

Silver Run Falls



# Program Report

A recap of our work in 2014 for our members



## To our members

**"With your support, we've taken on challenges to protect our waters from polluters and made huge strides to tackle global warming."**



**Dave Rogers**  
Field Director

*Looking back on the past year, we have a lot to be proud of. Environment North Carolina has taken on challenges to protect our waters from polluters and have made huge strides toward tackling global warming. And we couldn't have done it without your support for our environment and the places we love.*

*In 2014, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed groundbreaking new rules to curb carbon emissions from power plants—the single largest source of global warming pollution in the country. With the rule facing strong opposition from big polluters, we turned out to public hearings and testified in support of the EPA's Clean Power Plan. We're working hard to protect our children from the worst consequences of global warming.*



**John Rumppler**  
Senior Attorney

*We also continued our work to protect our rivers and lakes. Last February, the Dan River coal ash spill highlighted just how vulnerable our rivers are to pollution. And although the governor and leadership in the General Assembly promised to make coal ash cleanup a priority, it took until September to finalize a bill, which fell well short of the comprehensive plan they promised. In an effort to hold Gov. Pat McCrory accountable, we collected thousands of petitions demanding that he clean up all the coal ash pits across the state.*

*On these campaigns and more, your support and activism is crucial. Thank you so much for making it all possible.*



**Liz Kazal**  
Field Associate

**Elizabeth Ouzts**  
State Director

# Protecting the Blue Ridge

With the Land and Water Conservation Fund facing funding cuts year after year, and set to expire altogether as early as 2015, we worked this past year to show decision-makers that the public wants to protect our state's parks and other open spaces, like the Blue Ridge Parkway. Environment North Carolina and our national federation talked with more than 150,000 people from across the country about the threats facing our public lands.

## 50,000 joined our call to restore conservation funding

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is our nation's most important conservation program, and helps protect critical ecosystems and the places we go to enjoy the outdoors. But if Congress eliminates this successful fund, places like the Blue Ridge Parkway and Cape Lookout National Seashore will be left with less protection against pollution, logging and overdevelopment. In 2014, Environment North Carolina raised public awareness of the threats facing our parks and open spaces and mobilized thousands to fight back against this reckless proposal to eliminate funding for the LWCF.

- Over just a few months in 2014, our national federation collected nearly 50,000 signatures and more than 250 photo petitions of citizens holding signs calling for restored conservation funding. We mobilized small business owners, outdoor enthusiasts, and conservationists to take action and tell Congress not to zero out funding for the LWCF.
- In addition to citizens, 200 state legislators also joined our call for the president to permanently protect special places not just in North Carolina but around the country—and he did. In 2014, President Obama declared the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks in New Mexico a national monument, and expanded the California Coastal National Monument to include Stornetta Public Lands.



# Global Warming Solutions

Together, we've made hard-won progress in the race to protect our children from global warming. In June, after 6 million Americans urged President Obama to limit carbon pollution from dirty power plants, the Environmental Protection Agency finally proposed a bold Clean Power Plan. In 2014, Environment North Carolina defended the EPA's plan from attacks by those in Congress who deny climate science and their fossil fuel industry backers.

## A groundbreaking step to tackle global warming

On June 2, the EPA took a historic step in the fight against global warming by proposing the Clean Power Plan. America's power plants are the number one source of the dangerous carbon pollution that is fueling global warming, and cleaning up power plants is most important step the U.S. can take to reduce this threat.

Environment North Carolina enthusiastically applauded the proposal, which would limit, for the first time, carbon pollution from power plants, reducing this pollution 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.

"We're already paying the price for global warming in unusually extreme drought, storms, floods and wildfires," said Dave Rogers, Environment North Carolina field director. "If we want to protect our children's future, we need to limit global warming pollution, and the EPA's Clean Power Plan does just that. Limiting global warming pollution from dirty power plants and transitioning to clean, renewable energy are exactly the actions we've been waiting for. Now, we're focused on making sure the proposal is as strong as it can be and polluters don't slow this critical step."



## Staff, supporters turned out to back Clean Power Plan

Following the announcement, Environment North Carolina's Global Warming Solutions campaign, waged together with our national federation, has been connecting the dots between the consequences of global warming that are already being felt across America and the meaningful impact of the Clean Power Plan.

- In June, the EPA held hearings on the Clean Power Plan across the country, including in Atlanta and Washington, D.C. Our staff testified and helped turn out citizen climate defenders to show support for the plan.
- Last fall, we also held local citizen hearings on the Clean Power Plan in Chapel Hill and Charlotte, where our members and supporters again joined us to testify in favor of the rule.

Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center's report, "America's Dirtiest Power Plants," released in September, found that our country's coal-fired power plants produced more carbon pollution than the entire economies of Russia, India, Japan, or any other nation besides China.



Left – Environment America Executive Director Margie Alt (left) testified to the EPA on our behalf, alongside Hal Quinn, President & CEO of the National Mining Association. Right – EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy announced new limits on power plant pollution.

# Stand Up for Carolina Rivers

In 2014, North Carolina experienced first hand just how vulnerable our rivers are to pollution. In February, 39,000 tons of toxic coal ash waste spilled into the Dan River. Environment North Carolina set out to defend our rivers by knocking on doors across the state to educate people about the threats our waters face, and gathering thousands of comments to support closing polluter-won loopholes in the Clean Water Act.

## **In the wake of disasters, a renewed call for clean water**

From the devastating coal ash spill into the Dan River in February, to Gov. Pat McCrory opening North Carolina to fracking in June, it's clearer than ever that restoring protections to North Carolina's waters is crucial.

On March 25, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposed a rule to close loopholes in the Clean Water Act that have left 135,000 miles of headwaters and streams across North Carolina, and the drinking water for 117 million Americans, at risk for more than a decade.

More than 800,000 people sent public comments to the EPA backing the clean water proposal, with 200,000 coming from supporters of Environment North Carolina and our national federation. We also sought to engage influential constituencies, including local elected officials, family farmers and small business owners.

On the heels of the EPA's announcement, opposition from polluters intensified. As 2014 drew to a close, we worked to refute the industry's message and show senators who were on the fence that the public wants our country to move forward on clean water, not backward.

"If we want our waterways to be clean for future generations to enjoy, we must restore Clean Water Act protections now," said Liz Kazal, field associate for Environment North Carolina.

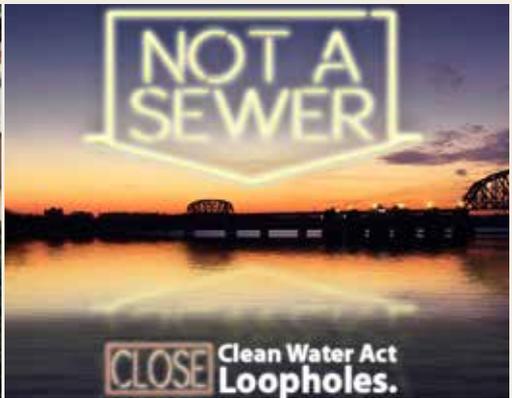
## North Carolinians stood up to big polluters

While tragic, the coal ash spill demonstrated just one threat to our rivers. Fracking uses millions of gallons of water and laces them with toxic chemicals, putting waterways like the Deep River and the Eno at risk. Unbelievably, in addition to opening North Carolina to fracking, state leaders also considered weakening as many as 50 clean water rules already on the books.

That's why Environment North Carolina knocked on more than 50,000 doors to educate people about the threats to our rivers, and collected more than 10,000 petitions demanding that the General Assembly and the governor protect our waters by cleaning up coal ash pits, reinstating the moratorium on fracking, and strengthening and enforcing our state's water quality standards.

## 8.9 million pounds of chemicals dumped

In 2014, Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center also released our report, "Wasting our Waterways," which revealed that 8.9 million pounds of toxic chemicals were dumped into North Carolina's waterways in 2012 alone, highlighting the urgent need to protect our rivers, lakes and streams. The report earned media coverage in Raleigh, Charlotte, and western North Carolina.



Left – Across the country, people joined Environment North Carolina's efforts to close loopholes in the Clean Water Act. Right – Environment North Carolina's online outreach efforts helped gather thousands of comments to the EPA.



# Repower North Carolina

2014 was a breakout year for solar and wind power. Another home or business in the U.S. goes solar every four minutes, and the rate keeps getting faster. The country now generates enough wind energy to power 15 million homes. By crafting and promoting local and state policies, Environment North Carolina has played a major role in the growth of clean energy in the state and continues to work to defend and expand pro-solar and pro-wind initiatives.

## Fueled by smart policies, solar power tripled in three years

Too much of our energy comes from dirty sources that wreak havoc on our environment. But by tapping our vast renewable energy resources, we can break our dependence on fossil fuels and move to clean energy that's virtually limitless. In 2014, Environment North Carolina called on our decision-makers to embrace solar and wind power, and enact policies and programs to help repower our state.

Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center's report, "Lighting the Way: The Top Ten States that Helped Drive America's Solar Energy Boom in 2013," found that solar power tripled across the country in the past three years, thanks to strong policies that Environment North Carolina helped win.

- North Carolina came in at an impressive #5 in our list of states with the most installed solar per capita. While we've made strong progress in recent years, we still have a long way to go: Most of our energy still comes from dirty sources such as coal and oil.
- The report found that the states with the most installed solar shared many policies, including net-metering programs, strong interconnection policies, and strong renewable energy standards, with solar carve-outs and accessible financing options.



## Leaders banded together behind offshore wind

North Carolina has more potential for offshore wind than any other Atlantic state, but this year, a new report released by Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center, “Catching the Wind: State Actions Needed to Seize the Golden Opportunity of Atlantic Offshore Wind Power,” found that North Carolina is lagging in our commitment to making offshore wind a reality. In 2014, we called on state leaders to set a bold goal for offshore wind power and implement policies to help the state achieve it.

- State and federal officials have already designated more than 1.5 million acres off the Atlantic Coast for offshore wind power development, and more are being considered. These areas could produce more than 16,000 megawatts of virtually pollution-free electricity—as much as 16 fossil-fuel burning power plants.
- North Carolina’s state leadership is lagging. Other than passing a renewable energy standard in 2007, our state hasn’t taken any significant steps to encourage offshore wind development. Instead, Gov. Pat McCrory has favored opening North Carolina to fracking.
- Environment North Carolina is challenging the state’s leaders to advance critical contracts for offshore wind projects; ensure an environmentally responsible leasing process; and invest in key research, initiatives, and infrastructure.

### Top 10 States in Solar Electricity Capacity Installed During 2013 per Capita

1. Arizona
2. Hawaii
3. California
4. Massachusetts
- 5. North Carolina**
6. New Jersey
7. New Mexico
8. Vermont
9. Nevada
10. Delaware

North Carolina’s Ranking:



**#5**