From the director

Sometimes after spending time in Washington, D.C., or just reading the paper, every issue seems contentious.

But as I traveled across the country this past year, I found that once I got outside the Beltway, in fact most Americans have a lot in common when it comes to environmental values. We want clean air and clean water. We want to protect and preserve the places we care about, from majestic national parks to our local forests. And we want to ensure a clean and healthy future for our families.

That’s why, as the new year begins, I am eager for the challenges and opportunities that 2011 will present. We’ve seen a lot of conflict in the capital this past year—coal companies blocking progress on clean energy legislation; partisan bickering in Congress that led to stalemates on numerous critical issues; and a mid-term election season that often seemed to bring out the worst in people. But I’m proud to say that in this year of divisiveness, Environment America helped bring people together around the places we love, and the deeply held environmental values so many of us share.

I was thrilled to spend much of the year visiting places that mean so much to so many of us. I brought my parents (New Yorkers to the bone) on a trip to experience the grandeur and glory of Glacier National Park. Oil and gas companies are trying to drill right outside the park’s gates, threatening the ecosystem, wildlife and tourism. We are working with both of Montana’s senators and many others to stop them. Closer to home, I took a ferry to walk the trails on Spectacle Island, which is part of the Boston Harbor islands, one of the nation’s newest national parks. Both experiences served as excellent reminders of the timeliness of the Obama administration’s America’s Great Outdoors initiative, and of the need to increase funding for the National Parks Service.

This summer I also had the opportunity to go down to the Gulf with colleagues from the environmental community—not just to witness the damage wrought by BP’s horrific Deepwater Horizon blowout, but also to experience firsthand the incredible richness of the Gulf. The threat of irresponsible drilling continues to loom large over both the unique human and ecological communities. Ending that threat and restoring the Gulf must be top priorities for all of us.

I still find myself amazed by the beauty this country has to offer. Thanks to your support, we will keep doing our part to make sure America’s great outdoors are there to be experienced long into the future.
From the Chairman

People in this country know a good idea when they hear one, and I’m pleased that American entrepreneurialism is still alive and well. With our state affiliates now active in well more than half the nation, and representing two-thirds of our population, we are making a real difference—good idea by good idea, state decision-maker by state decision-maker.

The problems facing our environment and our country can be daunting. Global climate change threatens our communities with more extreme weather; the largest oil spill in world history caused untold damage to the fragile ecosystems and communities of the Gulf; runoff pollution from factory farms and irresponsible development poisons treasured waterways and key drinking water sources including the Chesapeake Bay, the Great Lakes, the Mississippi and Puget Sound. And the forces arrayed against us are equally daunting: Big Oil, King Coal, corporate agribusinesses, utilities and chemical companies.

But in the face of these challenges, our staff and members continue to work together and make a difference. In this past year alone we helped get cleaner cars on the road that will reduce our oil consumption, save families money, and limit global warming pollution. Thanks to policies we helped craft and then pass into law, tens of thousands of solar panels will go up across the country and thousands of megawatts of wind energy will repower our homes and offices. We pushed the Environmental Protection Agency to work with state officials in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia on common-sense plans to reduce pollution flowing into the Chesapeake Bay, and pressed the Senate to move on legislation to protect and restore the Great Lakes, Puget Sound and other waterways across the country.

In each of these cases, good ideas ultimately prevailed—but it took hard work. Our staff researched solutions, released reports to the media, reached out to hundreds of thousands of citizens across the country, and built broad coalitions with groups ranging from the League of Conservation Voters to supportive small business owners. And that work—from Washington to Florida, California to Maine, Minnesota to Missouri, Wisconsin to Texas—was only possible because of your support.

We’ve made real progress this past year, but more must be done. We need to keep chipping away at the problems plaguing our environment. Your long-term support, both financial and political, will help ensure that Environment America continues to be successful in the years to come.

“With our state affiliates now active in well more than half the nation, we are making a real difference—good idea by good idea, state decision-maker by state decision-maker.”

Douglas H. Phelps
Board of Directors, Chairman
As BP’s oil disaster unfolded in the Gulf of Mexico this summer, Environment America and our allies mobilized nearly half a million people who oppose new drilling off America’s coasts. In addition to holding the line against expanded offshore drilling, we built support to hold BP accountable for the damage it caused.

**Gulf faced worst accident in history**

In late April, we watched in horror as BP’s Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded in the Gulf of Mexico, killing 11 workers and unleashing what would become the worst oil spill in history. Along with the nation, our frustration grew as BP grasped at straws in its efforts to contain the deluge, finally stopping the leak in July.

BP released more than 200 million gallons of oil into the Gulf, coating beaches from Louisiana to Florida. Pelicans, sea turtles and other wildlife fell victim to the massive slick. The disaster caused billions of dollars in economic losses and upended the lives of thousands of fishermen, shrimpers and tourism workers. Damage to the Gulf’s ecosystem could persist for decades to come.

**Campaign to protect our shores**

In response to this tragedy, Environment America’s John Rumpler launched a national campaign to ensure that oil companies like BP are held fully accountable for the damage they cause, to prevent future catastrophes by passing tough new rules for offshore drilling, and to permanently protect America’s waters from expanded drilling.

We mobilized quickly to make these goals a reality. In Washington, D.C., Executive Director Margie Alt joined Sens. Robert Menendez (N.J.) and Bill Nelson (Fla.) to call for an end to the cap on oil companies’ liability for spills. Heather Emmert, our field organizer in the Gulf, kept tabs on BP’s activities throughout the crisis and countered the company’s sugar-coated assurances at administration hearings. When the oil industry touted economic arguments for more drilling, our federal Oceans Advocate Mike Gravitz took to the airwaves to publicize data showing that clean coastal waters create far more jobs and economic value than drilling does.

**Citizens held line against new drilling**

Meanwhile, at beaches from Santa Monica to Miami, our staff and members participated in Hands Across the Sand events—the largest demonstration against coastal drilling in history. Our staff pounded the pavement across the country, speaking to...
more than 80,000 people and e-mailing thousands more about the threat of expanded drilling to North Carolina’s Outer Banks, Georgia’s coastal islands and Florida’s Gulf Coast. In June, Environment America and our allies submitted more than 400,000 petition signatures urging the president not to expand offshore drilling.

Meanwhile, supporters nationwide opened their hearts, their homes and their checkbooks to help Gulf coast residents affected by this disaster. Members took us up on our invitation to organize “Gumbo for the Gulf” dinners to raise funds for disaster relief efforts and our work to prevent future drilling catastrophes. New Orleans chefs John Besh and Susan Spicer contributed gumbo recipes, and chef and author Anthony Bourdain promoted the events.

The fight to protect our nation’s shores is far from over, but our efforts have begun to pay off. The Obama administration cancelled drilling leases off the coast of Virginia, and Environment North Carolina won state legislation requiring tougher review of new drilling near the Outer Banks. On Sept. 30, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced strict new safety requirements for offshore drilling.
After nearly a decade of allowing our environment to deteriorate thanks to the undue influence of polluters, the federal government is slowly taking steps to restore America’s great waters to health. Countering opposition from developers and factory farms, Environment America pushed our leaders to move swiftly and boldly. We helped win a key Senate committee vote for the Great Lakes and advance an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) initiative on the Chesapeake Bay. We have a long way to go, but we are anxious to build on the progress we made in 2010.

Action to restore Great Lakes, Puget Sound, Long Island Sound

We helped bring the Great Lakes closer to restoration this summer, when a key Senate committee approved measures to inject new resources and energy into restoring the Lakes. The committee also approved bills aimed at cleaning up Long Island Sound, Puget Sound and other great waters. The Great Lakes are an unparalleled national treasure. Stretching across eight states to form the largest freshwater ecosystem on Earth, they provide drinking water for more than 33 million Americans. In addition, millions of visitors flock to the Lakes each summer to swim, fish and boat. But with 24 billion gallons of sewage discharged into them each year, more Great Lakes beaches are closed due to pollution than beaches in any other region of the country. Fishing on the Lakes is also threatened. Voracious Asian carp—which can weigh up to 100 pounds and jump high enough to knock boaters unconscious—have come within 10 miles of the Great Lakes. If we don’t stop the invasion, the carp could starve native fish populations and devastate the ecosystem.

To address these challenges, Sen. Carl Levin (Mich.) and Rep. Vern Ehlers (Mich.) introduced the Great Lakes Ecosystem Protection Act, which would help restore the Great Lakes and stop invasive species like Asian carp. Companion bills targeting the Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, and other great waters were also introduced—and our staff and members worked nationwide to build support.

Canvassers with Environment Illinois, Environment Michigan and Environment Ohio talked to nearly 75,000 people about this critical opportunity to protect the Great Lakes. Piper Crowell, our national clean water advocate, researched and wrote “America’s Great Waters,” a report highlighting the steps needed to restore the Great Lakes, Long Island Sound and other waterways to health. Our staff released the report nationwide, winning widespread media coverage. On June 30, the Senate Environment and Public
Works committee approved bills to protect the Great Lakes, Long Island Sound, Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound and other waterways.

**EPA moved to get tough on Bay polluters**

As legislation to protect the Chesapeake Bay advanced in Congress, our staff in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C., urged the EPA to draft strong new rules to reduce pollution flowing into the bay.

The Chesapeake Bay is the world’s most productive estuary, home to blue crabs, bald eagles and 350 species of fish. But this fragile ecosystem is threatened with a dead zone spanning up to one-third of the bay—the result of pollution, sewage overflows, and agricultural runoff from the estimated 1.1 billion pounds of chicken manure coming from the region’s factory farms.

This year, the EPA drafted a relatively tough plan to clean up the bay. Environment Maryland and Environment Virginia helped gather 43,000 public comments from concerned citizens urging the EPA to set mandatory limits on pollution. Environment Maryland’s Tommy Landers released a letter signed by 55 local farmers, urging Gov. Martin O’Malley to make big agribusinesses clean up their pollution. We also worked to ensure that the EPA sets tough penalties to enforce the new limits—so that the Bay can finally recover.

Runoff pollution, toxic chemicals and oil spills threaten the health of communities around Puget Sound, and have contributed to the decline of orca and salmon populations. New legislation would help clean up the Sound and protect it for future generations.

We’re mobilizing people in New York and Connecticut to protect Long Island Sound. The Sound’s diverse marine ecosystem is threatened by runoff pollution that is causing a growing dead zone, which grew to be 180 square miles in 2008—seven times the size of Manhattan.

**The Great Lakes**

Millions of people flock to the Great Lakes every year to swim, fish and boat. But Great Lakes beaches are closed due to pollution more than any region in the country. The lakes’ health is threatened by runoff pollution, sewage and invasive species. We’re campaigning to restore the Lakes.

**Puget Sound**

Runoff pollution, toxic chemicals and oil spills threaten the health of communities around Puget Sound, and have contributed to the decline of orca and salmon populations. New legislation would help clean up the Sound and protect it for future generations.

**Chesapeake Bay**

The Chesapeake Bay is home to more than 3,600 species of plants and animals, including blue crabs and bald eagles. Our staff is pushing the EPA and surrounding states to protect this critical yet fragile ecosystem by enacting tough limits on factory farm pollution flowing into the Bay.

**Long Island Sound**

We’re mobilizing people in New York and Connecticut to protect Long Island Sound. The Sound’s diverse marine ecosystem is threatened by runoff pollution that is causing a growing dead zone, which grew to be 180 square miles in 2008—seven times the size of Manhattan.
This summer, Environment America launched a campaign to revitalize our national parks.

Hailed as “America’s best idea,” many of our national treasures are vulnerable to neglect, development and pollution. For example, Glacier National Park, called “the crown of the continent” for its high, snow-covered mountains, is threatened by oil and gas drilling in the nearby Flathead River Valley. Drilling pollution could spoil the park’s pristine lakes and wild forests, which are home to grizzlies, bald eagles and other endangered species.

With Mt. Rainier, Acadia, Shenandoah and other parks across the country confronting similar problems, our staff and members joined together to defend the places and wildlife that mean so much to so many Americans.

Thousands joined call to defend Glacier
Our efforts proved especially timely in light of a new Obama administration initiative. In April, President Obama and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced the America’s Great Outdoors initiative, designed to reconnect Americans with the outdoors and strengthen protections for our nation’s most beloved places. The administration held listening sessions across the country—giving our staff and members a chance to speak out for the parks and other places that we believe need enduring protection.

To protect Glacier, for example, Environment Montana conducted a public education drive that reached thousands of Montanans with news about the dangers nearby drilling could cause to the park. When the administration held a listening session in Missoula, we mobilized hundreds of supporters to call for the drilling leases near the park to be cancelled. Our online activists sent nearly 3,000 messages to Secretary Salazar, urging him to make protecting Glacier a priority for the administration.

From Acadia to Mt. Rainier, supporters rallied to protect their parks
After researching the problems and consulting with local groups, park officials and others, we organized similar efforts across the country, including:

- In Virginia, we rallied support for Shenandoah National Park, where proposed budget cuts would have reversed the trend toward increased funding for Shenandoah—which could jeopardize the park’s ability to maintain overlooks along Skyline Drive and keep campgrounds and visitor centers open.
- Environment Texas’ Luke Metzger led our call for an expansion of Big Bend National Park to include the stunning Christmas Mountains just
outside its northwest border.

• In Washington State, Heather Shute built grassroots support for expanding Mount Rainier National Park to include the Carbon River Valley rainforest, one of America’s last remaining rainforests, which would create a wildlife corridor stretching from the park to Puget Sound.

• In Minnesota, Ken Bradley organized to protect the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, whose stunning scenery, waterways and wildlife would be threatened by the sulfuric acid that could leach from mining projects proposed just beyond the wilderness.

• In Maine, Emily Figdor is working to protect Acadia National Park by securing funding to purchase nearly 1,000 acres of land within the park’s borders that are currently vulnerable to private development.

• Environment Missouri’s Ted Mathys focused on the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, where, due to a lack of enforcement, pristine areas are being overrun with vehicles, eroding stream banks, beating up trails and degrading the outdoor experience for visitors.

As of this writing, the administration was expected to release its final recommendations at the end of 2010.

From top: Staff in Colorado; Wisconsin Environment’s Dan Kohler; Environment Virginia staff visit Shenandoah; Margie Alt at Glacier; Environment New Jersey’s Dena Mottola Jaborska at the Shore; Luke Metzger and his son in the Christmas Mountains; PennEnvironment’s Erika Staaf.
As hopes dimmed for progress on clean energy legislation in Washington, state and local governments forged ahead, spurred on in part by our research, advocacy and grassroots organizing.

As a result of this year’s efforts, Californians will get one-third of their electricity from clean, renewable sources by 2020. Colorado, Illinois and New Jersey will develop enough solar energy to power more than 50,000 homes by the same year. Offshore wind farms will supply the energy to power hundreds of thousands of homes on the East Coast. And across the country, tens of thousands of people will be put to work erecting wind turbines, installing solar panels, and insulating homes.

Environment California’s “Triple It” campaign helped persuade state officials to accelerate California’s renewable energy standard to require 33 percent clean energy by 2020. In March, Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter signed an Environment Colorado-sponsored bill bumping that state’s clean energy standard up from 20 percent to 30 percent by 2020. And in states across the country, we helped win similar clean energy policies.

In a sign that the competition to lead on offshore wind is underway, New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie signed an Environment New Jersey-backed bill supporting the development of enough wind off the Jersey shore to power 350,000 homes. “With this new legislation, New Jersey could be the first state in America to build offshore wind,” said Matt Elliott, clean energy advocate for Environment New Jersey.

More solar in Maryland, New Jersey, Colorado and beyond
Momentum also grew nationwide for solar power. Led by our National Energy Program Director Rob Sargent, our staff advocated ambitious, but achievable goals to provide at least 10 percent of America’s total energy use from solar power by 2030.
To help make our case, in March we released our report *Building a Solar Future*. We were joined by a broad coalition of supporters, including mayors, state officials, members of Congress, solar industry leaders, small business owners and labor representatives.

Environment Texas staff went on a statewide Solar Tour, releasing *Lone Star Power* in Austin, Dallas and five other cities. The report highlighted Texas’ unique solar potential and profiled Texan solar businesses that are already building a clean energy economy.

Our efforts to make increased solar energy a centerpiece of America’s energy and environmental strategies have begun to pay off. In Maryland, we won a bill to quadruple the amount of solar power generated in the state in the next two years. Three percent of both New Jersey and Colorado’s electricity will come from solar by 2020, thanks to rules we helped win; and in Minnesota and Ohio, we helped pass bills that allow municipal governments to finance solar installations.

Here’s a paradox: The cheapest, cleanest energy is the energy we don’t use. Thanks in part to our work this year, people in at least 12 states will find it easier to use less energy.

Millions of Americans already make their homes more energy-efficient and thus healthier, more comfortable and less costly. But we can do better. Environment America is calling to reduce energy use in buildings 50 percent by 2050 by investing in the efficiency of existing buildings and strengthening energy codes for new buildings.

In March we were joined by elected officials, business leaders, architects and building owners to release *Building Better*. Our report showed that improved efficiency could reduce global warming pollution from buildings 37 percent by 2030, and save American families nearly $1,300 per year on average. State by state, we publicized the importance of energy efficiency and collected public comments to promote high-performance buildings.

Our work paid off. This year we helped win building code upgrades in 12 states: Georgia, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin.

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**Increasing our use of renewable energy**

*Thanks to the work of Environment America’s state affiliates and others, 29 states now have renewable electricity standards.*

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**Energy efficiency**

**Bringing America’s buildings up to code**

*Here’s a paradox: The cheapest, cleanest energy is the energy we don’t use. Thanks in part to our work this year, people in at least 12 states will find it easier to use less energy.***

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*Caitlin Seeley released *Building Better* in Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island’s headquarters, one of Providence’s greenest buildings.*
New cars and trucks will soon get better gas mileage, emit less global warming pollution, and cost less to refuel at the pump, thanks to a 2010 Obama initiative supported by Environment America—despite the efforts of some in Congress.

For years we have known that cars and trucks are major global warming offenders, responsible for roughly one-third of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. This spring, the administration unveiled new vehicle fuel efficiency standards that will reduce global warming pollution by 108 million metric tons per year by 2016—equivalent to the annual emissions of 28 coal-fired power plants. The standards will also save consumers roughly $31 billion annually at the pump starting in 2016.

Decade-long effort laid groundwork for Clean Cars victory

Environment America’s work over the past decade helped make this win possible. By 2008, 14 states had adopted clean cars standards that built the foundation for President Obama’s announcement this spring. In 13 of the 14 states, Environment America affiliates helped secure these victories, enabling one of the nation’s most important steps forward in the fight to tackle global warming.

But the ink had barely dried on the president’s announcement when oil lobbyists went on the offensive, working with Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski to craft legislation—dubbed the “Dirty Air Act”—to block clean cars standards and strip the administration’s ability to regulate coal-fired power plants, the largest single source of global warming pollution.

Big Oil’s rollback attempt defeated

Environment America mobilized to defeat this attack on the Clean Air Act. In the weeks leading up to the Senate vote on the Dirty Air Act, our staff garnered supportive editorials from the Washington Post and the New York Times, and mobilized officials from California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick to speak out against the proposal. Our members leapt into action as well, with tens of thousands signing our petition against the Dirty Air Act and more than 1,000 activists calling key senators.

The Senate rejected the Dirty Air Act in June by just six votes. Knowing the opposition won’t go away, we remain vigilant in our efforts to clean up the largest sources of global warming pollution.
Healthy Oceans: West Coast residents moved to stop plastic pollution

To a sea turtle, styrofoam and plastic bags both look a lot like food.

That’s just one reason why the toxic soup of plastic floating 1,000 miles off the Pacific coast, estimated to be twice the size of Texas, is so dangerous to wildlife. Scientists believe this Pacific Garbage Patch is responsible for the deaths of more than 1 million seabirds, 100,000 sea turtles and countless fish every year.

Plastic bags are a big part of the problem. California alone uses 19 billion plastic bags, many of which wind up in the Pacific. Our affiliates in California, Oregon and Washington launched a Great Pacific Cleanup this year, with an immediate goal of phasing out single-use plastic bags up and down the coast.

Thousands in Ore., Calif. united to “ban the bag”

Environment Oregon’s Brock Howell kicked off the campaign in March, speaking to 100,000 Oregonians about the Pacific Garbage Patch and building support for bag bans in nine communities. The first victory came this summer, when the Portland City Council voted to phase out plastic bags by October 2011. Environment Washington is supporting a similar ban in Seattle.

In addition to supporting local efforts, Environment California’s staff and members worked to pass a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags (AB 1998). We spoke to more than 100,000 Californians about banning the bag. Members flooded their representatives’ in-boxes with more than 10,000 e-mails supporting the ban. Legislative Director Dan Jacobson and celebrity activists Amy Smart, Rosario Dawson and Rachelle Lafèvre met with lawmakers in Sacramento, and held five news conferences up and down the state. In June, the Assembly passed the ban.

Chemical industry struck back

As the Senate prepared to vote, we organized hundreds of Californians to send pictures of themselves with reusable bags to their legislators. We collected nearly 500 signatures from supportive small business owners. Our staff toured the state with a 25-foot inflatable turtle, holding “Turtle Tour” events.

But with victory in reach, the American Chemistry Council—whose members include companies that make plastic bags—launched a furious campaign against the ban. Unleashing an expensive ad blitz, they showered key senators with contributions and hired some of Sacramento’s most well-connected lobbyists. As a result, the bill was defeated. Going forward, we are taking the fight back to the local level. More than 25 California communities have already adopted bans on plastic bags or styrofoam.

Cities that banned plastic bags or styrofoam in

CALIFORNIA

Alameda   Monterey
Berkeley   Newport Beach
Calabasas   Oakland
Capitola   Pacific Grove
Carmel     Pacifica
Del Rey Oaks   Palo Alto
Emeryville   Richmond
Fairfax     San Bruno
Hercules        San Francisco
Laguna Beach   Santa Cruz
LA (voluntary)  Santa Monica
Malibu       Scotts Valley
Manhattan Beach    West Hollywood