

## Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report

Thanks for making it all possible

# From the President

*As environmentalists, we wrestle with a conundrum: We need bold action on a short timeline ... with broad public support.*

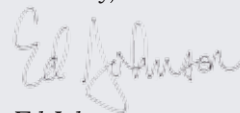
*We need to do a lot, quickly, to preserve a livable planet. But progress on the environment requires popular support—and that tends to grow and strengthen incrementally, as people experience positive change and see it in the world around them. As a result, progress usually comes incrementally too, one small-ish victory at a time.*

*At Environment America, we acknowledge the conundrum—and embrace it. We believe in bold action on a large scale. But we work every day at the local and state levels to build, step by step, the support that effective, long-lasting action demands—and then spread that support across the nation. Each college or city or state that deploys renewable energy helps win more people over to the possibility of a world that runs on the power of sun and wind. Each company or state that phases out a single-use plastic product shows more people a way to end the harm done to wildlife by plastic pollution.*

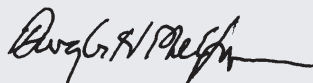
*These victories are smaller than the challenges demand. But as their pace picks up, their summary effect grows. A year ago, California became the second state to commit to 100 percent zero-carbon electricity. Now, there are six states with such commitments, plus Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. Back in 2016, California banned single-use plastic bags. In 2019, five more states banned plastic bags, and Maine and Maryland banned plastic foam take-out containers. Like all social changes, environmental solutions have tipping points.*

*Our natural world faces serious problems, and we've got to solve them. Our strategy is to make sure that each victory opens a door to the next. Thanks for being with us on the journey.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ed Johnson".

Ed Johnson  
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Phelps".

Doug Phelps  
Chairman, Board of Directors



# Clean Water & Air

Through our Clean Water & Air program, our staff and members tackled problems ranging from the Trump administration's attempts to roll back clean water standards, to industrial discharges that violate the Clean Water and Clean Air Acts. Below, you'll find reports on our Get the Lead Out campaign and our efforts to bolster investment in our nation's water infrastructure.

## **The grades are in: Report finds states are failing to ensure safe drinking water for our children**

**MARCH 21, 2019:** Lead contaminates the water coming out of drinking fountains and taps at schools across the country, and at least 22 states aren't doing enough about it.

"Get the Lead Out," a study published March 21 by our research partners Environment America Research & Policy Center and U.S. PIRG Education Fund, examined the policies of 31 states and Washington, D.C., and assigned grades based on how well they protect children from lead in drinking water at school. Twenty-two states earned an F grade with only Illinois and D.C. grading above the C range.

"Waiting for more tests to confirm that our children are drinking water laced with lead is unconscionable," said John Rumpler, senior director of our national network's clean water campaign. "It's time to get the lead out."

Our national network is working in more than a dozen states to protect drinking water for millions of children by advancing policies to proactively get the lead out.

## **Congress passes long overdue measures to protect our drinking water from lead, sewage**

**OCT. 23, 2018:** Victories for clean water are rare in Washington, D.C., these days, so this is one to savor.

In October, Congress passed—and the president signed—America's Water Infrastructure Act (S. 3021), which would double federal investment in safe drinking water, establish a small grant program for schools to address lead contamination, and expand monitoring of contaminants such as per- or polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Our national network's advocates—and environmental champions such as Sen. Ben Cardin (Md.) and Rep. Paul Tonko (N.Y.)—shaped the legislation and ensured it contained the solutions we need.

"In 21st-century America, we should be able to keep lead and other toxins out of our drinking water, and sewage out of our rivers, lakes and bays," said John. "These provisions are long overdue."



*John Rumpler, senior director of our national network's Clean Water campaign, spoke to CBS This Morning about states' failure to protect school drinking water from lead contamination.*



*Above: Rob Sargent toured the nation's first offshore wind farm at Block Island, R.I. (upper left). Below: Our national network campaigned for 100% renewable energy across the country, from California (left) to Florida (right).*





# Clean, Green & Renewable Energy

With support from Environment America's members, our national network promoted energy efficiency in our homes, educated city leaders about solar, and fostered the development of wind power. Here are updates on our network's 100% Renewable Energy campaign and our research arm's "Shining Cities" report.

## Six states are now committed to 100% clean energy

**JULY 1, 2019:** In 2018, only one state had committed to 100 percent clean energy. Six months ago, there were two. Now there are six.

In June, Maine and New York became the latest states to pass laws committing to 100 percent zero-carbon electricity, joining Hawaii (2015), California (2018), New Mexico (March) and Washington state (May). Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., have made similar commitments.

"Within less than a year, four states have said, 'If California can do it, so can we,'" said Rob Sargent, director of our national network's 100% Renewable Energy campaign. "We're urging decision-makers across the country to join the 100 percent renewable movement and put the United States back on the world map as a climate leader."

Our network helped win the laws in California, New Mexico, Washington and Maine. We're also advocating for 100 percent renewable energy laws in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Florida, Michigan, Illinois and Minnesota.

## Solar power is growing fast. These cities are shining the brightest.

**APRIL 9, 2019:** Solar power is booming in dozens of major American cities.

"Shining Cities 2019," researched by Environment America Research & Policy Center and released on April 9, found that solar energy capacity more than doubled in 45 of America's 57 largest cities in the past six years. The report's main event? The latest ranking of America's top solar cities. Los Angeles topped the list for the second year in a row, and San Diego, Phoenix, Honolulu and San Jose rounded out the top five.

"Cities are rapidly adopting solar energy and driving the renewable energy transition across the country, bringing pollution-free power to our homes, schools and workplaces," said Emma Searson, director of our national network's Go Solar campaign.

The report also found that solar is not just a Sun Belt phenomenon. Other leading cities include New York City; Indianapolis; Washington, D.C.; Trenton, New Jersey; and Ypsilanti, Michigan.



*Our national network's staff joins Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham (center) for the signing of legislation committing New Mexico to 100% carbon-free energy by 2045.*





*Leaders of our national network's canvass team met in Baltimore before spreading across the country to build public support for putting wildlife over waste by banning single-use plastics (top).*





# Conservation

Our network's staff and members sought to save the bees from toxic pesticides, and to spare Arctic wildlife from oil and gas exploration and drilling. Below, find more on our national network's efforts to protect wildlife from plastic pollution and revive the country's best conservation and recreation program.

## Six states in six months choose Wildlife Over Waste

**JULY 2, 2019:** In the first half of 2019 alone, six states took strong action to rein in plastic pollution.

New York, Maine, Vermont, Connecticut and Oregon all banned single-use plastic bags, joining California, which banned them in 2016. Maine also became the first state to ban single-use polystyrene foam containers, and Maryland became the second a month later. Bags and polystyrene are seldom recycled. Instead, they often end up in our rivers and oceans, where they never fully degrade and pose a threat to wildlife for years to come.

"Our Wildlife Over Waste campaign is based on the principle that nothing we use for a few minutes should pollute our environment for centuries," said Steve Blackledge, senior director of our national network's Conservation program. "When we started this year, it was only California. Now it's a movement."

Our network's staff were instrumental in winning the California ban, and campaigned for the laws in Maine, Connecticut, Oregon and Maryland.

## More than 123,000 join the call to save the bees

**JULY 26, 2019:** Wherever you go, you're likely to find people who have heard about the decline in bee populations and are willing to do something about it.

That was our experience this summer, as our national network sent canvassers across the country to knock on doors, write letters and meet with lawmakers in support of restrictions on the class of pesticides called neonicotinoids (or neonics), which are known to kill bees. Their message resonated. As of this writing, more than 123,000 people have sent messages to governors and state legislators calling for action.

"If we want to save the bees, one of the first things we need to do is stop using the pesticides that are killing them," Steve said.

Decision-makers took notice, from Idaho, where the governor's office requested a meeting with Steve, to Texas, where the state Parks and Wildlife Department agreed to stop using neonics in state parks.





Above: Staff from our national research partner Environment America Research & Policy Center, along with their allies, delivered 350,000 public comments in support of federal Clean Car standards to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Below: Andrea McGimsey and Environment America Research & Policy Center staff hosted a tour of an electric bus facility (upper middle and bottom right).





# Global Warming Solutions

Environment America worked with state groups in our network to reduce carbon emissions from power plants, transportation and other sources. Here's more on what our network did to promote state-level action across the country and defend strong pollution standards for cars and trucks.

## **Fourteen governors, from both parties, made climate progress in first six months of 2019**

**JULY 2, 2018:** The first half of 2019 saw encouraging climate progress on the state level. In January, we released a report by our national research partner, Environment America Research & Policy Center, outlining 12 ways that governors can address the climate crisis. As of July 2, 14 governors had taken at least one of the actions we recommended. Colorado Gov. Jared Polis took action in the most categories, followed by Maine Gov. Janet Mills and New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

"More Americans understand that climate change is an existential issue," said Andrea McGimsey, senior director of our national network's Global Warming Solutions campaign. "It's encouraging to see Republican and Democratic governors from coast to coast listening to their constituents and taking action."

These actions included Gov. Polis' executive order supporting Colorado's transition to zero-emission vehicles and a slate of bills signed by Gov. Mills that will update Maine's climate action plan and put the state on a path to 100 percent renewable energy.

## **Wrong way for the climate: 350,000 oppose rollback of Clean Cars Standards**

**OCT. 26, 2018:** Given the alarming ways our climate is changing, doesn't it make sense for automakers to focus on making cars that pollute far less, if at all?

On Oct. 26, our network's national research partner showed the Trump administration that 350,000 Americans think so. Together with coalition partners, Environment America Research & Policy Center delivered that many public comments to the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration opposing plans to roll back federal Clean Car Standards. By freezing the standards at 2020 levels, the plan would lock in more dirty air and global warming pollution.

"With the latest research telling us we'll have a climate catastrophe on our hands if we don't significantly slash global warming emissions, we need to move forward, not pull a U-turn," said Andrea.

Our network is also calling on state leaders to promote zero-emission electric vehicles.

**It's encouraging to see Republican and Democratic governors from coast to coast listening to their constituents and taking action.**

*Andrea McGimsey  
Senior Director, Global Warming  
Solutions campaign*





Our national network's staff rallied in Tallahassee, Fla., to oppose offshore drilling (row 2, left). At the Western Governors' Association annual meeting in Vail, Colo., staff and volunteers from our network urged the event's keynote speaker Interior Secretary David Bernhardt to support permanent funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, America's best conservation and recreation program (row 3, middle).





# Environmental Defense

As we work to move closer to the cleaner and green world we want to live in, it's vital that we don't lose the progress we've already made. Our staff and members stood up against attempts by President Trump and his allies in Congress to dismantle protections for wildlife, our public lands and more.

## **Coalition delivers 800,000 public comments to save the Endangered Species Act**

**SEPT. 4, 2018:** Hundreds of thousands of Americans sent a resounding message in support of one of our nation's most effective conservation laws.

On Sept. 4, Environment America joined a broad coalition in submitting 800,000 public comments on the Trump administration's proposal to weaken the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The proposed change would make it easier to take protected status away from vulnerable species, and harder to protect the habitat they depend on to survive. Our staff used social media to keep the spotlight on the ESA, gathered comments from our members and supporters, and enlisted the help of Chicago's Brookfield Zoo to build awareness and generate more action and support.

"We live in a world of excess, but we're rapidly losing nature, including healthy habitats and their rich tapestry of species," said Steve Blackledge, senior director of our Conservation program. "Weakening this vital conservation tool is simply the wrong choice."

Since the ESA was adopted in 1973, more than 99 percent of protected species have survived or thrived.

## **Bill backed to halt the rush to drill in the Arctic**

**FEB. 11, 2019:** Environment America is backing legislation to restore protections to the heart of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. On Feb. 11, U.S. Rep. Jared Huffman (Calif.) announced he will introduce the Arctic Cultural and Coastal Plain Protection Act, which would prohibit oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The prohibition was removed by a provision tacked on to the tax bill passed by Congress in 2017, setting off a rush to test and drill for oil on once-pristine Arctic land.

"Drilling in the Arctic Refuge would likely displace the porcupine caribou herd from their prime calving grounds and disrupt nesting grounds for dozens of species of migratory birds who flock there from every U.S. state and six continents," said Erik Dumont, public lands advocate for our national network.

"Even just doing seismic testing would likely cause irreparable harm to our iconic polar bears. Rep. Huffman's bill provides hope that we can prevent this catastrophic outcome."



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