

**Final Report for Corvallis Environmental Center  
Energize Corvallis: Energizers Program  
EPA Climate Showcase Communities Program  
Dates Covered by Report: October 1, 2011 through May 31, 2014**

To: Scott Dybvad, City of Corvallis  
From: Carly Lettero, Corvallis Environmental Center  
Date: July 1, 2014

## **INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW**

The goal of the Energizers program was to create a network of residents who would serve as liaisons about energy conservation and climate change efforts to specific groups in the community. In the tiered Energize Corvallis program model, this program required a medium level of engagement.

## **ACTIVITY UNDER THE GRANT/COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT**

**Energizers Recruitment Materials:** We developed various iterations of recruitment material including email invitations, registration forms for community events, and an online registration.

**Energizers Training and Handbook:** We developed an Energizers Handbook (hereafter Handbook) for the Energizers training. The Handbook included worksheets that helped volunteers identify the demographics of their networks and why people in their network might be interested in energy efficiency and conservation (e.g., to save money, to be stewards of the earth, to decrease dependence on foreign oil, etc). The Handbook also guided volunteers through the process of developing an outreach strategy for their network including the types of outreach (e.g., flyers, email, announcements, newsletter articles) and an annual schedule for outreach.

**Creation Care Workshop:** We customized the Energizers training for members of the faith community and held two Creation Care Workshops. Before the workshops, we reached out to members of the faith community in three ways: 1) we called each community and personally invited someone from the community to the Creation Care Workshop, 2) we followed up with an email to each faith community with details about the workshop, and 3) we mailed an invitation letter to each community with information about the workshop. When representatives from the faith communities registered for the Creation Care Workshop, we followed up with them via email one week and one day prior to the event. During the two-and-half hour workshop we discussed the connection between energy use and faith, introduced Energize Corvallis programs, and discussed plans for attendees to bring the Communities Take Charge program to their faith community.

**Corvallis Climate Summit:** We co-developed the Corvallis Climate Summit with a team of volunteers from the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition, the League of Women Voters of Corvallis, First Congregational UCC, Corvallis Citizen's Climate Lobby, 350Corvallis, Corvallis Environmental Center, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Neighborhood Sustainability Stewards, Oregon State University Divest, and the Spring Creek Project. Almost all of these volunteers had already participated in an Energize Corvallis program, and many of the volunteers represented communities that were already in the Energizer or Creation Care network. Together, we envisioned the Summit as a time to network, learn about what climate projects were already happening in Corvallis, envision innovative ways forward, and spark new alliances and collaborations. Our hope was that the Summit would help galvanize current efforts, inspire our community to innovate new

programs and projects, and help us become a showcase of what is possible when a community is dedicated to doing something now to fight climate change. In addition to creating a vision for the Summit, we also created outreach materials and a program for the gathering.

**Corvallis Climate Network:** As a follow-up to the Corvallis Climate Summit, we created a Corvallis Climate Network in collaboration with the Energy Action Team and 350.org Corvallis. To create the network, we surveyed Summit attendees about how likely they would be to participate in a number of networking opportunities.

## RESULTS

### Outputs

- Hosted two Energizer trainings and two Creation Care workshops.
- Gave an Energize Corvallis presentation at the First Congregational United Church of Christ, which is in the Energizers Creation Care Network. Approximately 30 people attended the presentation.
- Recruited Energizer volunteers during outreach events including Farmers' Markets, the Benton County Fair, Corvallis Knights baseball games, and Rhapsody in the Vineyard.
- Co-developed and promoted a "Corvallis Climate Summit" gathering with other local organizations that are working on climate change issues.
- Conducted a Corvallis Climate Network survey of Corvallis Climate Summit attendees to determine the most effective ways to maintain the network in the long-term.

### Outcomes

- Energizer trainings were attended by 22 people who represented ten community networks including schools, non-profits, and service organizations.
- Creation Care Workshops were attended by 17 people who represented 14 faith communities including Beit-Am, Calvary Corvallis, Corvallis First United Methodist Church, Corvallis Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Corvallis Mennonite Fellowship, Episcopal Church of the Good Samaritan, First Congregational United Church of Christ, Grace Lutheran Church, Seventh-Day Adventist, United Campus Ministry at OSU - Westminster House, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Corvallis, and Westminster House, United Campus Ministries.
- In total, 39 people attended the workshops, which is lower than our original goal of 60 people attending trainings. However, over 250 people attended the Corvallis Climate Summit, and we have since created a Corvallis Climate Network with over 200 people on the email listserv. While enrollment in trainings was lower than anticipated, the development of the Corvallis Climate Network exceeded the program goals.
- An Energizer volunteer from Benton Habitat for Humanity ReStore offered to give store coupons to Communities Take Charge participants. His coupon offer inspired the Take Charge volunteer team to ask for coupon donations from other local businesses. As a Communities Take Charge incentive, we offered coupon cards featuring local businesses to participants from 2012-2014.

- An Energizer volunteer who is also a local high school teacher offered to use the Communities Take Charge program as a project in one of her environmental classes. As we worked with her and her classes, we realized that the Communities Take Charge program would be more useful in high school classrooms if it integrated science standards and was focused on a younger audience. The spark of this idea led to us apply for a Environmental Education grant from the Environmental Protection Agency, which we subsequently awarded and will begin working on in July, 2014.
- An Energizer volunteer from the faith community was inspired to help host an Energizers training that was tailored toward recruiting more Energizers volunteers from other local faith communities. This volunteer helped design the Creation Care program for our faith-based outreach efforts.
- Unitarian Universalist Fellowship representatives hosted a Communities Take Charge tabling event after Sunday. During the event, 17 people from the Fellowship registered for the Communities Take Charge program. One month later, nine of those people completed the program by reporting about their energy-saving actions online. Together, those nine people saved 1,110 pounds of carbon dioxide in one month.
- Over 250 people attended the Corvallis Climate Summit including representatives from 30 community organizations.
- Eight-eight people (35%) of Corvallis Climate Summit attendees completed the Corvallis Climate Network survey. Respondents indicated that they were most interested in three types of networking opportunities:
  - 1) **Corvallis Climate Update:** 77% of respondents (64 people) indicated that they were “extremely likely” or “somewhat likely” to sign up to receive the Corvallis Climate Update, a once-a-month email including information from all local climate groups about ongoing programs and meetings (e.g., an announcement about the next 350.org or Energy Action Team meeting, information about energy efficiency upgrades for renters and homeowners, etc.).
  - 2) **Annual Meeting:** 74% of respondents (61 people) indicated that they were “extremely likely” or “somewhat likely” to attend an annual networking summit for climate groups (e.g., a half-day meeting once a year to build the climate network)
  - 3) **Climate Flash Alerts:** 68% of respondents (56 people) indicated that they were “extremely likely” or “somewhat likely” to sign up to receive a Climate Flash Alert, which we described as emails with calls for immediate climate action (e.g., announcements about upcoming acts of creative disruption, issues to call or email your representatives about, etc.).
- A group of people who attended the Corvallis Climate Summit is leading Corvallis’ effort to compete in the Georgetown University Energy Prize, a two-year, national competition to reduce residential and municipal energy use.

## CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

**The importance of a flexible program design:** In our grant proposal, we envisioned Energizers as a somewhat static program—something that we would design in Year 1 and then continue recruitment and enrollment in Years 2 and 3. However, during the grant period we realized that the network needed to be much more dynamic to meet the needs of the Corvallis community. The program went through three iterations. First, we focused on creating a general Energizers network, then we focused on creating a network within the faith community, and finally we retooled the program when we developed the first Corvallis Climate Summit and the subsequent follow-up activities (e.g., the Corvallis Climate Network and a team of volunteers working on Georgetown University Energy Prize).

**An abundance of climate programs:** As we developed the Energizers program, we realized that there were already many groups working on aspects of climate change programs in Corvallis. For example, the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition has eleven Action Teams, and many of those teams were already working on climate-related efforts (e.g., the Transportation Action Team is focused on promoting alternative transportation, the Food Action Team is focused on promoting local foods), Benton County has a Sustainability Task Force, many local churches have some kind of sustainability committee, etc. During the first two years of the Energizers program, we struggled to understand how the program fit within existing networks. As the Energizers program evolved in collaboration with other groups, we discovered that Energizers had the potential to serve as a convening organization that strengthened the collective action of many groups.

## **SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICATION**

The Energizers program increased capacity within Corvallis by helping to: 1) recruit a team of volunteers that will lead Corvallis' effort in the Georgetown University Energy Prize, 2) create a Corvallis Climate Network, and 3) develop a Climate Flash Alert. All of these efforts will continue beyond the award period.

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Please see the Communities Take Charge report for Corvallis Environmental Center financial information including matching.

## **DELIVERABLES/PRODUCTS**

The following program materials are available on the Energize Corvallis website (<http://energizecorvallis.org/for-other-communities/>):

### **Energizers**

- Program recruitment materials including the invitation to join the network and registration form
- Training materials including a training agenda and the Energizers Handbook
- Outreach materials including quarterly newsletters

### **Creation Care Workshops**

- Program recruitment materials including the invitation to attend the workshop
- Training materials including a workshop agenda

### **Corvallis Climate Summit**

- Program recruitment materials including the invitation to attend the event and for groups to submit a slide and the event poster
- Event materials including the outline and program
- Video of the Climate Summit keynote address by Kathleen Dean Moore
- Climate Network survey