

Ad Hoc Committee on OSU Carbon Commitment (C3) Annual Report: 2019

Abstract

OSU's net carbon emissions may be reduced by a combination of institutional policy and community commitment to environmentally positive practices. The Carbon Commitment, signed by Pres. Ray in 2007, set a goal of carbon neutrality by 2025. Policies and practices instituted since 2007 have reduced emissions and more such work is needed. The OSU Sustainability Office is vital in crafting and advancing these policies and practices. The *Ad Hoc Committee on OSU's Carbon Commitment (C3)* acts as advisory on such policies. An underdeveloped area for action on OSU's carbon footprint is individual and community practices. The C3 aims to nurture a culture of sustainability across the OSU enterprise that results in measurable gains in carbon reduction. Identifying best practices, organizing communities of practice, and measuring the outcomes is the core mission of the C3. By optimizing institutional, individual, and community action we may approach the goal of carbon neutrality for OSU.

<https://fa.oregonstate.edu/sustainability/faculty-senate-ad-hoc-committee-carbon-commitment>

C3 Committee Contact: sustainability@oregonstate.edu

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I. Background

In 2007 President Ed Ray signed the Carbon Commitment as developed by the Second Nature consortium, establishing OSU as a charter signatory. The Commitment is intended to reduce net carbon emissions by institutions of higher education in order to mitigate global climate change.

<https://secondnature.org/signatory-handbook/the-commitments/#carbon-commitment>

Commitment signatories were within two months of signing required to take at least two of seven tangible actions while developing comprehensive climate plans. At the time, OSU selected the following three actions:

- Constructing all new facilities, including major remodels, to LEED Silver equivalent or higher
- Providing transit passes to all students, staff and faculty on four regional transit systems
- Purchasing renewable energy certificates to offset 75% of OSU's electrical consumption.

In 2008 and 2009, the OSU Sustainability Office facilitated a community process to develop the first OSU Climate Plan, a strategic plan for climate neutrality that was based on the OSU

Strategic Plan. Community input and a review of goals set by the State of Oregon and the Oregon University System helped shape OSU's aggressive goal to be carbon neutral by 2025. <https://fa.oregonstate.edu/sustainability/planning-policy-assessment/institutional-carbon-neutrality/osu-carbon-planning>

From 2008 to 2018, OSU reduced greenhouse gas gross emissions by 12% despite significant growth in enrollment and building space. Per student and per square foot of building space, this equates to a 41% reduction in emissions. Climate action efforts OSU has taken since 2008 include:

- From 2007-2013, OSU invested over \$1M in proactive lighting efficiency upgrades
- The Energy Center came online in late FY10 and reduced total university emissions by 16% the following year
- OSU has pursued Energy Trust of Oregon financial incentives for all eligible activities, bringing in over \$1.02M to support energy efficiency projects
- Retrocommissioning of the Linus Pauling Science Center was recently completed
- With federal stimulus money in 2011 and 2012, OSU installed 16 electric vehicle chargers and invested \$800k in building efficiency, primarily lighting and heating and cooling system retrocommissioning
- Retrocommissioning of the Kelley Engineering Center was completed in early 2019
- In 2019, OSU adopted higher green building standards via the OSU Requirements for Sustainable Development
- In 2016, the Sustainability Office launched the Green Office Certification program to give OSU employees tips and incentives to be more sustainable in the workplace
- In 2019, OSU implemented an energy policy via the Energy Consumption Rule
- Transportation Services is developing a Transportation Demand Management program with the goal of reducing single occupancy commute trips from 32% to 20%.

Yet, OSU is not on track to achieve carbon neutrality by 2025. OSU's FY19 gross emissions were 137,170 metric tonnes (t) carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e), a 2.71% increase from FY18. This increase was mainly due to increased consumption of purchased electricity at OSU operations across the state.

Net emissions were 134,432 t CO₂e, a 1.20% increase from FY18. Sources for this increase are the same as those noted above for gross emissions. The growing difference between gross and net emissions is due to increasing annual purchases of renewable energy and carbon offsets.

Gross emissions per full-time equivalent (FTE) student were 5.12 t CO₂e, a 3.04% increase from FY18. Gross emissions per 1000 square feet of building space were 12.71 t CO₂e, a 0.35% increase from FY18.

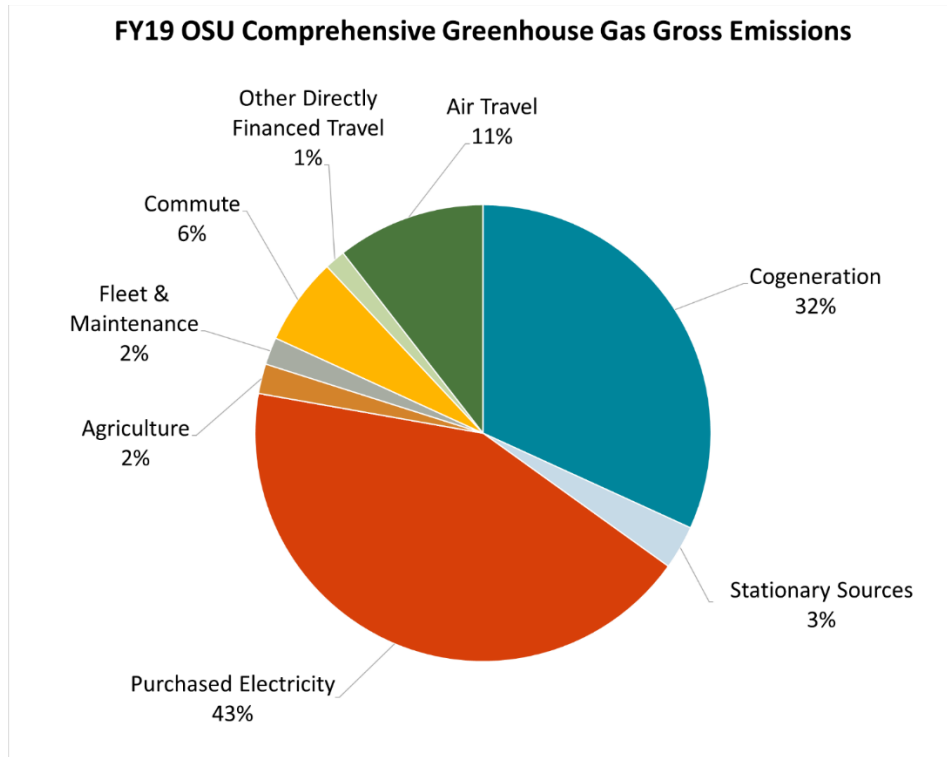


Figure 1. OSU Comprehensive Greenhouse Gas Gross Emissions by Source

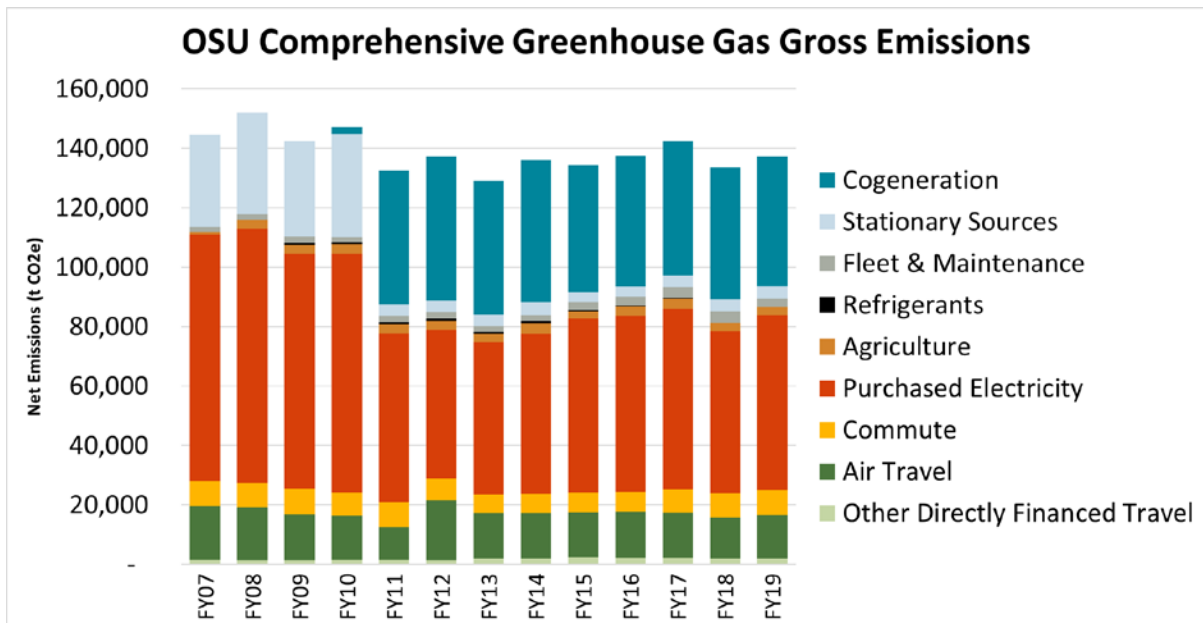


Figure 2. OSU Comprehensive Greenhouse Gas Gross Emissions by Year

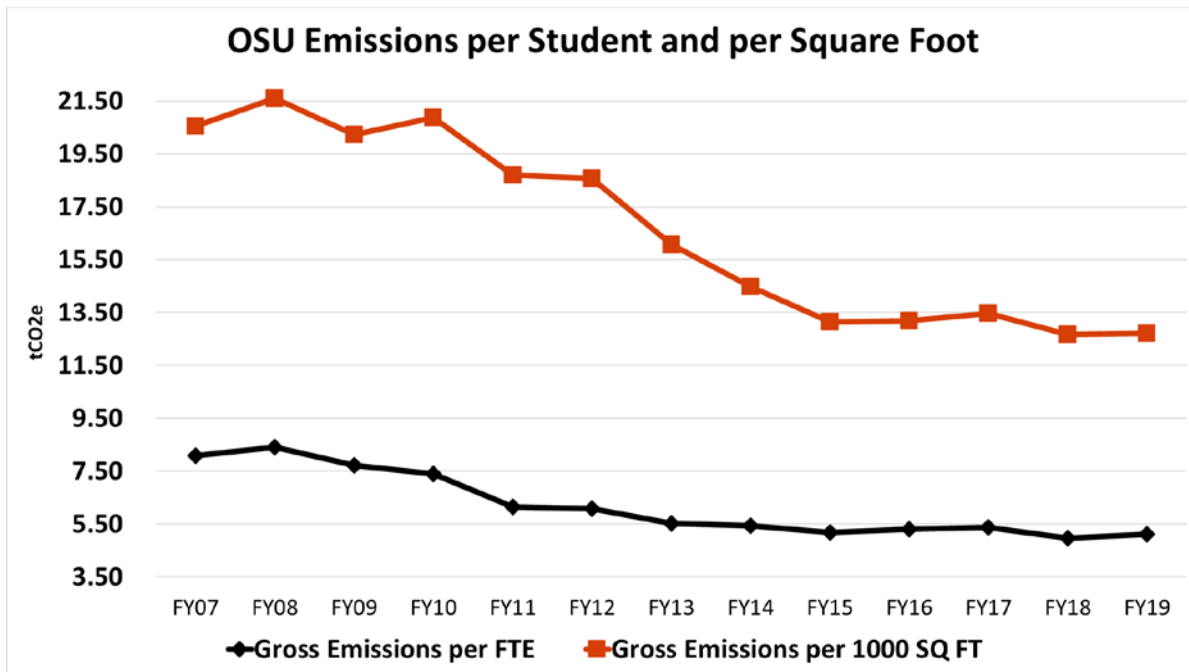


Figure 3. OSU Emissions per Student and per Square Foot of Building Space

The intention of OSU’s leadership and the Faculty Senate is to change the historical trends of greenhouse gas emissions in order to attain a steady reduction of emissions across the enterprise.

In order to support OSU’s carbon reduction ongoing efforts, the OSU Faculty Senate passed a resolution to create the Ad Hoc Committee on OSU’s Carbon Commitment (C3) in 2018.

https://senate.oregonstate.edu/sites/senate.oregonstate.edu/files/carbon_chg.pdf

The Ad Hoc Committee on OSU’s Carbon Commitment (C3) is charged with promoting policies and activities that facilitate carbon reduction (see the charge in part VI below). This report addresses the Ad Hoc Committee on OSU Carbon Commitment activity in 2019.

II. C3 Charge and Activities

The C3, composed of members from each of the Faculty Senate apportionment groups plus some other OSU groups, developed objectives for the overall effort. The primary objective of C3 is to support the OSU Sustainability Office in advancing carbon emissions reduction work throughout the university enterprise. A key to this support will be enabling C3 members to create action within their home units. This approach is predicated upon the principle that effective carbon reduction at an institutional level requires cultural change in the behaviors of the majority of the people who make up OSU. Reaching an equilibrium between culture and carbon levels requires a combination of institutional policy revision and change in collective behavior.

Given the need for collective action in support of carbon reduction at OSU the C3 formed four work groups to address projects in the following areas: conservation & efficiency, education & curriculum, transportation, and reporting & communication.

III. Work Groups

Conservation and Efficiency Work Group

Description

Identify goals, opportunities, and best practices for reducing the carbon emissions of campus infrastructure through policy recommendations and communication with the OSU community.

Objectives

- Promote and model use of Green Office Certification surveys for several OSU units/departments, offering mentorship and assistance where needed.
- Promote the new Green Lab Certification to be launched by the Sustainability Office in February 2020.
- Advocate for an increase in funding for campus building retrocommissioning projects.
- Advocate for carbon neutral construction in all major capital projects.

Education & Curriculum Work Group

Description

Ensure that climate literacy courses are available to all OSU students.

Objectives

- Promotion of changes to the Baccalaureate Core to ensure all students leave OSU with credible knowledge on climate change.
- Develop a repository for climate change course materials open to all OSU faculty.
- Propose a free, transcript visible Sustainability Certificate available to all OSU students.
- Consideration of a small grants program for graduate and honors students to work on projects.

Transportation Work Group

Description

Identify goals, opportunities, and best practices for reducing the carbon footprint of academic travel and commuting through policy recommendations and communication with the OSU community.

Objectives

- Explore options to implement a program to offset carbon emissions from OSU air travel.
- Communicate with the OSU community about best practices for travel-related carbon reduction.

Communication and Reporting Work Group

Description

Facilitate, produce, and distribute information and active engagement opportunities for the OSU Community and beyond. This working group is exploring tools to engage the OSU community and market the carbon-reduction message.

Objectives

- Dissemination of Committee's actions through existing newsletters and blogs.
- Submissions of feature stories in existing vehicles such as Life@ OSU, OSU Today, etc.
- Planning of talks/forums on carbon reduction.
- Creation of information packets for students and faculty.

IV. 2020 Objectives/Moving Forward

- Advancing the projects already started in 2019.
- Creating a set of guidelines that govern the mission and scope of the four workgroups.
- Circulate a [feedback form](#) for the campus community to provide input to the C3.
- Solicit and accept input via sustainability@oregonstate.edu.

V. Your Contact and Input

For information about the C3 and carbon issues and to provide your input, contact:

sustainability@oregonstate.edu

C3 Committee Chair

Jon Louis Dorbolo

Jon.Dorbolo@oregonstate.edu

541.737.3811

VI. Membership

Amy Bourne, Business

Beth Filar Williams, Libraries

Brandon Trelstad, Sustainability Office

Chris Kulah, SEIU

Cinamon Moffett, HMSC

Ed Dever, CEOAS

Gary Miller, Pharmacy

Heather Moline, Graduate Student

Jacob Putney, Extension

Jeff Gautschi, OSU Cascades

Jillian Gregg, Agriculture Sciences

Jon Dorbolo, Faculty Senate Executive Committee

Keith Jayawickrama, Forestry

Kim Hannigan-Downs, Public Health

Leela Magdaleno, Student Affairs

Lety Cavazos, Sustainability Office

Marlys Amundson, OSU Foundation
Marriane Vydra, Athletics
Qinglai Meng, Liberal Arts
Roberto Albertani, Engineering
Shelly Signs, Associated Faculty
Tess Collins, Veterinary Medicine
Zac Pinard, ASOSU

VII. Faculty Senate Charge

The Faculty Senate passed the following Committee Charge at the October 11, 2018 Faculty Senate Meeting.

https://senate.oregonstate.edu/sites/senate.oregonstate.edu/files/carbon_chg.pdf

Ad Hoc Committee on the OSU Carbon Commitment

Committee Charge

Rationale

Succeeding at the objectives set by the American College and University Presidents' Carbon Commitment, signed by President Ed Ray in 2007, requires action and collaboration by all parts of Oregon State University (OSU). The Ad Hoc Committee on the OSU Carbon Commitment provides faculty leadership in order to support effective engagement by all faculty and their home units.

Objectives

1. Conduct an annual assessment of the current status at OSU of meeting the goals of the American College and University Presidents' Carbon Commitment (the OSU Carbon Commitment).
2. Seek and gather data, in collaboration with the OSU Sustainability Office, relating to the state of progress towards the goals of the OSU Carbon Commitment.
3. Support the OSU Sustainability Office in advancing towards the objectives of the OSU Carbon Commitment.
4. Develop recommendations for advancing the objectives of the OSU Carbon Commitment at OSU.
5. Inform the OSU community of OSU's carbon neutral status.

Deliverables

1. Present an annual report to the Faculty Senate on the status of the 2025 American College and University Presidents' Carbon Commitment at OSU with recommendations for improvement.
2. Send the annual report to the OSU Board of Trustees, the OSU President, the OSU Provost, and the Deans of OSU colleges.

3. Communicate findings of the annual assessment to the OSU community at large.

Timeline

11.15.2018 Convene Ad Hoc Committee on OSU Carbon Commitment.

01.30.2026 Ad Hoc Committee on the OSU Carbon Commitment Final Report.

01.30.2026 Dissolve Ad Hoc Committee on OSU Carbon Commitment.

Members

Chair: Faculty Senate President or designee.

One faculty member from each Faculty Senate Apportionment Unit drawing from members of the academic, research, and administrative units that each Faculty Senate Apportionment Unit represents. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee on the OSU Carbon Commitment need not be Senators. Senators from each apportionment unit will nominate and elect by majority vote a committee member in a process managed by the Ad Hoc Committee on the OSU Carbon Commitment Chair.

One member from the OSU Foundation. One member from the OSU classified staff.

One member from the OSU Sustainability Office.

One member from the United Academics of Oregon State University leadership.

One member from the Associated Students of Oregon State University (ASOSU).

Members may serve for the life of the committee. Members may be replaced as needed by the Committee Chair in consultation with the Committee.

Sources

The Presidents' Carbon Leadership Commitments <https://secondnature.org/wp-content/uploads/Carbon-Commitment-2017-SecondNature.pdf>