



Your Fall Report

Protecting our shared air, water and climate

Together, we're defending the places we love

Most Americans want more, not fewer, protections for the people and places we love. After all, we all breathe the same air, drink the same water, and love the same mountains, rivers and forests.

This summer, people across the country joined Environment Texas and our national network to save our environmental protections from rollbacks.

We spoke with more than 1 million people at their doorsteps, and together, we flooded our senators with more than 350,000 petitions, phone calls and emails, urging them to stand up for our environment.

You stood up against rollbacks

After the president announced he would withdraw the United States from the Paris climate agreement, governors, mayors, business leaders and citizens across the country replied, "We're still in." Twelve states and nearly 300 cities have pledged to uphold the Paris agreement—and more are joining every day.

In June, Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt proposed the repeal of the Clean Water Rule, which our members helped us win back in 2015. Environment Texas and our allies gathered more than 800,000 comments and united more than 1,000 farmers, business owners and elected officials to help restore federal protections to half our nation's streams, and we're doing the same to protect them now.

And after the president ordered a review of 27 of our national monuments to determine if they could be stripped of their protected status, Environment Texas and our members



▲ This summer, our members helped Environment Texas and our allies deliver more than 2.7 million public comments to the Department of the Interior to protect our national monuments.

took action. We joined coalition partners to deliver more than 2.7 million comments calling on the Department of the Interior to save our monuments, from Bears Ears to Giant Sequoia.

Drawing a green line of defense

In May, the U.S. Senate successfully blocked an attempt to roll back an Obama-era rule

that limited methane emissions from oil and gas wells in a close 51-49 vote. It was a good indicator that strong public support for our environment can, in fact, win the day. With your support and action, we're working to build a green line of defense in the Senate, where 51 votes will be enough to keep our environmental protections in place.



Credit: Suzannah Hoover Photography

take action

Take action online to urge our senators to stand up for the people and places we love in Texas at:

www.EnvironmentTexas.org

◀ Our national citizen outreach team spoke with more than 1 million people this summer, asking them to take action to defend our environment and our health.



Credit: Staff

You make the difference

I spoke with a lot of people this past summer who shared my concerns about the threats facing our environment. We're all worried. But together, I'm confident we can hold the line against the worst setbacks in Washington, D.C., and even make progress on tackling climate change, transitioning to clean, renewable energy, protecting our drinking water, and more.

Since our last update, we joined our national network to speak with more than 1 million folks across the country to unite them in defense of our environment. And they took action, helping us deliver more than 350,000 petitions calling on our senators to stand up for our air, water, climate and health.

We couldn't have done it without you. As a member of Environment Texas, you're helping us win real results for our environment, and build a cleaner, greener future for kids growing up today.

Thanks for standing with us,

Luke Metzger
Director



Toward a greener future

Environment Texas and Environment Texas Research & Policy Center gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities to support our work to build a cleaner, greener, healthier future.

For more information, call 1-800-841-7299 x310 or send an email to: PlannedGiving@EnvironmentTexas.org.

Photo: NPS

Your Impact

Runoff in our streets, pollution in our waters

Stormwater runoff has become one of the top causes of water pollution in Texas. According to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, 431 miles of streams are polluted by urban runoff. Dirty stormwater is threatening some of our most iconic waterways, including Galveston Bay, Lady Bird Lake, and the Trinity and San Antonio rivers.

In order to cut runoff pollution, Texas cities have begun to use rainwater retention features such as green roofs, rain gardens, permeable pavement and rain cisterns. Known as Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) and Low Impact Development (LID), these features can cut runoff by catching rain where it falls.

With the support of our members, Environment Texas recently persuaded Austin to adopt a resolution supporting the increased use of GSI/LID. We're now working to win similar commitments in Houston, Dallas, Fort Worth, and San Antonio. Texas will keep growing, but together, we can make our new growth as green as possible.

You're standing up to save the bees

Millions of bees are dying off, with alarming consequences for our environment and our food supply. That's why, with your support, Environment Texas is going all out to ban the pesticides that are harming bees and other pollinators. After all, it's bees, not pesticides, that make our farms and food possible.

This year, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced it would conduct a risk assessment of four types of neonicotinoids, a widely used class of bee-killing pesticides, and opened a 60-day public comment period. Our members leapt at the opportunity to save our pollinators, and by the end of July, Environment Texas and our coalition partners delivered more than 164,000 comments urging the EPA to declare a moratorium on bee-killing pesticides.

We also held bee-friendly BBQ and picnic events over the summer to highlight the many foods we enjoy that depend on bees for pollination—everything from strawberries and watermelons to the alfalfa grown to feed dairy cows.



Credit: Joseita Harco

▲ Our members are making their voices heard at the Environmental Protection Agency by submitting tens of thousands of public comments calling for a moratorium on bee-killing pesticides.

Solar power surges in our cities

Solar power grew at a record-breaking pace in 2016. The United States now has 42 gigawatts of solar photovoltaic energy capacity, enough to power 8.3 million homes and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 52.3 million metric tons each year.

Hundreds of thousands of Americans have invested in their own solar panels or solar projects in their communities, and millions more are ready to join them.

In April, Environment Texas Research & Policy Center and Frontier Group released a new report, “Shining Cities 2017,” revealing the top U.S. cities for solar capacity, and explored how smart local policies are expanding solar power in America.

Cities are leading the way

America’s cities have played a key role in the clean energy revolution and stand to reap tremendous benefits from solar energy. As population centers, they are major sources of electricity demand and, with millions of rooftops suitable for solar panels, they have the potential to be major sources of clean energy as well.

By the end of 2016, just 20 cities accounted for nearly as much solar power as the entire country had installed at the end of 2010.

San Diego leads the nation in total installed solar capacity among the 66 cities surveyed, surpassing Los Angeles, which had been the national leader for the past three years. Honolulu rose from sixth place for total solar capacity in 2015 to third place by the end of 2016. Other top 20 cities for solar capacity include Indianapolis, New York, San Antonio, Denver, New Orleans, Portland, Ore., and Newark, N.J.

Untapped solar energy potential

Even the cities that have seen the greatest solar success still have vast amounts of untapped solar energy potential. According to National Renewable Energy Laboratory analysis, cities such as Los Angeles,

New York, Chicago and San Antonio have the technical potential to generate tens to hundreds of times more solar energy than they currently do.

To take advantage of that potential, city, state and federal governments should adopt a series of pro-solar policies, such as:

- Leading by example, and meeting 100 percent of government energy needs with renewable sources.
- Expanding access to solar energy through community solar programs.
- Adopting policies to make solar energy the default, such as requiring new construction projects to include solar energy systems.
- Expanding and protecting net metering, tax credits and other powerful incentives for customers to switch to solar power.
- Increasing investments in research, development and deployment programs designed to reduce the cost of solar energy.

To achieve the nation’s full solar potential, we need strong public policies at every level of government to promote solar energy adoption and protect the pro-solar policies already in place.



▲ Environment Texas members Pat and Dale Bulla installed solar panels on their home in Austin, Texas, to reduce their carbon footprint. They produce more electricity than they use, even while cooling their home during scorching Texas summers and charging their electric car.

Voices for
100%
RENEWABLE ENERGY



Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez

House of Representatives | New York

“A shift to 100% renewable energy can revitalize our communities, make us healthier, leave a livable future for our children and grandchildren, all while creating good jobs in the process.”



Jane Kleeb

Founder & President | Bold Alliance

“Rural America is ready for clean energy jobs that protect our land and water while fueling our economy. The power lies in our communities and urging our elected officials to stand with us as we transition to 100% clean energy.”



Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva

House of Representatives | Arizona

“To continue to depend on fossil fuels is to continue to endanger all life on this planet. This is not about politics—it’s about survival.”

To read more stories, visit:

www.100percentrenewable.org

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VOLUME 11 | NO. 2 | 2017

Environment Texas

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 Texas Citizen Lobby, Inc., a project of Environment America, Inc. We focus on protecting Texas' 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: Donna Hoffman, Sierra Club



Your support is bringing polluters to justice

Over the past 25 years, Environment Texas and our partners have found dozens of cases where companies have dumped illegal amounts of pollution into our air, rivers, bays and harbors.

In April, Environment Texas secured a \$19.95 million penalty against ExxonMobil after filing an environmental "citizen suit" against the oil giant for violating the Clean Air Act on more than 16,000 days at its Baytown, petrochemical complex. A federal judge found that Exxon had profited to the tune of \$14 million by delaying pollution control measures, and released more than 10 million pounds of illegal emissions into the air, including carcinogens and other toxic air pollutants.

Lawsuits filed by Environment Texas and its partners have resulted in more than \$250 million in court-ordered penalties and pollution reduction actions. And with the Trump administration giving a free pass to polluting industries, we're launching an Environmental Enforcement Initiative to hold polluters accountable. With support from our members, we'll continue taking illegal polluters to task when they break the law.

Support our efforts

**Support efforts to make polluters pay.
Donate online at:**

www.EnvironmentTexas.org

◀ We're working on active lawsuits in five states, including against Pasadena Refining Systems, Inc. for violations of the federal Clean Air Act at its Pasadena, Texas, refinery.