



## **21 Voices. One Planet.**

*Boise Climate Justice League*

*Monday, October 29th, 2018*

### **The Trail of the Century**

The lawsuit *Juliana vs U.S.* was filed back in 2015 by 21 plaintiffs from all over the country. Kids 11 to 22-years-old allege the federal government failed to stop climate change by promoting the use of fossil fuels for decades, and because of that their constitutional rights to "a climate system capable of sustaining human life" have been violated.

The case was supposed to be heard today in a U.S. district court in Eugene, Oregon, but is now in limbo after the Supreme Court intervened to issue a stay in the suit at the request of the Trump administration. The stay is an extremely rare, if not unprecedented move by the Supreme Court intended to silence the voices of young people and avoid giving the trial its day in court. It makes it all the more important for us to show up today to support the 21 young plaintiffs fighting for our right to a stable climate and demand that their case be heard.

Today's rally is one of more than 70 rallies being held across the country. In Boise, we have chosen to show support for the 21 plaintiffs by creating 21 pieces of art that represent the just a portion of ways climate change will negatively impact all Idahoans. These 21 pieces of art represent the future we as young people refuse to inherit in Idaho and demonstrate our commitment to fight the right of the 21 strong folks leading the suit against the federal government to be heard.

### **Introduction Speech: Rose Thompson, Senior at Timberline High School**

Good afternoon! Thank you all so much for coming to stand with us in solidarity with the 21 courageous young folks fighting for a climate revolution.

My name is Rose Thompson. I am sixteen years old, a senior at Timberline High School, and I'm terrified. Not because I have three college applications due on Thursday or a math test on Friday, but because my future is in jeopardy.

On October 6th, just three weeks ago, the United Nations released their annual climate report. They anticipate global temperature to reach a warming point of 1.5 degrees celsius by the year 2040 if no significant action is taken. By that point, the damage done to our planet will be irreversible.

But we are that significant action. In 2015, during the Obama-era Presidency, 21 young people filed a lawsuit against the federal government for their constitutional right to a climate system capable of sustaining human life. This reminds us that climate change isn't a partisan issue but a human issue and that this type of change should never be controversial. But it is. Which is why our voices today are so important. These young people were supposed to have their day in court today but their hearing got delayed yet again because our government is afraid to take responsibility for the warming that plagues our planet.

This is why it is essential that we speak out today. We cannot afford to delay the rights to our future. Today we stand in solidarity with these 21 young people because the impacts of climate change affect each of us in distinct and devastating ways, especially in our beautiful Boise, Idaho. I have lived in Boise my entire life and watched this city change before my eyes in my sixteen short years. I know what is at stake: our water supply. Our air. Our snow. The beating heart of our beautiful city.

Today we present a collaborative art piece representing 21 Idaho-specific impacts of anthropogenic climate change. These impacts are evident now but they will only worsen unless real, systemic change is made. Stand with us as we demand our administration be held accountable the deadly effects of climate change and for preserving the future of

my generation and those to follow. *We are youth. We are scared. And we deserve to inherit a livable planet.*

## Boise Students Bring 21 Climate Impacts Home for Idahoans

1. **Recreational Skiing:** Diminishing snowpack resulting from increasing temperatures may shorten the season for skiing and other forms of winter tourism and recreation.
2. **Burn:** The number of acres burned in the west has doubled from 1984 to 2015, and the future projects 4x as many major wildfires.
3. **Crops:** Decline in summer streamflow reduces the water available for irrigation, heat will cause need for increased irrigation requirements of 4 inches by the mid-21st century.
4. **Farm Workers:** Increased heat will expose outdoor workers to extreme conditions that will impact their health.
5. **Exercise:** Air quality conditions makes outdoor recreation dangerous.
6. **Extended heat forecast:** By 2080 the predicted days per year that will be over 90 degrees will be 56 and high risk heat days will become more common
7. **Air quality:** Very large fires in Boise airshed region is projected to increase by 400% by the mid-21st century causing chronic air quality problems.
8. **Potatoes:** Higher temperatures may impact potato yields and quality.
9. **Neighborhood fires:** Fire leads to significant property damage, including loss of neighborhoods and historical buildings and monuments.
10. **Pine Beetle:** Changing climate is likely to increase the pine forests in the northwest infested with mountain pine beetles over the next few decades, which will kill off forests and decrease lumber harvest numbers.
11. **Cities:** Unchecked growth in cities is hurting climate resilience by reducing the amount of trees that provide a carbon sequestration benefit of 50 pounds of carbon per tree per year and reduce energy needs through shading.
12. **Fish:** 10-20% of bull trout stream habitat was lost between 1993-2006 projected to increase. Increased stream temperature impacts spawning.
13. **Greenbelt flooding:** Seasonal shift in Boise river levels will impact Greenbelt recreation with increased rate of flooding.
14. **Plants:** Drier soils, higher temperatures and a lack of water will make plants more susceptible to pests and disease. Many plants are already at the limit of what they can tolerate.
15. **Hops:** Extreme droughts and heatwaves will become more frequent and impact the growth of hops by reducing productivity by 20%, this will cause beer prices to double
16. **Neighborhood Flooding:** Within the next 20 years, the number of communities experiencing chronic flooding will double as a result of climate change. Extreme floods described as 100 year events are expected to become more frequent.
17. **Cheatgrass:** A change in climate can facilitate invasive species growth such as cheatgrass
18. **Highly Impacted Populations:** Climate change will amplify the threats to more vulnerable people including children, elderly, sick, and poor
19. **Snake River:** Idaho shows a 15% decrease in cumulative annual streamflow over the last ½ century, in-river stream flows are projected to increase. The flow of water during summer may be 50% less by mid-century than what it is today.
20. **Ski resorts:** Idaho ski resorts are facing shorter and more uncertain seasons impacting benefit to the community.
21. **Cattle:** Hot weather causes cows to eat less, grow more slowly, and produce less milk. In extreme cases, climate change may threaten their health.

All information for these impacts is sourced from climate research performed and compiled by the [Environmental Protection Agency](#), the [University of Idaho](#), and the City of Boise's *Climate Adaptation Assessment*.