



The satellite image above shows the border between Haiti (left) and the Dominican Republic (right), illustrating the large amount of deforestation that has occurred on the Haitian side of the border. PHOTO CREDIT: NASA/Goddard Space Flight Center [Scientific Visualization Studio](#)

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SPECIAL PROJECT

OTAK PLANNER TRAINS WITH AL GORE



To help address global environmental problems such as illustrated in the above photo, [Brad Kilby](#), a planner in Otak's Lake Oswego, OR, office recently joined an elite team of soon-to-be lecturers on global warming. He recently spent two days in Nashville as a trainee in [The Climate Project](#), a non-profit organization committed to spreading the message about Global Climate Change and the expected consequences. While there he learned about the science of climate change and developed the information and skills necessary to present his own version of the training. The coaching was conducted by Al Gore, along with scientists and other experts, and featured a presentation that echoes the messages in the movie, [An Inconvenient Truth](#). One thousand presenters are being trained globally with this first phase, including Oregon's secretary of state, Bill Bradbury. As part of the application, Brad committed to giving the presentation a minimum of ten times a year. "I would give it every night if I could; it's a very important message," says Brad. He's in the process of tailoring his presentation to the current "climate" in the Pacific Northwest and says, "I'm very excited!" To learn more on the global situation, read the widely anticipated 4th Climate Change Assessment Report that is scheduled to be released February 2 by the United Nations' [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) (IPCC). The IPCC was established to assess scientific, technical, and socio-economic information relevant for the understanding of climate change, its potential impacts, and options for adaptation and mitigation.

AWARDS

OTAK'S SWAMP CREEK FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT HONORED

[Playgrounds](#)
[Public Involvement](#)
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Otak Offices

[Lake Oswego, OR \(corporate\)](#)
[Bend, OR](#)
[Carbondale, CO](#)
[Corvallis, OR](#)
[Gearhart, OR](#)
[Kirkland, WA](#)
[Long Beach, WA](#)
[Manzanita, OR](#)
[Seattle, WA](#)
[Tempe, AZ](#)
[Vancouver, WA](#)
[Yakima, WA](#)

[United Arab Emirates](#)

 Trees were not used to produce and disseminate this electronic newsletter.



Otak received a 2007 Engineering Excellence Gold Award from the [American Council of Engineering Companies of Washington](#) for our Swamp Creek Flood Reduction Improvements Project for the City of Kenmore, WA. The award is under the "Complexity" category for its features that improve fish and wildlife habitat, increase wetland function in the project area, and replace and improve existing roadway and utility infrastructure. As part of this \$4.5 million project that has alleviated flooding in the lower Swamp Creek area, Otak recycled concrete demolished on-site into a new roadbed and sidewalk. Trees that were necessary to remove were also reused on-site as fish, bird, and insect habitats in and around the newly restored stream, which mimics its previous natural flows. Otak served as prime consultant for all design and construction management. Email to find out how Otak can help with a similar project.

WHAT MAKES IT GREEN?

COMPOST USED AS SOIL AMENDMENT



Food scraps, coffee grounds, paper soiled with food waste, veggie scraps, and yard trimmings don't look very green, but they facilitate green growth when properly composted and used as a soil amendment. Otak's landscape architects recommend the addition of compost to soil for its many benefits such as acting as a glue to hold soil particles together to reduce erosion. It also can help keep polluting metals out of waterways and suppress soil-borne diseases. Mature compost is made from organic waste that is biologically decomposed through high temperatures to destroy pathogens and weed seeds. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says that 24 percent of the municipal waste stream in the U.S. is yard trimmings and food residue - and all of it could become useful, beneficial compost instead! Check with your local solid waste program to see if it accepts food scraps and other organic waste. If not, you can create your own bins or purchase something like an ["Urban Compost Tumbler"](#) that fits into small spaces. In King County, WA, residents can add food waste to yard waste containers that are set out with normal [garbage collection](#). Learn the basics of composting from Washington State University's Stewardship Gardening [program website](#). To find out more about composting in Oregon, visit the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality [website](#). Or visit the Washington Organic Recycling Council [website](#). If you need more organic material for your compost, check out your local Starbucks for its free compostable [coffee grounds](#).

NEWS

[WHAT'S NEWSWORTHY @ OTAK](#)

TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE SPICE

Besides the spare tire around the midsection, all that holiday food produces another perhaps unwanted result; according to a University of Washington study there's more cinnamon than usual in the waters of Puget Sound. [Read article.](#)

OTAK SPONSORS KEYNOTE AT GREEN BUILDING CONFERENCE



Otak is an official keynote sponsor for the [2007 Built Green Conference & Expo](#), which will be held at the Everett Events Center March 13, 2007. The keynote speaker this year is [Hunter Lovins](#), an internationally renowned environmental author and speaker. She is the president of [Natural Capitalism, Inc.](#) and an advisor on sustainable business. An author and champion of sustainable development for more than 30 years, she has managed international non-profits, taught at major universities, advised citizens' groups, governments and corporations, and created several corporations. Her natural capitalism concepts have been utilized by companies such as Interface, Clif Bar, and DuPont, as well as Cities including Portland, OR, Boulder, CO, and San Francisco, CA. We invite you to join us for one of the Northwest's most popular green building events! For a registration form [click here.](#)

DECONSTRUCTION BY THE NUMBERS



What about all those buildings or other old structures that need to be torn down to make way for something new? Many are salvageable, or have reusable components, and should not be thrown away. In Washington State, one of Otak's subconsultants in sustainable building is racking up some impressive numbers in saving these perfectly good materials mainly through deconstruction. In 2006 alone, [RE-USE Consulting](#) worked and consulted on 234 structures in the Evergreen State. [Dave Bennink](#), owner of RE-USE, says that many deconstruction projects take about three to four days. Over the past 14 years, he's worked on a myriad of projects for clients in ten states. He

provided a few numbers to illustrate how much his company saved last year:

- 89 total buildings deconstructed or mostly deconstructed
- 1,300,000 to 1,800,000 lbs diverted from the landfill through reuse and recycling (not including concrete!)
- 2,500 windows kept out of the landfill
- 700 cabinets kept out of the landfill
- 184 total buildings consulted on through on-site visits/work
- 45 total buildings deconstructed with RE-USE's onsite training/crew leading the project

For more information on deconstruction, visit the RE-USE [website](#) or call (360) 201-6977, or visit the Building Materials Reuse Association [website](#).

TEACHERS USE LEFTOVER SAMPLES

Speaking of reusing materials, [ReUse Resources](#) collects donations of unwanted office and art supplies from businesses and sells them to teachers for a few cents. Items can be delivered directly to the ReUseResources Center in Burien, WA, located at Big Picture High School on 15631 8th Avenue South. It is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays, between 10 am and 12 pm. This service matches surplus supplies with elementary school teachers who usually buy their own supplies. Among the most needed materials are matt board (3"X5" and larger, cut and uncut; no strips), foam core (12"X12" or larger), frames (no broken glass), acrylic, plexiglass, corrugated plastic, and sign vinyl. Architecture and design samples are also welcome such as carpet (18"x14" or larger), formica, tile (colorful, granite, marble-18"x18" max), paint chip samples, fabric books, fabric swatches and wood samples. Last year's calendars and magazines with great images, three-ring binders, pens, paper, and markers (company logos are ok) are useful as well.

THIS OLD HOUSE GOES GREEN



This Old House, the long-running PBS home renovation show, is going green for its 50th remodeling project. Premiering Thursday, February 8, the Old House crew will transform a 1926 Craftsman-style bungalow in Austin, TX, into a [model of green energy efficiency](#).

FROM THE EDITOR

THE GREENEST UNIVERSITIES

It's a great time for students of the environment. Recently, the president of [Yale University](#) pledged to become the greenest university in the U.S. The school has already

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reduced its campus greenhouse-gas emissions by six percent in one year [15,486 MTCE]. With 13 million square feet of space on campus, Yale is opting for better controls on lighting and heating in existing buildings and will include green architecture for all new buildings, plus use renewable sources of energy such as photovoltaic power, ground water for heating and cooling, biodiesel fuel in its bus fleet, and plans to replace its cars with hybrids.



In the Pacific Northwest, we've got some competition for that title, though! [Western Washington University](#) purchases 100 percent of its power from green sources and is rated one of the EPA's [top ten green power college partners](#). The [University of Oregon](#), [Pacific Lutheran University](#) and the [University of Washington](#) all have [LEED-certified](#) green buildings on campus. [Portland State University](#) features the LEED-certified, Otak-designed Broadway Housing (pictured at left) building that sports a vegetated roof.

Pineapple and watermelon rinds, lettuce leaves, fruits, vegetables, breads, and coffee grounds fertilize the flowers as compost at Seattle University instead of going into the garbage. The university also has its own [campus sustainability program](#) with a full-time manager.

The [University of Oregon's](#) Ecological Design Center (EDC), a student design-oriented organization, was awarded \$100,000 to install photovoltaic panels.

The curriculum at many universities is also getting a boost from the interest in green design, green living, and environmental policy. For example, [Washington State University](#) has a degree in organic farming - the first in the U.S. Western Washington University has an entire college devoted to [environmental sciences](#). Crisscrossing the country, my alma mater, Virginia Tech (Master's of Architecture), offered me an excellent opportunity to study environmental architecture with a thesis focused on an energy-efficient, energy-modeled passive solar home design. VT also has a [comprehensive green engineering program](#).

To get a look at other U.S. universities with sustainability initiatives, check out the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (slightly outdated but useful) [list](#). In other areas of the world, Britain's People and Planet organization provides a comparison of more than 60 UK universities

and their green or not-so-green attributes on its [Going Green Table](#).

Happy hunting in higher education whether you're looking for research, academics, extension or a place to invest some green dollars!

[Robin Rogers](#)

Otak is a member of:



PARTING SHOT by Dana Norwood



Snowy treescape at Trillium