



## Summer Report

# Tell Congress: Let EPA protect our water

## Biggest clean water victory in a decade

The Obama administration is closing loopholes in the Clean Water Act that have left 2 million miles of our nation's streams open to pollution. But some in Congress are determined to block the rule to restore the Clean Water Act to full strength.

This summer, as polluters and their congressional allies turn up the pressure, Environment America and our national federation are doubling down to build the support to convince our elected officials to be champions for clean water.

## Pushing past our opponents

In February, a joint hearing before Senate and House committees was widely viewed as setting the stage for a vote to kill the rule, which has also faced bitter opposition from corporate agribusinesses, oil and gas companies, and developers.

But thanks in part to our advocacy, more than 250 local officials from across the nation voiced their support for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and defenders of clean water spoke during the hearing to defend the rule. With the help of our coalition and members, we provided these defenders with photos of beloved waterways at risk to show their colleagues what this fight is all about.

## Millions spent to keep loopholes

What are we up against? The same polluters that spent millions of dollars on lobbyists and lawyers to carve the loopholes in the Clean Water Act in the first place. In fact, "Polluting Politics," an analysis by Environment America, found that the



Credit: Jenne Turner

▲ Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) meets with Federal Legislative Director Anna Aurilio in Washington, D.C., about the EPA's clean water proposal.

10 most polluting companies from 2012 spent more than \$53 million on lobbying and contributed more than \$9.4 million to candidates for federal office during the 2014 election cycle.

"Our nation's polluters have deep pockets, but hundreds of thousands of people have

raised their voices in support of protecting our waterways," said Ally Fields, clean water advocate. "It's time for Congress to listen to citizens, and let the EPA finish the job."

The EPA's proposal is expected to be finalized this summer.

## Pollution by the numbers

**50 percent**

More than half the country's lakes, rivers and streams aren't safe for swimming or drinking.

**206 million**

Pounds of toxic pollution that industrial facilities reported dumping in our waterways in 2012.

**\$53 million**

Money spent lobbying by the 10 parent companies that reported the most toxic dumping.

Learn more about polluters' attempts to block clean water protections at [www.EnvironmentAmerica.org](http://www.EnvironmentAmerica.org)





## To our members

The past few months have brought some incredible victories for the environment, from President Obama's vetoing of a bill forcing approval of the Keystone XL pipeline to 4 million people speaking out to save the bees.

Of course, we still have our work cut out for us. With a Congress that officially denied the science behind global warming and dirty energy companies that continue to pollute and threaten our environment, it's more important than ever that we speak out for our country's air, water and open spaces.

In the coming months, Environment America will talk to people across the state, gather thousands of petitions and mobilize local support to protect America's rivers and streams, reduce global warming pollution, and grow solar power in our communities.

It's only through our members, like you, that we can do so. Thanks for making it all possible.

Sincerely,

Margie Alt  
Executive Director



## 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](mailto:PlannedGiving@EnvironmentAmerica.org).

## Recent action

### Offshore drilling proposal threatens marine life

From oil spills to seismic exploration, a new proposal to open huge swaths of the Atlantic Ocean to offshore drilling threatens precious marine life, according to a new analysis released by Environment America.

The analysis, released as the Obama administration vetted their Atlantic Ocean drilling plan in March, documented the massive, routine risks oil and gas rigs pose to marine life. One example: Roughly 200,000 migratory birds, lured by light and the prospect of food, are burned, poisoned by oil or otherwise killed each year near drilling rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.

As federal officials hold public meetings along the Atlantic Coast on the drilling plan, we're rallying elected officials, coastal businesses, anglers and thousands of our supporters together with our state affiliates to attend in force and send a clear message: Our coasts and wildlife are too precious to put at such high risk.

### 4 million urge President Obama to save the bees

In March, Environment America along with a coalition of beekeepers, farmers, business owners and other environmental and food safety advocates rallied in front of the White House and delivered more than 4 million petition signatures calling on the Obama administration to put forth strong protections for bees and other pollinators.

Environment America and our allies urged President Obama and the Environmental Protection Agency to take swift action to protect bees from a dangerous class of pesticides known as neonicotinoids.

These pesticides are linked to rapid bee decline, and in turn, threaten our food supply. With more than 90 percent of foods dependent on bees for survival, it's imperative that we protect bees from this toxic threat.



Credit: tankist276/Shutterstock

# Cities leading the country forward on solar

Credit: Konstantin Suvaygin/Shutterstock

The use of solar power is expanding rapidly across the country and playing a key role in meeting our energy and environmental challenges. Major cities are playing key roles, according to “Shining Cities,” a new report released by Environment America Research & Policy Center. With another panel or project installed every three minutes last year, solar jobs growing at a rate faster than the economy, and plummeting costs, we’re harnessing more energy from the sun and getting closer to leaving climate-altering dirty energy behind.

## Los Angeles ranked #1 in solar

As population centers, urban areas can have an important influence on the way we power our grids across the country. The report found that, at the end of 2014, 20 cities accounted for 6.5 percent of the installed solar in the country. And the 65 cities analyzed have installed more solar capacity than was installed in the entire country at the end of 2009. In total, the United States has enough solar electricity to power 3.5 million homes—a number that will continue to grow if our cities make strong commitments to growing solar power.

Los Angeles ranked among the nation’s solar leaders at #1 in the list for total solar installed. Leading cities like Los Angeles owe their solar success largely to growing clean energy markets in tandem with local government policies. These include: streamlining the permitting process for solar power in order to cut costs; removing cost barriers to solar energy adoption by adopting permitting policies and tax incentives; and partnering with local utilities to set renewable energy goals and financial incentives.

## Reducing threats of global warming

Solar power mitigates the dangerous impacts of global warming by reducing harmful pollution, improves air quality, and increases demand for local jobs in solar panel installation and manufacturing.

“Solar is taking off across the country, yielding huge payoffs for the environment, public health and the economy,” said Rob Sargent, director of Environment America’s Go Solar campaign. “Continuing progress across the country will be important to meeting our environmental and energy challenges.”

## Big utilities resistant to change

With momentum building, Environment America is urging the country to set a bold goal of 10 percent solar by 2030. Civic leaders, citizens, social media users and businesses have joined Environment America and our national federation’s call to support strong policies to facilitate reaching this goal. Nearly 600 civic leaders from across the country have stood up for strong solar goals, and 1,000 businesses have signed on to the campaign.

In the face of solar power’s rising popularity and feasibility, however, utilities across the country are campaigning to increase fees for rooftop solar.

“With prices going down and concern about global warming going up, solar power is growing rapidly across the country,” said Sargent. “We need federal, state, and even more city leaders to embrace the policies that allow solar to shine.”



Credit: cguilas2002/Flickr

## Take action

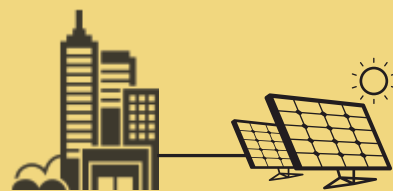
To urge your elected officials to set ambitious solar goals and support strong solar policies, visit:

[www.EnvironmentAmerica.org](http://www.EnvironmentAmerica.org)

# Where does your city stand on solar?

## Top 10 Solar Cities

1. Los Angeles, CA
2. San Diego, CA
3. Phoenix, AZ
4. Indianapolis, IN
5. San Jose, CA
6. Honolulu, HI
7. San Antonio, TX
8. Denver, CO
9. New York, NY
10. New Orleans, LA



All told, the U.S. has enough solar electric capacity to power

## 3.5 million homes.



= 100,000 homes

For the full “Shining Cities” report, go to:

[www.EnvironmentAmericaCenter.org](http://www.EnvironmentAmericaCenter.org)

Credit: Dave Gandy (house), Freepik Creative Commons  
Notes: Findings are based on 2014 data and on total installed solar PV



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### Environment America

#### Our mission

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

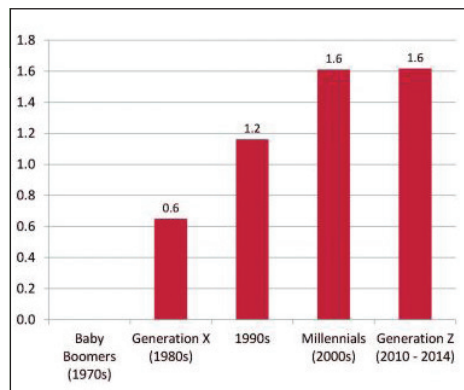
That's the idea behind Environment America. We focus exclusively on protecting air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

## Young Americans to inherit harsher climate

As a result of global warming fueled by pollution from power plants, Americans today live in a different climate than their parents and grandparents experienced—and without urgent action to clean up this pollution, our children will grow up in a more dangerous world.

“Dangerous Inheritance,” a report released by Environment America Research & Policy Center, found that the warming that has occurred over the past four decades has increased the risk of severe storms, heat-related illness, floods, drought, crop failure, wildfires and infrastructure damage. So far, temperatures in America this decade are 1.6 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than in the 1970s.

Finalizing the Clean Power Plan to limit pollution from power plants is the strongest action we can take to help solve global warming.



### more online



Read more about the impacts of global warming and how we can take action at:  
[www.EnvironmentAmericaCenter.org](http://www.EnvironmentAmericaCenter.org)

◀ The average temperature difference in the United States from the 1970s. Since then, each generation has grown up in a successively warmer climate.