

Where We Stand

Outdoor Industry Association's position on climate change

November 2015

Climate change is a global problem that impacts nearly every aspect of our lives and is one of the most significant threats to the outdoor recreation industry. We, as individuals, as outdoor enthusiasts and as business leaders, have an opportunity, in fact a responsibility, to take action to address the causes of climate change and help mitigate its impact.

Climate change, along with pollution from carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that intensify climate change, and the unpredictability of seasonal weather patterns caused by climate change, are a direct threat to the outdoor industry and the \$646 billion it contributes annually to the U.S. economy. Our businesses, their customers and the nearly 150 million Americans who participate in outdoor activities each year are dependent on climate stability and, as such, are among the first in the United States to experience the negative effects of climate change on an ongoing basis.

The quality of our outdoor experiences are diminished from longer, hotter summers, prolonged drought and increasingly devastating forest fires in the West; to unpredictable winters, rising sea levels, flooding, warming waters and reduced river flows. Our health is compromised by the pollution of our air, land and water.

Outdoor industry companies are founded on the values of product innovation, environmental and social responsibility. They are in a unique position to combine to be a leading business voice on this important issue.

Therefore, Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) calls on Congress to pass comprehensive climate change legislation. We encourage national, regional and local leaders – either through legislation or regulation -- to enact policies that reflect the reality of climate change and that seek to stem it. We ask our nation's elected leaders and public officials to implement meaningful climate mitigations. And we ask them to protect America's public lands and waters, including the recreational opportunities and American jobs they support.

Further, we believe comprehensive climate change policies should include:

- An adaptation strategy that protects our air, land, and water, and accounts for the recreational use and conservation of these places.
- Carbon sequestration through protection of and investment in open space and natural greenways throughout the nation.
- Consideration of climate change mitigation in all land and water use policy.
- Market-based instruments that incentivize and reward adoption of carbon reduction strategies and tools.

Just as any responsible sector of the economy should do, members of the outdoor industry should take steps to address climate change in their operations and business practices, including:

- Developing and adopting industry best practices and tools, such as the Higg Index, to mitigate supply chain climate impacts, and to measure and reduce impacts at manufacturing facilities, headquarters, retail stores, and other company facilities.
- Accelerating the integration of alternatives to coal-based energy, such as solar or wind power, into the energy portfolio for company facilities around the country.
- Giving preference to vendors, service providers and production facilities, both foreign and domestic, that incorporate industry best practices (such as alternative energy sources and other carbon reduction strategies) into their operations.

We believe that active engagement on the issue of climate change is critical to ensure the future growth and success of the outdoor industry and to ensure every American has the opportunity to pursue a healthy and active lifestyle through outdoor recreation.