



Fall Report

A summer spent fighting for clean water

Closing polluter loopholes with grassroots action

Late this spring, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed a rule to close loopholes in the Clean Water Act that have left more than half the streams in Ohio, and the drinking water for 5.3 million Ohioans, at risk for more than a decade.

On the heels of the EPA's announcement, we launched a grassroots campaign to build the public support necessary to get the rule across the finish line. Over the course of several months, our staff talked to thousands of people across the state, collecting hundreds of public comments to the EPA, and built a coalition of small business owners, local elected officials, and farmers.

7.5 million pounds of chemicals

Shortly after the EPA's announcement, big polluters ramped up their efforts to block the rule, lobbying in Congress, spreading misinformation, and threatening "legal warfare."

Alongside our national federation, we launched our own educational efforts, a blog, iheartcleanwater.org, to bolster support for closing the loopholes and protecting clean water nationwide.

We debunked polluters' claims when we released "Wasting Our Waterways," which found that 7.5 million pounds of toxic chemicals were dumped in Ohio's waterways in 2012—the 10th worst in the nation. The Muskingum River alone received 4.4 million pounds of toxic chemicals, some of which have been linked to developmental and reproductive harm and cancer.



Ken Colwell/Flickr

▲ Toxic algae blooms in Lake Erie threatened the drinking water for half a million residents of Toledo this summer.

Toledo's drinking water crisis

And this August, massive runoff from industrial agribusiness operations caused a toxic algae bloom in Lake Erie that contaminated the drinking water for nearly half a million in Toledo, leading to a state of emergency. Christian Adams, Environment Ohio state advocate said, "As residents recovered from this crisis, one thing became clear: If we want safe

drinking water, we must ensure that all of Ohio's waterways are protected by the Clean Water Act."

The fight is far from over, but we're closing in on the finish line. With the public comment period coming to a close soon, we're ramping up our efforts to show Congress the widespread support for clean water.



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◀ [Releasing Environment Ohio's Solar Report "Lighting the Way."](#)

To learn more and take action, visit us online at: www.EnvironmentOhio.org

To our members

This past summer was a whirlwind. Our citizen outreach staff talked to people across the state and collected thousands of petition signatures to protect Ohio's rivers and forests. We've made so much progress and we owe that success to members like you.

Now, as fall gets underway, it's important to remember another important aspect of the movement for a cleaner, greener Ohio: Electing leaders who will do the right thing for our environment. Elections can have huge implications, and if our elected officials are willing to stand up for clean air, clean water and our open spaces, we stand a far better chance of winning lasting improvements.

So, if you haven't already, I encourage you to make plans to vote, and to bring family and friends with you to the polls. It's our environment and our future—let's get out there and vote!

Sincerely,



Christian Adams
State Associate

Recent action

Gov. Kasich stops clean energy development

This summer, Gov. John Kasich signed a bill to undo Ohio's historic commitment to clean energy by halting energy efficiency programs for at least two years, just as the state stood on the cusp of ramping up its investment in local, sustainable, pollution-free energy, thanks in part to our advocacy.

Ohio's clean energy law had worked for five years to encourage such development. After starting from almost nothing, Ohio is now generating enough renewable energy to power over 100,000 homes, and has saved residents more than a billion dollars on their electric bills through energy efficiency programs.

"It is incredibly disappointing to see this action from Gov. Kasich, who has professed support for renewable energy since his energy summit in 2011," said Environment Ohio State Advocate Christian Adams. "But actions speak louder than words, and at the end of the day, he sided with polluting industries rather than a commitment to cleaner air and a clean energy future for Ohio."

Electric vehicles put the brakes on pollution

More than 220,000 electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles are on America's roads today, delivering real benefits for our health and our environment, according to a new report released by Environment Ohio Research & Policy Center. In just the last two years, annual sales of electric vehicles have increased by 500 percent.

The report, "Driving Cleaner: More Electric Vehicles Mean Less Pollution," shows that electric vehicles could prevent more than 369,000 metric tons of climate-changing carbon pollution annually in Ohio by 2025. That's the equivalent of eliminating tailpipe pollution from more than 78,000 of today's cars.

"It's time to charge ahead," said Nate Lotze, field organizer with Environment Ohio Research & Policy Center. "It's not just because electric cars are speedy, quiet and cool-looking—they are also one of the most important tools we have to break our dependence on oil, clean up our air, improve our health and protect our climate." We're working to advocate for policies on the state level to set ambitious goals for electric vehicle deployment.

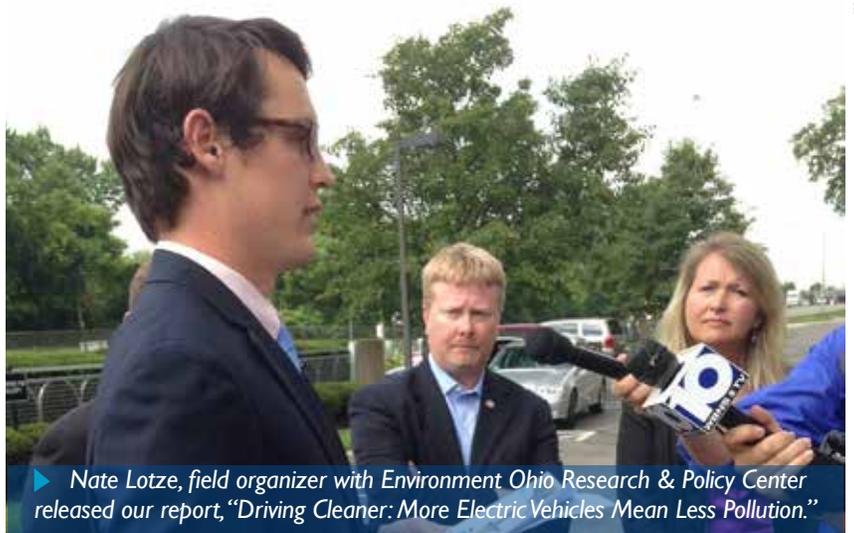
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▶ Nate Lotze, field organizer with Environment Ohio Research & Policy Center released our report, "Driving Cleaner: More Electric Vehicles Mean Less Pollution."

EPA takes historic step to tackle global warming

June 2 will go down as a historic date in the fight to tackle global warming. The Environmental Protection Agency finally proposed the first-ever, federal limits on carbon pollution from power plants.

A new precedent set

Unbelievably, until now, there have been no federal limits on the amount of carbon power plants are permitted to spew into the atmosphere, despite the fact that these culprits are the largest single source of global warming pollution.

Environment Ohio enthusiastically applauded the proposal, which would reduce carbon pollution from power plants by 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030. Once finalized, this will be the largest step the U.S. has taken to combat global warming.

“This announcement is exactly what we’ve been waiting for,” said Shelley Vinyard, regional director of Environment Ohio. “This is America’s chance to lead and our best opportunity to give our children a legacy we can be proud of.”

Today’s consequences

The National Climate Assessment, released in May, recognized the current impacts of climate change and the urgent need for action: “Climate change, once considered an issue for a distant future, has moved firmly into the present.”

Here in Ohio, severe flooding and storms have devastated communities around the state and threatened public safety.

“This proposal is a huge win for Ohio,” said Vinyard. “It means a safer future to come.”

This step forward is in large part a testament to the millions of Americans, more than 600 local elected officials, and hundreds of small businesses who have already demanded the cutting of carbon pollution. But we’ve still got work to do.

Defending the plan

Following the announcement, Environment America, our national affiliate, launched a nationwide “Global Warming Solutions” campaign. Active in 24 states, the \$2.4 million campaign has helped Americans across the country connect the dots between the consequences of global warming and the meaningful impact of the Clean Power Plan.

In July, our national staff across the country testified in front of the EPA in hearings on their plan. Not surprisingly, the dirty energy industry showed up to stack these events and spew misinformation. But we were there too, standing up for the urgent need to act on climate.

“Once implemented, the Clean Power Plan will be the biggest step the U.S. has ever taken to cut global warming pollution,” said Vinyard. “This is a huge deal. But it’s not yet a done deal.

“The fossil energy lobby and other polluters are spending millions to oppose the EPA’s commonsense action. That’s where Environment Ohio comes in: to ensure this critically-important step is taken. Our kids’ future depends on it.”



Jonathan Comer

Staff in action



To find out more, visit:
www.EnvironmentOhioCenter.org

Transportation accounts for nearly half of greenhouse gas emissions.

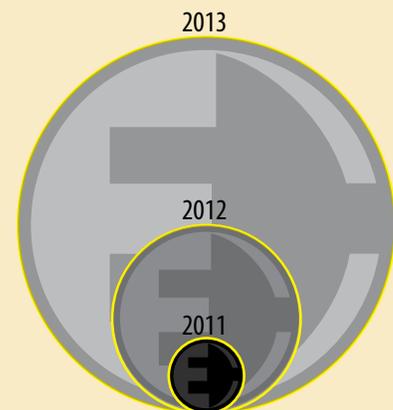
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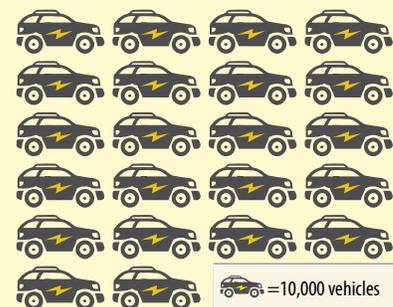
The time has come for America to:

CHARGE AHEAD

In the last two years, annual sales of electric vehicles have increased by **500%**.



Today, there are more than **220,000** electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles on U.S. roads.



SOURCE: Driving Cleaner: More Electric Vehicles Mean Less Pollution

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Fall Report

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Environment Ohio

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 Ohio. We focus exclusively on protecting Ohio's 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.

Defending Ohio's natural heritage

Holding the line for Ohio's natural heritage is a key part of our mission. That's why standing by as Congress attempts to zero out funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), our most successful parks and open space program, wasn't an option for us.

We knocked on doors across the state this summer, talking with Ohioans about the importance of protecting our parks and gathering thousands of signatures to call on Congress to restore full funding to the LWCF. This past July, the LWCF celebrated its 50th anniversary—50 years of protecting places like Old Man's Cave and Cedar Falls in Hocking Hills, and the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge from overdevelopment, mining, pollution, and disrepair.

Along with our national federation, we're bringing people together to urge our senators to make preserving our special places a priority. By standing up to anti-environment members of Congress, our senators can leave a lasting legacy for our parks.

Second Tree Creative Commons



more online

Tell your lawmakers to protect our parks and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund at:
www.EnvironmentOhio.org

◀ *Hocking Hills*