

Here in Eugene we breathe in green and we breathe out green (any kind of green you can think of). You can thank a tree for that clean air, but you should also tip your hat to **Friends of Trees**, a longtime Oregon nonprofit that has planted one-kajillion trees in Eugene, Salem and Portland since the 1970s.

Many of the towering oaks throughout the Whiteaker or the green-lit tunnels off various campus streets are the work of this environmental nonprofit. With Trump's vitriolic threats to abandon new climate-change efforts, the work of nonprofits like Friends of Trees is starting to look like the first line of rational defense against a crazy person.

"In January, we have three green space plantings that are going to be really, really fun," says Erik Burke, director of the Eugene office for Friends of Trees. Burke says the group will be "planting along I-105 in the Whiteaker and then in Springfield."

Donations to the Eugene office will pay for young seedlings of Oregon white oak, black tupelo (black gum), chitalpa (a fast growing deciduous tree with radiant crowns of pink flowers), valley ponderosa pine and Oregon myrtle (a deep green native), among other tree species.

A major climate change threat is "urban heat islands," Burke says. The little green saplings planted each month by volunteers are strategically placed throughout the city to help combat areas that get too hot each summer, which are the result of the way the city grew up around that area. Friends of Trees plants twice a month from October to April every year.

"For environmental issues, we are working really hard on trees that will be resilient to climate change in our selections," Burke says. "We've been doing experiments on trees from California for the high vandalism, high rental area west of campus. Urban heat island effect is a really big one we address."

Donations can be made to Friends of Trees at [friendsoftrees.org](http://friendsoftrees.org) or 503-282-8846. — *Jeslyn Lemke*

## Beyond Toxics Takes On Big Business

**Beyond Toxics** is everything the Trump agenda hates. So give this group some love.

The folks at Beyond Toxics stand up for the environmental health of low-income and minority communities that have historically been disproportionately impacted by pollution.

"Our concern is primarily with people and their exposure and vulnerability to chemicals," says Joel Iboa, the environmental justice community outreach manager.

Grassroots victories include forcing Union Pacific to clean up wetlands where they dumped creosote railroad ties, helping coastal communities stop a coal export terminal and fighting (and stopping) aerial herbicide sprays near some rural communities.

On the policy side, Beyond Toxics helped pass the law to ban field burning, passed the nations' most protective pesticide regulations for school and banned gas stations from spewing the potent carcinogen benzene into nearby neighborhoods.

The group says that many toxics problems unfairly impact lower-income, rural and vulnerable communities. The concentration of polluting industries and lack of access to services that promote healthy living is especially burdensome because political and socio-economic conditions prevent these communities from demanding change, Beyond Toxics tells *EW*.

In the Trump era, expect less power for the poor and the vulnerable and more to go to Big Business and its polluting ways. Help Beyond Toxics fight for what's right.

To donate go to [beyondtoxics.org](http://beyondtoxics.org) or call 541-465-8860. — *Camilla Mortensen*

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