Progress made on campaign to save bees

Your support gives bees a fighting chance

The repercussions of a dying bee population impact our food chain immensely—no other animal species plays a more important role in pollinating the fruits and vegetables we take for granted on a daily basis.

Yet for too long, we’ve been allowing the use of too many bee-killing pesticides on our farms and fields.

In order to “save” our farms and food from pests, we’ve risked destroying the bees that make our farms and food possible. How long are we willing to keep taking that risk? Especially when we rely on bees for so much of our food and more bee species are facing extinction?

You can help ban toxic pesticides

Our citizen outreach staff has spoken with more than 833,000 people from Washington state to Washington, D.C., mobilizing more than 330,000 supporters to call on the Environmental Protection Agency to ban the worst bee-killing pesticides.

And we’ve made progress worth celebrating! Several states have taken action to limit the use of neonicotinoids, or neonicos, one of the main chemical threats to bees.

In Maryland, the Pollinator Protection Act limits the use of neonicos to those that have been trained to use the pesticide; and last fall Minnesota announced plans to require growers who want to apply neonicos to their crops or plants to provide a “verification of need” to the Department of Agriculture before doing so.

The next step for bee conservation

Connecticut, Oregon and other states are also taking important steps, but at the end of the day, we need the EPA to act in order to ensure we aren’t killing off bees with unnecessary pesticides. You can help make this a reality with your continued support of Environment California.

You also may have seen the news that seven bee species were added to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s endangered species list for the first time ever. This is just one more sign that we’re running out of time to ban bee-killing pesticides and save the bees from extinction.

we need your help to protect the bees. Take action online to urge the EPA to ban neonicos:

www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org

We rely on bees to pollinate most of the food we take for granted every day—from almonds to apples to coffee.
A conservation legacy we can all be proud of

Over his presidency, President Obama built up a robust conservation legacy, designating new national monuments and protecting special places across the nation.

We’re proud to have supported the president in these efforts by mobilizing members and supporters to stand up for their favorite natural places, and calling for the protection of national and state parks from threats like mining and drilling. And we couldn’t have done any of this without the support of members like you.

Last August, on the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, President Obama topped off his legacy by creating the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument to protect more than 87,000 acres in Maine. With your support, we also called on the president to protect the unique natural and cultural heritage of the Grand Canyon from uranium mining. In the new year, thanks to your support, we’ll continue standing up for wilderness areas and the range of species living there.

Fighting climate change one car at a time

With your support, Environment California Research & Policy Center continues to lead the battle against climate change by transforming the ways in which we get from point A to point B. In the United States, transportation is the largest source of air and climate pollution. If we don’t rapidly exchange 20th century gas-guzzling vehicles for clean electric cars, trucks and buses, we will not achieve the carbon emissions that scientists agree are needed to stave off the worst impact of climate change.

For three years, Environment California Research & Policy Center has run the Charge Ahead California campaign, working to create the tipping point for electric vehicles by building public demand for clean transportation options and making electric vehicles accessible for Californians of all income levels. California already has more than 250,000 electric cars on the road as of this year. It’s a strong start—and we could not have done it without the support of thousands of like-minded Californians all pushing for carbon-free transportation options.
American society aspires to protect children, the sick and the elderly. With fracking, we’ve sunk to putting vulnerable populations at risk instead of making the wholesale shift to conservation and renewable energy.

In nine of the most heavily drilled states—Arkansas, California, Colorado, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and West Virginia—oil and gas companies have drilled at least 160,000 fracked wells since 2005.

An Environment California Research & Policy Center report released in October, “Dangerous and Close,” reveals that there are 1,947 child care facilities, 1,376 schools, 236 nursing care providers and 103 hospitals within a one-mile radius of fracked wells in those nine states.

**More than 650,000 children at risk**

One of the most shocking findings from the report is that more than 650,000 kindergarten through twelfth grade children attend school within one mile of a fracked well—within two miles, that number is more than 1.4 million. This is simply inexcusable, especially considering that children’s developing respiratory, immune and nervous systems are more susceptible to damage from toxic chemicals than adults.

And it’s not just toxic chemicals; fracking creates a range of threats to public health and safety. These include explosions at well sites; the potential for spills and well failures that can contaminate drinking water; soot and smog pollution that reduces lung function among healthy people, triggers asthma attacks, and has been linked to increases in school absences; and much more.

Something this dangerous has no place in our country. The fact that it’s happening so close to our most vulnerable populations makes it clear that we need to ban fracking altogether.

**You can help ban fracking**

Until fracking ends, state and federal officials should take action to protect public health and the environment from the impacts of fracking. Existing fracked wells should be closed, and the federal government should close loopholes that exempt the fracking industry from key elements of our best environmental laws.

At the same time, all levels of government should act to accelerate our transition to renewable energy, including investments in energy efficiency and increasing development of clean, renewable energy sources. By supporting Environment California Research & Policy Center, you’re standing with members and supporters across the country in calling for a 100 percent renewable energy future.

The legacy of hydrocarbon extraction and the rapid spread of fracking across the U.S. over the last decade have caused widespread harm to our environment and our health. By limiting fracking and ensuring that all oil and gas production is tightly regulated, the nation can take the first steps toward healing the damage.
You won: Californians vote to ban plastic bags!

In November, California became the first state to ban plastic bags. Your membership helped Environment California advocate for a YES vote on Prop 67 to uphold SB 270, requiring retailers to phase out single-use plastic bags. The vote to fully implement the statewide ban won 52-48.

Thanks to your support, Environment California held 15 press conferences, sent countless emails and Facebook posts, and helped organize hundreds of local groups to outreach to millions of Californians to raise awareness around Prop 67. On campuses across the state, our coalition partner CALPIRG Students recruited more than 500 volunteers to educate more than 22,000 students about Prop 67, and turned out thousands of students to the polls.

Thanks to all the people who helped out with emails, phone calls, posts on the web, and many other attention-grabbing avenues—our efforts prevailed, and now California will reduce the amount of plastic polluting our environment.

Support our efforts

Learn more and take action on our priority campaigns at:
www.EnvironmentCalifornia.org

Supporters of the bag ban joined Environment California Director Dan Jacobson (left) at a press conference on Prop 67 at the Unitarian church in Fresno, Calif.