Clearing the way for cleaner waterways

Urging Congress to let the EPA do its job

For more than a decade, Environment America has been working to close loopholes in the Clean Water Act that have left more than half the nation’s streams, 20 million acres of wetlands, and 117 million Americans’ drinking water at risk of unchecked pollution. This past spring, the Environmental Protection Agency finally proposed a long-awaited rule to restore Clean Water Act protections to all our waterways.

Dozens of commitments secured

Leading up to the rule’s announcement, Environment America held its annual lobby days, bringing public support from around the country to our elected officials in Washington, D.C. This year, we secured commitments from more than 44 senators and representatives to stand up for clean water and the EPA rule.

Environment America also organized 107 farmers and 87 academics to bolster the Obama administration in its effort to close the Clean Water Act loopholes. Clean Water Advocate Ally Fields delivered the outpouring of support to the EPA’s Science Advisory Board panel while testifying in support of their report, which makes the scientific case for restoring Clean Water Act protections.

150,000 Americans in support

Last fall, more than 150,000 people submitted public comments to the EPA in support of the administration’s steps to protect our waterways.

With the polluters’ lobby, led by corporate agribusiness and Big Oil, ramping up to slow down the EPA and to block the rule in Congress, Environment America launched a massive citizen outreach campaign to build even more support for clean water protections.

This summer, we will have conversations with more than 500,000 people about the importance of local waterways, generating even more public comments supporting the rule.

“This summer, we’re talking to folks face-to-face about their favorite waterways and the need to close loopholes in the Clean Water Act,” said Fields. “It’s no small undertaking, but we know that building support for this rule is our best chance to protect our country’s waters.”

Take action

For more information on our work to save and protect waterways from the Colorado River to the Great Lakes, visit: www.EnvironmentAmerica.org

Darling National Wildlife Refuge in Sanibel, Fla.
To our members

There’s nothing like summer to remind me how much I love being outdoors—whether it’s walking around Fresh Pond near my house, searching for shells along the Cape Cod National Seashore, or the much-anticipated trip I’m taking later this summer to Denali National Park in Alaska. So I’m thrilled that all summer long, our campaign staff will be out in neighborhoods like yours talking to folks about their favorite waterways and their treasured memories of trips to special places across the nation.

Over the next few months, we have a few great opportunities to make meaningful progress to protect America’s waterways from pollution and overdevelopment, to provide adequate funding for our national parks and other special places, and to take a major bite out of the global warming problem. But it will take all of us coming together and standing strong to actually achieve the results we care about so much. So please, share your best stories with our canvassers! And as always, thank you for your support. We couldn’t do it without you!

Sincerely,

Margie Alt
Executive Director

Recent action

Green Future Fund: A new way to honor supporters
Environment America’s new Green Future Fund honors donors who are helping to ensure a greener future for America by remembering Environment America or our sister group, Environment America Research & Policy Center, in their estate plans. Including Environment America in your planning costs nothing today, while protecting the places we love and the values we share for the future.

With your permission, we’ll recognize your gift in our publications, inspiring other members to make their own legacy gifts. Or you may choose to keep your gift private. Either way, any details you choose to provide about your gift will remain confidential.

To enroll in the Green Future Fund, or to learn more, call 1-800-841-7299 ext. 312, or email PlannedGiving@EnvironmentAmerica.org.

1,000+ doctors and nurses call to halt fracking
This past February, Environment America rallied doctors, nurses and other health professionals nationwide to join us in shining a spotlight on the serious health risks of fracking. More than 1,000 health professionals signed letters to President Obama and state officials verifying that this drilling has real consequences for the health of nearby communities.

These signatures add support to the irrefutable evidence we are seeing in communities close to fracking sites. Documented ailments in individuals and entire families include difficulty breathing, nosebleeds, skin rashes, neurological and gastrointestinal issues. Pennsylvania resident Judy Armstrong Stiles found barium and arsenic in her drinking water, and then in her blood, after drilling began on her land.

Environment America and our state affiliates will continue working with health professionals as we educate more decision-makers and the public about the verifiable threats to our families from opening more of our country to drilling.

Toward a greener future

Environment America and Environment America Research & Policy Center gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities to support our work to build a cleaner, greener, healthier future.

For more information, call 1-800-841-7299 or send an email to PlannedGiving@EnvironmentAmerica.org.

Fracking rig near homes and forestland in rural Pennsylvania
Clean energy policies, such as standards for renewable energy and energy efficiency, are leading to big reductions in carbon pollution—the leading cause of global warming—according to a new report released by Environment America Research & Policy Center this March.

Our report, “Moving America Forward,” showed that clean energy policies have reduced U.S. carbon pollution by the equivalent of taking 34 million passenger vehicles off the road.

The report shows that renewable electricity standards alone have helped states develop enough renewable energy to offset as much carbon pollution as 12.5 million cars produce in a year. Energy efficiency policies have helped avoid as much carbon pollution as 12.9 million cars produce in a year.

**National limits still needed**

“By using energy more efficiently and by generating more power from clean, renewable sources, states are delivering a one-two punch in the fight against global warming,” said Julian Boggs, federal global warming program director. “They’re proving that we have what it takes to protect our children and future generations from the worst impacts of global warming. But we need firm national limits on carbon pollution from power plants to really get the job done.”

American leadership in the fight against global warming is crucial. The United States is the world’s largest economy, the second-largest emitter of global warming pollution, and the nation responsible for more of the human-caused carbon dioxide pollution in the atmosphere than any other. Without prompt and bold action by the U.S., catastrophic impacts—from coastal flooding to food system disruptions—could become unavoidable.

**Polluter Protection Act**

Unfortunately, when President Obama and the Environmental Protection Agency step forward on climate, big polluters and their allies are there to hammer them back. When we learned about a new attack on the EPA’s ability to tackle climate in the House of Representatives—HR 3826 or the “Polluter Protection Act”—we leapt into action.

The week before the vote, Environment America staff held meetings with members of Congress and their staff—bringing with them letters of support, media clips and petitions from supporters across the nation. Thanks in part to our work, Congressional efforts to prevent the EPA from addressing global warming pollution are losing steam. When the bill came to a vote, it passed—as we knew it would—but it received 26 fewer votes than the last time it came up.

“We must tackle global warming any and every way we can,” said Boggs. “It’s going to take a combination of actions, and Environment America is committed to ensuring the U.S. does what it can on both the state and federal levels.”

Despite resistance from fossil-fuel interests like the Koch Brothers’ Americans for Prosperity and from politicians spouting anti-regulation, anti-clean energy ideology, we succeeded in convincing the RGGI states to do the right thing. In addition to reducing pollution and helping to build the clean energy economy, this victory helps lay the groundwork for federal action to limit carbon pollution from power plants.
Protection granted for California’s Stornetta

President Obama took decisive action to protect our public lands this spring when he expanded the California Coastal National Monument to include Point-Arena Stornetta Public Lands, and to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund, America’s premier land conservation program, in his budget. Protecting Stornetta will save 1,600 acres of beach, wetlands, dunes and waterways along Northern California’s coastline.

These actions made good on the president’s 2014 State of the Union promise to protect more of our pristine federal lands for future generations. Over the last year, Environment America has collected thousands of public comments urging President Obama to use his authority to protect our public lands. In February, we brought this public support to Washington, D.C., where we hand-delivered these comments to Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell during an in-person meeting.

“We still have a lot to do to protect America’s last wild places, but the recent progress we’ve made is noteworthy,” said Mary Rafferty, conservation program director.

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell and Environment California Preservation Advocate Nathan Weaver at the dedication of the Point Arena-Stornetta Unit of the California Coastal National Monument.