

Group 2 - LWVOR and LWVPDX POSITIONS - 2021-2022 PROGRAM PLANNING

Air, water, superfund sites, environmental issues, climate change

Monday, January 25, 2021 at 10 am

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LWVOR POSITIONS

Natural resources - Natural Resources (National position)

Air Quality

Water Policy - Quantity and Quality

Climate Change (LWVUS position)

Offshore and Coastal Management

Energy Conservation

Nuclear Energy

Seismic Risks

Water Resources - Columbia Basin

(Other LWVOR Natural Resources positions)

LWVPDX POSITIONS

Planning

Metropolitan Government

Regional planning - Regional planning and governance

Solid Waste

If there is a topic for which there is no LWVUS, LWVOR or LWVPDX position, the League cannot advocate for public policy changes on that topic. If your group believes we need a position on a topic, you may suggest a study or concurrence with a position from another state or local League. A study, restudy or concurrence must be approved by the membership before it is adopted.

Recommendations and comments from Program Planning 2020

CLIMATE CHANGE: have a Civic Ed program, perhaps jointly with City Club on Climate Change and include Energy and information about Liquid Fossil Fuel Infrastructure; update LWVUS Energy positions, emphasizing climate emergency; propose change in LWVUS wording to include climate emergency; seek coalition with CA and WA Leagues.

Group 2 - LWVOR Positions relevant to *Air, water, superfund sites, environmental issues and climate change*

Natural Resources (National position)

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health.

Air Quality (LWVOR position)

Adopted May 1968

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that all segments of society (government, industry, agriculture and individual citizens) must share responsibility for improved air pollution abatement practices.

In more specific terms, the League supports:

- Adequate standards for control of all sources of pollution and strict enforcement of established rules and regulations;
- A comprehensive, coordinated program for management of air as a natural resource;
- Adequate financing for air pollution abatement programs;
- More research to determine causes and effects of air pollution and methods of control, better coordination of research programs, and increased sharing of information.

League agrees:

Individuals, too, must recognize their responsibility in abatement programs and be willing to accept restrictions on their own activities, particularly with respect to automobiles and backyard burning.

Effective public education programs are necessary if the public is to recognize the seriousness of the problem; and appreciate the necessity to support improved pollution abatement.

In general, industry must be prepared to pay the cost of abatement for its own pollution, but members recognize the usefulness of some form of financial incentives:

- to assist small or distressed industries; and
- to prevent undue delay in obtaining relief from pollution.
- The members prefer loans and direct grants over forms of tax relief.

Polluters should bear the cost of pollution abatement in proportion to their contribution to the problem. (Actually everyone will pay, whether in taxes, in product cost, or in bearing the consequence of inadequate pollution abatement.)

In considering Oregon's relationship with other governmental units, League concludes: Because both the desirable air quality and the problems of pollution vary from one area to another:

1. The state has a right to set higher standards for pollution than those set by the federal government. The state has a responsibility to set higher standards for pollution when local conditions demand it.
2. Federal standards in all cases should be recognized as a minimum below which state standards cannot be set.
3. As air pollution does not recognize state boundaries, participation in interstate compacts is desirable in order to control pollution on an airshed basis.

Water Policy – Quality and Quantity LWVOR position

Adopted April 2011; Replaced positions on Water Policy and Planning (adopted January 1977; revised March 1985) and Water Quality (adopted January 1969)

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that water is a resource that should be managed for the benefit of the public and as sustainable habitat for all life forms.

The League supports Oregon state policies and statutes that promote comprehensive long-range planning for conservation and management of ground and surface water and the improvement of water quality. Regulating agencies that govern the protection and conservation of water should be transparent and provide the public easy access to information.

The League supports management approaches that maximize interagency communication to include but are not limited to:

1. Uniform definitions of "beneficial uses" and other terminology for both quality and quantity management,
2. Coordination of activities including water allocation, measurement, monitoring/testing, enforcement of water law and the promotion of water conservation,
3. Well-defined statutory enforcement procedures and the funding to protect water resources held in common, and
4. Recognition of the variability of local/basin/watershed quality and quantity needs.

The League recognizes the application of historic prior appropriations of water but supports modifications in order to accomplish the following:

1. Consider both in-stream and out-of-stream beneficial uses of water,
2. Facilitate changes from one beneficial use of water to another,
3. Provide incentives for water user conservation,
4. Incorporate evolving scientific understanding of natural water systems in waste management,
5. Develop priority uses for water in times of shortage, and
6. Expand protection of in-stream beneficial uses such as minimum perennial stream flow.

The League believes that the interdependence of land use planning and water planning must be recognized and required at all levels of government:

1. Local comprehensive plans, watershed plans, basin plans, state and regional plans should be coordinated and complementary.
2. Roles and responsibilities of all decision makers and agencies affecting water resource and quality issues should be clearly defined.

The League believes that all planning for ground and surface water should include consideration for both the quality of the water and the availability of water to meet the beneficial uses. Planning at all levels should consider existing water rights and current and projected uses. The League acknowledges that this may be best accomplished at the watershed/basin level if adequate funding and professional staffing are available. Basin/ watershed water management should be efficient and economical, responsive to public need, flexible to allow for changes over time, and lead to conservation and allocation of the resource in the public interest. Transfers of water between basins should require coordination with planning and water use in both basins.

The League recognizes that effective planning for water protection and use is most effective with a complete inventory of the water resource including all domestic wells and encourages moving toward this goal. Priority efforts should be directed to geographic areas with identified problems and vulnerabilities. The League opposes degradation of all of Oregon's surface and ground water. The League supports policies and legislation that integrate water quality into resource management and include but are not limited to standards for:

1. Potable water and drinking water treatment facilities,
2. Placement and inspection of septic tanks and alternative individual treatment systems,
3. In-stream surface water quality for recreational use, including primary contact sports, commercial and sport fishing, and habitat protection,

4. Ground water quality for recognized beneficial uses,
5. Agricultural, municipal, forestry and industrial wastewater discharge and runoff,
6. Uniform water quality testing protocols— updated as scientific methodologies improve,
7. Permitting and enforcement procedures with agency funding adequate to ensure timely compliance,
8. Adequate, well maintained sewers and sewage treatment facilities and
9. Control and treatment of runoff from non-pervious surfaces.

The League recognizes that conservation strategies for surface and ground water, including but not limited to incentives, regulations and rationing in emergency situations, are needed to meet future demand. Individuals, agriculture, municipalities, forestry and industry should be encouraged to develop practices to reduce water usage and minimize pollution. Support should be provided for upgrading and maintaining the equipment necessary for water conservation. The League supports the need to build resilience and innovation into water planning in order to address climate change impacts. Public involvement should be encouraged throughout the water management and planning processes. The processes should be transparent and include educational components. The League acknowledges that all water users must share in the cost of water management. Rate payers should have primary responsibility for infrastructure maintenance, delivery and conservation. The State should have primary responsibility for planning, research, data collection and public outreach. Permit fees should be a significant contributor to the development of infrastructure.

Superfund sites - there is no LWVOR position on superfund sites

Climate Change - LWVOR uses the LWVUS position on climate change

Statement of Position on Climate Change Policy, as announced by the National Board, January 2019: This is the new position in Impact on Issues, 2020-2022.

The League believes that climate change is a serious threat facing our nation and our planet.

The League believes that an interrelated approach to combating climate change—including through energy conservation, air pollution controls, building resilience, and promotion of renewable resources— is necessary to protect public health and defend the overall integrity of the global ecosystem. The League supports climate goals and policies that are consistent with the best available climate science and that will ensure a stable climate system for future generations. Individuals, communities, and governments must continue to address this issue, while considering

the ramifications of their decision, at all levels—local, state, regional, national, and global.

Offshore and Coastal Management

Adopted May 1990, 2013

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes responsible and responsive government management of the public's coastal and nearshore natural resources shall be based upon:

1. A complete environmental assessment, cumulative impact analysis, and baseline data specific to Oregon.
2. Recognition of coastal states and local government's rights, jurisdictions, and responsibilities to preserve and protect marine and coastal environment and economy.

Federal government's offshore activities must be consistent with Oregon's approved Coastal Zone Management Plan.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports uniformity of regulations governing the coastal management zone, with opportunity for public input. Jurisdictions should have the ability to enhance regulations to better address local conditions. The League supports the development and maintenance of local comprehensive plans and development codes. Funding should be adequate for effective management and enforcement and should come from a variety of sources.

The League opposes any revision, interpretation, or application of Oregon's established marine policy that would diminish Land Conservation and Development Commission Goal 19's strong environmental and natural resources conservation policy giving clear priority to long-term renewable resource uses.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon opposes oil and gas exploration and development within the state's territorial sea, and requests the state to oppose any federal lease sales within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone off the Oregon coast. The ecological integrity, renewable natural resources, and beneficial uses of Oregon's ocean water must be protected.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon opposes exploration and development of marine minerals within the state's territorial sea. The League supports academic research that would not adversely affect the ecological integrity, renewable natural resources, and beneficial uses of the state's territorial sea.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a state policy that calls on the federal government to ban the exploration and development of marine minerals with the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone off the Oregon coast. Should a ban not be effected, the following must be required:

1. An unbiased, credible scientific E.I.S. should be completed prior to any offshore mineral exploration or recovery operation.
2. Offshore mineral activities should be evaluated for degradation of the marine environment, risk to ocean fisheries, and coastal erosion problems.
3. A complete socioeconomic impact statement of offshore developments effect on the states and coastal economy should be made.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon affirms the public's right to be completely informed, actively involved and assured the opportunity to participate in decisions about offshore exploration and development, as well as onshore facilities that support offshore development.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon endorses adequate industry-financed oil spill contingency funds, compensation funds, and company bonding for marine mineral mining activities to cover claims for damage caused by their operations, onshore support facilities, and transporting vessels. Governments and other claimants should be reimbursed for, but not limited to, the following:

1. Oil spill clean-up costs.
2. Loss of natural resources or loss of use of natural resources.
3. Impairment of earning capacity.
4. Damage to real or personal property and personal injury.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports a policy which allows the state to terminate or modify a lease for environmental endangerment or for public safety within the state's territorial sea.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports the creation and operation of marine reserves and protected areas on the Oregon Coast. Siting and management of reserves should reflect a variety of factors, including habitat, species diversity, fisheries and tourism, with sound science being the most critical. The reserves should have identified goals, and continuous funding should come from multiple sources.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports active research into ocean energy technologies. Research should incorporate evaluation of impacts on marine habitats and the coastal economy. Funding should be from multiple sources. Commercial deployment should be allowed only after adequate scientific research is completed and regulations have been adopted. Monitoring should be ongoing with necessary actions and modifications taken to protect the marine environment. Commercial operations should agree to bear the cost of remediating and restoring any environmental damage.

The League of Women Voters of Oregon supports actions to restore and preserve estuaries to assure they function effectively in the long term. Measures could include additional reserves, streamside protection, planting, removal of invasive species, scientific research, restoration, and response to climate change. Funding should be

from multiple sources. Estuary restoration should encourage education and volunteer involvement.

The League recognizes that dredging may be necessary to keep deep-water channels open for maritime commerce. Prior to activity, environmental assessments must be completed to ensure protection of habitat. Design and execution should minimize damage to natural habitats.

Recognizing that mining affects water quantity, quality, and habitat, mining practices should be strictly regulated to minimize damage and require restoration. In some instances, where preserving water quality and habitat is vital, mining should be banned.

Energy Conservation

Adopted May 1973; Educational Update 2003*

- A) The members of the League of Women Voters of Oregon support state policies which promote long range planning for conservation and wise development of energy sources. The League believes the public should have an opportunity to influence decisions on the development of particular sources and the siting of specific installations. League supports:
 - 1) A governmental agency to evaluate power needs estimates and plan source development. This agency should include representatives of:
 - a) utility companies,
 - b) the general public, and
 - c) all levels of government.
 - 2) Governmental programs to provide public education and information to encourage information participation in all power decisions, both for production and conservation.
- B) The League believes that in any decision to build a power plant:
 - 1) The most important consideration is environmental quality;
 - 2) Of lesser importance, but to be taken into account are:
 - a) size of electric bills and prices of goods,
 - b) industrial development,
 - c) cultural standards.
- C) The League supports the following conservation measures:
 - 1) Rate structures encouraging the wise use of energy. To this end League favors:
 - a) a low base rate for essential use, above this,
 - b) higher rates to discourage waste.
 - 2) Government funding of research and development efforts to discover new technologies:
 - a) to provide efficient methods for energy production and use with minimal environmental damage,
 - b) emphasis should be given to renewable resources.
 - 3) Governmental programs to provide public education and information.

- 4) Building codes which will specify standards of design and insulation that minimize waste of energy used for heating, cooling, and lighting.
- D) The League believes that state or region should be allowed higher standards for nuclear plants than those set by the federal government.

*Updated in 2003 for background information only – no position change.

Nuclear Energy LWWOR position related “environmental issues”

Adopted May 1980

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that the nuclear power program must be managed to protect current and future generations and to maintain an **environment** beneficial to life.

1. Technical uncertainties must be publicly recognized and planned for,
2. Responsibility for establishing and maintaining a waste system must not be deferred to future generations, and
3. Effective coordination among all levels of government – federal, state, local – and the private sector is imperative in planning and carrying out programs for transportation, waste storage, and safety, with responsibility and authority clearly designated.

LWWOR position related to “environmental issues”

Water Resources of the Columbia River and the Columbia River Task Force

LWWOR position Adopted 1979

In order to meet the present and future water needs within the Columbia River Basin, the League of Women Voters believes comprehensive planning on a basin-wide basis for conservation, development, and management of the water is essential to the optimum utilization of our water resources. Machinery is needed which will:

Provide coordinated planning and administration among federal, state, and other agencies;

- Establish a process for resolving conflicts among uses;
- Establish procedures which provide information and an opportunity for citizen participation in policy decisions affecting the directions which water resources development will take.

The federal government has a necessary role in financing water resources development, but state and local governments and private users should share such costs, as far as possible, based on benefits received and the ability to pay.

The League of Women Voters believes that wise planning for the use of water in the Columbia River Basin requires an inventory of the water resource within the Basin.

This inventory should include all water-related information including:

- ground and surface water sources,
- viable water rights,
- current use, and
- projected future needs.

The inventory should be readily available to concerned agencies and the general public. The League also believes that minimum stream flows should be established as a public right and maintained on all streams in the Columbia River Basin.

The League recognizes that conservation strategies for surface and ground water, including but not limited to incentives, regulations and rationing in emergency situations, are needed to meet future demand. Individuals, agriculture, municipalities, forestry and industry should be encouraged to develop practices to reduce water usage and minimize pollution. Support should be provided for upgrading and maintaining the equipment necessary for water conservation. The League supports the need to build resiliency and innovation into water planning in order to address climate change impacts.

Public involvement should be encouraged throughout the water management and planning processes. The processes should be transparent and include educational components. The League acknowledges that all water users must share in the cost of water management. Rate payers should have primary responsibility for infrastructure maintenance, delivery and conservation. The state should have primary responsibility for planning, research, data collection and public outreach. Permit fees should be a significant contributor to the development of infrastructure.

Seismic Risks LWWOR position related to “environmental issues”

Adopted March 1995

The League of Women Voters of Oregon believes that all levels of government share the responsibility of coordinating, implementing and funding an effective program to mitigate Oregon’s earthquake and tsunami hazards.

Priority must be given to mitigation that protects human life and safeguards critical life support systems.

The League supports:

- Educating the public about the grave significance of Oregon’s earthquake and tsunami threat and encouraging preparedness.

- Improving the safety of transportation systems and establishing alternate routes around bridges and overpasses which are likely to be unsafe after an earthquake or tsunami.
- Establishing tsunami warning signals and evacuation routes.
- Evaluating dams that threaten population centers and taking remedial actions, such as reinforcing dams, and developing maps and downstream notification procedures.

LWVOR supports as essential elements of an effective earthquake and tsunami program:

- Comprehensive education efforts:
- All school children should be taught to understand Oregon's earthquake and tsunami hazards and how to respond to various situations and conditions that may arise.
- Schools' earthquake and tsunami plans, education and drills should be monitored and analyzed for adequacy.

Improved preparedness:

- Federal, state, and local chain of command should be established and fully coordinated. The emergency communication system should be enhanced and regularly tested.
- Emergency Services should be accessible and housed in safe buildings. Citizens should be encouraged to develop emergency plans, including supply kits.
- When citing critical facilities, tsunami run up and inundation as well as seismic factors such as severe ground shaking, liquefaction, massive landslide potential, and subsidence should be considered.
- Geological reports identifying property at risk should be on file and accessible to the public. Property that poses extreme hazards should be designated as unbuildable.

Group 2 - LWVPDX positions relevant to Air, water, superfund sites, environmental issues, climate change.

Note: LWVPDX can use LWVUS and LWVOR positions

City of Portland: Planning (2009, 1974, 1973)

The League of Women Voters of Portland supports comprehensive long-range city planning based on:

- Citizen involvement at all stages of the planning process;
- Communication and coordination among citizens, citizen advisory groups, and city and regional planning agencies;
- Consideration of environmental, social and economic impacts of proposed plans and actions;
- Determination of long-range goals and priorities.

Goals should include:

- Area-wide orderly growth and development;

- A visually attractive urban community with a sustainable and healthful environment and a healthy economy;
- Quality infrastructure and public facilities designed to meet the needs of residents and businesses;
- Fair distribution of tax burdens and government investment.

Water:

Regional Issues: Metropolitan Government (2000, revised 1994, 1992)

The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County support a regional government composed of:

A council of not more than 13 councilors elected from defined districts; and
An Executive Director, preferably to be appointed by the council.

Metro should continue to perform the following services and functions: Oregon Zoo, solid waste management, Oregon Convention Center, Metropolitan Exposition-Recreation facilities, transportation planning, **surface water run-off coordination**, planning and development, and information and assistance to local governments. The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County support Metro's involvement in planning for: a parks system, sewage systems, and water supply and distribution systems, in conjunction with local jurisdictions.

The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County support the following revenue sources for Metro: service or user fees; an excise tax on users of district services or facilities; per capita dues paid by counties, the Port of Portland and Tri-Met; federal and state funds; and general obligation and revenue bonds. The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County also support Metro's consideration of the use of an income tax for additional funding.

Metro should strive to develop visibility and foster communication with the public and local governments by the use of government officials and private citizens on advisory committees, and by creative methods of providing information about its activities to its constituents.

Regional Issues: Regional Planning and Governance (1996)

The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County believe the following issues are of regional concern:

- Growth management - affordable housing, long-term planning, parks/open space, urban growth boundaries/densities, economic development
- Natural systems management - **water**, air quality, solid waste/recycling
- Regional infrastructure - transportation including ports and airports, sewers, storm water drainage

- Human services and amenities - arts, libraries, education, health service, mental health
- Public safety corrections, police, emergency preparedness

We believe that efficiency, political feasibility, and economy should be determining factors in cooperative efforts among local governments. Intergovernmental agreements are one method of resolving issues that local governments cannot solve by themselves.

We believe that the entire area benefits from having regional attractors for arts, sports, and recreation. User fees and hotel-motel taxes should be part of the funding for these facilities.

Solid Waste (revised 1994, revised 1985, 1972)

The Leagues of Women Voters of Portland and Clackamas County support an environmentally sound solid waste management plan. To conserve our resources as much as possible, it should provide for maximum re-use and recycling. In support of this, local units of government should use recycled products whenever economically feasible. Industry should produce less unnecessary packaging, and more standardized and bio-degradable containers. It is industry's obligation to discard the "built-in obsolescence" theory and to manufacture better quality products. Local government should foster the use of neighborhood shredders, encourage research for alternatives to burning, and enforce existing laws.

Education of the public about solid waste problems is a primary need. The consumer should be educated to exercise care in purchasing, to demand quality products, to recycle, and to change the throw-away philosophy.

Financing of the solid waste management program must be adequate, economical, efficient, manageable and flexible, covering present and future needs. Financing should be supported by private and commercial interest together with local and regional governments. Financing should be provided by user fees and charges, licensing fees, disposal fees on car bodies and appliances, by bonds, and by federal and state grants and moneys.

The State should have authority over planning, regulation and enforcement of the solid waste program. Collection should be done by private industry with local government (city, county) handling the franchising. Transfer stations, recycling and disposal sites should be under regional jurisdiction.

Regional government should have the authority to initiate the process of siting regional landfills. Local government (city and/or county) land use plans must make it possible to site landfills within their own geographical boundaries. The state shall direct the

appropriate state-level authority to accomplish the siting should the regional governing body be unsuccessful in providing a landfill.