



March 22, 2016

To Whom It May Concern,

As a signatory of the Second Nature Carbon Commitment, Southern Oregon University (SOU) has pledged to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. While recent greenhouse gas inventories show that the university has met interim emission reduction goals, it is clear that the university must invest in larger efficiency and renewable energy generation projects in order to make a greater impact on the institution's carbon footprint.

Sustainability staff and campus administration discussed the makeup of the campus carbon footprint, with attention to the impact of university-funded air travel. Initially, the administration wanted to pursue purchasing carbon offsets for a portion of the travel. In an effort to support the local economy and to have a more direct impact on the university's greenhouse gas emissions, the Executive Council approved the creation of a Climate Action Fund (CAF). The CAF is financed by a 1% fee on all university-funded air travel, to be paid from the general fund.

The CAF is used to fund conservation projects on campus, including lighting retrofits, building envelope upgrades, renewable energy generation, or other projects that are otherwise lacking or short on funding and contribute to campus carbon reduction. Incentives or rebates available for the conservation or renewable energy projects completed are deposited back into the CAF to continue supporting resource conservation and renewable energy on campus. Charging a fee to all university air travel is an innovative solution to creating funding for projects to reduce the university's carbon footprint and operational costs, while drawing attention to the environmental impact of air travel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Keith Beed', is written over a horizontal line.

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