

## THE WATCHDOGS

ALAN THEIN DURNING AND CLARK WILLIAMS-DERRY // SIGHTLINE INSTITUTE

When Seattle-area residents want to know how well the region is evolving toward a cleaner, greener future, they can turn to the Cascadia Scorecard—a unique Northwest sustainability index developed in 2004 by Clark Williams-Derry (left), research director of Seattle-based Sightline Institute, which helps regional policymakers rethink their priorities on everything from zoning to transportation to waste. The continuously updated scorecard tracks how the region is doing by measuring key indicators, including health, economy, population, energy, sprawl, forests, wildlife and pollution. Williams-Derry has also spearheaded some of Sightline's other most influential work, including a recent study that helped convince state lawmakers to call on manufacturers to phase out toxic yet commonplace flame retardants. And his entertaining and wonky Sightline blog posts ([sightline.org/daily\\_score](http://sightline.org/daily_score)) have gained him a following. ■ Sightline was founded as Northwest Environment Watch in 1993 by Alan Thein Durning (right)—who recently made headlines when he, his wife and their three children pledged to go car-free for a year, a decision that led to a \$50,000 offer to appear on Fox Network's *Trading Spouses* show, though Durning turned it down. The acclaimed environmental policy analyst cut his teeth writing eco-policy reports for Washington, D.C.-based think tank WorldWatch Institute before launching Northwest Environment Watch. He has co-authored more than a dozen books focusing on positive solutions to some of our most vexing regional problems. ■ While Sightline's mission covers the entire Pacific Northwest, perhaps its biggest impact has been in Seattle, where the group's ongoing analysis of sprawl has inspired Mayor Greg Nickels to revamp the city's development plans for its downtown core to encourage walking and community vibrancy. "Sightline has been an interesting, important and useful source of information to me as I have thought about how Seattle can become a leader in building a sustainable community," sums up Nickels.

PHOTOGRAPHED  
IN SEATTLE BY  
RICK DAHMS ON  
JANUARY 11

sustainability ecoheroes no. 3