of 253 million gallons of gasoline, or 3.2% of total energy used by all sectors of the economy in Oregon. Similarly, waste recovery activities reduced greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 2.8 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, roughly the same as tailpipe emissions from 580,000 "average" passenger cars over a year. Oregon Department of Environmental

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Quality, *2011 Oregon Material Recovery and Waste Generation Rates Report* (2012). While DEQ has not quantified other environmental benefits, a meta-analysis of life cycle analyses conducted in the United Kingdom concluded that recycling activities typically also reduce a variety of other pollutants, such as those contributing to toxicity, acidification, and smog formation, relative to landfilling or incineration. WRAP, *Environmental Benefits of Recycling—2010 Update* (2010). Specific to jobs, a recent study found that landfilling supports roughly 1 job per 10,000 tons of waste landfilled annually, while composting and recycling support, on average, 5 and 20 jobs per 10,000 tons, respectively, with as many as 100 jobs per 10,000 tons of plastics recycled, and even higher job potential for reuse and remanufacturing. Tellus Institute and Sound Resource Management, *More Jobs, Less Pollution: Growing the Recycling Economy in the U.S.* (2011).

[8] For an example of the increasingly global nature of our environmental footprint, one recent study showed that reductions in territorial greenhouse gas emissions in developed countries between 1990 and 2008 were more than offset by an increase in emissions in other countries associated with producing goods for consumption in the developed countries. Peters *et al.*, "Growth in Emission Transfers via International Trade from 1990 to 2008," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* (May 24, 2011).

[9] Nationally, achieving nearly 95% recovery (recycling and composting) of municipal solid waste and 70% recovery of construction and demolition materials would reduce the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the life cycle of materials (excluding use of energy-using products) by roughly one-seventh—a significant accomplishment, but still leaving most of the emissions associated with materials untouched. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Opportunities to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Materials and Land Management Practices* (2009). Similarly, estimations of the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions associated with different program and policy alternatives conducted by DEQ for the Oregon Global Warming Commission found that the potential reductions associated with "upstream" actions were many times larger than the reduction potential from actions addressing management of wastes. Oregon Global Warming Commission, *Interim Roadmap to 2020* (October 2010).

Looking just at one product category, DEQ's life cycle analysis of drinking water delivery systems compares the benefits of increasing recycling of single-use bottles with other actions that producers and consumers might engage in. For example, increasing the recovery rate for conventional PET water bottles from 37% to 62% recovery (roughly equivalent to the change in recovery rate when water bottles were added to Oregon's bottle bill) decreases life cycle impacts of these bottles by 5% for global warming potential, 7% for energy use, 5% for respiratory effects potential, and 1% for ecotoxicity potential. (This is based on an allocation method that assigns only half of the benefits of recycling to the generator of recycled waste and the other half to the user of recycled material; an alternative approach that allocates all of the benefits to the waste generator would produce benefits roughly twice those listed above.) In contrast, increasing the recycling rate to 62% while simultaneously lightweighting the plastic bottle (an "upstream" or producer-related action not directly related to end-of-life management) leads to much larger reductions: 21% for global warming potential, 23% for energy use, 22% for respiratory effects potential, and 20% for ecotoxicity potential. Going further, decisions by the consumer to eschew bottled water and drink water from the tap instead could reduce these impacts by 26% to 99%. Franklin Associates, prepared for Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, *Life Cycle Assessment of Drinking Water Delivery Systems: Bottle Water, Tap Water, and Home/Office Delivery Water* (2009).

[10] Several of the best examples of suboptimal decisions resulting from focusing on end-of-life considerations rather than the full life cycle involve the very common practice of using end-of-life objectives (e.g., recycling, composting) to inform purchasing decisions (e.g., recyclable, compostable). As recycling and composting are generally viewed as good for the environment, a natural inclination is for people to assume that recyclable and compostable products must similarly be good for the environment. Two examples

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from projects in Oregon illustrate the hazards of this approach. First, a life cycle analysis of green building practices shows that, when choosing among competing wall framing practices, design for "waste prevention" and design for "recycling" can both lead to suboptimal outcomes. Over the life cycle of the home, several wall designs with lower overall environmental impacts tend to use more material (and thus generate more solid waste) and more types of materials that are currently difficult to recover. Quantis, Earth Advantage Institute, and Oregon Home Builders Association, prepared for Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, *A Life Cycle Approach to Prioritizing Methods of Preventing Waste from the Residential Construction Sector in the State of Oregon—Phase 2 Report* (2010).

Similarly, when considering options for shipping non-breakable goods in a catalog or electronic commerce order fulfillment environment, DEQ's e-commerce packaging life cycle analysis clearly shows that criteria such as "recyclable" and "recycled content" do not consistently correlate well with reductions in environmental impacts. In contrast, several packaging options that are both difficult to recycle and contain limited recycled content (such as plastic shipping bags) have environmental burdens that are considerably lower than options that are easy to recycle and contain higher levels of recycled content (such as corrugated boxes with paper void fills). Franklin Associates, prepared for Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Life Cycle Inventory of Packaging Options for Shipment of Mail-Order Goods* (2004).

[11] Specifically, in *Oregon Revised Statutes 459.015(1)*, the Legislative Assembly makes several findings and declarations, including that "(e) There are limits to Oregon's natural resources and the capacity of the state's environment to absorb the impacts of increasing consumption of resources…" and "(f) It is in the best interest of the people of Oregon to conserve resources and energy by developing an economy that encourages waste prevention and recycling."

[12] While recycling bridges the worlds of materials production and end-of-life management, the production element has been historically underemphasized. Further, some of the current challenges involving recycling (such as contamination of recyclables and loss of end-markets) may in part be a consequence of managing recycling as a solid waste activity as opposed to a materials management activity. Thus, the shift from solid waste management to materials management provides opportunities to improve outcomes from discard management programs, while also providing more effective opportunities to realize the broader policy objectives of conserving resources and reducing pollution.

[13] World Business Council for Sustainable Development, *Sustainable Consumption Facts and Trends from a Business Perspective* (2008).

[14] TerraChoice, a subsidiary of Underwriters Laboratories, has published a series of reports on "greenwashing." Its most recent involved a review of 5,296 consumer products sold in the U.S. and Canada. These products made more than 12,600 "green" claims. Only 4.4% of products making green claims avoided all of TerraChoice's "seven sins of greenwashing." Put differently, the vast majority of products making environmental claims are engaging in some form of greenwashing, as defined by TerraChoice. The most common "sins" include the "sin of no proof" (making claims that are not substantiated), vague claims, hidden trade-offs (implying greenness by calling out environmental attributes that may be positive but largely irrelevant, while not mentioning other negative environmental impacts), and the use of false or bogus certifications. TerraChoice, *The Sins of Greenwashing* (2010).

[15] Opinion data drawn from several 400+ participant random digit dial public opinion surveys conducted in 2008 and 2009 by PolicyInteractive.

# Appendix A
# Glossary

**Backcasting:** A technique used in The Natural Step and elsewhere that starts from an envisioned future outcome and works backwards to determine steps that can lead from current conditions to that future outcome.

**Choice editing:** Instances where less sustainable products or services are removed and replaced with more sustainable items. Governments may introduce outright bans or introduce timelines for the elimination of a product or service. Businesses may phase out production of less sustainable items or remove items from sale, whether voluntarily or in response to government initiatives.

**Consumption:** The using of a resource, product, or material. In the *2050 Vision*, "consumption" typically refers to the stage in the life cycle of a product where it is acquired and used, following production but prior to end-of-life management. However, "consumption" in the context of the **consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions inventory** has a slightly different meaning, referring to the purchase of goods and services by households and governments, as well as business purchases that are classified as capital or inventory formation (economic final demand).

**Consumption-based greenhouse gas emissions inventory:** An estimation of the quantity of gases contributing to climate change that are associated with consumption (economic final demand). A consumption-based inventory is sometimes contrasted with a territorial inventory. A territorial inventory estimates the emissions that physically originate within a community (e.g., Oregon). In contrast, many of Oregon's consumption-based emissions occur in other states and countries, in the course of producing goods and services for consumption in Oregon.

**Conversion technology:** The use of primarily chemical or thermal processes to convert solid waste to fuels or other useful products. Examples include pyrolysis, gasification, transesterification (biodiesel production), hydrolysis, and distillation. Anaerobic digestion and fermentation (for ethanol production), which are both biological processes, are often considered to be forms of conversion technology.

**Cost:** Everything given up to acquire or provide a material or service, or achieve a goal. Cost can include direct transfers of money (as reflected in market prices of acquiring or providing a material or service) as well as other components not typically reflected in the market price, such as time, opportunity, health, and environmental quality.

**Discard management:** The collection, transport, processing or disposal, managing, and monitoring of waste materials at end-of-life.

**Downstream:** Those actions and impacts that occur after that point in the life cycle, at any point on a product's life cycle. For example, as viewed by a consumer, downstream actions are those associated with disposal or recycling of the product.

**Eco-label:** A symbol or other label information that reports one or more environmental impacts or attributes of the labeled product. Eco-labels are often used to communicate or imply that the labeled product has lower environmental impacts than previous versions/models and/or competing products.

**End-of-life:** The point at which a product or material is no longer useful to the person possessing it and is either discarded or abandoned.

**Energy recovery:** The use of solid waste to produce a fuel, or the direct combustion of solid waste as a fuel for heat recovery or to produce electricity.

**Environmental footprint:** A measure of the environmental impacts associated with the life cycle of a good or service, including resource extraction, production, transport, sale, use, and end-of-life management. For example, the "Ecological Footprint" is one specific methodology of evaluating environmental impacts in terms of the amount of land required to produce goods and services that an individual or organization consumes. The methodology was originally developed by Mathis Wackernagel and William Rees.

**Extended producer responsibility (EPR):** A mandatory type of product stewardship that includes, at a minimum, the requirement that the producer's responsibility for its product extends to post-consumer management of that product and its packaging.

**Green building:** Constructing and maintaining structures in a way that optimizes resource use and minimizes environmental and human health impacts throughout the life cycle, through design, material selection, operation, and adaptable reuse or deconstruction considerations.

**Green chemistry:** The invention, design, and application of chemical products and processes to reduce or to eliminate the use and generation of hazardous substances.

**Greenwashing:** The practice of making an unsubstantiated or misleading claim about the environmental benefits of a product, service or technology

**Large volume market:** A geographic area with sufficient population or commercial or other activity to allow the viable establishment of a collection program or processing activity.

**Life cycle assessment (or analysis), LCA:** A standardized process used to estimate the impact that a product or process has over the whole of its lifespan, including extraction of raw materials, production, transport, use, and disposal.

**Materials management:** An approach to reduce environmental impacts by managing materials through all stages of their life. Materials management identifies impacts and actions across the full cycle of materials and products as they move through the economy—from raw material extraction to product design and manufacture, transport, consumption, use, reuse, recycling, and disposal.

**Natural capital:** The stock of natural ecosystems that yields a flow of valuable goods or services into the future. It is an extension of the economic definition of capital, which traditionally refers to only the stock of human-made goods and machinery.

**The Natural Step:** A process derived from the work of Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt that businesses and organizations use to advance sustainability goals based on four "system conditions." The four conditions are that the natural environment is *not* subject to

systematically increasing concentrations of substances extracted from the earth's crust, concentrations of substances produced by society, or degradation by physical means; and people are not subject to conditions that systematically undermine their capacity to meet their needs.

**Product stewardship:** The act of minimizing health, safety, environmental, and social impacts and maximizing economic benefits of a product and its packaging throughout all life cycle stages. The producer has the greatest ability to minimize adverse impacts, but other stakeholders, such as suppliers, retailers, and consumers, also play a role. Stewardship can be either voluntary or required by law.

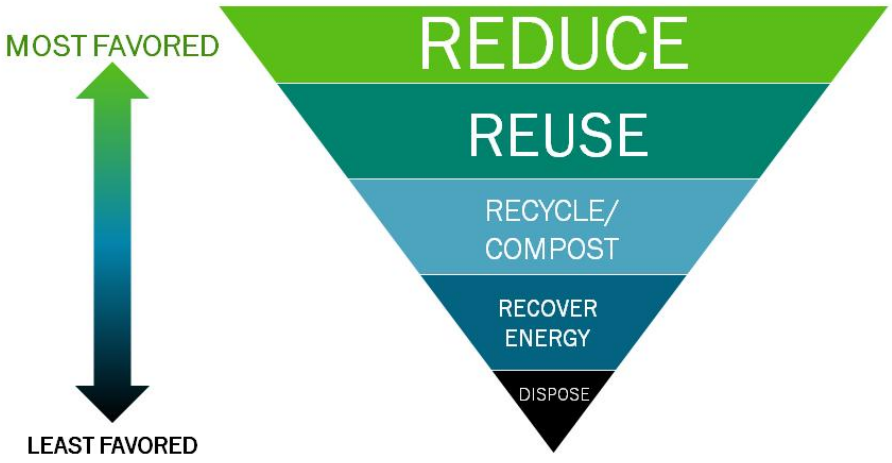
**Social equity:** The just, fair and equitable distribution of resources across populations.

**Sustainability:** Using, developing, and protecting resources in a manner that enables people to meet current needs and provides that future generations can also meet future needs, from the joint perspective of environmental, economic, and community objectives.

**Upstream:** Those actions and impacts that occur before that point in the life cycle, at any point on a product's life cycle. For example, as viewed by a consumer, upstream impacts are those associated with extraction of raw materials, production, distribution, and sale of the product.

**Waste management:** A subset of materials management specifically addressing the management of discards; often used to include, recycling, material recovery, composting, energy recovery, and landfilling.

**Waste management hierarchy:** Priority in methods of managing solid waste, established by Oregon law as follows: reduce the amount of solid waste generated; reuse material for the purpose for which it was originally intended; recycle material that cannot be reused; compost material that cannot be reused or recycled; recover energy from solid waste that cannot be reused, recycled, or composted, so long as the energy recovery facility preserves the quality of air, water, and land resources; and dispose of solid waste that cannot be reused, recycled, composted, or from which energy cannot be recovered by landfilling or other method approved by the Department of Environmental Quality.




**Waste prevention:** To reduce the amount of solid waste generated or resources used, without increasing toxicity, in the design, manufacture, purchase, or use of products or packaging. "Pure" waste prevention does not include recycling or composting.




# Appendix B
# Background Documents

DEQ collected and developed background documents for this project to inform Workgroup members, capture institutional knowledge, and explore relevant topics more deeply. Background documents are available at **www.deq.state.or.us/lq/sw/materialsmgmtplanbkgrddocs.htm**

## Upstream, Production, and Consumption

### Waste Prevention

This paper examines the topic of **waste prevention**, the "reduce, reuse" part of the solid waste management hierarchy. It provides a summary of research findings on prevention, an overview of DEQ's *Waste Prevention Strategy*, and a short discussion of key challenges moving forward.

### Residential Green Building

Residential green building is one element of DEQ's work in waste prevention. This report summarizes the results of DEQ's life cycle assessment of residential waste prevention building practices, outcomes of that research, next steps for DEQ, and emerging issues.

### Sustainable Consumption and Waste Prevention

This paper provides background on sustainable consumption and explores its relationship with waste prevention. It concludes that DEQ's traditional waste prevention work may be more effective if reframed clearly in the context of sustainable consumption.

### Literature Review: Key Challenges in Sustainable Consumption

This paper summarizes a literature review addressing the challenges specific to sustainable consumption.

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### Literature Review: Alternatives for Advancing Sustainable Production and Consumption through Government Programs and Policies

This document summarizes the results of a broad but limited literature review specific to program and policy alternatives that support sustainable production and consumption.

### Recommendations for Product Stewardship in Oregon

This report recommends that Oregon pursue product stewardship as one strategy to reduce the environmental and public health impacts of products. It also recommends eight key elements for product stewardship programs and policy in Oregon.

## End-of-Life Management and Recovery

### Oregon's Solid Waste Hierarchy—Intent and Uses

This document describes the policy intent behind Oregon's solid waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle, compost, energy recovery, and disposal) and DEQ's application of the guidance.

### Trends in Oregon Waste Generation, 1993-2010

This document describes wastes tracked by DEQ, overall disposal and recovery trends for Oregon, and trends in generation, disposal, and recovery for individual material groups.

### Best Management Practices for Discarded Food Scraps

This paper describes a food waste hierarchy that identifies activities and practices intended to minimize the amount of food waste generated and beneficially use food discards.

### What are "Conversion Technologies"?

This paper describes processes and technologies used to convert the energy stored in carbon-containing organic wastes to chemicals and products which can be used to create energy or make new products. The paper also briefly identifies potential benefits and concerns relevant to conversion technologies.

### Potential for Additional Material Recovery

This paper examines current recovery rates for materials in Oregon and evaluates several potential environmental impacts if recovery could be increased.

2050 VISION
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
CREATING A MATERIALS MANAGEMENT VISION
WELCOME TO 2050
FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION
ENDNOTES & APPENDICES

### General

#### What Are "Sustainable Materials" and "Sustainable Materials Management"?

This paper briefly introduces six different responses to these questions and summarizes some of the advantages and limitations of each approach.

#### DEQ Report to the Legislature: Solid Waste Management Program Information Update for 2009-2010

Biennial report regarding implementation of Oregon's Integrated Resource and Solid Waste Management Plan.

#### Materials Management and Greenhouse Gases

A summary of how materials contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and opportunities to reduce emissions through materials management.

#### Alternative Criteria for Measuring Environmental Impacts of Materials Management

An examination of some of the more important criteria and how changes in materials management might affect those criteria.

#### DEQ Toxics Reduction Strategy

DEQ's draft *Toxics Reduction Strategy* includes a Focus List of priority toxic chemicals and 25 actions to reduce and assess toxics in Oregon.

#### Rare Earth Elements

Rare earth elements - used for manufacture of wind turbines and electric vehicle technologies, among other products - will continue to be of considerable interest for the foreseeable future.

## Background Documents from Outside DEQ

#### Sustainable Materials Management: The Road Ahead

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2009.

#### The Natural Step Story: Seeding a Quiet Revolution

Karl-Henrik Robèrt, 2008.

#### More Jobs, Less Pollution: Growing the Recycling Economy in the U.S.

Tellus Institute and Sound Resource Management, 2011.

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# Appendix C
# Systems and Capabilities

This appendix describes systems and capabilities broadly needed to achieve the *2050 Vision*. To attain the future described in this *2050 Vision*, DEQ and others will need various systems and capabilities in place. Some of these capacities already exist, while others are not yet developed. DEQ and others will build the following systems and capabilities to support the *2050 Vision*.

## Information

- Ability to distill and credibly use information about environmental, societal and economic impacts.
- Knowledge and disclosure of environmental impacts for the full product life cycle.
- Ability to determine highest and best use of materials.
- Robust research and innovation initiatives toward sustainable materials management.
- Systems for sharing information and knowledge.
- Ongoing stakeholder involvement.

## Economic Systems

- Sustainable funding.
- A level playing field between Oregon businesses and global competitors.
- Financial signals that point consumers and manufacturers in the right direction.
- Full-cost accounting and cost internalization.



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## Social Systems

- Effective communication among government, producers, designers, distributors, retailers, consumers, recovery and discard management providers.
- Political and public support for achieving the *2050 Vision*.
- Social norms around sustainable production, consumption, and end-of-life management and recovery.
- Infrastructure for reuse, repair and sharing.
- Equitable access to sustainable choices.

## Leadership in Government

- Outcome-based management.
- Organizational structure and sufficient resources dedicated to materials management.

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# Appendix D
# Workgroup Members

## 2050 Vision for Materials Management Workgroup Members

| | |
|---|---|
| **Mark Brady*** | Business Oregon |
| **Eden Brukman** | International Living Future Institute |
| **Meghan Butler** | Recology |
| **Chris Chapman** | Washington State Department of Ecology |
| **Steve Clem*** | Skanska USA Building |
| **Julie Daniel** | BRING Recycling |
| **Shannon Davis** | U.S. Environmental Protection Agency |
| **Mike Dewey** | Legislative Advocates |
| **Anisha Ladha*** | Intel Corporation |
| **Kristan Mitchell** | Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association |
| **Jeff Murray*** | Recycling professional |
| **Babe O'Sullivan** | City of Eugene |
| **Garry Penning*** | Rogue Disposal and Recycling |
| **Megan Ponder*** | City of Portland |
| **Colin Price** | Oregon Environmental Council |
| **Jennifer Purcell** | Tillamook County |
| **Wayne Rifer*** | Green Electronics Council |
| **Meg Rowe** | Oregon Sustainability Board |
| **Jeanne Roy** | Center for Earth Leadership |
| **Heather Schmidt** | New Seasons Market |
| **Andy Sloop** | Metro |
| **Chris Thomas** | Association of Oregon Recyclers (Waste Connections) |
| **Wendy Wiles** | Oregon Department of Environmental Quality |
| **Adam Winston*** | Waste Management |

**Not pictured*



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