Annual Report
A recap of our work for our members in 2010
To our members

“You didn’t back down. This was a challenging year, but thanks to the hard work and determination of our staff, members and supporters, we won a few big victories for California’s environment.”

In 2010, we were forced to draw a line in the sand.

Powerful polluters had seized the offensive. Taking advantage of cash-strapped state and local governments along with increasingly divisive politics, oil, chemical and other powerful interests pushed to roll back environmental laws and skirt protections.

But they underestimated you. You didn’t back down. This was a challenging year, but thanks to the hard work and determination of our staff, members and supporters, we won a few big victories for California’s environment.

Two Texas-based oil companies spent millions of dollars to put the disastrous Prop. 23 on the November ballot in an attempt to convince Californians that—despite all the progress we’ve made on clean air and our growing clean energy industry—clean energy is overrated. In what the L.A. Times called the biggest environmental campaign in U.S. history, environmentalists, clean energy entrepreneurs, public health advocates and many others joined to overcome Big Oil’s money. We did our part by expanding our staff and recruiting 1,000 volunteers to get the truth out to hundreds of thousands of voters. Together, we won big, as voters soundly rejected Prop. 23.

In Sacramento, we helped further our goal of 1 million solar roofs, passing new legislation that will pay you if you generate more energy that you use with clean power like solar. To overcome the utilities’ opposition, we released new research and mobilized thousands of people to weigh in with their support. We also helped win legislation to reduce the levels of toxic exposures for kids, banning lead and cadmium from toys.

California is now using fewer plastic throwaway bags. While the chemical companies that make all these bags congratulated themselves after they helped stall a statewide ban on plastic checkout bags, we kept working. Their smiles began to fade as we helped persuade city after city, county after county, to pass their own bans. To date, 39 cities and counties have taken action, and 11 have successfully passed bans.

None of this progress would be possible without the support of people like you.

Dan Jacobson
Legislative Director, Environment California
Yosemite at risk

Yosemite is California’s irreplaceable treasure—home to Half Dome, Tuolumne Meadow and Yosemite Falls, as well as the peregrine falcon, black bear, mountain lion and other wildlife. Every year, more than 4 million people visit Yosemite to experience what Ansel Adams called “a glitter of green and golden wonder in a vast edifice of stone and space.” As part of our ongoing work to protect Yosemite, in 2010, we launched a new effort to keep Yosemite safe from toxic mining.

285 mining claims on Yosemite’s borders

Mining companies, of course, can’t set up operations in Yosemite National Park. Incredibly, the law does allow them to mine the land right next door. In the last five years, mining companies have staked 285 claims within 10 miles of Yosemite National Park, some right on the park’s borders. Historically, mining wastes often escape into local waterways.

To protect Yosemite, we’re calling for Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar to deny any new mining claims within 50 miles of the park, and remove the current threats. It’s critical that we act now:

- As the price of gold continues to skyrocket—upwards of $1,360 per ounce—the value of these mines becomes even greater.
- Mining companies use cyanide to separate gold from surrounding rock. As little as 76 micrograms of cyanide can kill many fish species—that’s less than the weight of one inch of a human hair.

Campaign to protect park from toxic mining launched

In order to protect Yosemite, Environment California launched a new effort to unite thousands of Californians and raise awareness about this modern-day gold rush.
Defeating Prop. 23

In recent years, California has put thousands of people to work making and installing solar panels, and erecting wind turbines to build a clean energy future—driven in large part by the Environment California-backed Global Warming Solutions Act. Yet two Texas oil companies, backed by the notorious oil tycoons the Koch brothers, sought to derail the law and our clean energy progress in 2010. Thanks to the work of our staff and members, they failed.
By a 3-2 margin, voters chose clean energy over Prop. 23

We can breathe easier: Despite the best—and well-funded—efforts of a few oil companies to roll back the landmark Global Warming Solutions Act, California voters weren’t fooled. Together with an expansive coalition, we worked to counter the opposition’s deceptive advertisements and highlighted the pollution cuts and job creation that Prop. 23 would have undone. In the end, the state voted 61 to 39 percent to reject Prop. 23, the largest margin for any of the nine statewide ballot measures.

169 million tons of pollution averted

California has doubled the amount of wind and solar energy we generate over the last three years. Green jobs are the fastest growing sector of our economy—a rare bright spot in this long, deep recession. As clean energy wins, oil consumption declines. To reverse the trend, oil companies tried to use the ballot process to roll back our most important clean energy law.

• If Prop. 23 had passed, it would have allowed oil refineries and other polluters to put another 169 million tons of pollution into our air.

• From its inception, Prop. 23 was the project of out-of-state oil companies. Oil company lobbyists wrote the text of the proposition; oil company money helped gather the signatures to put it on the ballot; and oil company funds paid for the deceptive ads designed to persuade Californians to pass it.

• In total, 88 percent of all “Yes on Prop. 23” funding came from out-of-state oil companies, most of it from Texas-based Valero and Tesoro.

Hundreds of thousands of voters reached

Environment California staff, members and volunteers played a strong part in the “No on 23” campaign, focusing largely on young voters, who overwhelmingly support clean energy and strong action against global warming, but are historically less likely to vote than older age groups.

• In order to educate and mobilize students, we worked on more than 40 college and university campuses across California, reaching as many as half of the students in the state.

• Our more than 1,000 volunteers held more than 370,000 face-to-face conversations and gathered more than 160,000 pledges to vote No on Prop. 23.

• In the days leading up to Election Day, our staff and volunteers made 20,000 get-out-the-vote reminder phone calls.

Who funded Prop. 23?

Oil Companies 93%
- Valero Services, Inc.: $5,075,315
- Tesoro Companies: $2,040,637
- Other: $2,293,000

Other Organizations 7%
- Adam Smith Foundation: $498,000
- Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Assoc.: $102,568
- National Petrochemical & Refiners Assoc.: $100,000

Legislative Director Daniel Jacobson (left) along with clean energy advocate and author Van Jones, educate campaign volunteers about the dangers of Prop. 23.
Great Pacific Cleanup

More than 100 million tons of plastic pollution is swirling together in our oceans. Off the California coast, it has formed a plastic soup called the Pacific Garbage Patch. Churned slowly by ocean currents into a mass twice the size of Texas, this plastic pollution kills hundreds of thousands of turtles, seabirds and other marine animals every year. In order to reduce the pollution, we need to stop wasting so much. We can start with plastic throwaway bags.
Taking a bite out of the 19 billion plastic bags used per year

Nothing we use for a few minutes should be polluting the ocean for hundreds of years. In 2010, Environment California launched a major new initiative to help curb needless plastic waste. Californians have been using 19 billion bags per year, about 500 per person. Very few of these bags are recycled; nearly all of them end up in landfills, littering streets, clogging drains or headed out to sea. Once underwater, plastic bags can resemble jellyfish, leaving sea turtles and other animals to mistake them for food—and sometimes choke to death as a result.

500 business endorsements, 20,000 signatures
Environment California helped build support for a common-sense step: switching from single-use plastic to reusable grocery bags. Among other steps, we worked to build support for a statewide ban on single-use plastic bags.

• Environment California hosted our third annual Ocean Day, an all-day event dedicated to educating and inspiring lawmakers on the importance of the Pacific's health to California and the many threats our oceans face.

• Touring the state with a 25-foot inflatable turtle, we held press events in San Diego, Long Beach, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo and San Jose highlighting the danger that bags pose to turtles and other wildlife.

• We collected more than 500 signatures from small business owners across the state, enlisted more than 20,000 supporters to send emails to lawmakers, and brought in actresses Amy Smart, Rosario Dawson and Rachelle Lefevre to meet with lawmakers in Sacramento.

• Unfortunately, lobbyists from the chemical and plastics companies that make these bags succeeded in stopping the ban, running misleading TV ads and even brazenly handing campaign contributions to on-the-fence senators.

11 cities and counties ban the bag
The lobbyists didn’t have long to relish in their victory as city after city and county after county moved ahead with local bans. With each new ban, it’s easier for the next town to take action and harder for the state to do nothing.

• At the time of this writing, 11 cities and counties have some sort of bag ban in place, and this number keeps growing.

• In November, Los Angeles County passed a ban on single-use plastic bags, joining Oakland and San Francisco.

• In December, Long Beach and San Jose followed suit—to be quickly followed by Marin County, Santa Monica and Calabasas.

Local plastic bag bans
Thirty-nine cities and counties in California have taken action to ban plastic bags. Bold denotes that the ban has already passed.

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Million Solar Roofs

Imagine flying into LAX. As the plane descends, you begin to see roofs of homes, schools and those huge warehouses. As far as the your eye can see, nearly all of them are adorned with solar panels. That’s our vision: At least 1 million solar roofs in California by 2020, tapping some of the world’s greatest solar power potential, reducing our state’s dependence on fossil fuels, and helping to build a more stable and sustainable economy. In 2010, we took another big step toward our goal.

New law will help make solar pay for 500,000

Thanks to a new law supported by Environment California, twice as many Californians will get to experience their meter running backwards—as their homes generate more energy from their solar than they are using.

The law, AB 510 (Skinner) sets a new limit on how many Californians can sign up for what is called “net metering,” which is simply the ability to send electricity back to the grid and get credit for it. In short, this new law will double the number of people able to take advantage of this program in the years ahead.

36,000 solar jobs in California, and growing

Fueled by the Environment California-led Million Solar Roofs Initiative, as more Californians go solar, more and more get jobs in the solar industry.

- According to a new study produced by the Solar Foundation and Green LMI Consulting, 36,000 Californians now work in the solar energy industry.
- Across the country, employment figures for solar power have nearly doubled in the last year, and are expected to grow another 26 percent in the coming 12 months—at a time when overall job growth is only expected to grow 2 percent.
Driving beyond oil

From offshore spills to the steady stream of pollution from tailpipes, from the hefty price we pay at the pump to the looming threat of global warming, we have plenty of reasons to ditch our dirty, dangerous dependence on oil—Californians more so than most, with 10 counties among those with the most polluted air in the nation. With plug-in hybrids, plug-in electrics and other zero-emission vehicles, we can begin to kick our oil addiction.

New emission standards will save 11.6 billion gallons

In April, President Obama adopted new auto emission standards, which will boost national fuel economy standards to 35.5 miles per gallon (mpg) by 2015, cut national fuel use by 40 percent and cut oil use 11.6 billion gallons by 2016—an amount equal to half of the oil we import from Saudi Arabia each year.

California’s leadership made this historic move possible. The new national standards are based on our Clean Cars Program, established in 2002, and since adopted by 13 other states.

Next step: 1 million zero-emissions vehicles

As California prepares to update our landmark Clean Cars Program for the next decade, Environment California is working to raise the bar again. This time, we’re calling for standards that will put 1 million ultra-clean, zero-emission cars and trucks on California roads by 2025. Zero pollution cars would have a profound impact:

- Every day, Californians spend about $129 million on gasoline and diesel; and 97 percent of California’s transportation relies on oil.

- Every year, California’s air pollution cuts short an estimated 9,200 lives.

- Our report “Clean Cars in California,” found that despite progress, cars and trucks still account for 20 percent of our state’s smog-forming pollution.

“Air pollution is a major public health concern, and every child growing up in California deserves clean air. Environment California is a valued partner in our work to reduce air pollution that makes it hard to breathe, especially for people with asthma and other lung diseases.”

— Bonnie Holmes-Gen
Senior Director, Air Quality & Public Policy, American Lung Association
Toxic-free homes

No one should have to worry about toxic chemicals in their home—whether it’s in nail polish or their children’s rubber ducks and baby bottles. But there are currently over 80,000 chemicals on the market in the U.S., the vast majority of which lack even basic information on health effects and toxicity. And there are chemicals that do have probable links to cancer, birth defects, reproductive impacts, and other health problems but are still on store shelves.
New protections against chemicals: Polish without poison, toys without toxics

Chemical policy is complicated, but the desire to protect one's family from exposure to toxic chemicals is very simple. At Environment California, we have systematically highlighted individual “bad actor” chemicals and have worked either to ban them, to convince manufacturers to stop using them, or to educate the public about their dangers. The ultimate goal is a comprehensive chemical policy that minimizes all toxic threats, which is the thinking behind the state's landmark Green Chemistry Initiative.

San Francisco salons to use less toxic nail polish

There are about 200 nail salons in San Francisco, and many workers are immigrant women of child-bearing age. They inhale toxic nail polish fumes all day long. Joining with nail salon workers and trade groups, we launched a campaign to take the poison out of the polish.

- In 2010, we co-sponsored citywide legislation to encourage nail salon owners to carry only nail polish free of three toxic chemicals—formaldehyde, toluene and dibutyl phthalate.

- Advocate Pam Palitz organized a nail polish party at a cosmetology college in San Francisco offering toxic-free manicures, free of charge. The event helped call attention to a safer nail salon ordinance introduced that day to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors by Board President David Chiu.

- We highlighted a non-toxic nail polish manufacturer in our report, “Green Chemistry at Work,” which described a dozen California companies whose profits are growing as they use innovative principles to reduce their use of toxics.

Cadmium banned from children’s jewelry

Toxic chemicals do not belong in our air, our water, or our consumer products. And it goes without saying that they do not belong in our children’s toys. This year, we helped pass a new California law that bans the use of cadmium, a heavy metal, in children’s jewelry.

California led the nation in restricting the use of lead in children’s and adult jewelry. Federal legislation, modeled on our state law, passed in 2009. However, some manufacturers began to use toxic cadmium instead—which can damage kidney functioning.

Since the inception of our Environmental Health program, we have won bans on toxic chemical compounds known as PDBEs in children’s clothes and furniture, and phthalates in children’s toys; and we’ve taken on Bisphenol-A in baby bottles and formaldehyde in nursery furniture.

“There is no reason that salon workers need to be exposed to these dangerous chemicals when manufacturers can easily take them out of nail polish. We’ve appreciated the partnership of Environment California with the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative in the effort to address this issue.”

Julia Liou
Founder of the California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative
For three months, we watched in horror as BP’s Deepwater Horizon rig spewed more than 200 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Environment California joined the other members of Environment America, our national federation, in calling on President Obama to hold BP fully accountable for containing, cleaning up and paying for the spill. We also asked the president to reinstate the moratorium on new offshore drilling. Thousands joined us in our call to action.

400,000 stood strong against new drilling

Over the last few years, we’ve watched some protections against offshore drilling off the California coast dwindle. Last year, Gov. Schwarzenegger reversed his previous position and endorsed an offshore drilling plan. In March, President Obama announced plans to lift a federal moratorium on drilling off much of the Atlantic, Gulf and Alaskan coasts.

- In June, we joined our allies in delivering 400,000 comments to the administration calling for reinstatement of the moratorium on new drilling.

- Our members also took part in Hands Across the Sand events, including events in Santa Monica, Santa Cruz and San Diego, declaring our outrage at the BP tragedy and drawing a line in the sand against new drilling.

After our work to demonstrate public concern with the dangers of drilling on display in the Gulf, the governor declared he no long supported drilling. In December, the Obama administration reversed course, announcing it would not allow new drilling off the Pacific, Atlantic and Florida’s Gulf coasts for seven years.
**Foundation support**

Environment California Research & Policy Center is a 501(c)(3) organization. We are dedicated to protecting our air, water and open spaces. We investigate problems, craft solutions, educate the public and decision-makers, and help the public make their voices heard in local, state and national debates over the quality of our environment and our lives.

Contributions to the Environment California Research & Policy Center are tax-deductible. To find out more, contact Dan Jacobson at (916) 492-7070. The Environment California Research & Policy Center would like to thank the following foundations for supporting our work in 2010.

- Arntz Family Foundation
- Calaliver Foundation
- Ceil and Michael E. Pulitzer Foundation
- California Wellness Foundation
- Colwell Family Distributable Fund at The San Diego Foundation
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- Lindemann Foundation
- Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund
- Louise Berg Fund for Giving
- Marin Community Foundation
- Michael Lee Environmental Foundation
- Moncton Family Fund
- Nancy Olmsted Kaehr and Michael Kaehr Fund at The San Diego Foundation
- Rau Abhari Fund
- Resources Legacy Fund Foundation
- Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund
- Rosenthal Family Foundation
- Serena Fund of Tides Foundation
- Shirley Fund
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation
- Streisand Foundation
- Tagney Jones Family Fund at The Seattle Foundation
- The Public Health Trust
- The San Francisco Foundation
- Tides Foundation
- TomKat Charitable Trust

We sadly note the passing of our great supporter, Molly Gaylor. Mrs. Gaylor, a member of CALPIRG since 1993 with a particular devotion to the environment, has left a very generous gift from her IRA funds to Environment California, the new home of CALPIRG’s environmental work.

**Planning for a cleaner, greener, healthier future**

Environment California and Environment California Research & Policy Center gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities to support our work. Your gift will assure that we can continue to protect California’s air, water and open spaces for future generations. For more information, call 1-800-841-7299 or send an e-mail to: plannedgiving@EnvironmentCalifornia.org.

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