



weber green

Weber State University's Environmental Issues Committee -

Our Mission

The Environmental Issues Committee shall help facilitate the modeling of best practices for economic and environmental sustainability at WSU. The committee shall serve as a local and state-wide source for scientifically based information and for leadership on environmental issues affecting Utah, the Wasatch Front, and WSU Campus Committees.

Your Green Link

news and information

February 2013

Cash Awards for Sustainability Research

The WSU Alumni Association and Provost's Office are offering cash awards (two \$500 student awards and one \$1,000 faculty award) for exceptional student and faculty sustainability research projects completed 2012-2013. Winners will be selected by a subcommittee of the WSU Faculty Senate Environmental Issues Committee.

Eligible faculty submissions include any faculty research project completed in 2012-2013 in the area of sustainability. Eligible student submissions include any research project involving some primary research completed in 2012-2013 in the area of sustainability. (Student projects completed in conjunction with faculty research may apply but the role and work of the student must be clearly explained.)

To be considered, please email a 250-word summary abstract of your research, including an explanation of how the research relates to the WSU Definition of Sustainability Research quoted below; indicate how your work impacted the WSU community and the world beyond WSU. Applicants should also provide an electronic copy of the completed project.

Sustainability research addresses components of sustainability (e.g., social equity, ecological health, the use of scarce resources and a belief that economic development must consider all of these) or particular goals of sustainable living (e.g., waste reduction, renewable energy, clean resources, climate change adaptation, comprehensive land use planning, or generally, the design of efficient environmental policies or regulations) as it furthers human understanding of complex interconnections between society and nature. At its core, sustainability research recognizes that human/societal and economic health is inextricably linked to a healthy natural world and the sustainable use of resources; it strives toward solutions to these challenges.

Email submissions to Dr. Shaun Hansen by *March 11, 2013*: shaunhansen1@weber.edu

Convocations Presents “A New Water Ethic”

Dr. Daniel McCool

February 21st, Noon, Wildcat Theater

An award-winning writer, researcher and teacher, Dr. McCool is a professor of political science and the director of the Environmental and Sustainability Studies Program at the University of Utah. He has written or edited nine books, the most recent of which, *River Republic: The Fall and Rise of America's Rivers*, was published in 2012. Professor McCool's research focuses on water resource development, public lands policy, voting rights and Indian water rights. He has served as a consultant for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U. S. Department of Justice, the ACLU's Voting Rights Project and the Southwest Center for Environmental Research and Policy. An expert frequently interviewed by newspaper, radio and television media, Dan McCool brings vast experience and expertise to Weber State University's Water Works Series. His talk is sponsored by the Office of the Provost, the Department of Student Involvement and Leadership, and the Environmental Issues Committee.

WSU's 4th Annual Sustainability Summit to be the Best Yet!

This year's Sustainability Summit is shaping up to be an exciting event. To be hosted in the Shepherd Union on February 28 and March 1, the conference will provide exceptional educational programs, networking and trade show opportunities for educators; government representatives; sustainability, energy and solid waste professionals; students; politicians and interested public.

L. Hunter Lovins will kick off this year's summit with her keynote address, “The Business Case for Sustainability.” Lovins is president and founder of Natural Capitalism Solutions (NCS) (www.natcapsolutions.org). NCS educates senior decision makers in business, government and civil society about methods to restore and enhance natural and human capital while increasing prosperity and quality of life.

Several sessions will be offered throughout February 28th on the following topics:

- Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy and Achieving Carbon Neutrality
- Water Conservation, Quality and Management
- Recycling and Waste Reduction/Elimination
- Student-gearred sessions focusing on green jobs, green building and more

On March 1, we are excited to offer three professional workshops:

- Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Green Associate Course: This course will provide a detailed overview of sustainable planning, design and construction techniques based on the LEED Green Building Rating System. Attendees will learn the major LEED categories and their related measurements.
- EPA Portfolio Manager Course: Portfolio Manager is an interactive energy management tool that allows businesses and building managers to track and assess energy and water consumption across a facility in a secure online environment. The workshop will cover these topics:
 - 1) What is Portfolio Manager?
 - 2) Why and how do you use it?
 - 3) How does Utah compare to other states?
- Energy & Water Management: An Introduction to Sustainable Business Development: This workshop will provide an overview of energy and water waste streams in the workplace as well as the tools to help identify and measure waste and to develop a sustainable business approach. Focus is on the triple bottom line approach: profit, people and planet.

For further details and to register, please visit: www.intermountainsustainabilitysummit.com

Convocations Presents "Unbroken Waters: Adventures on a Fluid Planet"

Craig Childs

March 14th, Noon, Browning Center (Room 113)

Craig Childs is a writer who focuses on natural sciences, archaeology and remarkable journeys into the wilderness. He has published more than a dozen critically acclaimed books on nature, science and adventure. He is a commentator for National Public Radio's Morning Edition, and his work has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Men's Journal*, *Outside*, *Orion*, and *High Country News*. His subjects range from pre-Columbian archaeology to US border issues to the last free-flowing rivers of Tibet and Patagonia. He has won several key awards, including the 2011 Ellen Meloy Desert Writers Award, 2008 Rowell Art of Adventure Award, the 2007 Sigurd Olson Nature Writing Award and the 2003 Spirit of the West Award for his body of work, an honor he shares with Wallace Stegner, Terry Tempest Williams and N. Scott Momaday. His talk is sponsored by the Office of the Provost, the Department of Student Involvement and Leadership, and the Environmental Issues Committee.

Uhaul Car Share Now at WSU!

Owning and maintaining a car can be incredibly expensive, especially if you need it only every now and then for shopping, errands or a night out. Now you can ditch your expensive car and borrow one from WSU's Uhaul Car Share fleet when you need it. A Uhaul car share car can be found on campus in the public pay lot and near the Community Center at University Village.

HOW CAR SHARING WORKS

JOIN: Join now for \$25. If you are 18 or older, have a driver's license and meet basic requirements, you can (and should) apply for U Car Share membership. Most applicants are approved within one business day. Once approved, you will receive an email letting you know you can begin sharing.

RESERVE: Choose a car and time. Sign in to your account and reserve any of our cars for the time you wish, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You pay only for what you use. You'll start out on a Pay as U Go plan but can upgrade any time. Rates begin at \$4.95/hour with a low price guarantee.

DRIVE: Each member receives a unique access code. Simply enter it into the car's keypad and the doors will unlock. The keys are tethered to the vehicle at all times. Run all your errands and return the car where you found it.

RESERVE, DRIVE, SAVE

- Available 24/7
- \$4.95/hr (plus mileage)
- Hassle free, no annual fees
- Gas, insurance and roadside assistance provided
- For responsible drivers 18 and older

For more information check out www.uhaulcarshare.com

Take Precautionary Action: The Bottom Line from Author, Activist Sandra Steingraber

On January 17, 2013, acclaimed ecologist, author, activist and cancer survivor Sandra Steingraber gave a Convocations address as part of the Water Works series. This followed the screening of *Living Downstream*, a film based on her first book (available in the library), earlier in the week. Her talk was a wonderfully complex tale

of the evolution of our knowledge of the environment, environmental pollution and its impacts on our health. Steingraber began with the 19th century story of cholera and its discovered link to the contamination of drinking water with sewage. Crucially, action was taken to keep sewage from drinking water sources long before there was absolute scientific proof that it was indeed the culprit—the precautionary principle at work in action that saves lives. She moved from the biological contamination of our environment and bodies to chemical contamination. Of the tens of thousands of hazardous chemicals used today, only a small number are regulated in the USA. With regard to water, while we may think our exposure to pollutants comes largely through drinking it, Steingraber noted that the vast majority of human interaction with water and its pollutants comes through skin and lungs (whose combined surface area equals the size of a tennis court). Chlorine is one substance that, while put into water to prevent biological contamination, creates its own toxic effects. Her point was that we cannot avoid pollutants by drinking bottled or spring water; it is necessary to keep culinary water sources clean from the start. Steingraber's talk segued into a description of fracking (hydraulic slick-water fracturing), the “unconventional” natural gas extraction process, and the problems it creates in ecological and human systems. This is *the* issue of our time, with its detrimental and irreversible impacts on water supply (water is permanently removed from its natural cycle), water and soil quality (several toxic chemicals are combined with sand and water and injected into wells to fracture the underlying rock formations) and air quality (the potent greenhouse gas methane is added to an already overloaded atmosphere). The largest effort against fracking in the USA is in New York State, where currently there is a moratorium on it. We should note that the fossil fuel industry has begun fracking in Utah.

Waste Reduction Pilot Program Launched Spring Semester

Recycling rates on the WSU campus have been, frankly, abysmal. According to our waste hauler, Waste Management, WSU is recycling only about 20% of its waste when easily 80 - 90% of what ends up in the trash is recyclable.

Another problem is recycling contamination. Too often food and liquid waste ends up in the recycling bins. Enough of this waste contaminates the entire batch of recycling, requiring it to be thrown away.

To tackle these problems, the Energy & Sustainability Office initiated a waste reduction pilot program on January 7th in the Social Science, Wattis, and Education Buildings. The program aims to substantially increase recycling rates and reduce recycling contamination by:

1. Placing a recycling bin next to every trash bin so that students/faculty/staff are always faced with a convenient choice when disposing of waste.
2. Placing better signs above ALL trash and recycling bins so that students/faculty/staff are aware of all of the items that can and cannot be recycled.
3. Increasing the frequency of recycling pick-up and decreasing the frequency of trash pick-up by the custodians.

The trash dumpsters serving these three buildings were also significantly reduced. Two 8-yard trash dumpsters were replaced with two 3-yard containers. Two new single-stream 8-yard recycling dumpsters were brought in to collect the additional recycling that is anticipated.

To date, custodians in the pilot buildings have reported reduced recycling contamination and increased recycling generation. The pilot program will be officially reviewed at semester's end. If deemed successful, the Energy & Sustainability Office will invest further resources to expand the program campus-wide.