

Date: February 19, 2015

To: Friends in the Monthly Meetings and Worship Groups of Pacific Yearly Meeting

From: Unity with Nature Committee of Pacific Yearly Meeting

Re: Institutional Divestment of Fossil Fuels as Strategy to Slow Climate Changes

Greetings Friends,

May this email find you happy, healthy, and immersed in Spirit.

Some Friends around the world would like to bring forward into action and testimony our concerns for climate change and its many impacts on human and other biological Life.

We of Unity with Nature Committee of Pacific Yearly Meeting would like to commend for your attention the attached The Strawberry Creek minute encouraging divestment from fossil fuel energy stocks. Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting came to unity about this minute on July 13, 2014. (See Appendix A below.) You may have already received a copy from Strawberry Creek itself.

We, Unity with Nature Committee, shared some information about this multifaceted strategic and educational tool of institutional divestment to slow climate change at the annual session 2014.

We feel that we Friends as a faith based community have a valuable voice in calling for action to slow climate change. Our voices and actions do make a difference. The need to slow climate change is critical as now whole ecosystems, countries and cultures are sinking beneath the rising waters or drying up, starving, and waging war. Look at Darfur. The wars in the Middle East masquerade as ethnic and religious wars but the underlying dynamic is a desperate struggle for dwindling resources, especially water, greatly exacerbated by climate disruption and overpopulation relative to those same scant resources.

In this worsening crisis of climate change with its negative impacts on global water, food, economy, climate driven wars, human health and well being and biological Life, the strategy of institutional divestment from fossil energy companies is an important step toward awaking the pressing need to address climate change, changing the course of energy companies toward renewal energy sources, and working toward a carbon free future. There is still so much to do on all levels.

We ask that your Monthly Meetings and worship groups consider

divesting the top 200 of your institutional holdings of fossil fuel energy stocks within the next five years and declare that you have done so in the wider community of Friends.

PacYM's Unity with Nature Committee [UwN] would be happy to provide speakers, video suggestions and other resources. Please contact us if you are interested. We particularly especially recommend the 350.org and the gofossilfree.org websites for more information and some good ideas about the basic strategy.

A fossil fuel divestment minute would hopefully include these two basic points:

- We, the _____ Monthly Meeting agree to divest all our fossil fuel energy investments (practically speaking the top 200 companies) within five years.
- We suggest to other Friends organizations to consider doing the same and would welcome similar declarations.

Additionally, it could contain two other points,

- We suggest to individuals to consider their own portfolios of investment and would welcome similar declarations.
- We thank Friends Fiduciary for having a fossil-free Green Fund and suggest that Friends Fiduciary become entirely fossil-free.

Please print out this letter and distribute it in your meeting. We would be very interested to hear what you are discerning about climate change action and this divestment strategy.

In the Light that is all around us,

Catya de Neergaard

On behalf of Unity with Nature Committee
co-clerks Catya de Neergaard and Muriel Strand

Appendix A – Strawberry Creek's Divestment Minute

Minute on Climate Change and Divestment from Fossil Fuels

Climate change is a real and urgent threat to humanity's current way of life. As Quakers, we see it as imperative that governments must take immediate action to curb climate change. When

governments are unwilling to take swift action, then we turn to divestment as a way to make our concerns heard.

Divestment from fossil fuel stocks calls for a halt in profiting from the destruction of the earth that fossil fuel emissions create. Divesting is congruent with our testimonies of peace, equality, community, and simplicity since climate change will sow the seeds of war, poverty, and injustice.

While Strawberry Creek holds no stock of any kind, we recommend the divestment of fossil fuel stocks or funds by all Quaker bodies, including Friends Fiduciary, and we commit to not buying any fossil fuel stocks and funds in the future.

Fossil fuel companies have not been responsive quickly enough to shareholder advocacy and they make clear that they will keep on taking oil, gas and coal from the earth, even if it warms the earth more than two degrees centigrade, arise that scientists have agreed we must not go above. We applaud Friends Fiduciary for recently establishing a green fund, but we request that they divest from all fossil fuels in their portfolio.

Divestment makes way for reinvestment in green, sustainable energy causes and in thriving local economies. We recognize that our lifestyle contributes to climate change any time we consume fossil fuels. While we are all currently dependent on fossil fuels, we hope to see more affordable, efficient choices in the future to use water, wind and solar energy to power our lives. We would like fossil fuel companies to stop blocking legislation that would slow climate change, to stop receiving governmental subsidies, and to become transparent in their funding of political candidates.

Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting approved an Earthcare testimony in 2010 which reinforced our commitment to stewardship of the earth. In part it says, “We feel a sense of urgency to bring our lives into right relationship with the community of life on earth. We are called to be faithful to continuing revelation in these matters...”

We urge Meetings and other Quaker bodies to divest as a needed tactic in an effort to contain climate change.

Approved July 13th, 2014 Strawberry Creek Monthly Meeting Meeting, Berkeley, California