

## OLSON BIO (2021)

Mary Olson is founder and Director of the Gender and Radiation Impact Project since 2017. She served from 1991 to 2019 as Staff Biologist and Senior Radioactive Waste Policy Analyst at US-based Nuclear Information and Resource Service, a non-government organization. Olson's work on radiation education lead her to the question of whether biological sex is a factor in radiation harm. Her paper, 'Atomic Radiation is More Harmful to Women' (2011) was featured at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons (2014); at the UN Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review of 2015; the International Committee of the Red Cross Asia regional meeting in St Petersburg, Russia and the EU Gender Summit, in Brussels, both in 2016. Olson spoke at the EU Gender Summit in London, 2018, as well as the Low-Dose Radiation Conference in Stirling, Scotland, events which led to her peer-reviewed paper in 2019 in the special Gender edition of Interdisciplinary Science Reviews. In 2020 Olson served at an expert consultation on an update on the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons for the International Committee of the Red Cross / Red Crescent in Geneva, Switzerland. Olson is currently raising funds to support a 2021 project to define a new, female-inclusive basis for radiation protection standards to help prevent unnecessary radiation exposure and reduce radiation harm.

Contact info: [www.genderandradiation.org](http://www.genderandradiation.org)

# MARY OLSON CV: ENVIRONMENT / ENERGY / CLIMATE

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## **1970 Letter of personal commendation for environmental leadership from President Richard M Nixon**

“Miss Earth” in first Earth Day parade, Lafayette, Indiana April 22

**1972** Presentation on Green House Effect to class on Radical Theories, Thomas Jefferson College at Grand Valley State, Allendale, Michigan; other radical theories of the syllabus were plate tectonics and large planetary impacts

**1976** Submitted painting for final project at St John’s college showing the Human Being and thought as central to all major challenges of the day including environmental degradation, nuclear, pandemics and over population

**1980** BA in Evolutionary Biology at Reed College; thesis on mycorrhizal associations of fungi and trees creating interspecies resilience and adaptation in the forest

- **1985**

Temenos Retreat and Environmental Education Center, Shutesbury MA. Support staff

- **1986** Circle Pines Center, Family Education, Conferences and Children’s Camp, Delton, MI; teaching cooperation, sustainability and experience of integrated systems. Business Manager, Program Coordinator and then Co-Director

**1991-** The following entries reflect activities while on the staff of Nuclear Information and Resource Service.

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## 2019

Titles included: Staff Biologist, Radioactive Waste Specialist, Community Lobbyist, Director of the Southeast Office, Asheville NC (2000—2019)

- **1991** Energy Policy Act of 1992, contributed to revocation of the Below Regulatory Concern Policy of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission that deregulated and would have released to commerce 1/3 of the volume of radioactive waste from industrial activities
- **1992** Led nationwide public and impacted community participation in the Enhanced Rulemaking on Residual Radioactivity of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency  
Joined Sac and Fox Elder Grace Thorpe in stopping the targeting of Native American Tribal Lands by the US Department of Energy for high-level nuclear waste storage, resulting in Congress defunding the promotion
- **1998** Invited to critique presentation by Hans Blix and panel from the IAEA on nuclear energy to non-government organizations at the United Nations
- **1999** World Atomic Safety Holiday (Y2KWASH) co-founder; call for fission to be suspended across the 1999—2000 “Y2K” transition—**received letter of commendation**

**from President Bill Clinton for increasing focus on nuclear safety**

**1995-  
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2000**

Joined President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore in opposing nuclear-industry sponsored federal legislation that would have created temporary storage of highly radioactive waste at the one site under study for a permanent repository —served as full-time front-line lobbyist on Capital Hill through 1999—and provided campaign support for Clinton veto in 2000; organization received **letter of commendation from President Bill Clinton for a significant contribution to scientific integrity in public policy**

**2000**

Founder, Southeast Office of Nuclear Information and Resource Service, Asheville, NC (disbanded in 2018)

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**2001 2002**

**2003— 2010**

**2005**

**2007**

## 2008

Intervention on proposed experimental use of weapons-grade plutonium as fuel in commercial nuclear plants (Duke and Virginia Power)—both corporations eventually withdrew and US DOE canceled the program; tech staff at both Duke and VA Power thanked me and NIRS for helping to educate decision-makers on dangerous flaws of proposals

Radiation and Health in the Nuclear Heartland—public conference co-sponsored by University of North Carolina, Asheville; featuring independent technical experts, impacted community members and basic literacy in concepts

Presenter and Exhibitor, Southern Energy and Environment Expo at the Ag Center, Fletcher NC

Co-Founder, AP1000 Oversight Group; tracking development of a physically flawed nuclear reactor design; convener Southeast Community Summit on first new nuclear reactor licenses in 40+ years, Atlanta GA

Speaker, Nuclear Energy and Climate Change side session at the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, sponsored by David Sawyer, Secretary General of Global Wind Energy Council (NYC)

Community release of “More than a TAD” security analysis of container and transport plans for nation’s irradiated fuel to South Carolina

Southeast Convergence for Climate Action, 2007; planning collective member and mentor on non-violent social- change activism August, 2007 in Etowah, NC

Speaker, Blue-Green Coalition Summit on Climate Change, New York City.

Southeast Convergence for Climate Action 2008; planning collective member and mentor on non-violent social- change activism, in Louisa VA

Carbon-Free, Nuclear-Free Campaign launched, based on book by same title by Dr Arjun Makhijani; served as Campaign Ambassador through 2015

Plutonium Policy Summit, co-host with Dr’s Frank von Hippel, Edward Lyman and Steve Frishman, and Citizen Summit on Radioactive Waste, both co-sponsored by the Green Block at University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

Author, “The Story of How We Did It,” young-adult fictional account of meeting the climate challenge; published by Bill McKibben on [www.350.org](http://www.350.org)

Organizer, National Community Summit on Radioactive Waste Policy, cosponsored by Loyola University, Chicago

Presenter to the General Assembly on the intersections of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons, NGO Day at the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty at the United Nations

Common Sense at the Nuclear Crossroads, co-founder; community education project about potential impacts to WNC of major nuclear waste shipping campaign if Bush-Cheney announced plan to recycle irradiated fuel in South Carolina were implemented (proposal was not executed, in part due to our community asserting that requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act had not been implemented)

**2010**

No Nuclear Waste in WNC, Community Campaign—staff support and expert advocate opposing revival of consideration the 1986 crystalline granite national nuclear waste repository site in Sandy Mush, near Asheville, NC by the Blue Ribbon Commission on America’s Nuclear Future initiated by President Obama; in 2014 the leaders of the Commission stated publicly that WNC was not under consideration for nuclear waste

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**2011**

Author, “Atomic Radiation is more Harmful to Women” published on NIRS website

Lead Intervenor on nuclear license proposed by Progress Energy for two AP 1000 nuclear reactors in Levy County, FL, representing grandmothers of Levy and Citrus Counties, 2011--2014; the nuclear licenses were granted, however after Duke and Progress merged, and problems of AP 1000 design were more widely understood, Duke eventually asked that the licenses be revoked prior to construction

**2014**

Carbon-Free, Nuclear-Free “stage” at People’s Climate March pre-march rally, Central Park, New York

MC of

Convener, National Grassroots Summit on Radioactive Waste Policy, Chicago, IL

Opening speaker, Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, Austria —led to several more global and regional presentations including during the UN Review of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, 2015, during the diplomatic run-up to the new global treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons

## **2016**

Presenter, EU Gender Summit, Brussels, Belgium Speaking tour (5 weeks), gender and radiation, Japan

## **2017**

Co-Author, Community Impacts, At the Crossroads of Nuclear and Climate Injustices In the U.S. South with Becky Rafter, Women's Action for New Directions and Jumana Master, Bevier Public Health Intern, Agnes Scott College, Decatur, GA, report published by WAND

Founder, Gender and Radiation Impact Project, dedicated to transferring insight about disproportionate impact of ionizing radiation on girls and women to academic investigation and further scientific research

Host and organizer of formal UN evidentiary sessions, and educational side sessions, on nuclear fuel impacts to front-line communities during the negotiation of the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; the treaty attained force this year, January 22, 2021



Convener, National Grassroots Summit on Radioactive Waste Policy, Chicago, IL **2018**

Speaker, EU Gender Summit, Kings College, London, England  
**2019**

Convener, National Grassroots Summit on Radioactive Waste Policy, Chicago, IL

**2020**

Co-Founder, Climate School Asheville, LLC with Sherry Wheat, member The Collider;  
withdrawn due to family health matters