

How's Our Health?

Each year in our nation's capital, Worldwatch Institute publishes its State of the World Report. Here in Oregon, the state's Progress Board periodically issues its Benchmarks. This report card tells us—in part—how close we are to healing our environment. Left unanswered are more fundamental questions such as: How many acres of parks per resident? Are the government's standards strict enough? How much does the cost of land take from the average resident's income? And, most basic, is leisure time growing or not? Despite its shortcomings, this list contains good news and a few surprises.

AIR	1990	1995	2000
Residents living where the air meets government ambient air quality standards	54	100	100
Carbon dioxide emissions as a percentage of 1990 emissions	100	122*	100
WATER			
Wetlands in 1990 still preserved as wetlands	100	100	100
Assessed groundwater that meets drinking water standards	95.1	94.3*	94
Key rivers meeting instream water rights			
9 or more months of the year	39	61*	60
12 months a year	44	28*	35
LAND			
Agricultural land in 1970 still preserved for agricultural use	98	97	97
Forest land in 1970 still preserved for forest use	92	91	92
Pounds of municipal solid waste landfilled or incinerated per capita	n.a.	1,511	1,506
Identified hazardous waste sites that are cleaned up or being cleaned up	67.1	65.7	66.9
tank sites	66.3	65.4	66.9
other hazardous substances	96.8	70	69.6
PLANTS AND WILDLIFE			
Wild salmon and steelhead populations in key sub-basins that are at target levels	48	2	13
Native fish and wildlife species that are healthy	76**	75	77
Native plant species that are healthy	83**	88	90
OUTDOOR RECREATION			
Acres of state-owned parks per 1,000 residents	31	29	35

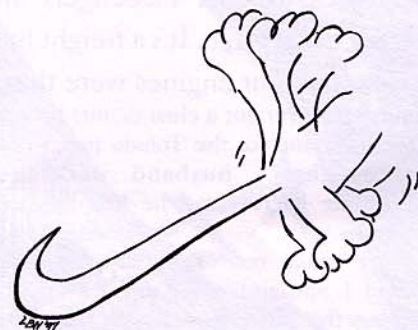
From Oregon Shines II: Updating Oregon's Strategic Plan: A Report to The People of Oregon From The Oregon Progress Board & The Governor's Oregon Shines Task Force (Salem, May 1997), page 78.

*1994
**1991

Nike

Continued from page 7

Besides urban planning, another casualty was a Nike employee. Armed with detailed charts and maps, Trip Allen urged Beaverton to stick to the plan. He was warned not to continue his public statements, and shortly afterward quit the company. Nike fired Chuck Carpenter after he took time to serve as a legislator, even though Oregon law prohibits such dismissals. Mr. Carpenter accepted a settlement from the company.



Laura Nobel

While waiting at Nike to discuss his case, Carpenter came across a book. The introduction was by Phil Knight. He noted that corporations are the true seat of power and governments must recognize that fact. Judging by recent history, Oregon has. On paper, states govern those who incorporate within their boundaries. Yet in reality, corporations use states as foils. As John Dewey said many years ago, "Politics is the shadow cast over society by Big Business." The tail is wagging the dog. If activists are to nurture a conscience in corporations, they will have to do it without the weight of the state behind them.

Max White, a volunteer for Amnesty International and the East Timor Action Network, is the founding coordinator of *Justice. Do It, Nike*. They can be reached at PO Box 219231, Portland OR 97225; 503/292-8168

1 CBS news 48 Hours, October 17, 1996, about Nike in Vietnam. A summary is available on-line, at <http://www.saigon.com/nike/summary.htm>

2 Sydney H. Schanberg, "Six Cents An Hour," *Life*, June 1996.

3 Linda Himmelstein, "Nike hasn't scrubbed its image yet", *Business Week*, 7 July, 1997.

4 Bob Herbert, "Mr. Young Gets it Wrong", *The New York Times*, 27 June, 1997.

5 Jonathan Make, "Critics: Young report just doesn't do it", *The Business Journal* (Portland), 30 June, 1997.

6 Quote by Shelly Young of Hambrecht & Quist in San Francisco, cited in Jeff Manning, "Troubles add up at Nike", *The Oregonian*, 4 May, 1997, page G4.

7 Steve Duin, "Sniveling Nike style," *The Oregonian*, 11 March, 1997.