

# SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

March 2011

WESTERN STATE COLLEGE OF COLORADO

[www.western.edu/sustainability](http://www.western.edu/sustainability)

Welcome to the first issue of the "Sustainability Update," a newsletter from the outreach and education subcommittee of the Sustainability Action Committee (SAC). Here you will find information on upcoming events, activities, tips and updates on campus sustainability initiatives. We welcome your feedback and ideas. Also, if you're doing something to help promote sustainability at Western, we want to hear about it. E-mail us at [sustainability@western.edu](mailto:sustainability@western.edu).

## Continuing the Momentum...

In 2005, the College adopted an **Environmental Charter** to outline principles and goals to improve environmental awareness, stewardship of natural resources and resource efficiency. Two years later, Western was among the charter members of the President's Climate Commitment to become a "carbon neutral" campus. The College has created an **action plan** for reducing carbon emissions and formed a committee to oversee those efforts.

For 2010-11, Western declared a **"Year of Sustainability"** (YoS) to raise awareness about environmental initiatives on campus and beyond. Spearheaded by students **Ryan Kelly** and **Kirky Olsen**, the YoS hosted several events, provided grants for sustainability projects and worked with the SAC on developing policies and resources.

The challenge is to keep the momentum going so that every year is a "Year of Sustainability" at Western. With the cooperation and dedication of students, faculty, staff and the administration, Western is well-positioned to continue making advancements in campus sustainability practices and policies. It's up to all of us to help Western realize these goals.

## "20 x 20" Subcommittee Formed to Explore Ways to Reduce Campus Carbon Emissions

"20 x 20" is a new SAC subcommittee. Chaired by **John Hausdoerffer**, professor and director of the Center for Environmental Studies, it is comprised of faculty, staff and students. Their goal is to bring together collaborative expertise to identify how Western will best meet its target of 20 percent CO2 reductions by 2020. This goal was outlined in the President's Climate Commitment Recommended Action Plan, submitted June 2008. This subcommittee will identify a list of potential reductions from the ~11,000 tons of carbon that Western emits each year. Once this list is established, the 20 x 20 subcommittee will facilitate campus discussions to identify which of the potential reductions fit Western's unique culture and circumstances. Identifying reductions will include criteria such as upfront affordability ("low-hanging fruit"); long-term financial payback and risk; classroom educational value; student research and "learning laboratory" potential; and fit with the Gunnison Valley and the mission/culture of Western as a regional education provider.

## Students Present at the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit

In February, environmental studies juniors **Dakota Becker** and **Ian Oster** presented two break-out sessions at the Rocky Mountain Sustainability Summit conference held in Denver.

Becker and Oster first presented the "Local Organics," which was based on the composting and gardening efforts on campus. The second presentation concerned the Year of Sustainability and refocusing new student orientation efforts on campus. In addition to the presentations, three enthusiastic students attended as well -- **Ruth Potter**, **Carolyn Riggs** (who conducted a presentation on sustainability for small businesses) and **Cayla Vidmar**.

This conference is a special education event, that at its most basic foundation, is a learning tool that promotes the sustainable cultural movement that is needed. Past examples of this were when previous students attended the Summit and came back with ideas that lead to the Presidents' Climate Commitment, Sustainability Fund and Western's Environmental Charter.



## Upcoming Events

### Sustainable Western World Café Monday, March 28, 3 p.m. - 6 p.m. College Center Ballroom

This is a community-wide event to discuss visions and ideas for sustainability at Western. It will feature free local, organic food (please bring your own plate and utensils), live music by Iola and a drawing for a Sun Cruiser bike.

### Environmental Spring Symposium: "The Politics of Environmental Film" March 29-31

This year's symposium features three award-winning documentary filmmakers as keynote speakers addressing the impact of documentary film on the public discourse of environmental issues. Two of the speakers' films will be screened the week prior to the symposium. The events are free and open to the public.

### Symposium Schedule

#### Judith Helfand

- **Film screening, "Blue Vinyl"**  
Thursday, March 24, 7 p.m.  
Kelley Hall 116
- **Presentation: Eco-Justice**  
Tuesday, March 29, 7 p.m.  
College Center Ballroom

#### Scott Hamilton Kennedy

- **Film screening, "The Garden" at the 100-Mile Feast & Film event**  
Friday, March 25, 6 p.m.  
College Center Ballroom
- **Presentation: The Power of Community**  
Wednesday, March 30, 7 p.m.  
College Center Ballroom

#### Melinda Levin

- **Presentation: Lifestyles and the Environment; Film screening, "River Planet"**  
Thursday, March 31, 7 p.m.  
College Center Ballroom

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