



Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report
Thanks for making it all possible

From the Director

Over the past year, Americans have mourned the loss of hundreds of thousands of loved ones, neighbors and friends to COVID-19. As the crisis altered our daily lives in ways both profound and mundane, Environment California continued to work, online and safely distant, for clean air, clean water, open spaces and a livable climate.

In this report, we share the stories of that work with you: stories of researchers, advocates, attorneys, organizers and citizens striving together to protect and preserve our natural world. We thank you for helping to make that work possible, in normal and not-so-normal times.

This year, our national network persuaded more cities and states to “go renewable” and to take steps to electrify their transportation systems. We also won more bans on single-use plastic items.

And, in a victory that was years in the making, we celebrated as America reaffirmed its commitment to public lands when the Environment California-backed Great American Outdoors Act became law on Aug. 4, 2020. We also worked to ensure this popular and bipartisan law is correctly implemented.

Over the past four years, the Trump administration dismantled or weakened more than 100 critical protections for the environment. We have a chance to restore and strengthen those protections and we are working with the Biden-Harris team to see this process through.

Your action and support make it all possible. Thank you, as always, for standing with us.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dan Jacobson".

Dan Jacobson
State Director

Clean Water & Air

In our view, America must fulfill the promise of the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act by making our waters and air safe. The Trump administration took a different view. We worked to defend our water and air, making progress on lead-contaminated water and promoting a transition to clean, electric cars, trucks and buses.

Millions of Californians experienced more than 100 dirty air days in 2018

JAN. 28, 2020: We learned that millions of Californians are regularly breathing dirty air.

Well, not just Californians: Environment California Research & Policy Center's report, "Trouble in The Air," revealed that 108 million Americans lived in areas that experienced more than 100 days of degraded air quality in 2018.

The report highlights the troubled Los Angeles, Long Beach and Anaheim metro area, whose 13 million citizens experienced a staggering 156 days of poor air quality. Exposure to air pollution increases the risk of premature death, asthma attacks and other adverse health impacts.

"No Californian should have to experience one day of polluted air—let alone 156 days," said Dan Jacobson, executive director of Environment California Research & Policy Center. "Air quality will only get worse as our climate warms, so we have no time to lose."

We're tackling a major source of air pollution by promoting a transition to clean, electric vehicles.

The House approved \$22.5 billion to 'get the lead out'

JULY 17, 2020: The U.S. House of Representatives took a historic step toward protecting kids and communities from lead in drinking water last summer.

On July 1, the House approved \$22.5 billion over five years to replace our country's ubiquitous lead service lines—the single worst source of lead contamination in drinking water—as part of a House infrastructure package. Reps. Elissa Slotkin (Mich.), Dan Kildee (Mich.), Rashida Tlaib (Mich.), David Cicilline (R.I.) and Gwen Moore (Wis.) co-sponsored the amendment.

"We've long known that lead is a potent neurotoxin that is especially damaging to our children's health," said John Rumpler, clean water program director for our national network. "Yet it's still getting into the drinking water in thousands of communities across America, including at our schools and child care centers."

"We urge the Senate to adopt this ambitious measure so we can ensure safe drinking water for all Americans."



While progress has been made since the passage of the Clean Air Act, smog still causes thousands of premature deaths in the U.S each year. Environment California Research & Policy Center is continuing to work to reduce water and air pollution.



Environment California Research & Policy Center Executive Director Dan Jacobson (above) and former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger joined to promote California's Million Solar Roofs initiative. Tony Dutzik, senior policy analyst with our research partner Frontier Group (below, left), presents on 100 percent renewable energy.



Clean, Green & Renewable Energy

We are working to move America toward a future powered entirely by renewable energy. In states and cities across the country, our national network advocated for rules to expand rooftop solar, called for stronger clean energy mandates, and raised awareness of clean energy success stories.

California to require 100% zero-emission truck sales by 2045

JUNE 25, 2020: If you don't like getting caught behind a truck's dirty cloud of smoke when you're driving, we have some good news for you.

On June 25, the California Air Resources Board approved the Advanced Clean Trucks rule, which will require vehicle manufacturers to transition from selling conventional trucks to electric, zero-emission trucks starting in 2024. Because transportation is our number one source of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, transitioning California's truck fleet to zero emissions will be a crucial step in protecting our communities' health and climate.

"We can not only reduce but virtually eliminate transportation pollution. We have the technology and policy know-how," said Dan Jacobson, Environment California Research & Policy Center state director. "This is a great victory for clean air, public health and our climate."

By 2045, 100 percent of trucks sold in the state will be zero-emission.

A big clean energy milestone: California surpasses 1 million solar roofs

DEC. 12, 2019: Two former California governors were joined by our staff in celebrating a clean energy milestone once considered unreachable—a million rooftop solar systems in our state.

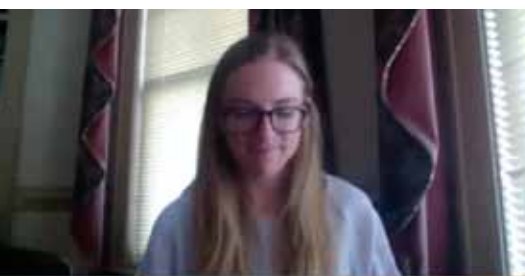
On December 12, former governors Jerry Brown and Arnold Schwarzenegger, Environment California Executive Director Dan Jacobson and California Solar & Storage Association Executive Director Bernadette Del Chiaro (an Environment California alumna) spoke at the event at Buchanan High School in Clovis.

"As we strive to meet our state's 100 percent clean energy goals, we need solar energy and energy storage technologies on every available rooftop and in every available garage," said Dan.

In 2006, then-Gov. Schwarzenegger signed the Million Solar Roofs Initiative into law, which set a goal of building one million solar energy systems throughout the state. Since then, solar installations have grown almost 50-fold. Environment California played a key role in proposing and advocating for the policy.



On Nov. 6, 2019, our staff co-hosted a summit at the UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation in Los Angeles, bringing together advocates, journalists, academics, mayors and legislators to talk about advancing the movement for clean energy all across the country.



Middle left: Environment California hosted webinars during the pandemic to keep members and supporters updated on advocacy efforts. Top left, bottom left: In 2019, our advocates gathered to support bans on unnecessary single-use plastics and Environment California will continue to put wildlife over waste. Our national staff and members also rallied people all over the country to speak out for the historic Great American Outdoors Act, including U.S. Rep. Joe Cunningham (on left, bottom right).



Conservation

Our country's lands and waters are precious beyond measure. This year, Environment California and Environment California Research & Policy Center, along with our national network, worked to defend and expand protections for our special places and the wildlife that live in them, standing up for bees and other pollinators, national parks, and our oceans. In July, we celebrated a major victory for public lands.

Great American Outdoors Act dedicates \$900 million per year to conservation

JULY 27, 2020: After years of tireless work, our advocates, members, supporters and allies celebrated a massive win for public lands.

On July 22, the U.S. House of Representatives followed the U.S. Senate in approving the Great American Outdoors Act, which will fully fund the long-neglected, but highly effective, Land and Water Conservation Fund. That means \$900 million per year for our public lands, along with billions in short-term funding to clear a backlog of maintenance issues at our national parks.

"The Great American Outdoors Act embraces what we all know to be true: Protecting and enhancing our public lands is an essential part of the American ethos," said Steve Blackledge, senior director of our national network's Conservation America campaign. "By locking in \$900 million a year for outdoor projects, plus providing a short-term infusion of money to address maintenance issues, the House is reaffirming that commitment to the natural world."

California lawmakers punt on breaking free from plastic

AUG. 31, 2020: On the last day of their 2020 session, California lawmakers failed to vote on the nation's most ambitious plastic pollution reduction bill.

Companion bills filed in the Senate and Assembly would have put California on a path to reducing single-use plastic packaging and foodware by 75 percent by 2032. All packaging and single-use foodware would have needed to be recyclable or compostable by that year.

"From turtles with plastic straws stuck in their noses to whales with bellies full of plastic bags washing up on our beaches, you don't need to look very hard to see an enormous plastic pollution problem," said Steve Blackledge, senior director of our national network's conservation program. "We'll keep calling for legislation that prioritizes the well-being of wildlife over the convenience and waste of single-use plastics."

Legislators have pledged to reintroduce similar bills in January 2021. Environment California will be ready to make the case and rally our members to take action.



Morgan Folger (left), director of our Destination: Zero Carbon campaign, is joined by Pennsylvania State Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta (center) and PennEnvironment Climate Defender Organizer Alex Lola at a January 2020 media event. Top right: As New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy signs a bill into law promoting electric vehicles, Doug O'Malley, state director of our sister group Environment New Jersey, speaks on behalf of the coalition that supported the bill. Bottom right: Our staff and members rally opposition to the Trump administration's rollback of Clean Car standards.



Global Warming Solutions

Global warming is the most profound symptom of our unhealthy relationship with the Earth. This year, we focused on the transportation sector, America's number one source of global warming pollution.

Environment California voices strong opposition to Trump administration's rollback of Clean Car standards

MARCH 31, 2020: The federal Clean Car standards—and California's stronger statewide standards—have reduced tailpipe pollution and saved lives. The last thing we should do is roll them back.

But that's exactly what the Trump administration has worked to do. On March 31, the administration's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration rewrote the federal Clean Car standards. Weaker standards could result in 900 million additional metric tons of global warming pollution being released into our atmosphere.

"This move makes no sense," said Dan Jacobson, executive director of Environment California. "It will not save money and it will hurt our planet."

The Trump administration also moved to revoke California's authority to set standards that are stricter than those at the federal level. These rollbacks are not only disastrous but also unlawful.

In May, our national partners at Environment America filed a lawsuit opposing the rollbacks.

Environment America Research & Policy Center's report provides a roadmap to 'Destination Zero Carbon'

AUG. 31, 2020: Transportation is the largest source of global warming pollution in the U.S., making it climate enemy number one. A report describes how we can build a zero-carbon transportation future, making our air cleaner and creating safer, healthier communities.

"Destination: Zero Carbon," released Feb. 25 by Frontier Group and our national research partner Environment America Research & Policy Center, looks at the factors underlying high transportation emissions. It also proposes solutions to expand electric vehicle use and double by 2030 the number of people who travel by foot, bike or transit.

"Climate change is the most urgent challenge of our generation," said Morgan Folger, Clean Car Communities campaign director with Environment America Research & Policy Center. "There's no excuse for waiting to act in any sector, especially transportation."



A report from our national research partners, Environment America Research & Policy Center and Frontier Group, describes how we can build a zero-carbon transportation future—all while cleaning our air and creating safer, healthier communities.



Bottom, left: Caribou in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. In August 2020, after the Trump administration approved the beginning of oil and gas leasing in this special place, our national partners at Environment America joined a lawsuit opposing the plans. Bottom, center: On August 27, John Rumpler, senior director of our clean water campaigns, participates in a virtual panel on the environmental and health impacts of the Trump administration’s “pause” on enforcement of clean air and water protections.



Environmental Defense

The price of a clean and healthy environment is eternal vigilance—especially as President Trump pushed to dismantle protections for our rivers, our public lands, our oceans and our climate. This year, our national partners Environment America and Environment America Research and Policy Center bolstered our green firewall in defense of America’s environmental protections.

After advocates took action, the Trump EPA backed down on suspending enforcement

APRIL 14, 2020: By suspending enforcement during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Trump administration’s Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) risked putting Americans’ health at further risk. So Environment California Research and Policy Center spoke out until it reversed its decision.

On March 26, the EPA released a policy that stopped enforcement of key provisions of our nation’s environmental laws during the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision came on the heels of requests from the oil and gas industry and others seeking exemptions at this time.

“Refineries release millions of pounds of air pollution—including fugitive emissions or leaks — that would go undetected without stringent monitoring requirements,” John Rumpler, senior attorney for our national network, told USA Today at the time.

After months of advocacy, during which thousands of Americans called on Congress or the courts to compel the EPA to do its duty and protect communities, the agency terminated its pandemic polluter loophole.

Our national partner went to court to defend clean water protections

MAY 5, 2020: Our national partner Environment America went to court to stop the Trump administration’s Dirty Water Rule, which puts rivers and drinking water at risk.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers have revoked federal protections for thousands of waterways across the country. On April 29, Environment America, with the Southern Environmental Law Center, filed suit to challenge the Dirty Water Rule in court. The streams and wetlands that lost protections under the rule are crucial to the health of the nation’s most iconic waterways—providing habitat for wildlife, filtering pollutants and absorbing floodwaters.

“As surely as water flows downstream, the Dirty Water Rule endangers the waterways where millions of Americans swim, fish, boat and draw their drinking water,” said John Rumpler, senior director of our national network’s Clean Water for America campaign. “We will not allow it to stand.”

Environment California
3435 Wilshire Blvd., Ste. 385
Los Angeles, CA 90010
(213) 251-3688

Non profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Brockton, MA
Permit No. 430

Our staff (partial list)



Dan Jacobson
State Director



Laura Deehan
Board Member



John Rumpler
Senior Director, Clean Water for
America Campaign and Senior
Attorney



Andrea McGimsey
Senior Director, Global Warming
Solutions Campaign



Johanna Neumann
Senior Director, Campaign for
100% Renewable Energy



Steve Blackledge
Senior Director, Conservation
Campaign



Alex Petersen
Conservation Campaign, Advocate



Bronte Payne
Director, Go Solar Campaign



Kelsey Lamp
Protect Our Oceans, Advocate



Emma Searson
Director, Campaign for 100%
Renewable Energy



Morgan Folger
Director, Destination: Zero Carbon
Campaign



Susan Rakov
Director, Research & Reports



Chuck Caldart
Litigation Director and Senior
Attorney; National Environmental
Law Center



Doug Casler
Director, Membership



Marcia Eldridge
Deputy Director, Digital



Katrina Riley
Deputy Editor



Amy Floyd
Senior Director, Grants



Pam Clough
Director, Donor Program