



Your Winter Report

Clean water blocked across the country

Court suspends protections we helped win

For more than a decade, loopholes in the Clean Water Act left streams that flow into many of the waterways we love and rely on in New Mexico and across the country vulnerable to pollution.

More than 800,000 of you took action with Environment New Mexico and our partners to close these loopholes in the Clean Water Act—and President Obama's Clean Water Rule, released in August, did just that, restoring protections to 2 million miles of streams and the drinking water sources for 1 in 3 Americans.

But now, the historic clean water protections that you helped win have been suspended nationwide, and could be overturned, due to lawsuits brought by polluters, and with the support of more than 20 attorneys general across the country.

Polluters attack rule in court

Within hours of the Clean Water Rule's September release, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was hit with a flood of lawsuits from giant corporate polluters, who were joined within weeks by the New Mexico Environment Department, and 20 other states' attorneys general. In October, a U.S. Appeals Court suspended the rule nationwide, and may vote to overturn it.

"For more than a decade, the courts left thousands of our streams and wetlands in a precarious legal limbo, vulnerable to pollution and development," said Sanders Moore, Environment New Mexico director. "Now they've done it again."

Your support helps us respond

We can't allow our country to go back-



Credit: Staff

▲ Clean water supporters turned out to a kayaking event to raise awareness about the threats facing our favorite waterways.

wards on clean water. So in 2016, we're doubling down on our efforts to protect this critical rule.

With you behind us, Environment New Mexico will urge attorneys general to intervene on the right side of the litigation. We're also organizing legal scholars to speak up about the legal soundness of

the Clean Water Rule. At the same time, we're keeping the pressure on our leaders in Congress to beat back polluters' attempts to pass legislation weakening the rule.

Most importantly, you're helping us keep the debate focused on what this issue is really about: clean water for our families.



NASA Earth Observatory

take action

We need your help to move forward on clean water. Take action online to urge our attorneys general to stand up for the Clean Water Rule:

www.EnvironmentNewMexico.org.

◀ Algae blooms, like this one on Lake Erie, are worsened by runoff pollution in streams.



Credit: Staff

You make the difference

As a member of Environment New Mexico, you're helping us win tangible results for our environment. We all want the next generation to be able to enjoy the same great parks we treasure, clean air and water, and a safer world free from the threats of global warming.

That's why in the face of discouraging setbacks in Washington, or opposition from powerful special interests, I'm counting on members like you, who share these values, to stand with us as we work for a greener future.

The advances we make for our environment are shaped by people like you who translate their hope for a better future into action and advocacy. So, even though at times the road feels riddled with obstacles, I feel hopeful. Together, we're making strides on global warming, clean water and protecting the places we love by building people power and amplifying the call on our elected officials to be champions for our environment.

Thanks for standing with us.

Sanders Moore
Director

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Recent action

Fighting to restore critical conservation funding

Environment New Mexico has worked tirelessly to get Congress to reauthorize and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), a crucial fund that protects public lands for future generations. It expired at the end of September due to inaction by Congress.

New Mexico has benefited significantly from the LWCF, which has supported our parks and outdoor industry, and helped bring \$261 million in revenue to the state. Projects that have benefited include Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Tent Rocks National Monument, and the Gila and Santa Fe National Forests.

Environment New Mexico worked with the Bernalillo County Commission to unanimously pass a resolution, gathered elected officials' signatures on a letter to Congress, and generated opinion pieces in papers across the state in support of the LWCF. We will continue to fight for this great program.

How we're defending the Clean Power Plan

Across the country, you've shared with us the effects you've felt from global warming—from record-breaking wildfires to increasingly severe storms. And this fall, your support helped Environment New Mexico continue our work to ensure the success of President Obama's Clean Power Plan, which sets the first-ever limits on America's largest source of global warming pollution—dirty power plants.

The Clean Power Plan is not only crucial to America's ability to effectively solve global warming, but also sets a precedent for other world leaders to do their part to address this urgent challenge. Unfortunately, the fossil fuel industry and their allies in Washington are determined to block this meaningful action.

Members like you are playing a key role in demonstrating widespread public support for the Clean Power Plan, calling on our representatives in Congress to stand up for this crucial measure, and supporting our work at the state level to ensure strong policies are in place to implement it.



▲ Members from our door-to-door outreach team held a "Beat the Heat" rally to demonstrate public support for the Clean Power Plan.

Credit: Elliott Foust, Wefoust Photo

Solar's shining success in 2014

Who's standing in the way of you going solar?

Credit: Elena Elisseeva/Shutterstock

Solar energy is booming across the country. In just the last three years, America's solar photovoltaic capacity tripled, largely driven by just 10 states, including New Mexico, according to recent research by Environment New Mexico Research & Policy Center.

Yet, as solar grows and generates increasing amounts of clean energy at increasingly affordable prices, electric utilities, fossil fuel interests and powerful industry front groups have begun chipping away at the key policies that have put solar energy on the map in the United States—often in the face of strong objections from a supportive public.

Leading states have strong policies

Environment New Mexico Research & Policy Center's annual report "Lighting the Way," released for the third time in September, found that solar's recent and growing success is due not to the nation's solar potential but rather to policies that have allowed increasing numbers of homeowners, businesses, communities and utilities to "go solar."

New Mexico and the other leading nine states all have renewable energy requirements, and most have laws that allow solar customers to connect to the electricity grid, or earn credit for excess electricity sent back to the grid. These 10 states are responsible for 86 percent of today's solar electricity capacity per capita. While New Mexico ranked in the top 10 for solar electric capacity installed in 2014, for the first time in our reports the state fell out of the top 10 for total installed solar in the state.

Special interests stand in the way

The continued success of solar power has been threatened by recent attacks on key solar policies. Environment New Mexico Research & Policy Center's report, "Blocking the Sun," released in October, documented 12 fossil-fuel-backed groups and electric utilities that are running some of the most aggressive campaigns to slow the growth of solar energy in the United States.

Here in New Mexico, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) has given the fossil fuel and utility industry direct access to lawmakers. During the 2011, 2013 and 2015 legislative sessions, conservative sponsors introduced a bill that modeled ALEC's "Electricity Freedom Act"—legislation designed to repeal renewable energy standards (RES) in New Mexico. Though similar legislation was introduced in 18 additional states—and even proved successful in a few—the popularity of RES legislation in New Mexico prevented the success of this regressive bill every single year.

"By wide margins, New Mexicans support pro-solar policies," said Carly Poremba, Environment New Mexico Research & Policy Center solar organizer. "That's why fossil fuel interests and their front groups have resorted to shady and deceptive tactics to undermine them. Ultimately, it's up to state leaders to reject these attacks and support a clean energy future."

Our research recommends that New Mexico's decision-makers resist utility and fossil fuel industry influence by rejecting policies that place restrictions or tariffs on solar or rollback renewable electricity standards, and encourage solar energy's growth by continuing to embrace ambitious goals for solar energy and adopt policies that will help meet them.



Credit: Staff

Explore more online

▲ Environment New Mexico Research & Policy Center staff and allies release the "Lighting the Way" report.

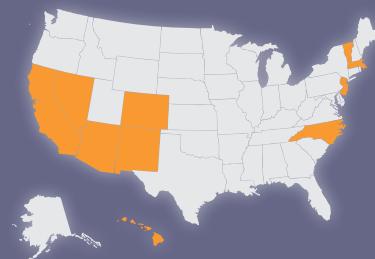
To read our research on solar, visit:
www.EnvironmentNewMexicoCenter.org.



Solar power offset 27.5 million metric tons of carbon dioxide pollution—the equivalent to the annual pollution from 6 million vehicles.



One third of the United States' new installed electric capacity came from solar power.



Just 10 states accounted for 86 percent of U.S. solar electricity capacity.



New Mexico ranked #6 in the nation for electricity capacity from solar.*

*Cumulative Solar Electricity Capacity per Capita 2014 (watts/person)
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Environment New Mexico

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 New Mexico, Inc., a project of Environment America, Inc. We focus on protecting New Mexico's 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.

Credit: Staff

How you can help save the bees

Millions of bees are dying off with alarming consequences for our environment and our food supply. We rely on bees to pollinate major crops, from almonds to strawberries to the alfalfa used to feed dairy cows.

This fall, you helped Environment New Mexico launch our grassroots efforts to protect our pollinators from this threat, making it possible for us to canvass on the street and go door-to-door to educate people about what's at stake. Scientists point to several causes behind the die-off, including a class of pesticides known as neonicotinoids, which are toxic to bees. We need your continued help to convince the Environmental Protection Agency to declare a moratorium on bee-killing pesticides.

Please go to www.EnvironmentNewMexico.org to learn more about how you can keep up the fight with us in 2016.



No bees, no food?

*Support our efforts to save the bees.
Donate online at:
www.EnvironmentNewMexico.org.*

◀ Supporters of all ages joined our call to save the bees.