



Fiscal Year 2018 Annual Report

Thanks for making it all possible



Our members make the difference

"The places we love will always need defending. But defending what we've already won isn't enough. We want to live in, and leave to our children, a greener, healthier world than the one we live in today. That's what we're working for. Your action and support make it all possible, and for that we are deeply grateful."

In times like these, one may ask: Why should a group like PennEnvironment focus on anything but the Trump administration's moves to dismantle our nation's environmental protections?

We have three reasons why the best environmental defense must include a strong, forward-looking agenda.

First, the planet can't wait. Ensuring the stability and suitability of our climate depends on whether we can get to 100 percent clean energy now, not generations from now. The survival of wildlife in our rivers, streams and oceans depends on whether we curb plastic pollution now, not two or six years from now. Ditto for the quality of the air we breathe and the water we drink.

Second, success breeds success. When our litigation compels one company to curb its pollution, others feel greater pressure to fall in line. When citizens succeed in reducing the use of one form of single-use plastics, they're emboldened to try to reduce the next. When one Pennsylvania city or business commits to renewable energy, another is more likely to follow their lead.

Third, ultimately winning and defending our environmental protections here in Pennsylvania and nationwide depends on us winning the country. By that I mean winning enough hearts and minds over to our cause to make any politician think twice about devaluing the environment—no matter the pressure applied by polluting industries or other interests.

In these pages, you'll find reports on our vigorous efforts to defend Pennsylvania's clean water and air laws, our state and national parks and other public lands, and our progress on global warming. But you'll also find examples of our work to reduce plastic pollution, to compel companies to comply with pollution limits, to increase renewable power, and much more—work that's paying off in positive results now for our environment.

The places we love will always need defending. But defending what we've already won isn't enough. We want to live in, and leave to our children, a greener, healthier world than the one we live in today. That's what we're working for. Your action and support make it all possible, and for that we are deeply grateful.

Sincerely,

David Masur
Executive Director

Don't Frack Pennsylvania

Since the start of fracking in Pennsylvania nearly a decade ago, PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center has been a leading voice calling for a ban on this dangerous drilling practice that puts our environment, health and communities at risk. Getting one step closer to permanently protecting the Delaware River Basin from dangerous fracking has been one of our proudest accomplishments over the past year.

The Delaware River at risk

Few places embody Pennsylvania's iconic natural environment like the Delaware River. It supplies drinking water for millions of Pennsylvanians and is a popular destination for fishing, hiking, boating and other recreational activities.

But the fracking industry had its sights set on bringing their dangerous drilling practice to the scenic region around the Delaware River. This would threaten the Delaware River Basin with irreparable damage to our forests and open spaces, and untold air and water pollution.

A victory for our water

For many years, PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center staff, volunteers and citizen members have worked together to keep the fracking industry away from the Delaware River. We've led the fight against fracking by gathering and delivering more than 100,000 petition signatures to the governor requesting a ban on drilling in Pennsylvania, lobbying state and regional officials, and keeping media attention on the threats posed by fracking.

We celebrated when the region's governors announced their intention to place a permanent ban on fracking near the Delaware River and in the watershed. When this proposal is finalized, nearly 6,500 square miles of Pennsylvania will be off limits to fracking.



Top: Standing in front of a letter signed by hundreds, then-PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center Deputy Director Adam Garber—now director of the Consumer Watchdog team for our network partner U.S. PIRG—called for a permanent ban on fracking in the Delaware River Basin. A few months later, the regions' governors announced plans for just such a ban.

Bottom: Marcellus Shale gas drilling site along PA Route 87, Lycoming County.



Clean, Green & Renewable

Our energy program is working toward a world in which we conserve more, use the energy we have more wisely and efficiently, and rely only on sources of energy that are clean, renewable and tread lightly on the planet.



▲ State Rep. Jim Roebuck Jr. (center) was among the many members of the Pennsylvania Legislature our staff and volunteers met with during our 100% Renewable Energy citizen advocacy day.



▲ The Somerset Wind Farm in western Pennsylvania is one example of the ways our state is increasingly tapping into its clean energy potential.

Momentum for renewable energy

Our transition to a cleaner, greener world starts with calling on state leaders in Pennsylvania to transition from dirty fossil fuels to clean sources of energy like wind and solar power. Last year, PennEnvironment led this charge in the halls of the Legislature.

Climate Defenders

Over the past year, we've recruited, trained and mobilized hundreds of concerned Pennsylvanians as Climate Defenders. These volunteers regularly meet with their elected officials, submit letters to the editors of their local newspapers, and engage other concerned citizens by collecting petition signatures and running phone banks in support of climate action.

Progress at the Legislature

PennEnvironment's organizing paid off over the past year. In the spring of 2018, legislators in both the state House and state Senate introduced bipartisan legislation (House Bill 2132 and Senate Bill 1140) that would fully transition Pennsylvania to 100 percent clean, renewable energy by 2050.

PennEnvironment's staff helped draft the legislation alongside the bill's chief sponsors, and held a kickoff news conference this past spring that garnered statewide media coverage for this proposal. At this press conference, PennEnvironment was joined by legislators from both parties, religious leaders, health experts and clean energy businesses in support of our 100 percent renewable legislation. PennEnvironment also used the news conference to unveil a letter of support signed by over 100 nonprofit groups, health experts and academics, small businesses and local elected officials from across Pennsylvania.

Citizen advocacy day

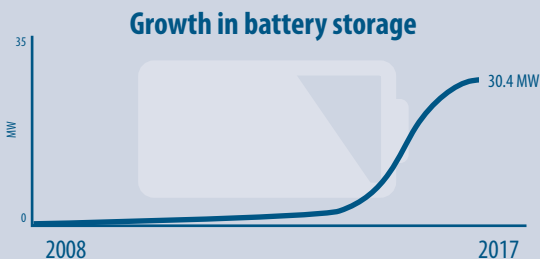
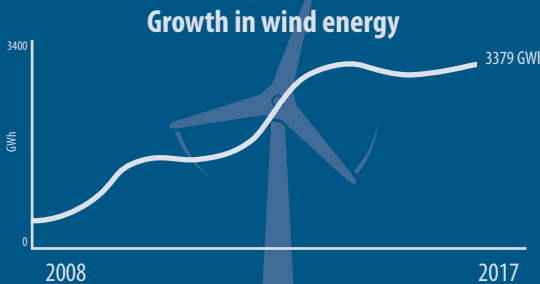
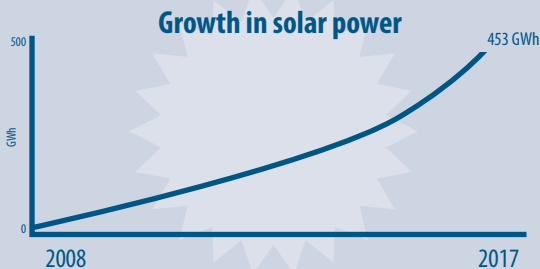
We brought these two tactical pieces of our campaign together last summer for PennEnvironment's annual citizen advocacy day.

This was one of the largest environmental advocacy days in many years, with more than 300 concerned Pennsylvanians from all corners of the commonwealth traveling to the state Capitol for a rally and meetings with their respective state senators and representatives. Over the course of the day, PennEnvironment volunteers and staff met with nearly 75 legislators and legislative offices and convinced dozens to add their names as cosponsors of our bill.

PennEnvironment will continue building momentum for this critical proposal to get Pennsylvania to commit to 100 percent renewable power.

A decade of growth

PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center's "Renewables on the Rise" report found that clean energy has grown dramatically over the past 10 years.





Wildlife Over Waste

Nothing we use for a few minutes should be allowed to pollute our communities, rivers, streams and oceans for centuries. That's why PennEnvironment launched a new campaign to tackle the problem of plastic waste.



▲ Wildlife, like this great blue heron in the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge, can be harmed or even killed by plastic waste they mistake for food.



▲ PennEnvironment summer intern Allie Capasso was among the dozens of staff and volunteers who turned out to help clean up plastic waste at the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge.

Action in defense of wildlife

Far too often, the plastic we throw away by the ton each day ends up in our rivers and lakes, where it can harm or even kill wildlife. Last summer, PennEnvironment kicked off our campaign to get rid of one of the worst kinds of plastic pollution: polystyrene foam (the stuff most of us call Styrofoam).

Thousands of conversations

In just three months, our staff visited more than 75,000 homes across the state, talking to more than 45,000 Pennsylvanians about our effort to address single-use plastics and to call for a statewide ban on polystyrene. At the same time, PennEnvironment collected more than 20,000 petition signatures in support of this effort.

Darby Creek cleanup

PennEnvironment staff organized a daylong trash cleanup along the Darby Creek as it flows through the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge, one of the most popular outdoor destinations in the Philadelphia area. Dozens of volunteers, staff members, and elected officials converged upon the Heinz Refuge to learn more about the threat posed by polystyrene plastic pollution, and then rolled up their sleeves to clean up some of the pollution that plagues the creek.

We held a news conference to announce the goals of our campaign to ban polystyrene, and were joined by a bipartisan group of legislators who supported the ban. Afterward, volunteers donned waders and gloves to collect dozens of garbage bags full of plastic and other trash from paths, wetlands and the stream itself. Local television and radio stations covered this event, further increasing our visibility and public awareness about the threat of plastic pollution.

Legislative action to tackle plastic waste

All of this effort paid off as state representatives and senators introduced legislation for a statewide polystyrene ban in Pennsylvania. Led by the efforts of state Rep. Tim Briggs (Montgomery County), PennEnvironment's proposal was introduced as House Bill 2560. Within weeks, the legislation had over 25 bipartisan cosponsors from every corner of Pennsylvania. We continued to add cosponsors throughout the year, ending with more than 35 cosponsors.

As we move ahead, we will continue to educate Pennsylvanians about the threat posed by single-use plastics like polystyrene, and the steps we'll need to take to protect our environment and health from our far-reaching plastic problem.





Clean Water & Air

Strong environmental laws aren't worth the paper they're printed on if polluters don't comply with the law and environmental regulators don't enforce them. Over the past year, PennEnvironment made historic headway stopping the illegal pollution of our rivers, our air and the places we love.



▲ Last December, PennEnvironment Executive Director David Masur announced a groundbreaking settlement in our lawsuit against steel giant ArcelorMittal over air pollution near Monessen.

▲ In March, Western Pennsylvania Field Organizer Zach Barber rallied citizens to demand clean air in Pittsburgh.

Illegal pollution stopped

When the government fails to stop illegal pollution, our cornerstone environmental laws give citizens the ability to enforce our environmental protections in court.

Historic win for clean air

As part of our effort to tackle air pollution in the Pittsburgh area, PennEnvironment worked with our network partners at the National Environmental Law Center to wrap up a groundbreaking lawsuit on behalf of local residents who had reported ongoing air pollution from the nearby coal refining facility known as the Monessen Coke Plant. The facility, which is owned by the steel giant ArcelorMittal, had violated its pollution limits and the federal Clean Air Act 225 times.

The settlement is believed to be the largest citizen suit penalty of its kind under the federal Clean Air Act in Pennsylvania history. The terms of the settlement included a \$1.5 million civil penalty, strict penalties for future violations or failures to implement upgrades to the plant, enhanced monitoring of emissions, and innovative technologies to control pollution.

PennEnvironment adds this important enforcement victory to our long track record of defending local communities against illegal industrial polluters, including handing down the two largest citizen suit penalties under the federal Clean Water Act against illegal polluters in Pennsylvania history.

Progress for the Allegheny River

Working with environmental attorneys, PennEnvironment made real progress in our efforts to clean up an illegal dump site along Pennsylvania's Allegheny River.

Last year, a federal judge handed down an important decision in our federal Clean Water Act and Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) lawsuit against PPG Industries over soil and water contamination. PennEnvironment initiated this lawsuit with Sierra Club in 2012 in an effort to clean up the company's Ford City waste site, a 150-acre site that received waste from PPG's nearby glass manufacturing plant for nearly 20 years, from approximately 1950 to 1970.

The judge found that ongoing pollution at PPG's site may present an imminent and unacceptable risk to human health or the environment, and held that PPG was liable for violating RCRA, as we had alleged. While not the final step in the legal process, it's an additional decision by the judge finding that the waste site violated cornerstone environmental laws.

A track record of litigation success



**Largest Clean Air Act
settlement in Pennsylvania
history**



**Largest Clean Water Act
settlement in Pennsylvania
history**



**More than \$35 million in
pollution reduction actions
and penalties**



Environmental Defense

The price of a clean and healthy environment is, to paraphrase Thomas Jefferson, eternal vigilance. As federal rollbacks threaten our cornerstone environmental laws, PennEnvironment is working to stand up for these protections and make sure Pennsylvanians are organized to do their part to keep our environmental laws intact.



▲ At a news conference in Pittsburgh, Western Pennsylvania Director Ashleigh Deemer discusses PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center's "Trouble in the Air" report, which found that more than 2.3 million people in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area experienced 121 days of degraded air quality in 2016.



▲ At a hearing in Pittsburgh, PennEnvironment staff and volunteers stood up for cleaner air and a more stable climate by opposing the Trump administration's proposed rollback of the clean car standards.

A strong stand for our air and water

Last year, PennEnvironment stood strong against the Trump administration's efforts to roll back our cornerstone environmental laws, which have enabled progress toward cleaning up and protecting our environment and health.

Clean Cars Standards

America's transportation sector is the largest source of air and global warming pollution. That's why PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center leapt to action when the Trump administration moved to weaken air pollution standards for cars and trucks that were approved by the Obama administration. This attack includes efforts to strip away the power of states to develop stronger protections to reduce pollution and protect their residents.

PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center collected thousands of signed petitions from concerned Pennsylvanians and held news events to shine a light on Trump administration efforts to upend existing clean air protections. We met directly with elected officials to galvanize their opposition to rollbacks that would usurp state efforts to reduce pollution and made sure that the Trump administration heard loud and clear from Pennsylvanians: The Keystone State supports clean cars.

The Environmental Protection Agency

Pennsylvania's waterways are the backbone of our community—we all have a favorite river or stream where we like to hike, swim, fish or explore. Unfortunately, the Trump administration has made its intentions clear as it has worked to dismantle clean water programs—including eviscerating funding for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

PennEnvironment staff organized our state's congressional delegation to hold news conferences in defense of clean water, and PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center released a series of studies showing the threats EPA budget cuts would pose to Pennsylvania's rivers and streams.

These efforts garnered wide-ranging coverage in media outlets across the state.

The Clean Water Rule

PennEnvironment worked to defend the Clean Water Rule from the Trump administration's attempts to repeal it. The Clean Water Rule alone is responsible for added protections to nearly 50,000 miles of Pennsylvania streams that would otherwise be vulnerable to increased pollution and encroaching development. Repealing it would mean more pollution in our water, putting our environment and health at risk.

PennEnvironment mobilized our statewide network of activists and concerned citizens, convincing more than 20,000 Pennsylvanians to sign on to our petition telling federal officials that it's simply wrong to vote against clean water.

We will continue to defend protections for America's water, our public lands and our climate as President Trump and his allies in Congress push to dismantle these laws.



Get the Lead Out

We've known for decades that lead carries health risks, especially for children. PennEnvironment has made it a top priority to uncover the threat of lead in the places where our children spend most of their waking hours: in our school buildings. This year, we made significant strides to expose dangerous lead in drinking water, and advocated for the solutions that will protect our health and get the lead out.



▲ State Rep. Karen Boback (right) worked closely with PennEnvironment Clean Water and Conservation Advocate Stephanie Wein (second from right) to craft H.B. 2025, a bill to get the lead out of school drinking water. At left, State Reps. Marguerite Quinn and Pat Harkins.



▲ Philadelphia leaders joined PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center Executive Director in launching a coalition to tackle lead contamination in Philadelphia schools.

Action to protect our health

After working with stakeholders in Philadelphia in 2016 to pass comprehensive municipal protections for lead in drinking water in schools, PennEnvironment worked to develop and implement similar safeguards statewide.

Momentum in Harrisburg

PennEnvironment staff were excited to announce the introduction of a bipartisan bill in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives that would set health-based standards for testing, reporting and repairing schools to address threats of lead in drinking water.

In just a few short months, the legislation has had incredible momentum. The spring of 2017 saw PennEnvironment host a news conference in the state Capitol with the legislation's chief sponsor, state Rep. Karen Boback, and a bipartisan group of legislators. Since that announcement, the list of legislative cosponsors has grown to nearly 75 representatives, within arm's reach of the number of votes needed to pass the full chamber. In fact, with legislative support for the proposal increasing, legislative leaders approved some of the testing and public reporting requirements called for in our legislation. Moving forward, we will continue to press for more action to protect all Pennsylvania kids from the threat of lead in schools' drinking water.

Task forces aim to get the lead out

After years of leading the charge in the effort to address the threat of lead in drinking water, PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center was excited and honored to be named to two new task forces created to help protect Pennsylvanians from lead contamination.

The first is a new statewide advisory committee created by the Pennsylvania General Assembly to address lead exposure and the hazards of lead poisoning in Pennsylvania; the second is a stakeholder task force convened by the School District of Philadelphia to help implement and oversee best practices for addressing lead paint in the city's public schools.

The statewide lead task force includes health experts, local officials, education advocates and others who have a stake in making sure we protect our children and families from lead—whether it comes from drinking water, paint or other sources. The task force is in charge of developing a comprehensive policy blueprint for elected officials to use in the General Assembly and at the local level to implement commonsense legislative solutions that can address the most pervasive lead threats.

The Philadelphia School District's advisory group includes teachers, parents, principals and school maintenance workers who are developing a “best practices” model for uncovering, repairing and cleaning crumbling lead paint in hundreds of buildings across the city.



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