



Annual Report

A recap of our work for our members in 2013



To our members

“Our lakes, open spaces, and the air we breathe deserve the strongest protections possible.”



Dan Kohler
Regional Director

Dear Environment Ohio members,

This past year, big polluters and their allies in government tried to sneak through sweeping cuts to our parks and conservation programs. But I'm happy to say that despite their attempts, we held our ground for Ohio's special places.



Megan Tanner
Citizen Outreach
Director

Our parks and open spaces are Ohio treasures—giving the next generation of Ohioans a place to grow up and explore nature. So when Gov. John Kasich wanted to slash funding for parks and open spaces, Environment Ohio stepped into action. Our advocacy helped convince the General Assembly to restore full funding to our state's best conservation program. But when the Statehouse refused to give Hocking Hills and our state parks the funding and protections they deserve, our staff hit the pavement and talked face-to-face with over 25,000 Ohioans to hold our lawmakers accountable.



Rob Sargent
Energy Program
Director

Our lakes, open spaces, and the air we breathe deserve the strongest protections possible, but polluters and their allies in government will keep fighting to weaken them. With your support, we'll continue the fight for a cleaner, greener Ohio in the coming year

Sincerely,

Christian Adams, State Associate



Preserve Hocking Hills

Hocking Hills is Ohio's hidden treasure—and it's up to us to safeguard it for future generations. That's why Environment Ohio talked to tens of thousands of people and collected thousands of signatures urging our leaders to give Hocking Hills the funds it deserves. We also spoke directly with our elected officials about the importance of preserving Hocking Hills.

Thousands act to restore parks funding

Hocking Hills State Park, and all of Ohio's state parks, rely on state funding for upkeep and preservation. But funding for our state parks has been cut year after year for the last decade, and in 2013, Gov. John Kasich cut our parks funding again. With less money to pay for the basics, there's more pressure on parks to turn to desperate measures like offering up their land for drilling and logging. Hocking Hills is too important to put at risk of destructive practices such as these.

- This summer, Environment Ohio staff pounded the pavement and talked face-to-face with nearly 25,000 people, educating them about budget cuts to Hocking Hills and the urgent need to take a stand for our parks.
- More than 8,700 Ohioans signed petitions to their state legislators, urging them to fully fund Ohio's parks.



Above: Ash Cave and other iconic sites in Hocking Hills are threatened by state funding cuts. Below: Environment Ohio State Associate Christian Adams delivers petitions to state Rep. Michael Stinziano calling for expanded state parks protection.



Stopping Global Warming

Carbon pollution is causing global temperatures to rise at an alarming rate, throwing our climate out of whack and threatening current and future generations. Ohio is already feeling the impacts of global warming today: 2012 was the hottest year on record, and three out of four Ohioans live in counties hit by weather-related disasters since 2007.

After push, Obama announced climate plan

Ohio's power plants rank second in the nation for carbon pollution, so cleaning up power plants is one of the most direct ways to reduce Ohio's carbon footprint. With research, media outreach, coalition building, and grassroots support, we've helped lead the charge in Ohio to limit pollution from power plants.

On June 25, President Obama announced a historic climate plan that directs the Environmental Protection Agency to set the first-ever carbon pollution standards for new and existing power plants.

- The president's plan also calls for expanding clean energy and energy efficiency, helping communities prepare for and respond to weather-related disasters and rebuilding American leadership on global warming internationally.
- The plan builds off state policies like Ohio's Clean Energy Law, championed by Environment Ohio, as well as past federal victories, such as fuel economy standards for automobiles.

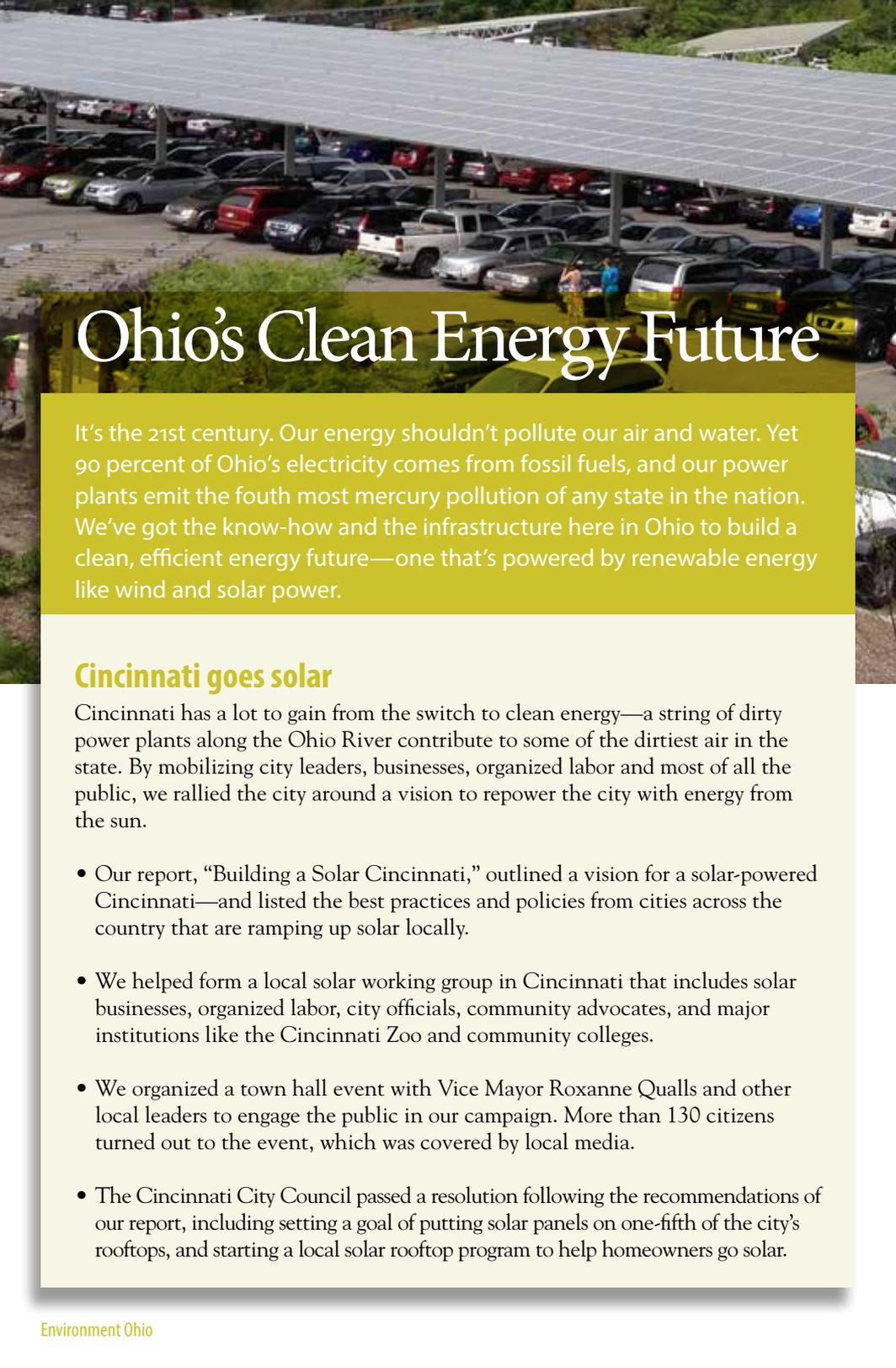
Report released, public support mobilized

Our report, “In the Path of the Storm,” connected the dots between extreme weather and global warming and received coverage in several Ohio newspapers, as well as on NBC-4.

- Our organizers engaged over 1,000 Ohioans to write, call and send photos to elected officials urging action to cut the carbon pollution that fuels global warming.
- Partnering with the Sierra Club, Environment Ohio launched “Summer Climate Movies of the Month” and organized 6 screenings of films on the climate crises. Nearly 100 people attended the meetings and took part in discussions and grassroots advocacy.
- Environment Ohio Advocate Julian Boggs met with U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown to discuss his support for reducing the pollution that’s causing climate change.



Left: Environment Ohio organizers recruit Ohioans for grassroots action; Right: Environment Ohio advocate Julian Boggs meets with U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown and coalition partners to discuss support for reducing carbon pollution.

A large parking lot with a solar panel canopy covering the cars. The canopy is made of a grid of solar panels supported by metal poles. The cars are parked in rows under the canopy. In the background, there are trees and a building.

Ohio's Clean Energy Future

It's the 21st century. Our energy shouldn't pollute our air and water. Yet 90 percent of Ohio's electricity comes from fossil fuels, and our power plants emit the fourth most mercury pollution of any state in the nation. We've got the know-how and the infrastructure here in Ohio to build a clean, efficient energy future—one that's powered by renewable energy like wind and solar power.

Cincinnati goes solar

Cincinnati has a lot to gain from the switch to clean energy—a string of dirty power plants along the Ohio River contribute to some of the dirtiest air in the state. By mobilizing city leaders, businesses, organized labor and most of all the public, we rallied the city around a vision to repower the city with energy from the sun.

- Our report, “Building a Solar Cincinnati,” outlined a vision for a solar-powered Cincinnati—and listed the best practices and policies from cities across the country that are ramping up solar locally.
- We helped form a local solar working group in Cincinnati that includes solar businesses, organized labor, city officials, community advocates, and major institutions like the Cincinnati Zoo and community colleges.
- We organized a town hall event with Vice Mayor Roxanne Qualls and other local leaders to engage the public in our campaign. More than 130 citizens turned out to the event, which was covered by local media.
- The Cincinnati City Council passed a resolution following the recommendations of our report, including setting a goal of putting solar panels on one-fifth of the city's rooftops, and starting a local solar rooftop program to help homeowners go solar.



Crucial energy efficiency policies defended

Energy efficiency is a win-win-win—saving money on utility bills, cutting pollution and putting Ohioans back to work. But FirstEnergy Corp.—the biggest utility in the state—has built its business selling dirty energy and is lobbying to block efficiency measures. This spring, FirstEnergy launched an attack on Ohio’s energy efficiency programs. We fought back, and FirstEnergy withdrew its proposal—for now.

- In March we released “Ohio’s Clean Energy Success Story,” an independent report that highlighted the biggest successes of Ohio’s clean energy programs, like the ultra-efficient new Reynoldsburg High School.
- We mobilized our members, activists, and a dozen northeast Ohio mayors to urge the governor and key legislators to protect Ohio’s Clean Energy Law.



Left: Over 130 members of the public turned out to support our solar program in Cincinnati; Right: Ohio’s Clean Energy Law is fueling investments in clean, renewable energy like wind, cutting pollution and bringing jobs to



Stop Fracking Waste

Fracking is swiftly proving to be a disaster for Ohio's environment and public health. Gas companies are trucking waste into our state from across the region, threatening to turn Ohio into their personal dumping ground. We worked to educate the public, raise media visibility, and reach out to new allies about this threat.

Opposition to waste gained momentum

Fracking waste is a toxic cocktail of water, sand, chemicals, corrosive salts and radioactive heavy metals. In 2012, over 14 million barrels of fracking waste were dumped in Ohio and injected underground. Over half of that waste came from Pennsylvania and West Virginia, where drilling has been more extensive.

- Our report, "The Costs of Fracking," converted fracking damage into dollars and cents, including contamination from waste. The report was featured in the Columbus Dispatch, the Akron Beacon Journal, the Canton Repository, and on NBC-4, among other media outlets.
- This summer, our outreach staff distributed educational literature about fracking waste directly to tens of thousands of Ohioans. We also toured fracking sites in other states and met with citizens to learn firsthand about the threats posed by fracking.



Above: Fracking operations devastate landscapes, and gas company trucks wreck local infrastructure — often leaving communities to pick up the tab. Below: Environment Ohio Advocate Julian Boggs met with people already impacted by fracking.



Preserve Our Local Parks

Every Ohio kid deserves a favorite place to explore nature or play in a creek. Yet we've already lost too many of our woods and waterways to development: Ohio ranks 47th in the nation for public land per capita. This spring, we took a big step forward when the Legislature approved full funding for Ohio's most successful local park conservation program, the Clean Ohio Fund.

Crucial conservation program fully funded

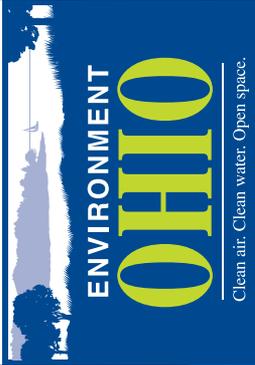
In 2008, Ohioans voted overwhelmingly in favor of renewing the Clean Ohio Fund, a crucial program for preserving, protecting and maintaining our parks and open spaces. But in his budget proposal this spring, Gov. John Kasich proposed no funding for the Clean Ohio Fund for the next two years.

- We knew we had to act. We mobilized the public to fight the governor's proposal to shortchange our parks. And years of demonstrating public support for conservation have paid off: Environment Ohio and our allies convinced the Legislature to revise the governor's proposal and provide full funding for the program.
- By winning full funding for the Clean Ohio Fund, we helped ensure that our parks and open spaces will continue to receive the care and protection they need.



Ohio's parks and open spaces offer us so much—we owe it to future generations to keep them clean and beautiful.

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2013 Annual Report

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