



## Your Winter Report

# Thanks to you, we delivered over 1 million public comments for our forests

Old growth forests, many of them older than America itself, are not just crucial allies in our race against climate change—they are also home to many species and areas of wonder. However, roadbuilding, logging and development threaten our forests on federal land.

Thankfully, our supporters and members like you are aware of the importance of these forests, and we were able to help deliver more than 1 million public comments over four comment periods urging protection of old growth forests from logging and development.

### How we made your voice heard

Mature and old growth trees and forests are critical to addressing the biodiversity and climate crisis, serving as unique ecosystems that support thousands of wildlife species and store significant amounts of carbon.

Following President Joe Biden's 2022 executive order directing the U.S. Forest Service to develop policies protecting mature and old growth forests in the National Forest system, the agency proposed a plan to change the way it manages old growth forests. The Biden administration then invited public input on the plan.

During the comment period, canvassers with Environment America's state offices knocked on doors across the country including in Oregon, Wisconsin and North Carolina where old growth forests are on the chopping block.



*Our national canvass team, ready and excited to kick off their summer outreach campaign.*

Canvassers educated the public about the threats to old growth trees and forests and built support for old growth protections by collecting public comments from supporters, including from members like you. Along with those supporters, environmental organizations, indigenous-led organizations, federal and state elected officials, faith groups and faith leaders, businesses, scientists and people across the nation submitted hundreds of thousands of comments in support of strong protections for the nation's oldest trees and forests.

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Thanks  
for making it  
all possible

## Celebrating California's new ocean sanctuary

Good news for California's ocean: on Oct. 11, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) designated permanent protection from oil and gas drilling to the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. Now, California's central coast will be home to the third-largest area of federally protected waters.

The protections will safeguard 116 miles of

helped get out the vote by encouraging students on college campuses to vote yes on Prop 4. We also led the charge to include significant funding for clean offshore wind infrastructure in the bond, securing nearly half a billion dollars to upgrade California's port infrastructure and kickstart crucial offshore wind development.

Unlocking significant climate investments with Prop 4 gives us strong momentum going forward, setting the stage for even bolder action to safeguard our environment and lead the nation on addressing climate change.

## Where does microplastic pollution come from? Often where plastic is made

Microplastic is showing up in our waterways and on our beaches. Facilities that make plastic pellets are one source of this pollution, so we set out to find where microplastics are coming from.

On July 31, Environment California and our partners at PIRG released an interactive map of these facilities based on data from the Environmental Protection Agency, so citizens can identify potential polluters near local water sources and homes.

An estimated 1 trillion plastic pellets enter the ocean each year and can take 100 to 1,000 years to break down. Because these pellets are small and lightweight, they are often spilled and end up in waterways where they can also be mistaken as food by wildlife.

"Turtles, birds and fish need waterways free from microplastic pollution, but if they live near one of these plastic-producing plants, they could be at risk," said Environment America's Executive Director Lisa Frank. You can find the tool on our website.

Rob Thomas



Environment California staff and coalition partners celebrate the new Chumash Marine Sanctuary at an event in October.

California's Central Coast coastline while supporting increased funding for regional science and research.

This area, where major ocean currents converge, serves as a vital feeding ground for migrating marine life along the Pacific coast.

The Sanctuary received more than 100,000 supportive comments and a letter from 181 scientists in the most recent round of public comments.

"This designation will forever protect these special waters from oil drilling and create the staging ground for valuable science that can help us understand our ocean in a changing climate," said Environment California State Director Laura Deehan.

## California voters approve \$10 billion for climate, clean energy projects

California voters made a strong statement in support of the environment and climate action this 2024 election by passing Proposition 4. This proposition approves \$10 billion in bonds to fund a variety of programs that help mitigate and address the impacts of climate change in the state.

On election day, Environment California

Get more updates on our work online at <https://environmentcalifornia.org>.

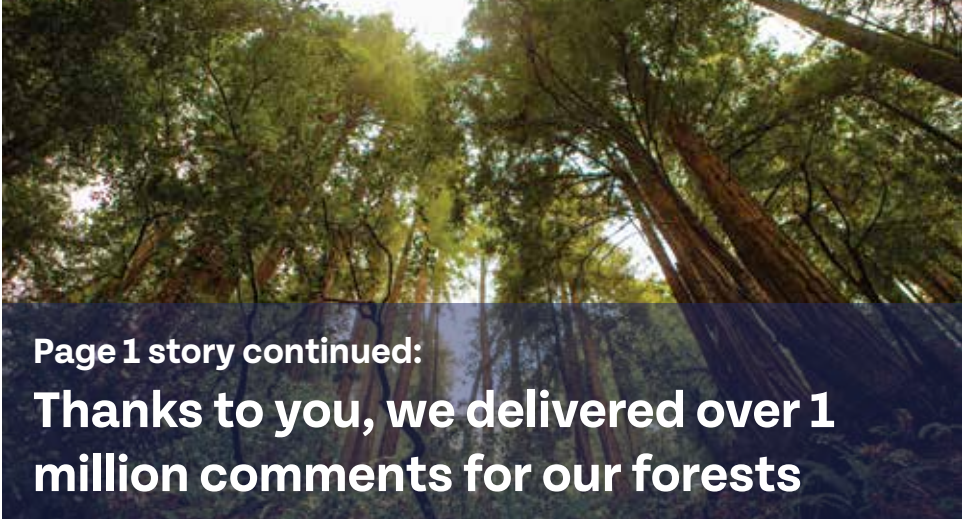
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**Thanks to you, we delivered over 1 million comments for our forests**

**Why our forests are still at risk**

Despite overwhelming public support, our forests remain at risk. The “Fix Our Forests Act,” passed by the U.S. House of Representatives in September 2024, poses urgent threats to our forests by prioritizing logging over true forest restoration. The Act could fast-track logging approvals in federal forests by bypassing critical environmental reviews.

The impact would be devastating: older trees chopped down, eroded soils and habitat destruction. We urged the Senate to reject this legislation.

**Strong support for our forests**

“The response from the public to our on-the-ground efforts to build support for a strong old growth policy has shown that people want to see older trees protected,” said Environment America Public Lands Campaign Director Ellen Montgomery. “These trees and forests are home to wildlife that we love from birds to bears.”

We will keep working to make sure that decision-makers recognize the truth that the public knows: old growth trees are worth more standing.



Above right: Many trees in old growth forests are older than Philadelphia’s Independence Hall (1753). Below: Public Lands Campaign Director Ellen Montgomery and staff help deliver more than 500,000 public comments to the U.S. Forest Service to protect old growth forests.



**Our mission**

Environment California is a policy and action group with one mission: to restore and protect the natural world.

Learn more about us by scanning the QR code below:



**Featured staff**



Kimball Nelson

Laura Deehan  
State Director

Laura directs Environment California’s work to tackle global warming, protect the ocean, and stand up for clean air, clean water and open spaces. Laura served on the Environment California board for two years before stepping into the state director role. Most recently, she directed the public health program for CALPIRG, another organization in The Public Interest Network, where she led campaigns to get lead out of school drinking water and toxic chemicals out of cosmetics. Prior to that, Laura ran Environment California citizen outreach offices across the state and, as the Environment California field director, she led campaigns to get California to go solar, ban single use plastic grocery bags, and go 100% renewable.

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# Environment California

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## Your 2025 Winter Report

### Renewables on the Rise

The Renewables on the Rise dashboard allows you to track the growth of clean energy in your state and around the country. Explore your state's clean energy progress by scanning the QR code below:



## California leads the way on renewable energy growth

California is at the top of the list for renewable energy growth over the past decade. According to the Renewables on the Rise 2024 dashboard released on Oct. 22 by Environment California Research & Policy Center, California now generates 371% more solar power than it did in 2014, meaning that we can power an additional 5 million households each year with clean energy.

Here are three interesting facts about clean energy's growth in California:

1. California generated more solar energy in 2023 alone than all solar generation before 2016 combined—continuing to produce the most solar power in the country.
2. California is ranked first in the country in terms of EV growth. Since 2014, the number of EVs in the state has grown by 1,805%, and there were 1.1 million electric vehicles registered in California in 2023.
3. California is first in the country in the number of EV charging ports installed.

“When we replace fossil fuels with wind turbines and solar panels, and curb wasteful uses of energy, we build a world where the planet and people can thrive,” said Steven King, clean energy advocate at Environment California Research & Policy Center.

*Clean Energy Advocate Steven King releases the latest Renewables on the Rise report at Los Angeles City Hall.*



Irina Logra Photography