Local, Regional, National, and International Solidarity
Together we can ensure that our communities can have the tools necessary to lead efforts to create a more just Oregon. Our alliance centers the idea that leadership and power must come from the grassroots. Environmental Justice principles call for policy agendas to be set by those who are most impacted and who are the experts of their own experience. We are called upon to activate our communities by organizing, creating ownership and deep investment in the solutions presented. We must earn a sense of belonging, trust, and the commitment of individuals in order to take collective action. Together, we will build power for Environmental Justice and Civil Rights in our communities across Oregon.

Radical transformation and a re-imagining of the systems which determine how we live our lives is difficult and will take time. We recognize that everything is at stake and the responsibility is ours to create a better, just future. At our core, we believe that the pathway to long-term system change goes beyond one piece of legislation, one policy change, or any election cycle – it comes from building a stronger community.

In Oregon, we are part of a long and global legacy of people of color fighting for environmental justice. We know that the communities most impacted by climate change are also those most harmed by histories of racism, colonialism, enslavement, and genocide. Extreme weather events like Hurricane Maria and Hurricane Katrina devastate already vulnerable communities; people of color and people from low-income communities pay the price of climate change through their health, financial security, loss of home, loss of and psychological well-being.

As part of this global movement, we see addressing environmental racism and the three crises (ecological, empire and economic) as an opportunity to build community power behind equitable solutions that strengthen the resilience of communities historically most impacted. We are focused on putting our communities in a position to lead and benefit as real solutions to a just transition move in our state and create a more just future for everyone, everywhere.
ABOUT US:

The Oregon Just Transition Alliance is a movement of communities facing environmental racism, climate change, and economic exploitation – the frontlines of injustice and the frontlines of change. We bring together organizations committed to base-building in frontline communities. We gather to create ownership over our collective future and move Oregon toward an economy that is rooted in our shared values.

Just transition “It’s a framework for looking at how environmental and climate justice can address long standing economic inequality – bringing all movements for justice under a single unified frame. We’re coming together to make sure our voices are heard, and that the new economy works for everyone.”

Steering Committee

2017 Build The New OREGON JUST TRANSITION ASSEMBLY
SEPT 1-4 PORTLAND, OREGON
WHAT IS JUST TRANSITION?

How do we shift from an economy that continues to extract our labor, resources and sacredness for the benefit of a few, to one that is ecologically sustainable, equitable and just for all of its members?

We need a new system that is rooted in a worldview of sacredness, deep democracy, self determination, and regenerative practices.

We build on the history of just transition as defined by the labor union movement. Our definition must encompass a range of social interventions needed to secure workers' jobs and livelihoods. When economies are shifting to sustainable production, mitigating climate change, and ending war, we must protect vulnerable communities. A just transition is a holistic approach encompassing the need to end the extractive economy a vision for healthy, thriving, life affirming and connected local economies in its place. This is a proactive and visionary approach credited to Movement Generation, Climate Justice Alliance and many other Just Transition movement builders.

The Oregon Just Transition Alliance has aligned with the creators of this framework to seek the shift needed for the state of Oregon to move to an economy that is regenerative and creates buen vivir. In recognition of our state's context and exploitative history we come together under this framework to draw upon the intersectionality of issues and demonstrate solidarity not only a local level but also national and international level. Under this framework we are led by the following principles:

- A just transition is led by frontline communities
- A just transition creates buen vivir, living well
- A just transition shifts resources and power
- A just transition embodies local, regional, national, and international solidarity
- A just transition must have regenerative ecological effects
- A just transition centers community resilience and collaboration
- A just transition is self determination
- A just transition builds the new
- A just transition must preserve ancestral wisdom and culture
Strategies for a Just Transition:

End the Bad
Build the New
Change the Rules
Divest From Their Power
Invest in Our Power
Change the Story
Build a Movement of Movements
OREGON JUST TRANSITION "BUILD THE NEW" ASSEMBLY

September 1-4 2017
The Oregon Just Transition Alliance brought together more than 250 community members from across the state of Oregon to build energy for a just transition. The Assembly itself was a space intentionally led by frontline, base-building organizations. Our goals were to introduce communities to the Just Transition framework, history, and principles, share how our communities experience climate change, and articulate our solutions. Working groups examined the three global crises: empire, economic, and ecological.

Day 1. Invest in Our Power:
On the first day we celebrated the gathering of hundreds of frontline community members from across the state by bringing together our supporters to learn about the plans for the weekend and beyond, raising resources to support the work.

Day 2. End the Bad:
On the second day participants analysed the extractive economy through workgroups on White Nationalism, Environmental and Climate Justice which included talking about false solutions, Workers Rights/Housing Rights, and a Youth Space – Youth Power. Participants had a the opportunity to rotate quickly through the groups to get an understanding of the global crises.

Day 2. Roots, Rhythm, Revolution: a Night of Cultural Resistance:
The second day ended with an evening of cultural performances where participants shared spoken word, songs, dancing, and much more.

Day 3. Build the New:
The third day focused on the solutions that could move us to a regenerative economy with the same workgroups spending considerably longer on deep-dives into solutions generation.

Day 4. Justice for the Worker – Action Camp
We closed the assembly with Nonviolent Direct Action (NVDA) training provided by the Ruckus Society- to show us how to claim our power for the campaigns and days of action ahead of us.
ASSEMBLY HIGHLIGHTS

250+ Individuals explored a variety of proposals for a Just Transition from a polluting, extractive and exploitative economy, to one that serves the interests of people and planet.
A JUST TRANSITION IS...

"will end the bad"  "a transition is inevitable, justice is not"
"build community mobilization around climate resilience"
"change the narrative"  "redistribute power"  "change the rules"
"built coalition with frontline communities leading"  "divest and invest"
"value sacredness and culture"  "restore our lands"
"build community and meaningful participation"  "resistance"
"practice self-care"  "people, place, power"
"Interconnected and intersectional stories"  "clean air"  "resilient"  "justice"

"real solutions"  "Funding for community spaces around state/create space for cultural/art expression."
"challenges systemic structures"  "representation"
"frontline led"  "What the hands do the heart learns"
"Empower communities to tell THEIR story + not an interpretation"

"climate, jobs and justice are not exclusive from one another"  "solidarity"
"ecologically sustainable"  "economically sustainable"
"movement of movements"  "solidarity"
"self determination"  "representation"
"interconnectedness"  "What the hands do the heart learns"
"organizing, organizing"  "What the hands do the heart learns"
"intersectional fights"  "What the hands do the heart learns"
"empowered and unified"  "strength and people power"

"sacredness, culture and tradition"  "strength and people power"
"Invest in Our Power"

As a key strategy towards a Just Transition, divesting from the extractive economy and investing in a regenerative economy is important.

Our current extractive economy accumulates wealth in fewer and fewer hands. This dynamic, fueled by rampant consumerism, leads to global human suffering and environmental degradation.

On the first day of the assembly we welcomed everyone to invest in a new kind of economy, one in where investments are controlled by community for community for the purpose of reinvesting in the communities taking lead in a just transition. We thank everyone who attended this day and continues to divest from an extractive economy to invest in a life-affirming one.
Another key strategy towards a Just Transition is to end the bad—moving from the destructive, extractive and exploitative way in which our resources, our labor, our culture, and our lives are put on the line for the benefit of just a few.

Climate change disproportionately impacts marginalized communities globally, and right here in Oregon. Devastating climate-related disasters continue to ravage low-lying parts of the world. Similar disasters exist in North America: from hurricane-battered Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico, to wildfires and mudslides along the Pacific Coast.

Efforts to address global impacts of our extractive economy and forge new ways are rarely driven by those most directly and adversely impacted. Interconnected issues of transportation, housing, alternative energy production, health care and education are still treated as business interests. There is a better way to transition our economy to be living and regenerative, one that frontline communities lead.

“When I dare to be powerful—to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid” ~Audre Lorde
Below is a list of issues around the extractive economy that community members identified to end, or where new solutions and ways to look at the problem are needed. Participants rotated around three workgroups as part of the three crises: crisis of empire, ecological and economic. These are only a few of the many issues surfaced as part of the first day. The list is not presented in any particular order.

- **Exploitation for profit:** Companies should be genuinely motivated by what is right for the environment, not what is right for their bottom line. Just causes should not be exploited for positive public relations or media attention, but rather because they uphold the values of our society.

- **Stop Expansion of Tracks for Exportation of Coal and Oil**
  #NoPacificConnectorPipeline

- **Stop ecological BAD practices:** Mixed Trash, Not Recycling Trash left, on the streets ~ Litter, Wasting water, Oil leaks onto the ground

- **Stop the school to prison pipeline**- youth are seeing the impacts not just at school, but also at the bus, in the fields, at home. No sense of security.

- **Stop the bad use of pesticides that contaminate our land, soil and water**

- **Stop expansion of freeways**

- **Private ownership profit, competition, exploitation- workers are exploitable:** Corporations currently possess too much power over the pivotal decisions facing our communities. We must protect the workers from exploitation and ensure that those in power have the people’s best interest in mind.

- **Evictions and negative impacts of gentrification:** gentrification and displacement should be a significant point of discussion within our state as we approach a pivotal time in the development of our community. Both the immediate consequences and the long-term impacts of gentrification must be made clear to the public in order to prevent further damage to vulnerable communities.
- Exposure to diesel exhaust
- Mass Incarceration
- Eliminating the fossil fuel infrastructure with an opportunity to build the new.
- Lack of affordable food and food sovereignty in general
- Cost of energy
Art is a vital way for our communities to express our cultures and share our struggles. Impacts of climate change have continued to cause both emotional and physical violence to our communities.

Art has the power to create healing spaces and outlets for individuals to express how we all interact with Mother Earth and its suffering. As we build, looking seven generations back and seven generations forward, art is a healing tool. Climate change and climate justice can be abstract, but art has a way of connecting people and communicating a message beyond just an individual person. A Just Transition must celebrate and restore our cultures.
"People are aware that they cannot continue in the same old way but are immobilized because they cannot imagine an alternative. We need a vision that recognizes that we are at one of the great turning points in human history when the survival of our planet and the restoration of our humanity require a great sea change in our ecological, economic, political, and spiritual values." - Grace Lee Boggs

A Just Transition will not be easy and will take time to achieve. We must remember that a Just transition must:

Be frontline led
Provide self determination
Shut economic control to communities
Advance ecological restoration
Drive and result in social equity and racial justice
Retain and restore culture and tradition
Democratize wealth
Relocalize most production and consumption
Have a solidarity model

and more... in order to be sustainable, regenerative and life affirming.

Building the new will require solutions that are visionary and oppositional to the status quo.
COMMUNITY DEFINED SOLUTIONS

We must recognize that the ecological crisis, crisis of empire and economic crisis are not exclusive from one another.

- All recycled paper: Recycling paper and paper-based products should become the new standard in our communities. We should phase out non-recycled paper materials in favor of this more environmentally friendly alternative.

- Banned/taxes on plastic bottles: The amount of damage that plastic bottles have on our environment should be proportional to the sanctions against their usage. Plastic bottles could either be banned entirely, or taxed significantly to reduce further damage.

- Develop a new, more inclusive, vocabulary to avoid discriminatory tones and ensure the creation of a more equitable community. Building shared vocabulary and values will be critical to building a movement of movements.

- Advanced bus/transit system: The urban bus and transit system should be both innovative and accessible to all citizens. Our community should be at the forefront of progressive transit developments.

- Multimodal transportation: We should become less reliant on cars and instead provide incentives for more environmentally friendly transportation alternatives, such as biking. We can encourage communities to engage in these lifestyle changes by making sidewalks more accessible and well-maintained.

- Cities should listen to the public’s perspectives on all the changes being discussed, and with their input, work to create a livable community that is conscious of its environmental impact. These positive changes can occur on both an individual level as well as on an institutional scale.

- Garbage taxes and larger taxes for rich people- one way in which we could reduce excess non-compostable waste is to propose a tax on garbage. These taxes should also be proportionally corresponding to a household’s income.

- People have a fundamental right to the city- we should aim to develop an inclusive and welcoming environment in which everyone is treated with respect and afforded the same amount of dignity.

- Reduce militarism by lobbying against military spending. Our tax dollars should go to health care, education, social services.
• Housing is a human right—All people in our community should be able to take shelter in a safe and comfortable space.

• Full worker control and dignity—workers should have a more powerful voice in the corporations they work for.

• Debunk the American dream—recognize the disparities and obstacles that exist for many people, and work to provide accessible resources in order to eliminate them.

• Condemn exploitation and excess—excessive wealth and exploitative practices by large corporation must not be tolerated. We have the power to apply public pressure until changes are made.

• Value cooperation over commodification—collaboration and personal growth should be the hallmarks of a successful organization, not profit margins or stock sales.

• People are not commodities—recognize that every individual within a corporation or business is a complex human being worth more than just their economic contributions.

• Power structure—institutional power-holders are mostly homeowners and not accountable to communities. When decisions concerning the future of a community are made, those within the community should have the most power to decide what is right. The influence should not lie with corporations who have a vested interest in the situation, but instead with those who know the community best.

• Community members can help to educate their representatives and other lawmakers to their perspectives in order to begin to build a stronger relationship upon a foundation of mutual trust and respect.

• Organize resistance against corporate greed and stop corporate money and influence from polluting our democracy

• Free public transit, replaced highways— with infrastructure dedicated for public transit. Focus on more routes (increase jobs without displacement)

• Community-owned clean energy, diesel regulation and more.
Youth will inherit this world from the adults who are in power today. Climate change is as much about the natural environment as it is about the socio-economic systems we live in. Our ability to transform these systems is key to realizing the vision of a just and sustainable future that is interconnected. We must advance real solutions and not false or distracting ones. Our vision will not be realized unless we commit to the work of transforming ourselves and following the lead of those most historically most impacted, especially youth.

Some of the topics that youth engaged during the Assembly included:

- School to Prison Pipeline
- Funding priorities in school
- Immigration priorities (DACA)
- Pesticides on farmworkers and its impact on youth
- Lack of transportation access
- Participatory budgeting
- Restorative Justice in public spaces
We strive for an interconnected, aligned, and strong alliance of community, health, labor, housing advocates, racial justice organizations, youth, and workers that works together to fight for a just transition. This requires investment in the leadership of these community members for the long term. After the assembly the many issues uplifted and solutions presented continue to be analysed by frontline communities, we need to amplify the need for these communities to be the ones making the decisions. Priorities of our movements include:

Creating a democratic, inclusive, and transparent economy

Organizing as a key strategy with individuals from historically impacted communities

Rejecting false solutions

Fighting for the basic rights to housing, health, green space and more.

Creating alternatives for clean energy

Organizing to end the bad around liquified natural gas pipelines and the fossil fuel infrastructure

Counter austerity, privatization, and community displacement (e.g., erosion of health care, education, social services, public benefits, gentrification, etc.)

Organizing a resistance against corporate greed and stop corporate money and influence from polluting our democracy

Reinvesting funds from extractive economies (e.g., corporations, war, resource extraction, etc.) to local living economies

Supporting a just transition for displaced workers

Create community ownership of natural resources like land, energy, food, etc.

Reclaim community and public space (public transportation, green infrastructure etc.)

Developing alternative governance structures to promote just transition projects

Build community-owned infrastructure that creates local jobs
Needless to say, three days provided barely enough time to scratch the surface of all the complexities that lie before us. The opportunity to convene frontline communities to learn about what Oregonians are already doing to End the Bad and Build the New served as a call to action. We need frontline leadership for real solutions to move forward. The gathering provided us also with the opportunity to explore our unique roles within the Just Transition framework, and deepen our work across the Oregon at the critical intersection of climate change and social justice. We all play a role in the just transition, and we must follow frontline leadership.

Build a Movement of Movements with Us!
We want to thank everyone who joined us at the assembly. Thank you for taking the time to envision with us a Just Transition led by frontline communities.

Below are some of the organizations who participated.

Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste
Unite Oregon
OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon
Rural Organizing Project
Beyond Toxics
Rogue Climate
Portland African American Leadership Forum
Latinos Unidos Siempre
Youth Environmental Justice Alliance
Community Alliance of Tenants
VOZ Workers' Rights Education Project
Native American Youth & Family Center
Eugene/Springfield National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Portland National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757
Africa House
Oregon AFL CIO
Green Lents
Momentum Alliance
Gabriella PDX
Latino Network
Verde
Euvalcree
Adelante Mujeres
MEChA de UO
Grupo Latino de Acción Directa
CAUSA Oregon
Capaces Leadership Institute
Asian Leaders for the Liberation of Youth
Talento Universitario Regresando a Nuestros Orígenes (TURNO)
Coalition Against Environmental Racism
Oregon Students of Color Coalition
Red Earth Descendants
GotGreen
Grassroots Global Justice
Change Lab
Enlace International
Indigenous Peoples Power Project
Ruckus Society