



## 20/20 vision for a wilder Cascadia

**Dylan Plummer** Though much has been lost since European settlement brought extractive industry to the shores of the Pacific, the land still maintains the beauty and bounty that have defined Cascadia since time immemorial.

This bioregion has long been an ecological jewel, with rivers once so full of salmon you could walk from one shore to the other on their backs, forests with trees large enough to drive a car through and rugged spires of volcanic rock adorned in sparkling glaciers.

Today, people from all over the world flock here to fish our world-class rivers, clamber through our dank old growth forests and climb our snow-covered peaks, driving our local economies and the ever-growing eco-tourism industry.

Yet the future of our beloved home is uncertain.

As we enter a new decade, the stakes have never been higher for our communities and our environment. We must work to ensure that this trying year marks a turning point for our region as we grapple with the pandemic, the

climate-driven wildfires and the racial inequality that have defined 2020 and endeavor to address their root causes.

**Luckily, with the growing coalition of individuals, organizations and communities committed to fighting injustice throughout our region and the election of a new administration dedicated to protecting the environment and our climate, we have the opportunity to protect the ecology of this spectacular place and forge a path toward a brighter and more equitable Cascadia.** The Biden administration can and should take decisive action to benefit the Pacific Northwest: from finally killing the dangerous proposed Jordan Cove fracked gas pipeline and terminal that's threatened the region's rural landowners, species and waters for over a decade, to signing an executive order setting aside old and mature forest on public lands for carbon sequestration and critical habitat.

**The new administration — under the leadership of our first Native American secretary of the interior in Rep. Deb Haaland — can fully fund the agencies tasked to protect and restore the imperiled iconic species of Cascadia: Northern spotted owl**

**, wolverine**

**, lynx**

**, Coho salmon**

**and more. It can move to expedite dam removal in places where antiquated dams are impacting salmon runs and the Indigenous cultures that rely on them. It can undo the damage that Trump era rollbacks**

**are having on our public lands and so much more.** But Biden won't be able to do all of this alone. While we are excited about the many things the new president and his appointees can do, we can't solely rely on politicians to make the change that we know we desperately need. And while we need our state delegation to support this work, and continue

to pressure Biden to fulfill his campaign promises, we know that real change comes from the grassroots.

If we are to protect the Cascadia that we know and love for generations to come, and restore our bioregion to its previous splendor, we must all rededicate ourselves to the fight to keep our beloved land and our communities wild and free.

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