



Fall Report

Outreach effort secures victory in L.A.

Nearly 1 in 3 Californians soon to be plastic bag-free

The wasteful plastic bags that pollute the Pacific and harm wildlife are now banned in 50 California communities, including Los Angeles, thanks to an all-hands-on-deck effort by thousands of Environment California members, supporters and staff.

“Just two years ago, the chemical company lobbyists thought they had us beat,” said Legislative Director Dan Jacobson. “Today, nearly 33 percent of Californians live in communities that have banned plastic bags, and we’re closer than ever to banning the bags statewide.”

The biggest bag ban yet

In the weeks leading up to the crucial vote in Los Angeles, our outreach staff helped mobilize more than 10,000 Angelenos to send messages to City Council, and volunteers generated more than 1,000 phone calls to Council members.

On the day of the vote, we held a rally at City Hall and then testified at the hearing, hand-delivering thousands of bag ban petitions alongside our friends at Heal the Bay, Green Vets, Homeboy Industries, Surfrider International and Hollywood supporters including Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Rachelle Lefevre, and Amy Smart.

With grassroots power and a lot of hard work, we were able to push past the chemical industry and score our biggest win yet to keep plastic out of the Pacific.

Getting to 50

Over the course of the summer, we spoke face-to-face with more than 180,000



Staff

▲ At LA’s City Hall the day of the bag ban vote: (l-r) Legislative Director Dan Jacobson rallied the crowd; Arts and Culture Outreach Coordinator Marshall Wright checked in with City Councilman Paul Krekorian; Environment California supporters turned out en masse to back the bill.

people up and down the state about the threat plastic poses to our ocean. On July 10, Santa Cruz became the fiftieth California community to ban plastic bags.

Before it’s too late

New research from the Scripps Oceanographic Institute shows that plastic pollution in the Pacific has increased 100-fold

in the last 40 years, and that plastic pollution is altering the ocean’s ecosystem.

With 50 local bag bans won, we have the momentum. But with plastic pollution killing turtles, birds and other wildlife each year, a statewide bag ban can’t come soon enough.

Trey Ratcliff/Creative Commons



Election 2012

Who’s defending our air, water, open spaces?

As Election Day approaches, visit www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org to see which politicians and candidates have a track record of voting for bills that protect our environment.



To our members

Politicians in D.C. may be bitterly divided, but Californians agree: The Pacific Coast, Yosemite, our state parks and all of the beautiful places that make our state so special are vital to our way of life and deserve to be protected.

We've seen what a difference the right leadership can make: Since President Obama took office, the Environmental Protection Agency has implemented smart new standards to cut the carbon pollution that fuels global warming, to keep mercury out of our air and water, and to reduce the amount of soot in the air. Federal fuel efficiency standards will average 54.5 mpg by 2025.

Of course, much work remains to be done. But with election season in full swing, we have a wonderful opportunity to remind our elected officials that we care about the environment—and vote accordingly.

Thanks for being with us,

Dan Jacobson
Legislative Director

Recent action

Bringing the climate change message home

This past summer, we spoke face-to-face with thousands of people across the state about the threat global warming poses to our economy and public health. Our data show that eight in 10 Californians live in counties that experienced federally-declared weather disasters between 2006 and 2011, and that global warming loads the dice for more extreme weather events.

To give ourselves the best chance of protecting future generations from the worst consequences of global warming, scientists have said the U.S. and other developed countries need to cut our carbon emissions so that by 2020 we're emitting 25-40 percent less carbon into the air than we were in 1990.

We're building public support to help our state get more energy from the wind and sun, burn less fossil fuel, and get cleaner-running cars on the road.

A reprieve for state parks

All but one of the 70 state parks targeted for closure in last year's budget will remain open—at least for now.

The agreement was reached after tens of thousands of Environment California members emailed Gov. Jerry Brown, urging him to protect our parks. Hundreds sent photos or financial contributions to run a full-page ad in the Capitol Weekly, grabbing the governor's attention. More than 100 business owners joined Environment California in making the case to the governor that parks are important to the state's economy: Parks contribute to millions in tourism revenue each year. "This is a real win for the state of California," said Dan Jacobson, Environment California's legislative director. "The next step is to secure stable funding that will protect our parks permanently."



nk30/Creative Commons

Timely action from Environment California members helped keep nearly 70 state parks from closing this past summer. We're working for a stable funding source that will keep our parks open and in public hands.

Solar victory could triple clean energy output

California can add as much as two gigawatts of solar power to roofs across the state, thanks in large part to the 60,000 Californians who urged the California Public Utilities Commission to expand the state's successful net metering program.

Net metering is the ability to send solar electricity back to the grid during sunny days for use by neighboring homes and businesses, and draw from the grid on credit during the night. It is a simple, proven way to help make going solar affordable for consumers, while incentivizing energy efficiency and the generation of pollution-free solar electricity during hot, smoggy summer days.

Net metering brings many benefits...

Thanks in large part to net metering, California currently generates more than one gigawatt of power from rooftop solar—enough to power at least 250,000 homes. That's more than every other state in the U.S., and more than all but five nations in the world.

The environmental and economic consequences are enormous: Each megawatt of solar installed prevents the emission of nearly 700 pounds of smog-forming pollution. And net metering has fostered the development of a robust solar industry, which is putting more than 25,000 Californians to work all across the state.

"Solar power continues to be warmly embraced by Californians of all walks of life," said Michelle Kinman, clean energy advocate with Environment California. "Support for net metering, along with the solar market itself, continues to grow from Fresno to San Francisco and Sacramento to San Diego."

...but utilities threaten progress

Unfortunately, the utility companies that benefit from selling dirty, old-fashioned power have a vested interest in limiting net metering, and we saw their lobbyists attempt to do just that during the CPUC decision-making process. To fend off the attacks, Environment Cali-

fornia partnered with groups including 350.org, CREDO Action, Sierra Club, Solar Energy Industries Association, Union of Concerned Scientists and Vote Solar in order to show resounding public support for net metering in the weeks leading up to the CPUC vote. The response was overwhelming.

Letters to the CPUC from all over the state made clear that Californians value the many benefits that net metering is already providing to the state—cleaner air, reduced global warming pollution, and tens of thousands of jobs—and that it is imperative to keep California's bright spot shining.

To a million solar roofs—and more

Looking ahead, net metering is a critical tool to fulfill Gov. Jerry Brown's vision of generating 12 GW of rooftop solar in California—the equivalent of a million solar roofs and then some.

"With this vote, the CPUC has responded to an outpouring of support from tens of thousands of Californians who want the state to build on the pioneering vision, commitment and investment that has made California the nation's solar leader," Kinman said.



Has your representative signed on for solar?

Eight members of Congress, 38 members of the California State Legislature and more than 50 local officials have rallied behind the call for more solar on rooftops across the state.

Visit www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org to see if your representatives are on the list.

Pedro Castellano/Stock Photo



Katrina Leigh/Shutterstock

Green Future Fund

A new way to honor supporters

Environment California is proud to announce the establishment of our Green Future Fund.

The Green Future Fund will honor a special group of our donors: those who are ensuring a greener future by remembering Environment California or our sister group, Environment California Research & Policy Center, in their wills, life insurance policies or retirement accounts.

These legacy donors are helping to ensure that Environment California will continue to flourish—protecting the places we love and the values we share—for years to come. "We appreciate all of our supporters," said Environment California's Dan Jacobson. "But I feel a special gratitude toward those members who have the vision and generosity to plan a gift that will protect our state's environment beyond their own lifetimes."

Establishing a legacy gift also offers donors a few advantages. Some supporters wish they could give more, but can't right now. Including Environment California in your estate plan costs nothing today, while ensuring support for our mission in the future. Legacy gifts may also offer tax benefits. (Your professional advisor can help you determine any tax advantage.)

As a Green Future Fund donor, with your permission, we'll recognize your gift in our annual report and other publications, helping to inspire other members to make their own legacy gifts. Of course, you may also choose to give anonymously. Either way, any specific details you choose to provide about your gift will remain confidential.

If you'd like to become a member of the Green Future Fund, or if you just have questions, call our planned giving coordinator, Marilyn Tesauro, at 1-800-841-7299 or send an email to her at: PlannedGiving@EnvironmentCalifornia.org.

Patrick Redgate, President, AMECO Solar

3435 Wilshire Blvd. #385
 Los Angeles, CA 90010
 Phone: (213) 251-3688

Environment California

Address service requested

NON-PROFIT
 ORG
 U.S. POSTAGE PAID
 BROCKTON, MA
 PERMIT NO. 430



Fall Report

VOLUME 10 | NO. 2 | 2012

Environment California

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 California. We focus exclusively on protecting California'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.

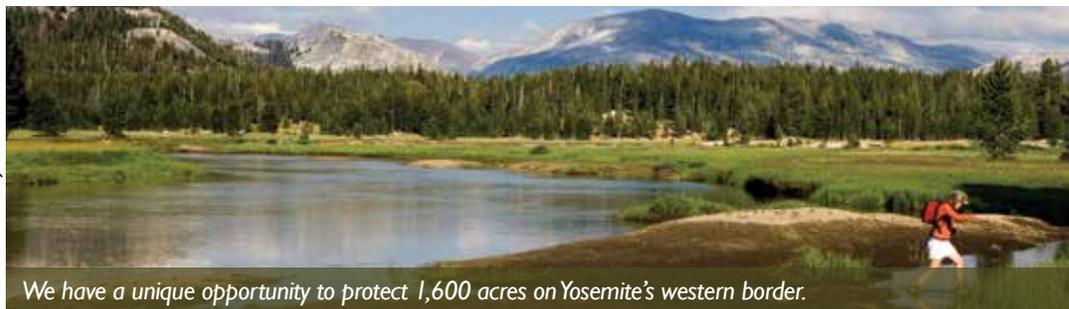
A dream come true for Yosemite

Environment California has been working for years to keep toxic uranium mining away from Yosemite's borders. This past summer, we learned of an exciting opportunity to further protect and enhance this amazing place—and create an unbroken wildlife corridor from Yosemite to the Sierra National Forest, protecting Pacific fisher, Sierra red fox, Cooper's hawks and Great Grey Owls.

When the legendary John Muir died in 1914, his dream for Yosemite was only partially achieved: Nearly 1,600 acres of forests, meadows, rocky ridges and streams along the park's western boundary were left unprotected.

Now, with this land increasingly vulnerable to development, we're joining our friends at Pacific Forest Trust to advocate for HR 5709, a bill to expand the boundaries of Yosemite to fulfill Muir's original vision for the park—just in time for Yosemite's 150th birthday next year.

Natalia Bratslavsky/iStock Photo



We have a unique opportunity to protect 1,600 acres on Yosemite's western border.

Paid for by Environment California, www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org. Not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.

Design: Public Interest GRFX, (215) 985-1113

Editor: Dan Jacobson. Contributors: Justin Boyles, Bernadette Del Chiaro, Mac Farrell, Michelle Kinman and Sharon Kunz.

Printed on recycled paper.