



Milestone in race to protect future generations

President's plan outlines action on global warming

We helped lay the groundwork. We pushed for it. And when President Obama delivered his most detailed commitment yet to protect our children and future generations from global warming, we stood up and applauded.

In late June, President Obama announced the first nationwide climate plan that will set limits on carbon pollution from power plants, advance energy efficiency, and increase the nation's commitment to renewable energy.

The president's plan includes:

- A limit on carbon pollution from new and existing power plants, which currently lack any such federal limits, despite being the largest single-source of carbon pollution.
- New efficiency measures for buildings and new appliances that will cut carbon pollution by reducing our overall energy demand.
- Expanded production of clean, renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar.

Years of local work pay off nationally

Our research over the years shows that global warming has loaded the dice for more intense storms, wildfires and unhealthy air days. Scientists also have warned that the window for making the necessary cuts in carbon pollution is rapidly closing. And with Americans from the West Coast to New England already paying the price, we must act now to cut carbon pollution and protect future generations.



▲ Environment America was there as the president announced his plan to tackle global warming by limiting carbon pollution from power plants. Executive Director Margie Alt shares a moment with President Obama just before he spoke on global warming.



After years of inaction and gridlock in Congress, Environment America and its state affiliates went to work at the state and regional levels to tackle global warming—winning the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative in the Northeast in 2003, and helping pass the country's strongest global warming legislation in 2006, in California.

With the groundwork in place in the states, and a national coalition organized to build support for EPA action, we helped persuade the Obama administration to propose the first nationwide carbon pollution standards for new power plants. More than 3.2 million Americans submitted public comments last year in support of the rule.



take action

Now it's time to make sure the president's climate plan gets implemented. Find out what you can do at: www.EnvironmentAmerica.org.

- ◀ Wind energy will help reduce carbon in our environment.

To our members

One of my favorite times of the year is when the leaves of the maple in my backyard turn yellow, and I can get a couple of fall hikes in before the first snow. There are few things I appreciate more than brisk air and listening to the leaves rustle in the wind.

Unfortunately, some in Washington don't feel the same way about our special places. Earlier this year, Congress cut funding for our parks, making them more vulnerable to pollution and overdevelopment. Now, the oil and gas industry is proposing to frack in or near our national parks and forests—and unfortunately, the Obama administration may just let them.

Protecting these places is something we do for ourselves, but it is also something we owe future generations. I know the only way we'll succeed is if we join together and call on our elected officials to act responsibly. Thank you for standing with us.



Margie Alt
Executive Director

Recent action

8,000 petitions gathered in N.C. for sustainable farms

We should grow our food in ways that don't damage our environment, but preserve and protect it instead. Unfortunately, factory farms that contribute to air pollution by transporting food long distances, and endanger our rivers and lakes with fertilizer, manure and pesticides dominate agriculture today.

That's why Environment North Carolina worked this summer to support local, sustainable farms. North Carolina boasts more farmers' markets and organic farms than any state in the Southeast, yet most of the food sold in its supermarkets and restaurants still comes from out-of-state factory farms.

In neighborhoods from Asheville to Wilmington, our staff worked to build public support to convince Sen. Kay Hagan to help level the playing field for small, sustainable and local farms by supporting the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act. Our staff collected more than 8,000 petitions from North Carolinians, and supporters made more than 100 calls into the senator's office speaking out for getting more local foods into our schools, our communities and our restaurants.

Millions now living plastic bag-free

Thanks to our grassroots campaigns in states across the country, more than 10 million people now live, or soon will be living, in communities that have banned single-use plastic bags. This is great news for the quality of the rivers and streams, for our cities, backyards, beaches, and for the animals in the Pacific and Atlantic that too often mistake plastic bags for food.

Among the cities that have banned single-use plastic bags are Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle on the West Coast, and dozens of cities on the East Coast. Bag bans are spreading across the country, despite the well-funded efforts of the plastics industry to thwart our work to protect marine wildlife and our waterways.

This year, 14 Legislatures, from California and Oregon, to Rhode Island and New Jersey, introduced statewide bills to ban plastic bags in their states.

The climate is changing –
are your investments?



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States go solar: Top 12 solar states announced

Solar power is practically limitless, virtually pollution-free, and growing cheaper and more accessible at a pace that few could have predicted just a few years ago.

That's why Environment America strongly supports solar as a clean, renewable alternative to our nation's dependence on coal, oil and other fossil fuels. Our most recent research highlighted the state policies that are lighting the way for more solar power in our homes, workplaces, schools and more.

12 states light the way

Today our country has 10 times as much solar capacity as it did in 2007.

Environment America Research & Policy Center's report, "Lighting the Way," outlined the top 12 states for solar per capita. They are Arizona, Nevada, Hawaii, New Jersey, New Mexico, California, Delaware, Colorado, Vermont, Massachusetts, North Carolina and Maryland.

While these 12 states account for only 28 percent of the U.S. population, they make up 85 percent of the nation's installed solar energy.

The report demonstrates that it is not availability of sunlight that makes states solar leaders, but the degree to which state and local governments have created effective public policy for the development of the solar industry.

States with more homeowners and businesses "going solar" share these strong policies:

- 11 of the 12 leading states have strong net metering policies, which allow customers to offset their electric bills with onsite solar and receive reliable and fair compensation for the excess electricity they provide to the grid.
- 11 of the 12 states have renewable electricity standards, requiring utilities to provide a minimum amount of their power from renewable sources; and nine of them have solar carve outs, which set specific targets for solar or other forms of clean onsite power.
- 10 of the 12 have strong statewide interconnection policies. These policies reduce the time and hassle required for individuals and companies to connect new solar energy systems to the grid.

Environment America urges the federal government to continue key tax credits for solar energy, like the Investment Tax Credit; to encourage responsible development of prime solar resources on public lands; and to support research, development and deployment efforts designed to reduce the cost of solar energy and smooth the incorporation of solar energy into the electric grid.



learn more

Massachusetts met its solar goal ahead of schedule. Read more about the policies that got it there in "Lighting the Way" online at: www.EnvironmentAmericaCenter.org

- ◀ Gov. Deval Patrick holds Environment Massachusetts' Johanna Neumann's son while celebrating the state's solar milestone.



Educating the public on the dangers of fracking

When it comes to the dangers of gas drilling, the truth hurts. The more people learn about fracking, the less they like it—and the more they take action to help us stop it.

That's why Environment America worked in collaboration with our state affiliate PennEnvironment to create a documentary on the dangers of fracking.

The documentary will be on PBS's Breakthroughs program, narrated by Martin Sheen, and is scheduled to air in 60 million homes across the country. It highlights the dangers that fracking brings to our families and communities, our water supplies, air quality and land.

Environment America Research & Policy Center also released a report on a little-examined dimension of the fracking debate, analyzing the nation's financial assurance requirements for oil and gas drilling operations.

The report, "Who Pays the Cost of Fracking?" showed that while damage from fracking operations can run into the millions of dollars, drilling companies are only required to post bonds of less than \$50,000 in all but eight states and even less on federal land.

The report found that state and federal officials must adopt new rules that ensure that oil and gas companies—not taxpayers—are held fully accountable for the costs of fracking.

Photos above: Environment New Mexico's Go Solar activists. PennEnvironment's Erika Staaf (left) and Environment America's John Rumlper (right) during the filming of the PBS Breakthroughs series on fracking.

Environment America
44 Winter Street, 4th Floor,
Boston, MA 02108
(617) 747-4449

Environment America

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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.

House panel: Zero for park funding

It's unfortunate, but not surprising, that the current U.S. House would cut funding for our national parks. Yet the vote of a key House subcommittee on July 23, was stunning even for this Congress. The panel voted to completely eliminate funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a 49-year-old program designed to protect, preserve and expand the nation's parks and other public lands.

Our national parks—from Glacier to the Everglades—depend on the LWCF. If passed into law, this budget would mean our parks would be left in the lurch, becoming more vulnerable to encroaching overdevelopment, logging, drilling and pollution.

Over the last few months, Environment America has worked with our state affiliates nationwide to call for full funding of this premier park program. So far, tens of thousands of signatures and photo petitions have been delivered to members of Congress. We will continue to organize the public support it will take to fully fund the LWCF and the other parks programs our special places depend on and deserve.



Eileen Photography

learn more



Our national parks are at risk. To learn more about our work and find out how you can help protect our parks, visit: www.EnvironmentAmerica.org

◀ [Glacier National Park](#)