



# Fall Report

## Some much-needed good news for N.C. rivers

### EPA to restore protections for more than half of streams

From the devastating coal ash spill into the Dan River in February, to the decision to open the state to fracking in June, North Carolina's rivers, lakes and streams were in desperate need of some good news.

That's just what the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency delivered earlier this year, when it announced a rule to restore Clean Water Act protections to more than 135,000 miles of headwaters and streams across North Carolina.

But oil companies, developers, and agribusinesses are fighting tooth and nail to thwart the EPA's effort. That's why Environment North Carolina focused this summer on getting the proposed rules, which affect more than half of the state's rivers and streams and the drinking water for more than 4 million, across the finish line.

From the Nantahala River, to Jordan Lake, to the Albemarle Sound, our waters are critical sources of drinking water and great places to fish and paddle. But far too many of our drinking water sources fail basic water quality standards, in part because the rivers and streams that flow into them aren't guaranteed protection from toxic coal ash, development, drilling and other harms.

### Most progress in a decade

More than a decade ago, two polluter-led Supreme Court decisions, created loopholes in the Clean Water Act that left the fate of more than 2 million miles of wetlands,



Zach Fraley

▲ Great Blue Heron

headwaters, and streams across the country at risk, opening the door for polluters, developers and drillers to treat our water like a private sewer.

In March, after hearing from hundreds of thousands of citizens, and hundreds of farmers, small businesses, and local elected officials, the EPA announced a rule to close these loopholes once and for all. Doing so would mean the most progress for clean water in more than a decade.

Unfortunately, polluters are lobbying hard in Congress against the measure and spreading misinformation about its consequences.

Already, Environment North Carolina has helped hundreds of people make phone calls into Sen. Kay Hagan's office and organized dozens of groups in support of the rule. This fall, we are knocking on doors and talking to thousands of citizens to keep up the drumbeat of support.



Staff

### take action

To take action to protect North Carolina's waters from pollution, visit: [www.EnvironmentNorthCarolina.org](http://www.EnvironmentNorthCarolina.org)

◀ Environment North Carolina campaign staff with Rep. David Price.

## To our members

This past summer was a whirlwind. Environment North Carolina citizen outreach staff talked to people across the state and collected thousands of petition signatures to protect North Carolina's rivers. We've made so much progress, and we owe that success to members like you.

Now, as fall gets underway, it's important to remember another aspect of the movement for a cleaner, greener North Carolina: electing leaders who will do the right thing for our environment. Elections can have huge implications, and if our elected officials are willing to stand up for clean air, clean water and our open spaces, we stand a far better chance of winning lasting improvements.

So, if you haven't already, I encourage you to make plans to vote, and to bring family and friends with you to the polls. It's our environment and our future—let's get out there and vote!



Elizabeth Ouzts  
State Director,  
Environment North Carolina

## Recent action

### How did your legislator vote?

This summer, state legislative leaders orchestrated another year of brutal attacks on the environment, from ushering in fracking to reducing protections for wetlands and streams. To make matters worse, when pro-environment lawmakers sought to lessen the damage of these measures, leaders in the House and the Senate used parliamentary procedures to block them.

We developed a “report card” to take stock of which decision-makers have a track record of voting for the health of the environment. In all, 34 Senators and 79 Representatives earned failing grades, while a total of 15 legislators consistently stood up for our air and water, earning a 100 percent.



### report card

To find out how your legislator voted, visit [www.EnvironmentNorthCarolina.org](http://www.EnvironmentNorthCarolina.org)

### Gov. McCrory and Speaker Tillis usher in fracking

Gov. Pat McCrory and the General Assembly passed a law, lifting the state's fracking moratorium in June. The new law allows still-incomplete fracking rules drafted by the Mining and Energy Commission to become effective by default early next spring, and removes a provision that would require another “affirmative vote” of lawmakers before permits could be issued, breaking a promise made two years ago by the General Assembly.

The commission, which is dominated by oil and gas interests, has drafted, but not yet completed, 120 rules to regulate drilling. Among their inadequacies, the proposed regulations don't address air pollution from fracking, and would allow toxic wastewater to be stored in pits, a waste disposal method that's proved hazardous when used for coal ash.

“Fracking has contaminated drinking water across the country,” said Elizabeth Ouzts, state director for Environment North Carolina. “Now, state leaders have put our rivers and the drinking water for more than 2 million in jeopardy.”

**Invest fossil fuel free.  
Because her future matters.**



**GREEN CENTURY FUNDS**

Get started at  
[GreenCentury.com/myguide](http://GreenCentury.com/myguide)

*You should carefully consider the Funds' investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses before investing. To obtain a Prospectus that contains this and other information about the Funds, please email [info@greencentury.com](mailto:info@greencentury.com), call 1-800-93-GREEN, or visit [www.GreenCentury.com](http://www.GreenCentury.com). Please read the Prospectus carefully before investing. The Green Century Funds are distributed by UMB Distribution Services, LLC. 11/13.*

Left: Hal Goodtree, Right: NFS.gov



▲ Gov. Pat McCrory signed a law this June to lift the state's fracking moratorium.

# Is offshore wind within reach for North Carolina?

A new report from Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center and the National Wildlife Federation shows that North Carolina could reap tremendous benefits from offshore wind, but is falling behind other Atlantic coast states in developing this non-polluting, renewable resource.

Our report, “Catching the Wind: State Actions Needed to Seize the Golden Opportunity of Atlantic Offshore Wind Power,” analyzes and compares the actions by Atlantic coast states toward progress on offshore wind.

## We’re falling behind

Despite having more offshore wind potential than any Atlantic state, North Carolina ranks in the bottom tier on its commitment to making offshore wind a reality.

The report cites lagging state leadership as a principle reason. Other than passing a renewable energy standard in 2007, North Carolina hasn’t taken any significant steps to encourage offshore wind development.

“North Carolina has enough offshore wind potential to power the entire state,” said Dave Rogers, Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center’s field director. “Unfortunately, Gov. Pat McCrory and North Carolina’s leaders haven’t taken the necessary steps to turn that potential into reality.”

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—making offshore wind an attractive option for states developing plans to shift to clean energy to achieve the targets in Clean Power Plan, recently proposed by the Environmental Protection Agency.

## Time for action

“The thought of clean electric power generated by the wind is not futuristic,” said Wilmington City Council Member Kevin O’Grady at the report release. “It is technology already in use in many countries to supplement other traditional sources of power. In the U.S., we have lagged behind in deploying wind power. Today’s report focuses on the current efforts to bring this source of power, and its attendant jobs, to the East Coast.”

“We need to quickly ramp up clean sources of energy like responsibly developed and sited offshore wind power in order to protect North Carolina’s wildlife from the dangers of climate change,” said Tim Gestwicki, CEO of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation.

Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center, the Wildlife Federation, and other allies will continue to educate state residents and their leaders on the importance of offshore wind power.

Staff



## learn more

Field Director Dave Rogers released “Chasing the Wind,” a report outlining how North Carolina can utilize offshore wind energy.

Learn more at: [www.EnvironmentNorthCarolinaCenter.org](http://www.EnvironmentNorthCarolinaCenter.org)



## Groundbreaking step in the fight to tackle global warming

On June 2, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed new limits on carbon pollution from power plants, the single largest source of carbon emissions in the country. When finalized, the rules will ensure power plants cut pollution by more than 25 percent by 2030, and spur the transition to clean, renewable energy such as solar and offshore wind.

Carbon pollution fuels climate change, triggers asthma attacks and respiratory disease, worsens air quality, and contributes to more frequent and more destructive extreme weather events. North Carolina’s power plants are responsible for 51 percent of the carbon pollution in the state.

North Carolina is especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Along the coast, sea levels are rising about three times more quickly than they are globally. Climate change is also expected to cause Asheville and Raleigh to experience twice as many bad air days, and Wilmington will have more than double what they’ve had in the past.

Environment North Carolina and a coalition of public health groups, clean energy businesses, faith leaders, and elected officials praised the plan.



To learn more about the Clean Power Plan, visit: [www.EnvironmentNorthCarolina.org](http://www.EnvironmentNorthCarolina.org)

112 South Blount Street, Suite 102  
Raleigh, NC 27601  
(919) 833-0015

# Environment North Carolina

Address Service Requested

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



## Fall Report

VOLUME 7 | NO. 1 | 2014

### Environment North Carolina

#### 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 North Carolina. We focus exclusively on protecting North Carolina'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.

## After coal ash spill, rivers still lack protection

For years, Duke Energy has stored toxic ash created by burning coal in wet ponds near the Tar, the Neuse, the Cape Fear, the Yadkin and other rivers across the state. In February, we saw what happens when these ponds fail: 39,000 tons of sludge, containing mercury, lead, and arsenic, coated the bottom of the Dan River for up to 70 miles. And worse, the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources reported that every one of the state's 14 waste dumps is leaking.

Rather than require Duke Energy to move its toxic coal ash away from all our rivers, lawmakers passed a measure that cleans up just four of the company's dumps and leaves the fate of the rest of the coal ash dumps to Gov. Pat McCrory's administration. Environment North Carolina will continue to urge the governor to side with the state's rivers and to clean up all of the state's coal ash pits.



Staff

### more online

Tell Gov. Pat McCrory to side with North Carolina's rivers at:  
[www.EnvironmentNorthCarolina.org](http://www.EnvironmentNorthCarolina.org)

◀ Environment North Carolina campaign staff canoed along the Eno River, one of the many rivers we've been working to protect.