



Building a Bipartisan Agenda for Farm and Forest Carbon Solutions: Launch of a New BPC Initiative

Thursday July 30, 2020



KEYNOTE REMARKS BY

Rep. Greg Walden (R-OR)

House Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member

U.S. Rep. Greg Walden represents the people of Oregon's Second Congressional District, which includes 20 counties in central, southern, and eastern Oregon. Walden is a lifelong Oregonian whose ancestors came to Oregon by wagon train in 1845.

He and his wife Mylene celebrated 37 years of marriage in August 2019 and make their home in Hood River where they've been small business owners since 1986. Their son, Anthony graduated from Hood River Valley High School and Wake Forest University. His parents are graduates of the

University of Oregon.

Walden and his wife spent more than two decades as radio station owners in the Gorge. He's also a licensed amateur radio operator (W7EQI). He put that small business and technology experience to work as chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Communications and Technology. In this role, he worked to pass legislation to grow American jobs by expanding access to wireless broadband, spur new U.S. technology and innovation, and protect the Internet from government control.

His work in support of Oregon's rural farm and ranch economy has earned him local and national recognition. He's helped write and pass bipartisan legislation to expedite treatment of fire-prone forests and continues to work across the aisle to find natural resource solutions. The House has also passed bipartisan legislation Walden has championed to fix broken federal forest policy to restore forest health and put people back to work in the woods, as well as legislation (now law) to bring more water and power to Central Oregon for job creation.

Walden's experience as a former member of the Hood River Memorial Hospital Board of Trustees and as a former member of the Oregon Health Sciences University Foundation Board have helped in his work to improve access to affordable health care, especially in rural communities. His successful efforts have earned him national and local awards.

Walden has also worked hard to ensure that Oregon service members and veterans receive the benefits they have earned through years of brave service.

In November 2014, Walden's House Republican colleagues unanimously reelected him to serve as chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC).

In the 116th Congress, Walden serves as the Republican Leader of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

PANELISTS



Robert Bonnie

Farm and Forest Initiative Director, BPC

[@overcreekfarm](#)

Robert Bonnie is the Farm and Forest Initiative Director at the Bipartisan Policy Center's Energy Project. He continues to work part time with the Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions at Duke University and Resources for the Future on natural climate solutions and rural attitudes on the environment and climate change. During the Obama Administration, Robert was Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment at USDA from 2013 to 2017, and a senior advisor to Secretary Tom Vilsack from 2009 to 2013. Prior to joining USDA, Robert was vice president for land conservation at Environmental Defense Fund where he focused on developing incentives to reward stewardship on private lands. Robert has master's degrees from Duke in forestry and environmental management. He lives with his wife, Julie, and daughter, Lilly, in Loudoun County, Virginia.



Karen Ross

Secretary of Agriculture, California Department of Food and Agriculture

[@agsecross](#)

Karen Ross was appointed Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture on January 9, 2019 by Governor Gavin Newsom. In re-appointing Secretary Ross, Governor Newsom cited her unmatched leadership experience in agricultural issues nationally, internationally, and here in California, in areas including environmental stewardship, climate change adaptation, and trade. Secretary Ross was initially appointed by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in 2011.

Before joining CDFA, Secretary Ross was chief of staff for U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, a position she accepted in 2009. Prior to that appointment, she served as President of the California Association of Winegrape Growers from 1996-2009, and as Vice-President of the Agricultural Council of California from 1989-1996. Her prior experience before moving to California included staff work for a United States Senator, a presidential candidate, and government relations for rural electric cooperatives and public power districts.

Secretary Ross is passionate about fostering the reconnection of consumers to the land and the people who produce their food, and to improving the access of all California citizens to healthy, nutritious California-grown agricultural products, celebrated for their diversity and abundance in serving local, national and global markets.

During Secretary Ross' tenure, the Department has focused on core functions to protect and promote California agriculture, investing in the Department's employees to provide the best service to farmers, ranchers and consumers and fostering an agricultural industry that embraces its role as a global leader on everything from the most technical aspects of farming to the broadest environmental imperatives.

Secretary Ross has strengthened partnerships across government, academia and the nonprofit sector in the drive to maintain and improve environmental stewardship and to develop adaptation strategies for

the specific impacts of climate change. She has initiated programs to provide greater opportunities for farmers and ranchers to engage in sustainable environmental stewardship practices through water conservation, energy efficiency, nutrient management, and ecosystem services; and she has worked to provide greater access to farm-fresh foods at school cafeterias through CDFA's Farm to Fork Program.

Secretary Ross grew up as a 4-H kid on a farm in western Nebraska. She and her husband, Barry, own 800 acres of the family farm where her younger brother, a fourth-generation farmer, grows no-till wheat and feed grains, incorporating cover crops and rotational grazing for beef production. The Secretary has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is a graduate of the Nebraska Ag Leadership Program. She has served on numerous boards and committees in California agriculture and with various academic institutions.



Dave Tenny

President and CEO, National Alliance of Forest Owners

[@NAFO_Forests](#)

Dave Tenny is the founding President and CEO of NAFO. Under his leadership, NAFO has grown from 14 initial members in 2008 to 47 member companies that own and manage more than 46 million acres of private working forests and 30 state and national associations that represent tens of millions of additional acres. Dave's passion for building trust and pursuing solutions-based advocacy has helped NAFO become a leading national advocate for the economic, environmental and social benefits of America's sustainably managed private forests.

Dave previously served as Vice President for Forestry and Wood Products for the American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA) and as Deputy Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment at the United States Department of Agriculture where he had responsibility for the U.S. Forest Service. He got his start in the U.S. House of Representatives where he served as Counsel and Natural Resources Policy Advisor for the House Committee on Agriculture and as Counsel for U.S. Representative Wally Herger of California.

A native of Boise, Idaho, he earned a bachelor's degree in American studies from Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, and a law degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

MODERATORS



Lesley Jantarasami

Associate Director of Energy and Climate, BPC

Lesley Jantarasami is the associate director for energy and climate and brings over 10 years' policy experience at the state and federal levels. She led energy and climate initiatives at the Oregon Department of Energy to evaluate policy design options for decarbonizing the state's electricity, transportation, industrial, and buildings sectors, including sector-specific strategies and economy-wide cap-and-trade carbon pricing legislation. She also led integration of energy resilience issues in a new statewide climate

adaptation framework for Oregon.

Prior to this, Jantarasami worked at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on national greenhouse gas regulations in the transportation and power sectors, and on climate impacts assessment and adaptation initiatives. She served as a chapter lead author for the Fourth National Climate Assessment and the U.S. Climate and Health Assessment. Her research has been published in multiple peer-reviewed journals and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fifth Assessment Report volume on Climate Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability.

Jantarasami has Master of Science and Master of Public Administration degrees from University of Washington's School of Environmental and Forest Sciences and the Evans School of Public Policy and Governance. She has a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Policy from Duke University.



Sasha Mackler

Director of the Energy Project, BPC

[@SashaMackler](#)

Sasha Mackler directs the Energy Project at the Bipartisan Policy Center. Sasha has worked for more than two decades at the interface of energy policy and commercial markets. Prior to leading the BPC Energy Project, he spent nearly 10 years in the private sector, first as vice president of Summit Power Group's carbon capture business and then overseeing market development activities for Enviva, the largest biomass fuel supplier to the global utility industry. His professional work has focused on the innovations necessary to scale emerging energy technologies along with developing the business models and policy frameworks that support the deployment of low carbon energy systems.

Earlier in his career, Sasha played a key role in BPC's first project as the Research Director at the National Commission on Energy Policy which produced a comprehensive set of policy recommendations many of which were incorporated into the 2005 Energy Policy Act. He subsequently launched the BPC's energy innovation portfolio, including the formation of the American Energy Innovation Council. Sasha has managed a number of energy policy projects on topics such as tax incentives, federal RD&D, finance, workforce transition, carbon capture & storage, low carbon fuels, cap & trade, climate impacts & adaptation, and geoengineering research. Prior to his work with NCEP, he was an analyst in the Clean Air Markets Division at the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Sasha holds both a Master of Science in Earth Resources Engineering and Master of Public Administration from Columbia University. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Geomechanical Engineering from the University of Rochester.
