



2020 Program Agenda

No Bees, No Food

Millions of bees are dying off, with alarming consequences for our environment and our food supply. We rely on bees to pollinate everything from almonds to strawberries to the alfalfa used to feed dairy cows. What happens if the bees disappear? It's simple: No bees, no food. Scientists point to several causes behind the problem, including exposure to toxic pesticides. But it's not just bees which are exposed. Pesticides drifting from farm fields have sickened school children and farmers and contaminated drinking water. Environment Texas is working to:

- Establish a moratorium on bee-killing pesticides like neonics and glyphosate.
- Create no-spray zones around schools, day cares, hospitals, neighborhoods, and waterways and prohibit pesticide application when nearby wildflowers are in bloom
- Improve enforcement of pesticide application laws

Clean Water

From taking a dip in the local swimming hole to the water we drink from the faucet, we all want our water to be safe, healthy and plentiful. Environment Texas is working to protect clean water by advocating for nature-based infrastructure like rain gardens and green roofs, for policies to protect our drinking water, and to stop algal blooms and other pollution which threaten our waterways. Environment Texas supports:

- Policies and funding to encourage the use of nature-based infrastructure both in public infrastructure projects and on private developments

- Protecting our drinking water from toxic PFAS and lead contamination
- Working for strong enforcement of the Clean Water Act to protect Texas waterways

Clean Air

We look forward to the day where all Texans can breathe safe and clean air, especially vulnerable populations like children and senior citizens. Despite progress in recent years, air pollution from cars and trucks, petrochemical facilities, power plants, concrete batch plants and more causes thousands of premature deaths each year, as well as inducing a host of human health issues including asthma and cancer. We need the state of Texas to hold polluters accountable and help fund programs to reduce air pollution. Environment Texas is working for clean air by:

- Mobilizing fenceline communities through our Neighborhood Witness project and filing federal lawsuits to compel refineries and chemical plants to cut their pollution
- Pushing the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality to step up enforcement against illegal air pollution
- Making sure all Texas Emissions Reduction Program funds go to support clean air, including expanding funding for electric vehicle rebates
- Building public support for substantial investments in public transportation
- Advocating for stronger regulations on concrete and aggregates operations

100% renewable energy

Texas is home to an abundance of clean energy options — the sun's power, the mighty winds of west and coastal Texas, the earth's heat, and even the energy leaking from drafty windows in our homes and businesses. Despite our wealth of resources, renewable energy supplies less than 30% of our state's electricity; and while we rank first in solar installation potential, Texas only ranks sixth in terms of existing solar power. By using energy more efficiently and tapping our vast renewable resources, we can move to 100% clean energy: energy that doesn't pollute, doesn't contribute to climate change, and never runs out. Environment Texas supports:

- Adoption of 100% renewable energy standards by Texas cities, universities, state agencies and corporations
- Installing solar panels on Texas schools and city and county buildings
- Creating incentives such as rebate programs and tax credits for installing solar panels and battery storage
- A wider set of financing options for property owners interested in installing energy efficient technologies

Million Acre Parks Project

Camping, fishing, hiking and nature viewing: our local and state parks protect some of the most beautiful places in the state and give us places to teach our kids about the great outdoors. The passage of Proposition 5, to guarantee that the state sales tax on sporting goods goes towards funding our state and local parks and historic sites, will give the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department the ability to finally catch up on a huge backlog of repairs. But fixing parks is not enough. Demand for parks is skyrocketing. Our population has been booming, but the park system has not. Our existing parks are overcrowded at times, with visitors sometimes facing long lines to enter or even being turned away. Environment Texas supports:

- Having the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department develop a plan for land acquisition with clear and tangible goals
- State funding to acquire one million acres of new state and local parks by 2030

Wildlife Over Waste

Every day, people throw away tons of single-use cups, containers and other plastic "stuff." Among the worst forms of plastic pollution is polystyrene foam (the stuff most of us call Styrofoam), which never fully degrades. Nothing we use for a few minutes should be allowed to pollute our oceans and rivers and threaten wildlife for centuries. That's why we're working to ban foam cups and take-out containers. Environment Texas is working to:

- Get Texas restaurants, including Whataburger, and cities to end their use of polystyrene and reduce their use of single use plastics

Reducing pollution from oil and gas

From the huge amount of water required for oil and gas extraction, to the frequent and damaging wastewater spills and the seizure of family farms and ranches for pipeline construction, Texans are increasingly concerned about the serious damage oil and gas production causes to our air, water, land, and climate. Global warming pollution in Texas has increased 20% since 2009, coinciding with increased flaring and venting rates throughout the Permian Basin. And, our public lands, including the Sam Houston National Forest and Lake Somerville, could be forever altered by dirty drilling operations, polluting our drinking water, displacing wildlife, and damaging the beautiful, wild places Texans hold so near and dear to our hearts. In order to avoid the worst impacts of global warming, Texas needs to get off oil as quickly as possible. In the meantime, Environment Texas supports:

- Reforming the leasing program for federal public lands, including raising royalty rates and bonding requirements to reflect the true cost of drilling and ensuring public participation in the leasing process
- Banning most forms of flaring and venting
- Requiring oil and gas companies to reduce methane pollution and other environmental damage from drilling on University Lands
- Keeping fracking wastewater out of our rivers and aquifers
- A moratorium on new pipeline construction