



Annual Report

Recapping our work in 2012 for our members



To our members

"In a year of tough fights, Environment New York stood strong and defended New York's clean air, clean water and open spaces."



Eric Whalen
Field Organizer

Dear Environment New York members,

In a year of tough fights, Environment New York stood strong and defended New York's clean air, clean water and open spaces. We continued to grow as an organization, bringing in new members across the state and carrying your voices and your concerns to Albany and Washington. And in a year of serious challenges we had real successes, because when we stand and speak together we can defeat powerful polluters.



Shelley Vinyard
Federal Clean Water
Advocate

Marcellus shale gas drilling ("fracking") was the centerpiece of our work, and with the support of thousands of New Yorkers, we successfully kept the rigs out of the state. We also showcased the risks of global warming to our communities, promoted development of clean solar power and offshore wind, and vigorously defended our clean air and clean water against repeated attacks by polluter-supported Congressional representatives in Washington.



Rob Sargent
Energy Program
Director

Further, we spoke out strongly in support of higher fuel efficiency standards for our cars and trucks that will annually save New Yorkers \$1.4 billion at the pump and reduce our carbon pollution by 24 billion pounds.

Environment New York is your voice for clean water, clean air, clean energy and open space. But we're only as strong as our active membership, which is why I'm so grateful for your support. Thank you!

Anna Aurilio, Federal Legislative Director



Clean Air, Smog-free Skies

All New Yorkers should be able to breathe clean air. But air pollution such as ground-level ozone, the main component of smog, threatens our health. Studies show that on days with high concentrations of smog pollution in the air, children and adults suffer more asthma attacks, increased respiratory difficulty and reduced lung function.

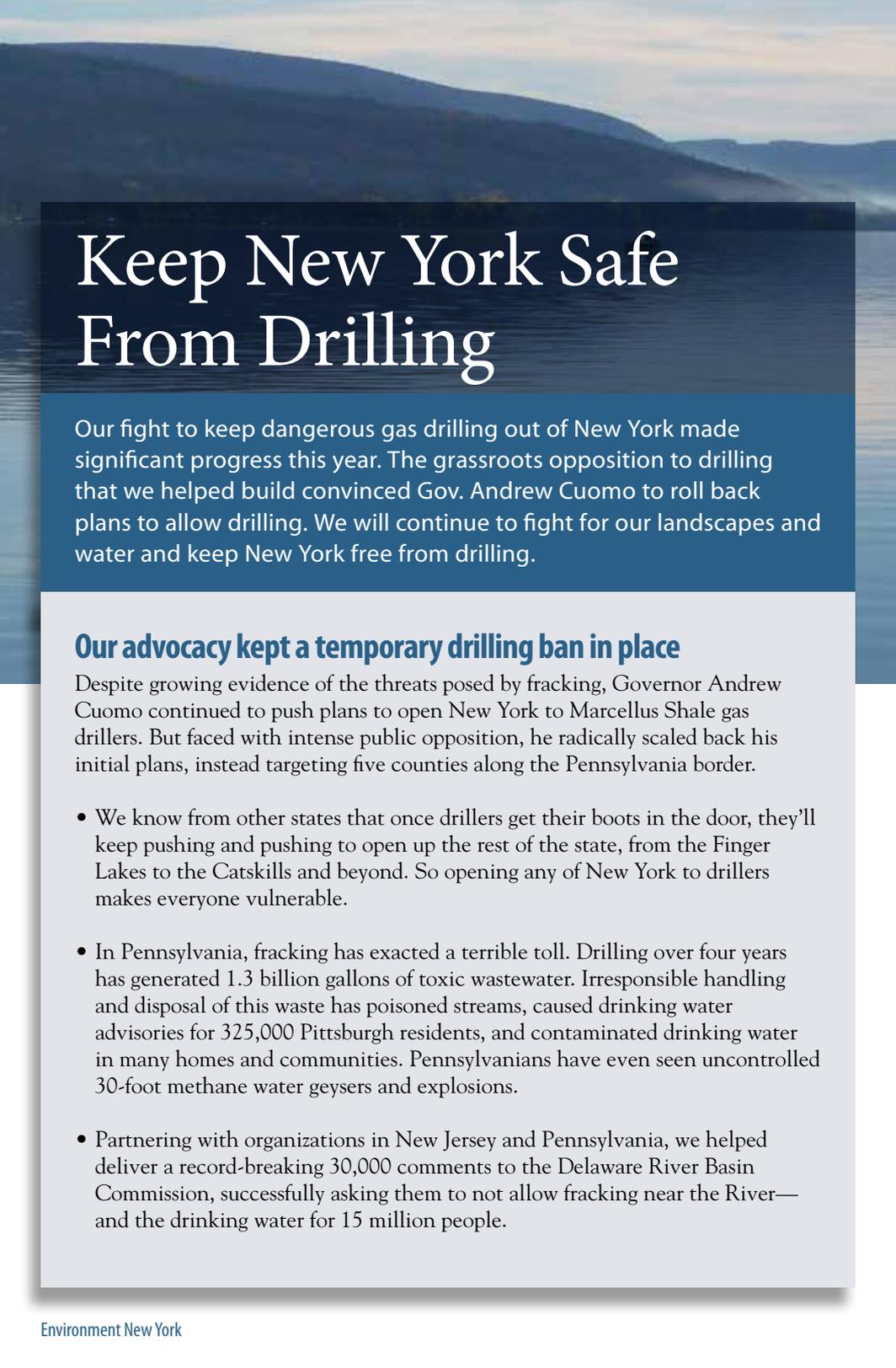
New gas-mileage standards will reduce pollution

Environment New York lobbied in Washington and delivered more than 1,700 comments supporting the Obama administration's new clean car standards. In a major victory for our environment and our health, the standards were finalized in August. These standards will, by 2025, increase the fuel efficiency of our cars and light trucks to 54.5 mpg.

- The new federal standards will reduce New York's global warming emissions by more than 12 million tons and save New Yorkers \$1.4 billion at the pump every year. Nationally, the new standards will cut our annual oil use by 23 billion gallons; that's roughly equal to the amount of crude oil we currently import from Saudi Arabia and Iraq each year.
- To help raise awareness of the clean car technology that will enable the implementation of these new standards, Environment New York joined the Sierra Club to host an electric vehicle showcase. Hundreds of New Yorkers came to Pier 54 in New York City to take a peek at the newest in high-tech electric vehicles.



Our "Danger in the Air" report showed that New York City and Long Island are among the nation's 20 smoggiest metropolitan areas. In 2011, the area suffered 28 "smog days" (when it was unhealthy for children and seniors to breathe) and seven "red-alert days" (when anyone could experience some adverse health effects). Pollution from cars and trucks currently accounts for a third of smog-forming nitrogen oxide emissions in the United States.



Keep New York Safe From Drilling

Our fight to keep dangerous gas drilling out of New York made significant progress this year. The grassroots opposition to drilling that we helped build convinced Gov. Andrew Cuomo to roll back plans to allow drilling. We will continue to fight for our landscapes and water and keep New York free from drilling.

Our advocacy kept a temporary drilling ban in place

Despite growing evidence of the threats posed by fracking, Governor Andrew Cuomo continued to push plans to open New York to Marcellus Shale gas drillers. But faced with intense public opposition, he radically scaled back his initial plans, instead targeting five counties along the Pennsylvania border.

- We know from other states that once drillers get their boots in the door, they'll keep pushing and pushing to open up the rest of the state, from the Finger Lakes to the Catskills and beyond. So opening any of New York to drillers makes everyone vulnerable.
- In Pennsylvania, fracking has exacted a terrible toll. Drilling over four years has generated 1.3 billion gallons of toxic wastewater. Irresponsible handling and disposal of this waste has poisoned streams, caused drinking water advisories for 325,000 Pittsburgh residents, and contaminated drinking water in many homes and communities. Pennsylvanians have even seen uncontrolled 30-foot methane water geysers and explosions.
- Partnering with organizations in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, we helped deliver a record-breaking 30,000 comments to the Delaware River Basin Commission, successfully asking them to not allow fracking near the River—and the drinking water for 15 million people.

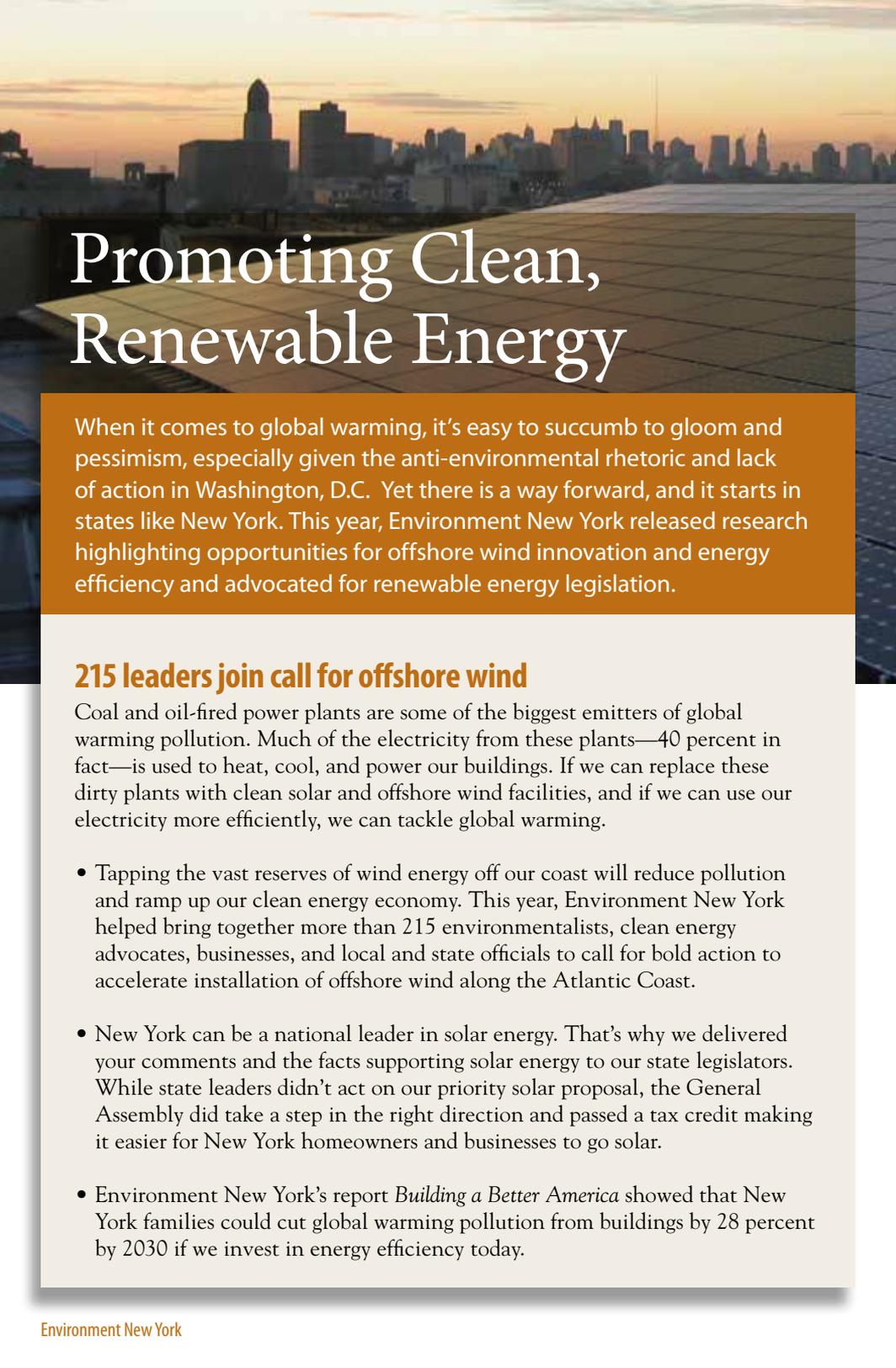
Action in the streets, the State house and the Capitol

Clean water is the lifeblood of New York. In addition to defending New York's waters from the dangers of Marcellus Shale gas drilling, we worked in Washington to restore vital protections for more than 45,000 miles of vulnerable waterways.

- Through the year, Environment New York built public opposition to the Governor's plans to open New York to fracking, talked with more than 100,000 New Yorkers about the dangers involved, gathered thousands of comments, and called on the governor and legislature to keep the drilling moratorium in New York intact. We also met with legislators in Albany to educate them on the risks and push back efforts to open the state.
- We released "Wasting Our Waterways," a report showing how many of New York's waters continue to be threatened by industrial pollution. In addition to pollution of our major rivers, more than 45,000 miles of smaller streams are vulnerable because of two polluter-driven Supreme Court decisions in the last decade. We lobbied hard in Congress to restore protections to all our waters.



Environment New York spoke with 100,000 New Yorkers from the Hamptons to Ithaca about the dangers of fracking.



Promoting Clean, Renewable Energy

When it comes to global warming, it's easy to succumb to gloom and pessimism, especially given the anti-environmental rhetoric and lack of action in Washington, D.C. Yet there is a way forward, and it starts in states like New York. This year, Environment New York released research highlighting opportunities for offshore wind innovation and energy efficiency and advocated for renewable energy legislation.

215 leaders join call for offshore wind

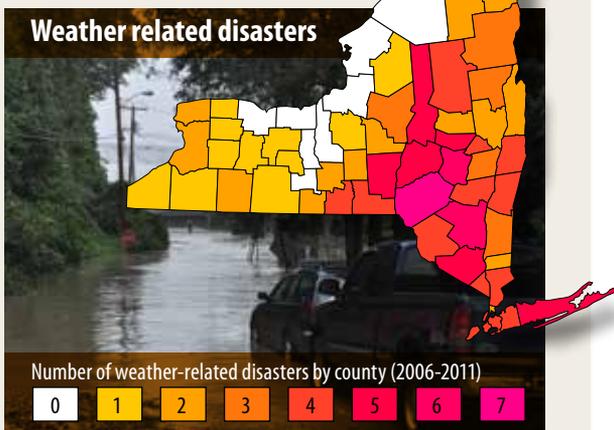
Coal and oil-fired power plants are some of the biggest emitters of global warming pollution. Much of the electricity from these plants—40 percent in fact—is used to heat, cool, and power our buildings. If we can replace these dirty plants with clean solar and offshore wind facilities, and if we can use our electricity more efficiently, we can tackle global warming.

- Tapping the vast reserves of wind energy off our coast will reduce pollution and ramp up our clean energy economy. This year, Environment New York helped bring together more than 215 environmentalists, clean energy advocates, businesses, and local and state officials to call for bold action to accelerate installation of offshore wind along the Atlantic Coast.
- New York can be a national leader in solar energy. That's why we delivered your comments and the facts supporting solar energy to our state legislators. While state leaders didn't act on our priority solar proposal, the General Assembly did take a step in the right direction and passed a tax credit making it easier for New York homeowners and businesses to go solar.
- Environment New York's report *Building a Better America* showed that New York families could cut global warming pollution from buildings by 28 percent by 2030 if we invest in energy efficiency today.

Regional global warming program backed

The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) is the first program in America to make power plants pay for their global warming pollution and invest the revenues in energy efficiency and clean energy initiatives. And after a year in which two fall storms caused \$1 billion worth of damage and New York experienced the hottest opening six month period on record, it's clear that we need to tackle global warming now.

- Our report “A Record of Leadership,” showed that New York and the nine other RGGI states have cut per capita carbon dioxide emissions 20 percent faster than the rest of the nation, even as the region's gross product per capita grew 87 percent faster.
- As part of our effort to promote this historic program, Environment New York helped spearhead a letter from more than 200 environmental groups, businesses, clean energy advocates and political leaders to urge the 10 RGGI state governors to further strengthen the initiative.



Renewable energy can power our homes and lessen the impact of global warming.



Getting New York Off Oil

The cost of our dependence on oil is out of control—and it's putting the health, welfare and security of New York families at risk. This year, Environment New York joined partner organizations and community members to kick off our campaign to move New York past oil and toward clean, renewable energy.

We sparked awareness and advocacy

Each year, our oil consumption transfers more than six billion dollars out of our state to oil companies and oil-producing nations—eating up paychecks and undermining our economy. Oil is also a leading cause of many of our most intractable environmental problems, including air pollution, water pollution, global warming and habitat destruction.

- New York's dependence on oil is more than a century in the making, and ending it won't be easy. But the technology exists to take the first steps. We can slash our oil consumption by improving our energy efficiency and finding sustainable substitutes for petroleum.
- In December, Environment New York joined partners and allies to host a "Get Off Oil" forum at New York University. With roughly 60 students and community members in attendance, Environment New York's "Get Off Oil" forum got the ball rolling on meaningful measures to move New York beyond oil.



The Get Off Oil Forum engaged students and community members.

Protecting Our Beloved Landscapes

Across New York and across the nation, development is a very real threat to some of our most treasured places and iconic landscapes. From opposing huge developments in the Adirondacks to fighting for land-protection funding, Environment New York went to work this year to protect our beloved landscapes.

Dollars for land protection defended

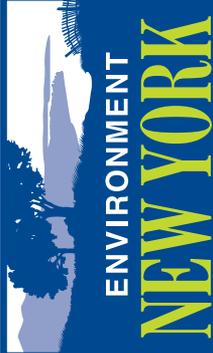
One of our most important tools for buying lands in New York is the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. This program provides resources for states to protect and expand national and local parks, wildlife refuges and natural areas. Unfortunately, Congress regularly raids the Fund for other purposes, this year slashing it by 93 percent of its intended budget.

- Over the last 40 years, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has delivered \$290 million to New York, helping protect land on Fire Island, in the Hudson Valley and across New York.
- Environment New York members spoke out to our federal legislators in defense of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and in opposition to mining and other development plans near national parks across the nation.



The Land and Water Conservation Fund has supported state parks across New York, from Jones Beach to Watkins Glen (above) to Whirlpool State Park in Niagara Falls.

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Clean air. Clean water. Open space.

2012 Annual Report

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