

**Project:** Sound Alliance

**Category:** Environmental Justice

**Coordinator:** Jennifer Bright

The Sound Alliance is a community organizing alliance of religious congregations, labor organizations, and community groups that has formed in the Puget Sound area. University Unitarian Church was one of the founding member institutions of Sound Alliance when it formally launched in June 2008.

Since then, UUC's strongest participation has been on the Alliance's *Sustainable Jobs & Environment Team*, which has been pursuing local change that marries sound environmental stewardship with good jobs at living wages. The main activity of this team has been *Sustainable Works*: a grassroots initiative to combine living wage jobs with affordable energy retrofits for homeowners and small businesses and nonprofits.

Sustainable Works is currently being promoted by Sound Alliance in the Washington State legislature and is emerging as a centerpiece of economic stimulus in our state. Several UUC members are highly involved in moving this effort forward, and members of our congregation have also met with state legislators and utility officials. The program has triple benefits: It promotes jobs in the green economy and trains apprentices in the newest, cross-disciplinary approaches to energy retrofits. Homeowners and small businesses reduce energy costs at an affordable price. And a significant source of carbon emissions is reduced.

The Sustainable Jobs & Environment Team is also focusing on our state's participation in the Western States "cap and trade" initiative for permitting, taxing, and limiting the right to emit carbon, to ensure that this market-based system is developed in a way that not only achieves our true environmental goals, but is also economically just for the people of our state.

