

# Annual Report

A look back at our work together in fiscal year 2017





## From the director

**"I still believe a greener, healthier world is within our means and within our reach, one with clean air, clean water and clean energy for all. And I am quite confident that each campaign we launch, each action, each donation, each small victory, will bring us another step closer to the world we want to live in."**

*When it comes to our environment, are we winning or losing?*

Nearly five decades ago, guided by sound science and an awakened public, our country adopted a suite of protections for our air, our water and our most beloved wildlife and places—and in so doing elevated the priority our government gives to our health and the quality of our environment.

Today, we're breathing cleaner air and drinking cleaner water than we were 50 years ago. We find more bald eagles, grizzly bears and wolves in the wild. We're getting more of our energy from the sun and the wind, as you can see on page 4 of this report. Bolstered by strong local and state action, the programs we've helped put in place at the federal level are working.

Yet, as covered in this report, we know all too well that the Trump administration is rolling back these protections, neglecting clean air and water enforcement, and silencing environmental scientists. Congress is on the verge of allowing, for the first time, drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. We see the consequences of burning fossil fuels in the ever more destructive wildfires and hurricanes disrupting and often taking lives. We must do more.

In short, we face a grave environmental crisis, one that doesn't allow us the folly of losing ground due to the recklessly short-sighted priorities of those in power in Washington.

I still believe a greener, healthier world is within our means and within our reach, one with clean air, clean water and clean energy for all. And I am quite confident that each campaign we launch, each action, each donation, each small victory, will bring us another step closer to the world we want to live in.

So: Are we winning or losing? It's up to each of us to tip the balance.

For the past 10 years, I've had the privilege of serving as Environment America's executive director. As I look forward to standing with you in new ways in the years to come, I want to thank you for all we have done together and all you will continue to do.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Margie Alt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Margie Alt  
Executive Director



## From the president

***"In 2017, while mounting a vigorous response to anti-environment policies in Washington, we found other avenues to advancing a greener, healthier country."***

*When one door closes, we go out and find another.*

*In 2017, while mounting a vigorous response to anti-environment policies in Washington, we found other avenues to advancing a greener, healthier country.*

*Thanks to our energy team's work, dozens of college campuses are now considering how to get most, or even all, of the energy they need from clean, renewable sources; mayors from Atlanta to Los Angeles are making it easier for residents to go solar; and governors up and down the Atlantic Coast are being encouraged to harness more offshore wind energy.*

*Our clean air and water team not only defended the federal Clean Water Act, but also took action in schools, in the courts, and beyond. Due to the team's work, local officials are moving to get lead out of schoolchildren's drinking water, local activists are better equipped to protect and restore regional watersheds, and Exxon and other companies have agreed to remedy their violations of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act.*

*Our global warming team not only defended the federal Clean Power Plan, but also advanced local solutions and harnessed the power of green-minded investors. Their research and advocacy have strengthened and extended programs to cut carbon pollution in the Northeast and California. And, thanks to our partnership with Green Century Funds, interest in fossil fuel free investing is growing.*

*Our conservation team not only defended our national monuments and other public lands, but also organized new constituencies to protect wildlife. More than 200 chefs and restaurant owners have joined our Bee Friendly Food Alliance, raising awareness of threats to pollinators and sparking action against bee-killing pesticides.*

*So much of this was possible thanks to the leadership of Margie Alt, who was executive director of Environment America from 2007 to 2017, and played a critical role in the state PIRGs for the prior 25 years. Margie has moved on to her next venture, and we miss her. Yet we remain, as always, ready to find new paths to a greener, healthier future.*

Douglas H. Phelps  
President and Chairman of the Board



# Clean, Green & Renewable

In a greener, healthier world, we would 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. In the past year, we took concrete steps to move closer to the world we want to live in.



▲ Energy Program Director Rob Sargent visited Block Island, R.I., for the opening of America's first offshore wind farm.



▲ Clean Energy Advocate Michelle Kinman and Environment California led a 12-city tour to rally public support for renewable energy legislation.

# Renewable energy on the rise

Burning oil, gas and coal has polluted our air, water and land for decades, and it's changing our climate even faster than scientists feared. The good news is that renewable energy is growing faster than experts predicted. We can have healthier communities today and leave our children a cleaner, more livable tomorrow, but only if we turn our backs on the dirty technologies of the past and commit to a 100 percent renewable future.

## 100% Renewable

Last year, Environment America took concrete steps to bring us closer to the world we want to live in. Knowing we were facing strong headwinds in Washington, D.C., we built momentum for clean energy at the state and local level.

In California and Massachusetts, we campaigned for legislation that would put both those states on a path to 100 percent renewable energy. Spurred on by our research and local action, Atlanta committed to going 100 percent renewable by 2035.

In Washington, D.C., Sens. Jeff Merkley (Ore.), Ed Markey (Mass.), Bernie Sanders (Vt.) and Cory Booker (N.J.) introduced the “100 by ‘50 Act” into the U.S. Senate, with a House companion bill following a few months later. The bill would put in place a comprehensive plan to ramp up renewable energy and energy efficiency while halting the development of fossil fuel infrastructure, putting the United States on a path to achieve 100 percent renewable energy by 2050.

## Go Solar

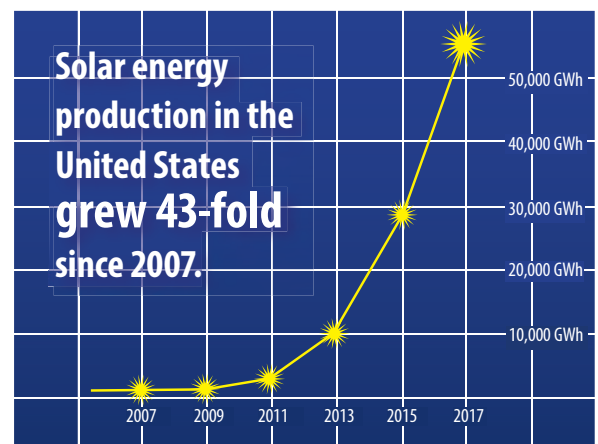
Every year, enough sunlight shines on America to provide 100 times more power than we need. Environment America's Shining Cities project campaigned for expanded solar energy in 50 key cities, including Las Cruces, N.M., and Tempe, Ariz.

We stood for pro-solar policies in the face of attacks by special interest groups who sought to undermine them. In Washington state, we won a major expansion and modernization of the state's solar incentive program, which offers homeowners and businesses rebates for producing solar energy. In June, the Nevada Legislature restored a rooftop solar incentive program after nearly a year and a half without it.

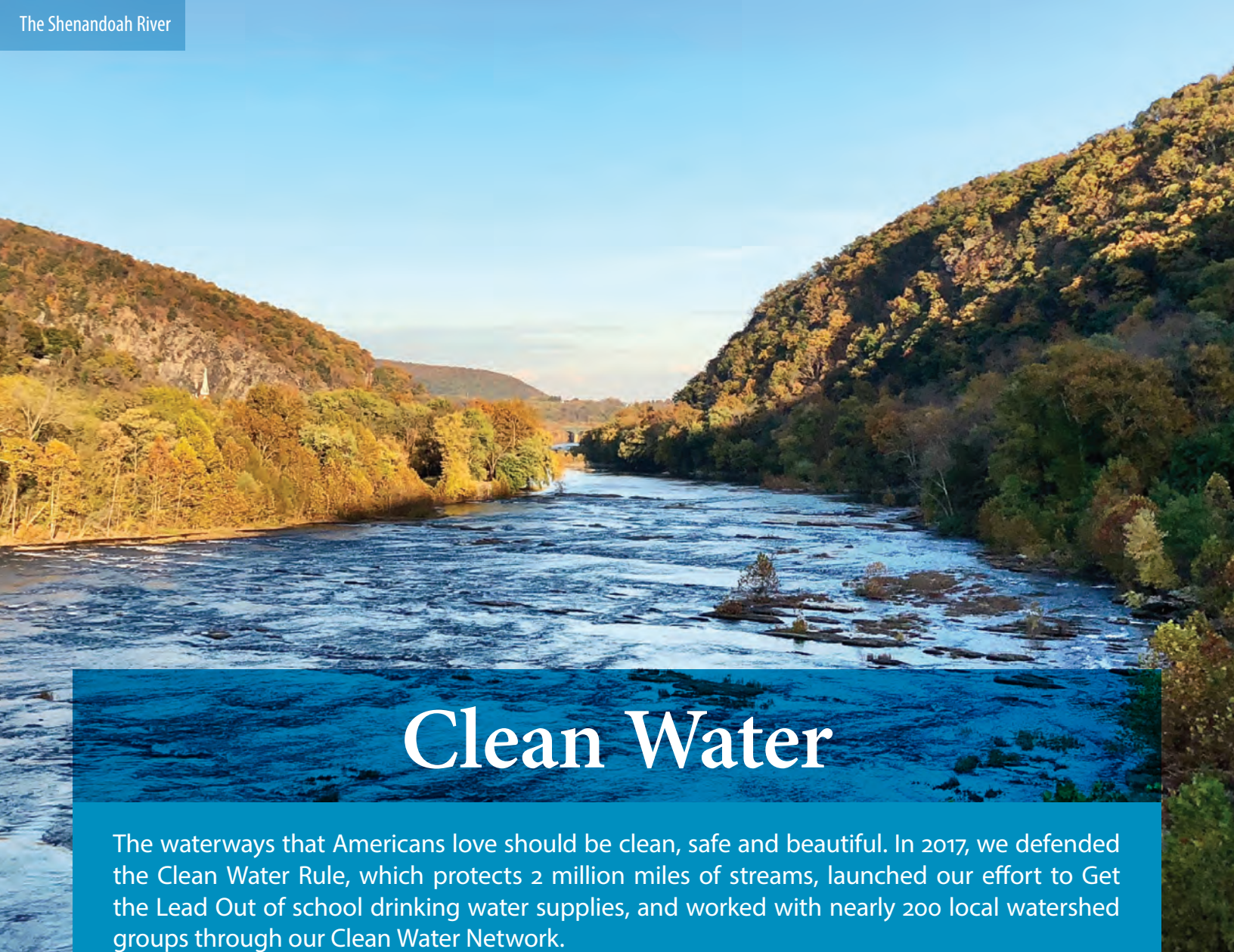
## Go Big on Offshore Wind

Once wind farms are in operation, the fuel is free: Nobody can charge you for the wind. The Atlantic coast is especially well-suited for wind power, with shallow waters and millions of people living close to shore. Atlantic winds could ultimately meet 40 percent of current energy needs.

Thanks in part to Environment America's research, advocacy and action, the nation's first offshore wind farm opened last year, three miles off the Rhode Island coast.







# Clean Water

The waterways that Americans love should be clean, safe and beautiful. In 2017, we defended the Clean Water Rule, which protects 2 million miles of streams, launched our effort to Get the Lead Out of school drinking water supplies, and worked with nearly 200 local watershed groups through our Clean Water Network.



▲ In March, Environment America Clean Water Program Director John Rumpler (middle) joined Jerry E. Hammons of Save the Illinois River (left) and other water advocates to meet with Environmental Protection Agency official Benita Best-Wong (right) in Washington, D.C., to raise concerns about proposals to weaken clean water protections.



▲ In February, Environment Washington Director Bruce Speight appeared on TVW testifying at the state Legislature on a bill addressing the problem of lead contamination in school drinking water.



# In defense of clean water

When President Trump moved to roll back protections for 2 million miles of streams that help provide drinking water for 117 million Americans, Environment America was ready to stand up for our waters. We mobilized immediately to push back against the repeal, rallying support across the country to defend the Clean Water Rule and other key environmental protections.

Our clean water team enlisted hundreds of business and political leaders to voice their support for the Clean Water Rule. Our state leaders submitted op-eds and letters to the editor to dozens of local papers, as well as national media outlets like The New York Times and CNBC.

“Clean water is vital to our ecology, our health and our quality of life,” said Environment America Clean Water Program Director John Rumpler. “Repealing the Clean Water Rule turns the mission of the EPA on its head.”

## Get the Lead Out

Four years ago, the tragedy in Flint, Mich., stunned the nation. We watched the drinking water of an entire city become contaminated with lead. And now we know this toxic threat extends well beyond Flint to communities across the country—including in our schools and preschools.

Last February, Environment America Research & Policy Center released “Get the Lead Out,” a report showing the alarming prevalence of lead contamination in school drinking water. The information available publicly is still very limited, but what we do know paints a grim picture: The report found evidence of lead contamination in schools across the nation, from New York to Texas.

## Clean Water Network

Every day, we hear stories of new threats to the waterways that are critical to our health and quality of life. That’s why Environment America Research & Policy Center and its affiliates around the country formed the Clean Water Network. The Clean Water Network (CWN) is a nationwide coalition of nearly 200 local clean water groups working to protect the waterways we love.

Last year, CWN member group Shenandoah Riverkeeper celebrated a victory protecting the Shenandoah from waste treatment plant pollution, and Western Reserve Land Conservancy doubled the Hach-Otis Sanctuary and State Nature Preserve in Ohio by preserving approximately 80.5 acres of land.

### Where do we need to get the lead out?



#### FLORIDA

At least **24** schools

#### GEORGIA

At least **25** Atlanta schools

#### ILLINOIS

At least **113** Chicago schools

#### MARYLAND

**All** Baltimore schools

#### MASSACHUSETTS

At least **20,000** school water outlets

#### NEW JERSEY

Schools in at least **three** counties

#### NEW YORK

**14 percent** of school water outlets

#### PENNSYLVANIA

Schools in **Philadelphia** and **Butler** Counties

#### TEXAS

At least **62** Dallas-Ft. Worth area schools

#### WISCONSIN

**183** school water fountains

#### WASHINGTON, D.C.

At least **64** schools





# Global Warming Solutions

We need to do all we can as fast as we can wherever we can to slow global warming. In 2017, we defended the Clean Power Plan, waged successful regional and local campaigns to reduce pollution from power plants and other sources, and encouraged investors to go fossil fuel free.



▲ Our affiliate PennEnvironment hosted a panel at Drexel University on *The Future of Climate Action* in 2017, featuring U.S. Sen. Bob Casey (right) and PennEnvironment Deputy Director Adam Garber (left).



▲ Research & Reports Director Susan Rakov led a team that produced nine reports on global warming-related issues.



## Defend the Clean Power Plan

On March 28, 2017, President Trump signed an executive order directing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to begin the process of repealing the Clean Power Plan, a set of measures that limit carbon pollution from dirty power plants. The plan is the strongest action to date taken by the United States to combat climate change.

We condemned the move as “sheer reckless folly,” and took steps to educate the public and our leaders about the damage the administration’s decision would cause, releasing hard-hitting research on the health risks of carbon pollution. Our members and supporters joined our call to keep the Clean Power Plan intact, and helped us deliver more than 23,000 petitions and public comments to the EPA in favor of upholding and strengthening the plan.

## Think Globally, Act Locally

Nine states in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic are leading the way with America’s most successful clean air and climate protection program: the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Since 2009, the program has cut dangerous pollution from power plants while generating billions in funding for clean energy programs. Environment America helped shape RGGI from the very beginning, and now we’re working to strengthen it, and ratchet down greenhouse gas emissions even faster.

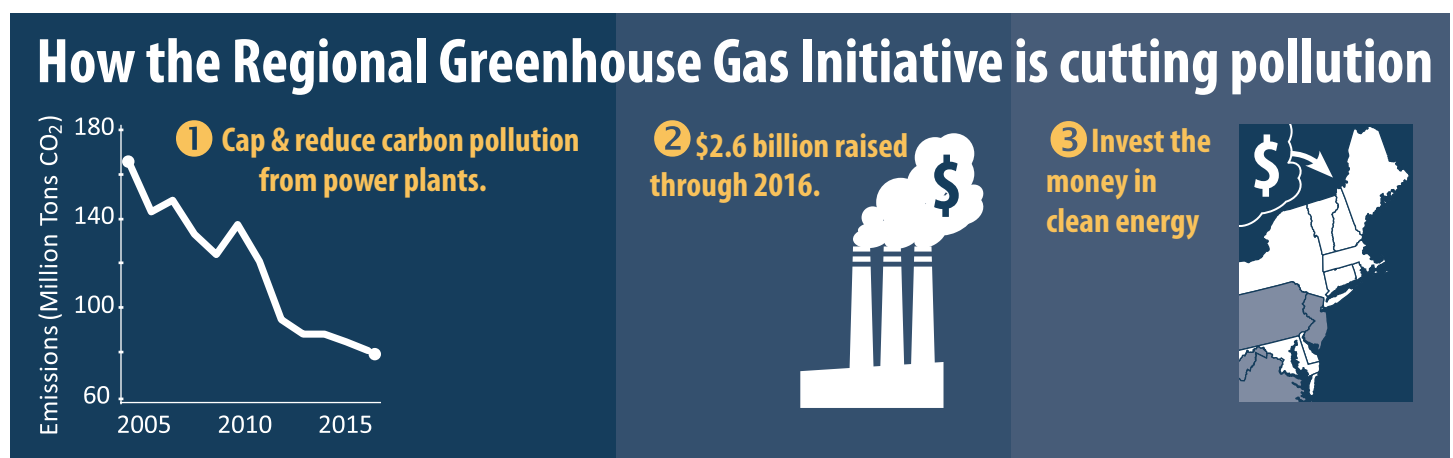
In March, Environment America Research & Policy Center released “Doubling Down on Climate Progress,” a report that found that RGGI’s clean air benefits have saved 600 lives over the past six years, prevented 9,000 asthma attacks, and averted 260,000 days of restricted activity—such as the inability to exercise outdoors—caused by poor air quality.

## Fossil Fuel Free Investing

Increasingly, environmentally minded investors are seeking to align their investments with their values. Offerings like Green Century Funds, which was founded by environmental advocacy groups affiliated with Environment America, provide a family of diversified, responsible, fossil fuel free mutual funds, allowing people to avoid industries that accelerate climate change and instead supporting companies helping to build a more sustainable economy.

Green Century also uses its leverage as a shareholder to push companies to improve environmental policies and practices. For example, our Forest Protection Campaign will keep at least 1.5 gigatons of carbon dioxide out of our air through the zero-deforestation commitments we’ve secured from companies such as Kellogg’s\* and ConAgra\*.

\*See page 13







# Defend Our Environment

For the past 50 years, America has enjoyed cleaner air, cleaner water and better protected public lands thanks to environmental laws and other protections. In 2017, as the Trump administration and new Congress sought to dismantle this legacy, we stood in defense of our environment.

## Defend the EPA

When President Trump proposed a budget that would slash Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funding by nearly one-third, Environment America launched a campaign to defend the agency from crippling budget cuts. We delivered over 14,000 petitions in support of the plan, educated citizens and leaders about the plan's importance to our climate and health, and backed our efforts up with hard-hitting research on carbon-cutting success stories and the health risks of carbon pollution.

## Defend the environment in court

When the government failed to enforce protections for air and water, Environment America and our partners at the National Environmental Law Center have stepped in to hold polluters accountable and take them to court when they break the law.

In Texas, a judge ordered ExxonMobil to pay a \$19.95 million settlement after we sued the company for thousands of Clean Air Act violations, and our lawyers are currently at work on a similar case against Pasadena Refining. In Florida, we sued Pilgrim's Pride, the world's second largest chicken producer, for polluting the Suwannee River. In Pennsylvania, we're taking on the world's largest steel company, ArcelorMittal, for showering Pittsburgh-area neighborhoods with emissions of soot, acidic gases and noxious odors. Over the last 30 years, our lawsuits have resulted in more than \$250 million in court-ordered penalties and pollution reduction actions.



*Top: National Environmental Law Center's Heather Govern (left) and Environment Florida's Jennifer Rubiello (middle) announced a lawsuit against Pilgrim's Pride.*



*Bottom: Environment New Mexico's Sanders Moore (center) was joined by U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich (right) in standing up for our environmental protections.*



# Conservation

Our national parks have been called America's "best idea." Along with our other public lands and waters, and the wildlife that depend on them, they are our birthright and our legacy to our children. In 2017, we organized the Bee Friendly Food Alliance, a new effort to protect bee species threatened by pesticides and climate change, and we took action in defense of our national monuments and oceans.

## Bee Friendly Food Alliance

Bees are dying off at an unsustainable rate, with alarming consequences for our environment and our food supply. In 2017, Environment America launched the Bee Friendly Food Alliance to provide chefs, restaurant owners and other leaders in the food industry with opportunities to take action to save the bees.

In June, more than 30 restaurants joined us for National Pollinator Week to educate customers, highlight the importance of bees through food and drink specials, and spread the word through social media.

## Defend National Monuments

When President Trump ordered a review of 27 of our national monuments, Environment America and our coalition partners helped deliver more than 2.8 million of your public comments to the Department of the Interior, calling on the president and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to preserve our monuments.

## Defend Ocean Wildlife

When companies use seismic blasting to search for offshore oil, it has a devastating impact on marine life. An Interior Department study found that seismic blasting could injure 138,000 marine mammals, and disrupt feeding, breeding and behavioral patterns of 13.6 million more. Environment America members and supporters flooded the Interior Department with thousands of petitions urging Secretary Zinke to deny all permits for seismic blasting in our oceans.



*Top: A honey bee feeds on a daisy.*

*Bottom: A North Atlantic Right Whale mother swims alongside her calf.*



Membership Services Office  
1543 Wazee St., Ste. 430  
Denver, CO 80202  
(303) 534-1783

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## Our staff (partial list)



**Margie Alt**  
Executive Director



**Doug Phelps**, Chairman,  
Board of Directors & President,  
The Public Interest Network



**Faye Park**  
Executive Vice President,  
The Public Interest Network



**Ed Johnson**  
Incoming President



**Rob Sargent**  
Director, Energy Program



**John Rumpler**  
Director, Clean Water Program



**Bret Fanshaw**  
Director, Go Solar Campaign



**Anna Aurillio**  
Director, Global Warming  
Program



**Susan Rakov**  
Director, Research & Reports



**Elizabeth Ridlington**  
Senior Policy Analyst



**Chuck Caldart**  
Litigation Director and Senior  
Attorney



**Pat Wood**  
Managing Director, Community  
Outreach



**Will Vanderbilt**  
Director, Digital



**Pat Kelly**  
Senior Digital Organizer



**Wendy Wendlandt**  
Political Director



**Rich Hannigan**  
Senior Communications  
Manager and Editorial Director



**Amy Floyd**  
Managing Director, Grants



**Johanna Neumann**  
Managing Director, Donor  
Program