

FY 2009 Annual Report





“Yet despite all the sound and fury ... we still stand on the threshold of significant change.”

**Margie Alt
Executive Director**

From the director

This year has been one of rising expectations and mounting challenges, yet as I write to you today, I'm pleased to say I'm excited by where we find ourselves.

We are closer than ever to a future where our power comes from the wind and the sun, not oil and coal; where our carbon footprint is small enough to sustain a healthy planet; and where our country's natural beauty and wonders are protected and preserved for future generations.

To help get to this point, the staff and members of the 28 state groups in our federation have worked together to achieve important steps forward. We've won local and regional limits on carbon and other forms of pollution, new investments in clean energy, new safeguards for national forests and parks, and much more.

To some extent, the opposition of entrenched powerful interests has tempered the hopes raised by the 2008 election. Yet we knew from day one that Barack Obama couldn't do it alone and he couldn't do it all. As he led the country toward major change, we knew there would be great resistance.

In 2009, this played out with the oil, coal and other industries spending millions of dollars to block some of the critical changes we seek. We're proud of the first-ever cap on global warming pollution passed by the U.S. House of Representatives, though the compromises necessary to win were a bit tough to swallow. Worse, the opposition prevented the U.S. Senate from even voting on a bill before international negotiations began in Copenhagen at the end of the year.

Yet despite all the sound and fury, all the money spent against us, and all of the aggressive lobbying on the other side, we still stand on the threshold of significant change. Building the cleaner, greener, healthier future we've dreamed of for so long will be neither easy nor quick. Real change never is.

We're ready to do our part, and I'm thankful that people like you are with us. Thanks for making it all possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Margie Alt".

From the chair

As I look back at our efforts this year to navigate an increasingly dynamic political, social and cultural environment, the basic elements of our approach remain steady. And, I'm happy to report, they're working.

Our approach is based on a few core convictions: Environmental progress comes one step at a time; lasting progress builds from the bottom up; and to win and sustain progress, we must build support beyond that of the traditional environmental "base."

Take, for example, President Obama's vision of a clean energy economy, which we're supporting on Capitol Hill and in state legislatures by mobilizing grassroots support across America.

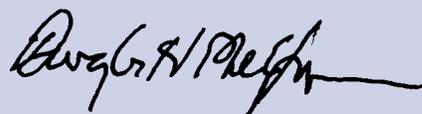
We believe a clean energy future will come sooner if we can win small, yet tangible victories along the way—new solar incentives in Colorado, a new green building program in Massachusetts, and so on. Each victory helps whittle down the seemingly intractable problem of our dependence on fossil fuels to a more manageable size.

We've found over the years that the states, America's "laboratories of democracy," are ideal venues for building the experience and support we need for these changes. Carbon caps are now in place at the state level, thanks in part to our advocacy in California, New Jersey and other states. Homes and businesses are being powered by wind and solar in dozens of states, due to new policies we've promoted.

This strategy paid enormous dividends when the president announced this year new auto emission standards—based in large part on similar rules we had helped to win in 14 states.

Winning these victories and others required support beyond that of like-minded environmentalists. Our advocates, organizers and canvassers reached out to the Ohio farmer concerned about a changing climate's effects on his land; the Maryland "waterman" struggling to preserve a way of life as pollution degrades Chesapeake Bay's shellfish beds; the mom in Wisconsin upset over the impact of a nearby factory farm on her family's drinking water.

Our step-by-step approach is helping to build a strong foundation for lasting environmental progress. Especially in these tough economic times, we're grateful for your support. We couldn't do it without you.



"Our step-by-step approach is helping to build a strong foundation for lasting environmental progress."

**Douglas Phelps
Chair of the Board**



Top left: Environment America's Emily Figdor with EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson at the White House for the announcement of strong new clean cars standards. Bottom left: the new clean car standards will reduce U.S. oil consumption by 1.8 billion gallons by 2016. Right: President Obama tours a solar facility in Florida.

Repower America: Two big steps toward a clean energy economy

What if our towns and cities were powered only by clean sources, like the sun and the wind? What if every new home, school and office built in America were a green building?

It's going to require big changes to put America on the path toward an environmentally and economically sustainable energy future. But, as we witnessed during the last year, the momentum behind innovative, green energy solutions is helping to finally deliver the change our country and our planet need so badly.

Obama's energy advances

Environment Colorado's Pam Kiely and Douglas Phelps, the chair of Environment America's board of directors, were on hand in Denver this February as President Obama signed an economic recovery plan into law that invests \$78.6 billion in clean energy, energy efficiency and green transportation—the single largest investment in renewable energy ever.

In the run-up to Congress' vote on the recovery package, our report "Clean Energy, Bright Future" made recommendations for rebuilding our economy through green infrastructure projects. At the same time, our organizers mobilized grassroots action to keep the bill clean and green. At a forum organized by PennEnvironment's Adam

Garber, 300 people turned out to meet with Rep. Joe Sestak. More than 100 people joined Luke Metzger and Environment Texas at a forum with Rep. Charlie Gonzalez. Another 100 attended a forum hosted by Dan Kohler and Wisconsin Environment.

In May, the White House announced a plan to dramatically cut our country's oil dependence from passenger cars and trucks. The president's plan mirrors the Clean Cars Program already adopted by 14 states with the help of our staff. The program promotes advanced-technology vehicles, and reduces our consumption of oil by 1.8 billion gallons by 2016.

Green buildings, advanced solar

What's next? As Congress debated a plan this year to boost clean energy while cutting carbon pollution, we helped make the case and organize public support for the strongest possible bill Congress could pass. Environment America staff organized support for state-level policies that demonstrate innovations that will reduce the amount of energy we use and make it possible to move beyond our dependence on oil, coal and other dirty fuels. Among the highlights:

- We released "Building a Better Future," a report examining how we can cut the amount of energy used in

P. 3 Photo credits: (clockwise from left) Staff, The White House,** Michael Byrne.*

P. 4 Photo credit: Z. Schnepf.*

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new buildings by half within 10 years and ultimately down to zero by 2030, all while more than paying back the upfront investment through energy savings.

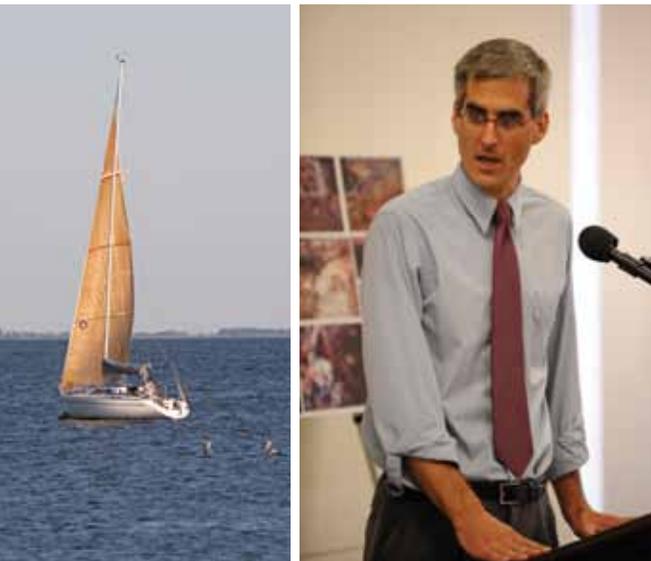
- Armed with the report, Environment America advocates, working with architects, consumer groups, utility companies and state and local officials, helped to convince decision-makers in Illinois, Maryland and Washington to improve building efficiency codes as much as 20 percent by 2012. And in California, Oregon and Massachusetts, we won commitments to have all new buildings use zero-net-energy by 2030.

- Environment California, Environment Colorado and Environment New Jersey helped to win strong new solar energy policies, including rebate programs to hasten the development of more solar power installations.

- In California, our efforts contributed to Gov. Schwarzenegger's decision to require that 33 percent of the state's power come from renewable energy by 2020.

- And in Colorado, Illinois and Maryland, our staff campaigned for —and won—policies to require electric and gas utilities to promote energy efficiency, through measures such as strong rebate programs for electric and gas customers that cut energy use.





Environment Maryland's Brad Heavner speaks at a town hall meeting that brought together hundreds of Marylanders to call for action to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.

Our Rivers, Lakes & Streams: A pivotal decision on the Chesapeake

From the blue crab to the bald eagle, thousands of species of wildlife have found a haven in and around the waters of the Chesapeake Bay. But decades of pollution—from farms, overdevelopment, roadways, sewage treatment plants and other sources—have degraded the health of the bay's waters.

Despite much effort, too little has been done to curb the sources of pollution most damaging to the Chesapeake Bay, including untreated animal waste from industrial livestock operations and runoff from sprawling development within the bay's watershed. That pollution contributes to a dead zone within the bay—an area in which oxygen is so depleted from the water that fish, shellfish and other wildlife cannot survive.

Public awareness of the threat to the Chesapeake is high and support for action is strong. Yet to date the response by local governments has often been too timid to solve the problem. Setting voluntary goals for agribusiness and developers to meet, with no meaningful threat of enforcement or penalty, has left our treasured bay on the brink of collapse. This year, we focused our attention on building support and making the case for action with real teeth and the potential to truly revive and restore this unique American waterway.

New hope for a Chesapeake cleanup

On May 12, President Obama issued an executive order directing the Environmental Protection Agency to create a new plan of action to restore the Chesapeake Bay to health.

Since his announcement, our advocates have been making the case for tough, enforceable limits on bay pollution. We've built and mobilized broad support from the public and key constituencies for strong action to restore its waters.

This summer, our field staff brought the issue to more than 30,000 doorsteps in Maryland and Virginia, working with our allies to collect 19,000 petition signatures to the EPA calling for stricter pollution rules. Local media reported on our work in more than 35 stories on the threats facing the Chesapeake Bay.

In August, Environment Maryland and Environment Virginia hosted a pair of town hall meetings that together had over 750 concerned citizens in attendance. The Annapolis event featured the EPA's special advisor on the bay, J. Charles Fox, who listened for hours to the 500 residents who came to urge him and the agency to take tough action.

P. 5 Photo credits: (From left) Lisa F. Young*, Staff.
P. 6 Photo credits: Robert H. Creigh.*

In September, we released a report documenting how the increase in pollution in the Chesapeake Bay contributed to the decline in oysters, soft shell clams, blue crabs, striped bass and other populations vital to the economy of the region. This decline has been deeply felt in coastal communities in Virginia and Maryland that depend on the fishing industry. “My great-grandfather, my grandfather, my father and myself, we all could make a living,” said retired Eastern Shore waterman Capt. Wade Murphy, one of the report’s subjects. “My boys can’t make a living . . . It’s a damn shame.”

Cracking down on pollution

On Sept. 10, the EPA issued its draft report, which included a first-ever roadmap for creating enforceable limits on pollution into the bay. That’s a major advance, but it’s just a beginning. We will continue to work to ensure that the EPA will adopt the strongest possible cleanup plan.

We also supported Sen. Ben Cardin (Maryland) in his plans to introduce a Chesapeake Bay bill in Congress, which would strengthen the EPA’s ability to deal with polluters and increase funding for restoration and enforcement.





After Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger announced a plan to cut funding for California's state parks, over 30,000 of Environment California's online supporters e-mailed him in protest. Pictured, clockwise from top left: Gov. Schwarzenegger; Environment California press conference at Sutter's Fort State Historic Park; Crystal Cove State Park; South Carlsbad State Beach.

Parks, Open Spaces, Wild Places: Help for the Grand Canyon

For their scenery, their wildlife, and the inspired idea that led to their creation, there is nothing so American as our national parks. The splendor of Yosemite Valley, the vastness of the Grand Canyon, and the simple tranquility of these protected natural places testify to this truth. It is our duty to pass on the natural wonders that were set aside for us, so that our children and theirs can experience the same places.

But we can fulfill that duty only if our parks are nurtured with the resources they require, and if they are protected from the many abuses that threaten them daily. This year, we worked to protect and preserve state and national parks across America. We made progress despite an economic climate in which many state governments were reluctant to invest in preserving our natural heritage.

Grand Canyon off-limits to new mining

With the rising price of gold, uranium and other minerals, mining companies have staked more than 8,000 claims within five miles of Grand Canyon National Park. Unfortunately, hardrock mining frequently involves chemicals like cyanide and sulfuric acid, which pose a looming pollution threat to the Canyon, its visitors and its wildlife—and to the Colorado River, a drinking water source for millions. Before leaving office in January 2009, the Bush administration rebuffed ef-

forts by Congress to stem this threat. As the Obama administration entered the White House, we continued to make the case for protecting the Grand Canyon.

On July 7, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced a two-year moratorium on new mining leases on more than 1 million acres of public lands around the Grand Canyon. We're pushing to make the protections permanent, and calling for reform of the nation's antiquated mining laws that fail to protect our national parks and waterways from toxic pollution.

California's parks on the line

In California, the state's staggering budget shortfall nearly led to a disastrous decision for state parks.

From the Anderson Redwoods to Moñtana de Oro to South Carlsbad State Beach, California's 278 state parks include some of the nation's most beautiful natural scenery. In addition, these parks are home to thousands of rare species, many of which cannot be found anywhere else in the world. Each year, the California state parks are visited by more than 77 million people from across the globe.

In 2008, Environment California beat back wrongheaded proposals to close 48 of these parks. But in 2009, faced with an enormous budget shortfall,

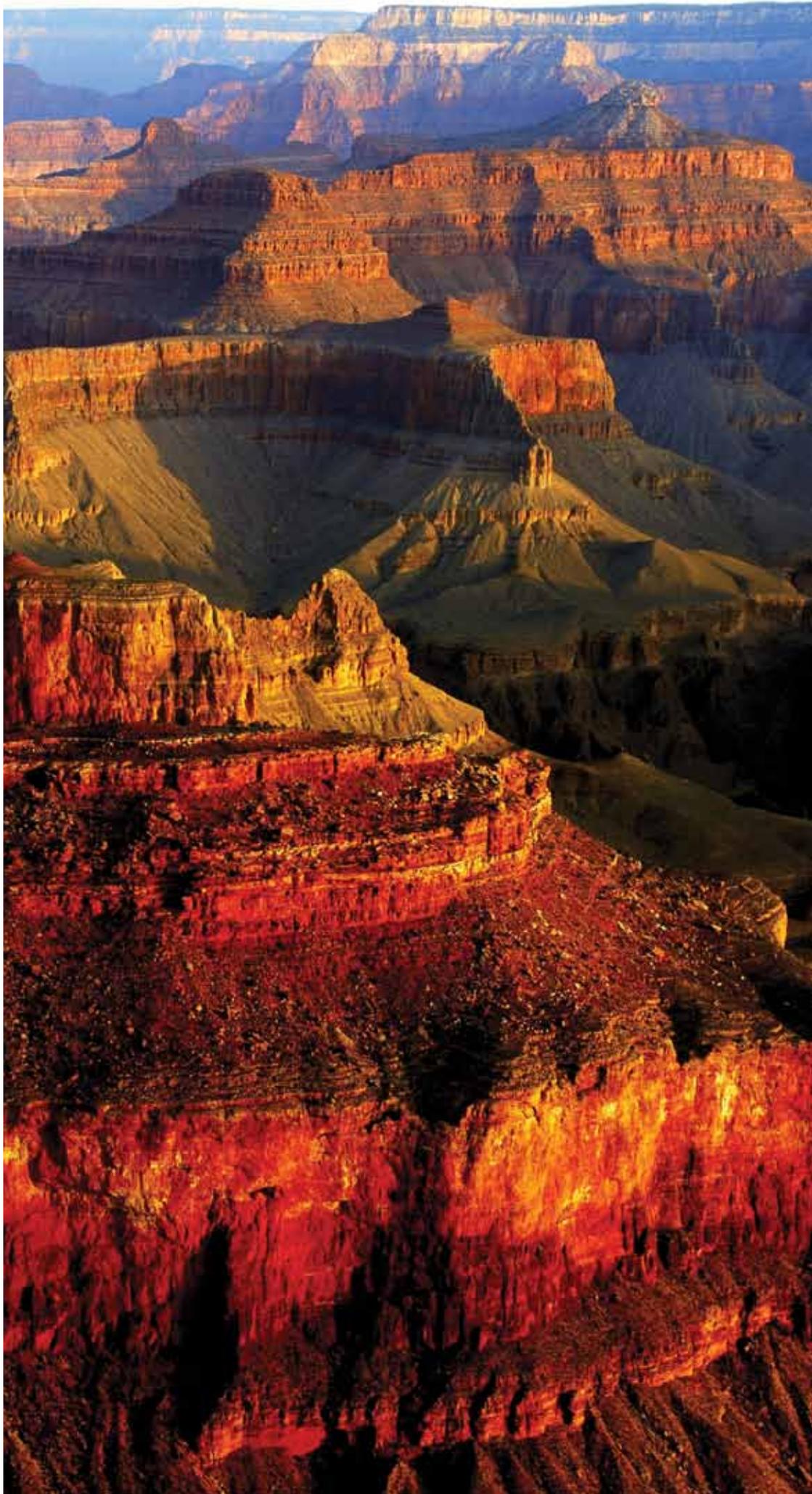
P. 7 Photo credits: (Clockwise from top) Thomas Hawk**, Staff, Automania**, Phil Gibbs**.
P. 8 Photo credit: Bryant Jayme*.

the Legislature again threatened to shutter some of the state's parks as a fiscal solution. The Schwarzenegger administration proposed an even more reckless option—cutting 100 percent of state parks' funding, a move that would have forced 200 parks to close.

Environment California sprung into action. We reached out to the media and alerted our 150,000 online supporters to the situation. We promoted research revealing that closing the state parks would cost the state more in revenue losses than it would save.

By August, the governor's office backed down to closing "only" 100 parks; we kept the pressure on. By early September, only 50 parks remained on the chopping block. On Sept. 25, the governor announced he would not close any state parks. Environment California's Dan Jacobson declared victory, but emphasized the fragility of the parks and their funding.

Moving forward, Environment California and our allies are working to create a permanent funding source for parks, removing these treasures from the whims and fluctuations of the state budget. Other states are watching anxiously, hoping the California experience will help us to protect state parks from budget cuts nationwide.





Top: Environment Minnesota staffers present Sen. Al Franken with constituents' postcards in support of the clean energy bill. Bottom left: Environment Maine staff rally in Portland. Bottom right: Environment California Legislative Director Dan Jacobson releases a report on solar energy with San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom.

Stopping Global Warming: Historic votes on Capitol Hill

Can we build a new economy powered by clean energy? Will we act boldly and quickly enough to reduce our carbon footprint and draw our planet back from the brink of a climate disaster?

Global warming is the challenge of our generation. Although our country has the technology and expertise to confront it, the real question is whether we have the political will. Our challenge is building the political demand for our leaders to take the action that's required, especially given the hold powerful oil and coal interests, and their ideological allies, have on Capitol Hill.

A different climate in Washington

Nonetheless, with the election of Barack Obama and the most pro-environment Congress in decades, hopes are high for a clean break from the delay and denial that characterized the Bush administration's approach to climate policy.

This past year, we outlined a vision for putting our country on the right track when it comes to energy and climate policy. We need to get 100 percent of our electricity from clean renewable sources; dramatically improve the efficiency of our homes and businesses; improve public transportation and reduce the pollution

from our cars and trucks; and cut global warming pollution at least 80 percent by 2050.

As reported on page 3, we hit the ground running with the new administration and Congress, developing and presenting recommendations for investing in clean energy and green transit—and helping to win approval of a \$78.6 billion investment in energy efficiency, renewable energy and green transportation projects as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The first steps in Congress

Also during the first months of 2009, the House of Representatives debated action to regulate global warming pollution with the American Clean Energy and Security Act, sponsored by Reps. Henry Waxman (Calif.) and Ed Markey (Mass.).

We focused our resources on keeping that bill as strong as possible. We built support among citizens and constituencies who could influence the undecided members of the House whose votes would be essential to the bill's passage.

Across America, our staff educated citizens and lawmakers on the consequences of inaction or further delay. Our research showed that lower

P.9 Photo credits: (Clockwise from top left) Staff.
P.10 Photo credits: Staff.

crop yields resulting from climate change could cost the 10 most vulnerable agricultural-producing states in America an average of \$116 million each year. We released our findings to the press in Indiana, Ohio, Iowa and other key agricultural states, and we were joined by the American Corn Growers Association, the Ohio Farmers Union and other partners. Before the final vote in the House, our research on climate issues was chronicled in nearly 400 print and online articles and television and radio spots across the country.

In addition, our staff gathered more than 120,000 petition signatures during one-on-one conversations with citizens in 20 states, and we encouraged another 30,000 citizens to take action on our Web site. Thousands of Environment America supporters called the offices of their representatives to urge action as well.

In July, with a nail-biting seven-vote margin, the House voted to pass the energy and climate bill—an unprecedented advance.

Despite setbacks, historic progress

Still, the bill that passed was far from perfect. In order to secure the last votes to get to a majority large enough to pass it, the bill's sponsors made

compromises that benefit oil and coal companies, agribusiness and other interests at the expense of taxpayers and the environment.

Despite these compromises, we supported the bill and helped to pass it, believing that America, and the world, can't wait any longer to get started fighting global warming. While only a first step, this bill has the potential to begin transforming our energy systems.

Making full use of the Clean Air Act

With industry pressuring Congress to do less than what's necessary to combat global warming, and the prospects of a Senate bill still unclear, we also focused on the role the Environmental Protection Agency must play in enforcing rules requiring coal-fired plants, oil refineries and other smokestack industries to cut their global warming pollution. We helped lead the effort to block Alaska Sen. Lisa Murkowski's amendment to undermine the EPA's authority to regulate the largest, dirtiest sources of pollution in America and continue to make the case for strong enforcement of the Clean Air Act.



Making the case

On the heels of the House of Representatives' approval of a clean energy and climate bill in July, we shifted our focus to the debate unfolding in the Senate.

Building a clean energy economy isn't just a critical aspect of fighting global warming—it creates new jobs and can revitalize local economies.

Led by Environment America Political Director Ivan Frishberg, in September, 31 clean energy business owners, state legislators, county commissioners and other community leaders joined our staff in meetings in the offices of key members of the Senate. Participants came from Montana, Maine, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, North Dakota and Missouri. The group included Maine's state Senate majority leader, Phil Barlett, and Greg DeFisher, the president and CEO of Ohio's Freeman-Schwab Machinery, which recently converted its auto parts manufacturing business to produce solar components.

We've since released five reports on clean energy and global warming, which have earned coverage in more than 500 media outlets.

► *Above: Environment America Global Warming Program Director Emily Figdor, left, discusses the energy and global warming bill with Sen. Sherrod Brown (Ohio), right, and his staff during a meeting on Capitol Hill.*



Logging in Alaska's Tongass National Forest, where officials recently authorized destructive activities despite Secretary Vilsack's order.

National Forests: A temporary reprieve for our last wild forests

Every last acre of our national forests should be protected and preserved—for the beauty and enjoyment they offer us, the clean air and the clean water they supply to our communities, and the home they provide to a rich array of wildlife. That's why it's essential that we do our best to protect our remaining forests and wilderness areas—not only for ourselves, but for future generations.

Roadless protections thrown into doubt

In recent years, the battle over the fate of our national forests was waged around the Roadless Rule—the largest conservation initiative in American history. This rule extended protection to nearly 60 million acres of roadless, and therefore still wild, forests.

President Clinton enacted the rule as he left office, and in the ensuing eight years President Bush suspended it and then repealed it, opening the door for mining and timber companies to destroy our last wild forests. Since 2001, Environment America has worked as part of a broad coalition to restore these protections. During the presidential campaign, then-candidate Obama promised to restore protections to the still roadless areas of our national forests. However, soon after his inauguration, we learned that something was amiss.

Despite the new president's support for our forests, Bush-era officials at the Forest Service moved to approve plans for

logging, mining and other destructive activities in wild forests in Colorado, Idaho, Oregon and Alaska. In April, we documented our findings in our report, "Quietly Paving Paradise," and urged the administration to call a time-out on new plans that would endanger the forests.

Six weeks later, on May 28, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced a temporary halt on permits for destructive activities within the national forests. His sweeping directive protects millions of acres of the most pristine forests in America.

Permanent protections for our forests

Still, there is much work to be done. The halt is only temporary. And while Secretary Vilsack's order ostensibly covered 8.5 million acres of the Tongass National Forest, the largest temperate rainforest in the world, officials subsequently authorized some extractive activity. Moreover, the secretary did not include threatened Idaho national forests in his directive.

This summer we revived our efforts to get Congress to permanently protect our national forests. With our coalition partners, we generated enough support to gain the attention of Congress. In October, the National Forest Roadless Conservation Act was introduced with 152 House sponsors and 25 in the Senate. We'll continue to make the case and build support in the coming year.

P. 11 Photo credit: Alaska In Pictures.
P. 12 Photo credit: Donna Hoffman, Sierra Club.

Clean Air: In precedent-setting move, Shell agrees to clean up

For too long, a refinery and chemical plant operated by Shell Oil Company near Houston has violated clean air laws and threatened the health of the area's residents.

Shell's Deer Park facility is a 1,500-acre complex located on the Houston Ship Channel in Harris County, about 20 miles east of downtown Houston. It is one of the world's largest producers of petrochemicals and is the third largest source of air pollution in Harris County—already one of the most polluted in the country. At the Deer Park facility alone, Shell has violated the Clean Air Act more than 1,000 times since 2003, resulting in the release of 5 million pounds of air pollutants—including toxic chemicals and known carcinogens. Shell's reckless behavior has real consequences: A recent study by the University of Texas found elevated rates of leukemia in children living within two miles of the Houston Ship Channel.

According to the federal government, more than half of Texans live in areas where the air is unhealthy to breathe. Oil refineries and chemical plants contribute much of the pollution that creates Texas' smog problem, and emit large amounts of toxic chemicals—often illegally. According to the federal government, one in five oil refineries and chemical plants in Texas severely violated the Clean Air Act between July and

September 2004. These plants also endanger public health by exploiting loopholes that permit them to emit pollution accidentally without facing punishment.

Environment Texas decided to take action, joining the Sierra Club and the National Environmental Law Center in January 2008 to sue Shell to stop threatening public health with illegal air pollution.

A record settlement

On Apr. 23, 2009, Shell Oil Company agreed to settle our Clean Air Act lawsuit. The settlement requires dramatic air pollution reductions at Shell's Deer Park refinery and chemical plant, extensive plant upgrades and enhanced monitoring of air emissions. Going forward, Shell will be required to reduce accidental emissions by 80 percent, or roughly 750,000 pounds per year given the plant's current emissions levels.

In addition, Shell will pay a \$5.8 million civil penalty for its past violations. This is the largest penalty in a citizen environmental suit in Texas history. The entire penalty payment will be used to fund environmental, public health and education projects in the area, including a project to reduce diesel emissions from school buses and a project to install solar panels on schools in eastern Harris County.



Environment Texas' Luke Metzger announces a record settlement following a lawsuit against Shell Oil for clean air violations at its Deer Park refinery outside Houston.

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Environment America Staff (a partial list)



Margie Alt
Executive
Director



Anna Aurilio
Director,
Washington,
D.C. office



**Ivan
Frishberg**
Political Director



Rob Sargent
Energy Program
Director



**John
Rumpler**
Senior
Environmental
Attorney



**Michael
Gravitz**
Oceans Advocate



**Christy
Leavitt**
Field Director



Emily Figdor
Global Warming
Program Director



Paul Burns
New England
Regional Program
Director



Sean Garren
Clean Energy
Advocate



Alyssa Schuren
Development
Director

Environment America State Affiliate Staff (a partial list)



Dan Jacobson
Environment
California



**Bernadette
Del Chiaro**
Environment
California



Pam Kiely
Environment
Colorado



Chris Phelps
Environment
Connecticut



Adam Rivera
Environment
Florida



**Jennette
Gayer**
Environment
Georgia



Max Muller
Environment
Illinois



Brad Heavner
Environment
Maryland



Ben Wright
Environment
Massachusetts



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Environment
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Vinyard**
Environment
Michigan



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Jaborska**
Environment New
Jersey



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Ouzts**
Environment
North Carolina



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PennEnvironment



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Environment
Texas



J.R. Tolbert
Environment
Virginia



Dan Kohler
Wisconsin
Environment



Piper Crowell
New England
Field Organizer



Jake Horowitz
Western Field
Organizer



**LuCinda
Hohmann**
Midwest Field
Organizer