



Fall Report

Keeping up the fight against fracking

Public opposition to fracking grows

While gas drilling companies and frackers are spending millions of dollars lobbying New York's elected officials in Albany and running ad campaigns attempting to convince the public that drilling is safe, new polls and political action in the state Capitol shows that it's not working—as more and more New Yorkers voice opposition to fracking.

This growing opposition is already having a positive impact, with legislators in Albany proposing to keep fracking out of New York. Specifically, the state Assembly recently approved a proposal to implement a 2-year moratorium on fracking in New York.

Yet, despite the deep public support for a moratorium on fracking, the state Senate would not move the legislation for a 2-year moratorium through its chamber. Environment New York is working to convince our state senators to put this proposal on Gov. Andrew Cuomo's desk for passage.

Drilling companies still pushing

We all know that fracking poses a serious threat to New York's environment. And if approved, drilling companies in the state could drill up to 50,000 gas wells, creating millions of gallons of toxic waste and destroying thousands of acres of pristine New York landscapes. Drilling companies are aggressively lobbying our state decision-makers, including Gov. Cuomo, to allow drilling in New York as soon as possible.



▲ Environment New York joined thousands of our fellow New Yorkers at the state Capitol in Albany to call for a ban on fracking.

Thousands rally in Albany

Fortunately, concerned New Yorkers from every corner of the state are speaking up as well. In mid-June, Environment New York teamed up with dozens of environmental groups, community groups, and anti-fracking organizations to hold the largest anti-fracking demonstration in New York's history. Thousands of concerned citizens descended on the Capitol building in Albany to keep fracking out

of New York. With Gov. Cuomo's office in earshot, advocates and activists rallied in support of protecting our farms, forests, drinking water and clean air from fracking. The rally generated media attention across the state.

Environment New York is now working to channel this citizen pressure to call on Gov. Cuomo to protect New York from gas drilling.



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To learn more about our work to keep fracking out of New York and take action, visit: www.EnvironmentNewYork.org

◀ Fracking wastewater containment pond in rural Pennsylvania



Staff

To our members

I'm amazed by New York's activist spirit, and these past few months have shown that a deep love for our environment is alive and well in the Empire State.

Environment New York members and activists joined thousands of concerned citizens for a rally in Albany against fracking—the largest rally of its type in state history. Impressively, some activists traveled long distances—from Buffalo or New York City. We all shared a united voice to protect New York from the dangers of fracking.

At the same time, New Yorkers sent thousands of emails and postcards to protect our special places and tackle global warming.

All of this sends one reassuring message: While New Yorkers have busy and complicated lives, when it comes to protecting our environment and health, we will find the time and energy to step up to get involved. So thank you for your critical work for New York's environment.

Heather Leibowitz
Campaign Director

Recent action

New York losing ground in solar market

This summer, Environment New York released its newest clean energy study, entitled “Lighting the Way,” showing that while many states are tapping into solar power to create jobs and protect our environment, the Empire State is losing ground and no longer ranks in the top dozen states in the nation for per capita solar installations.

Across the nation, solar is on the rise and the industry is booming. This is partially because the price of solar panels fell by 26 percent in 2012. And while Gov. Andrew Cuomo has taken steps to help New York's solar production keep up, a number of comprehensive proposals have been log-jammed in the legislature and unable to make it to the governor's desk for approval, potentially sparking New York's decline in the national rankings.

Critical park funding stalls in Washington, D.C.

This summer while New Yorkers enjoyed some of our most iconic parks, the Republican majority in Congress moved to eviscerate the cornerstone program that has helped protect many of the state's most important outdoor treasures.

The program is called the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and while most New Yorkers haven't heard of this program by name, over the past 40 years the LWCF has helped maintain and protect New York's beautiful state and national parks from threats. It helped protect Theodore Roosevelt's birthplace; preserved our natural heritage at parks from Fire Island to the Finger Lakes National Forest; and maintained historic and recreational areas such as New York's portion of the Appalachian Trail and pristine places in the Catskills.

Environment New York is working with the state's environmental champions in Congress like Sens. Kristen Gillibrand and Chuck Schumer to defend against these attacks and to fully fund the LWCF for decades to come.

The climate is changing – are your investments?

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▲ North-South Lake in the Catskill Mountains

President announces historic plan to tackle global warming

This summer, President Obama announced a climate plan that will set limits on carbon pollution from power plants, advance energy efficiency and increase the nation's commitment to renewable energy. In the aftermath of last year's Superstorm Sandy, and extreme droughts and heat waves across the nation, the president's plan to address global warming was loudly applauded by Environment New York and others.

"All of us who have felt the effects of global warming, or are simply worried about what's in store for our kids, can take comfort knowing that President Obama has put the nation on a path toward a cleaner, healthier and safer future," said Environment New York Campaign Director Heather Leibowitz.

Left unchecked, global warming is projected to bring New York more intense storms and unhealthy air days. Scientists have warned that the window is rapidly closing for making the necessary cuts in carbon pollution to protect future generations from the worst consequences of global warming. To respond to this threat, the president's plan contains several key components, including:

- **Limiting global warming pollution from coal-fired power plants.** The president directed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set limits on carbon pollution from new and existing power plants, which currently lack any such federal limits despite being the largest single source of this global warming pollutant.
- **Investing in energy efficiency measures for buildings and new appliances.** This will cut global warming pollution by reducing overall demand.
- **Bringing more renewable energy online.** The plan focuses on expanding production of clean, renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power.

- **Supporting affected communities.** The president's plan will help ensure that communities are better equipped to prepare for and recover from the impacts of global warming.
- **Rebuilding the international leadership of the U.S. on this issue.** The president's plan calls for the U.S. to actively engage in international efforts to tackle global warming.

Focus on carbon pollution

Environment New York offered special praise for the president's pledge to cut global warming pollution from existing power plants. More than 3.2 million Americans submitted public comments last year in support of the president setting limits on carbon pollution from power plants.

"Carbon pollution from power plants is a huge part of the global warming problem. President Obama acknowledged this and mapped out a plan for cleaning up this pollution," said Leibowitz. "At the same time, this plan is just one important step in a multi-year effort to tackle global warming."



▲ Union Beach, N.J., after Superstorm Sandy

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To learn more about our work to curb global warming and read the full report, "In the Path of the Storm," visit:

www.EnvironmentNewYork.org



Gina McCarthy confirmed as new EPA administrator

On July 18, in a bipartisan vote of 59 to 40, the U.S. Senate confirmed Gina McCarthy as administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The confirmation came within a month of President Obama instructing the EPA to cut carbon pollution from power plants as part of his plan to fight global warming.

In response, Eric Whalen, field organizer of Environment New York, released the following statement:

"Gina McCarthy's confirmation is long-awaited good news for the planet and New York, and should not surprise anyone remotely familiar with her record.

"Gina McCarthy's track record with both Republican and Democratic governors, coupled with her experience at the EPA, proves that when it comes to protecting our families' health and environment, it isn't about which party or who you work for. It's about whether you can get the job done—and Gina McCarthy can get the job done.

"Working with a variety of stakeholders over the past four years, McCarthy was integral to several historic initiatives, including new, cleaner car standards, the first-ever federal limits on mercury pollution from power plants; and the first-ever proposed federal limits on carbon pollution from new power plants.

"I am confident that McCarthy will continue to put her professionalism to work developing solutions to the formidable environmental challenges we still face."

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Environment New York

Our mission

We all want clean air, clean water and open space. 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 New York. We focus exclusively on protecting New York'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.

New fracking rules that fail our natural heritage

This summer, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposed new rules that will leave many parts of America's great natural heritage and public lands vulnerable to hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking." The move comes as the oil and gas industry is seeking to expand drilling near treasured places and drinking water sources for millions of Americans.

"The Department of the Interior has the power to reverse the harmful decision. We needed Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell to protect our natural heritage and environment from dirty drilling. Unfortunately, this summer, she didn't do it," said John Rumpler, senior attorney for Environment New York.

With fracking posing such a staggering array of threats to our environment and health, Environment New York is now working to convince President Obama to step in and protect our natural heritage—and our drinking water—from dirty drilling.



more inside

Keeping New York safe from fracking; Protecting New York's parks; a historic victory for our climate; and more.

◀ *Fracking rig near homes and forestland in rural Pennsylvania*