



Our program report

on the actions you made possible

For a greener Illinois



A letter to our supporters

Every life depends on a livable environment. So there's nothing more important than protecting the web of life that sustains us all.

Over the past year, Environment Illinois staff and supporters worked to put the environment first. We organized the public to defend our nation's oldest trees from logging, helped Illinoisians take advantage of new clean energy tax credits to reduce climate-warming emissions, and raised a call on major corporations to do right by our planet.

The results included new protections for our country's wild spaces; more people plugging into clean, renewable technologies; and fewer single-use plastics polluting our seas and harming marine wildlife.

Your action and support make all our work possible. We couldn't do it without you.



Emily Kowalski

On behalf of Environment Illinois

At Environment Illinois, our mission is to work for clean air, clean water, clean energy, wildlife, open spaces and a livable climate.

But we can't do it without you. Our staff research the issues, educate the public, and advocate tangible results for a greener world. Our members give us the resources to carry out our mission and put grassroots support behind all of our campaigns and programs.

To keep up to date with our work and learn more about our campaigns and progress, you can follow us at the addresses below. We'd also love to hear from you—feel free to email us at info@EnvironmentIllinois.org

EnvironmentIllinois.org

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500,000



PRESERVE OUR FORESTS

We delivered 500,000 comments for our oldest forests

Our planet needs old trees. They're essential allies in the fight against climate change, but they're being cut down.

In the summer of 2023, more than half a million people (including members like you) submitted public comments on behalf of our oldest trees. Through our Save America's Oldest Forests campaign, our staff and supporters played a key role in building to this moment.

In 2022, we led a coalition of more than 100 organizations to convince President Biden to direct the U.S. Forest Service to develop policies protecting mature and old-growth forests—and when the Forest Service issued its proposal on Earth Day 2023, our supporters were ready. We helped deliver more than 500,000 messages urging the Forest Service to protect mature and old-growth trees on federal lands from logging before the public comment period closed.



(Left and above) Public Lands Campaign Director Ellen Montgomery and staff help deliver more than 500,000 public comments to the U.S. Forest Service to protect mature and old-growth forests and trees from logging on federal land. Photo credits: (Left) Staff; (above, clockwise from top) Bob Pool via Shutterstock; Glen Fortner, Wood Valley Productions; Danita Delimont via Adobe Stock.



Billions



CLEAN, GREEN & RENEWABLE ENERGY

With billions going to clean energy, we helped people go green

A world powered by clean, renewable energy is within our reach. Over the last year, our staff of organizers, advocates and researchers educated and mobilized the public to make the most of the clean energy opportunities available to them.

Back in 2022, we helped win the Inflation Reduction Act, the United States' largest-ever investment in clean energy and climate solutions. This policy package was designed to reduce global warming pollution 40% below 2005 levels by 2030. Now, we're working to make sure that funding is put to good use.

Our clean energy team held a series of webinars to teach attendees how to take advantage of the new clean energy tax credits included in the Inflation Reduction Act to get solar panels, make their home more energy-efficient, or get an electric vehicle. You can watch the webinars on our website.



You can find our Clean Energy Home Toolkit at:
EnvironmentIllinois.org/cleanenergyhome.

(Left) 100% Renewable Energy Campaign Senior Director Johanna Neumann releases a report on the benefits of installing solar panels on warehouse rooftops. (Above, top and middle) Staff call for clean energy. (Above, bottom) Lisa Frank, executive director of our federal legislative office, leads a webinar on how to use new clean energy tax credits. Photo credits: (Left) Tim O'Connor; (above, top to bottom) staff; Christian Fiore; staff.

Ten v. neonics



SAVE THE BEES

Ten states have now restricted bee-killing pesticides

Bees play a crucial role in our ecosystems—but their populations are plummeting, due in part to the use of bee-killing neonicotinoid pesticides. Fortunately, decision-makers are starting to recognize the dangers these pesticides pose, and by the fall of 2023, 1 in 4 Americans was living in a state that had taken action to limit the use of neonics.

Last year, staff and supporters of our national Save the Bees campaign helped win policies in more states (now up to 10 and counting) to restrict the use of these pesticides, and we're calling on companies to take action, too. Over the past year, we delivered more than 30,000 petition signatures to online giant Amazon, urging it to stop selling bee-killing neonic pesticides.



(Left) Conservation America Campaign Director Steve Blackledge (top right) joins canvassers in the field, who went door to door to build support for saving the bees. (Above, right to left) Steve with canvassers; staff speak with visitors at a farmers market about our campaign to save the bees. Photo credits: (Left) Marc Olivier Le Blanc; (above, clockwise from top) Dave Angelini, Marc Olivier Le Blanc; Marc Olivier Le Blanc.

100% RENEWABLE



Liam Louis, ElleVignette Photography

Nearly 1 out of every 3 Americans live in a state that has made a commitment to repowering itself with 100% clean energy, including here in Illinois. In 2023, our national clean energy team helped win another 100% commitment in Minnesota, making it the 11th state so far with such a commitment.

WILDLIFE OVER WASTE



Courtesy of Oceana

Our supporters helped send 137,000 petition signatures to Amazon, urging the company to stop using single-use plastic packaging in its shipments. In July 2023, the company announced it would phase out its blue-and-white plastic padded envelopes in favor of recyclable alternatives.

! SAFE FOR SWIMMING



WGME

“Safe for Swimming?,” a report from our research partner Environment America Research & Policy Center, found that 55% of tested beaches nationwide experienced at least one day in 2022 in which fecal bacteria reached potentially unsafe levels. Read the full report at our website.



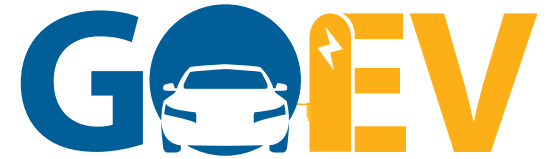
Staff

Our national Conservation team helped convince President Biden to designate three new national monuments in the last year: Camp Hale-Continental Divide in Colorado, Avi Kwa Ame in Nevada and Castner Range in Texas. These special places and the wildlife that call them home will now be better protected.



Harlan Schwartz via Shutterstock

The boreal forest is being cut down in part to make products such as toilet paper. Our supporters sent more than 30,000 petition signatures to Procter & Gamble, maker of paper products including Charmin toilet paper, Puffs tissues and Bounty paper towels, urging it to protect the boreal by going forest-free.



Staff

Our research partner's report, "Renewables on the Rise," found that Americans bought 647,000 plug-in electric vehicles in 2021, a 13-fold increase from 2012. And thanks in part to the inclusion of EV tax credits in the Inflation Reduction Act, we expect to see more and more Americans switch to EVs.

OUR LEGACY: A GREENER AMERICA

Together, we have a long legacy of victories for clean air, clean water, clean energy and more—including state and local wins that have provided blueprints for action nationwide.



2007: 5 states join regional climate pact

Environment Massachusetts, Environment Maine, Environment New Hampshire, Environment New Jersey and Environment Rhode Island help convince their states to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI)—a climate program that cuts power plant pollution.

2011: Nation sets first mercury coal standards

Environment America helps win the first nationwide standards for limiting mercury from coal power plants. The Mercury Air and Toxics Standards go on to reduce mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants by 86%

between 2011 and 2017.

2012: We help secure national clean car standards

Environment America plays a key role in securing new national clean car standards equivalent to 54.5 mpg that will make super-efficient cars the norm by 2025. This win sets automakers on a path toward improving fuel efficiency across their fleets and even helps usher electric vehicles into the mainstream.

2012: New rules to curb pollution from drilling

Environment America and our national network helps win new standards to



curb air pollution from gas drilling operations. These rules will help reduce smog and protect people from toxic pollutants like benzene that can cause cancer.

2012-2014: 4 states spearhead local plastic bag bans

Between 2012 and 2014, Environment Oregon, Environment California, Environment Rhode Island and Environment Washington help pass bans on single-use plastic bags in various municipalities and counties. California passes the nation's first statewide plastic bag ban in 2014, and nine more states follow suit over the next eight years.

(Left to right) Dena Mottola with Environment New Jersey speaks with NJN News about climate change; our staff meet with President Obama at an event celebrating the new fuel efficiency standards; Environment California's Dan Jacobson calls for the passage of the statewide plastic bag ban. Photo credits: NJN News; White House; Staff



2015: Pres. Obama rejects the Keystone XL pipeline

Environment America helps convince President Obama to reject the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline. Our national network and our members worked alongside our allies for years to stop this project, which State Department officials estimated would produce 26 million metric tons of carbon pollution each year—the equivalent of 5.7 million cars.

2020: U.S. military phases out PFAS use

Environment America helps win a law compelling the military to phase out its use of firefighting foams containing toxic PFAS chemicals,

which have contaminated drinking water in communities across the country.

2020: Conservation gets \$900 million annually

After winning the permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in 2019, Environment America wins full funding of \$900 million annually for the LWCF the following year. It's the nation's most effective conservation and recreation law, putting billions of federal dollars into national and local parks, playgrounds and trails across the country over the last 50 years.



2021: Clean air, water get a boost in infrastructure bill

Environment America advocated to help pass a major bipartisan package to improve our transportation and power infrastructure and ensure clean water and broadband access across the U.S. over the coming decades.

2022: Historic investment in climate action

In 2022, President Biden approved our country's largest-ever investment in clean energy and climate solutions. Environment America advocated for expanded tax credits for clean energy, giving people crucial support for a transition to a cleaner future.

(Left to right) The Keystone XL pipeline mid-construction; our staff distribute lawn signs calling on Congress to fully fund the LWCF; Environment America's Johanna Neumann tours a warehouse solar rooftop installation. Photo credits: Reinhard Tiburzy via Shutterstock; Suzanne Navarro Photography; Tim O'Connor

Our staff

To see a full staff list and learn more about our campaigns, visit us online at EnvironmentIllinois.org.

Emily Kowalski

Outreach & Engagement Manager

Paloma Paez-Coombe

Regional Canvass Director

Emily Rusch

Vice President and Senior Director of State Offices

Steve Blackledge

Senior Director, Conservation America Campaign

Johanna Neumann

Senior Director, Campaign for 100% Renewable Energy

John Rumpler

Senior Director, Clean Water for America Campaign and Senior Attorney

Ellen Montgomery

Director, Public Lands Campaign

Susan Rakov

Director, Research & Reports

Chuck Caldart

Litigation Director and Senior Attorney, National Environmental Law Center

Emily Reid

National Canvass Director

Jenny Douglass

Director, Membership Services

Amy Floyd

Senior Director, Grants

Ruthie Seroussi

Development Director



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30 GREEN CENTURY FUNDS

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Environment Illinois

318 W Adams St. #1609
Chicago, IL 60606
(312) 544-4430

Member questions: 1-800-401-6511

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