Annual Report

A recap of our work for our members in 2010
While I could fill these pages with a daunting environmental to-do list, thanks to your support, I am able to report on a list of victories we achieved for Washington’s environment.

As I sit down to write a review of the year, it’s hard to look past the significant challenges we faced in 2010. Reports showed that dead zones are increasing in the Sound. The Senate failed to pass meaningful climate legislation. The nation’s worst environmental disaster unfolded in the Gulf, and for months we watched the oil gush. One thing is clear: We need to do more to ensure we all have access to clean water, clean air and open space.

Over the course of the year, Environment Washington played a crucial role in protecting Washington’s environment with your generous support and involvement. We advanced much-needed policies to preserve Puget Sound, held polluters responsible for product waste, protected Mt. Rainier National Park, and ensured that the cleanup of Washington’s most toxic sites continues.

But our work didn’t stop there. We were able to use your support to advance many other environmental initiatives and respond to urgent environmental needs.

We went head to head with Big Oil at the state capital and secured initial funding for green infrastructure projects that will stem the flow of polluted stormwater runoff into the Sound. We continued to hold the line on state environmental protections. Our advocacy helped stop deep budget cuts that would have gutted the state’s ability to ensure clean drinking water and safe air to breathe. In response to the Gulf oil spill, we joined with our allies to organize concerned citizens in the Gulf, and across Washington, to call for an end to offshore drilling. We worked to pass legislation that will require oil companies to pay for environmental damage caused by spills. And, we took the first step in securing funding to expand Mt. Rainier National Park in order to permanently protect the Carbon River Valley rainforest.

You can read more about all of these environmental campaigns, and others, in the rest of our report.

When the to-do list for the environment looks like a tall order, our continued victories remind me that—with you at our side—a cleaner, greener, more sustainable future is always within grasp.

Thanks for making our work possible.

Heather Shute
Advocate, Environment Washington

Washington’s green programs protected

No one considers the air we breathe or the water we drink to be a luxury. Nor should we consider our state environmental programs to be an indulgence, affordable only in good times. They allow our government to monitor the quality of our air and water, oversee the cleanup of polluted sites and preserve our watersheds. When we saw that the 2010 state budget included nearly $100 million in cuts to these programs, we objected. In the end, we prevailed.

Cuts averted to clean air, other programs

In January, the state’s 2010 budget threatened devastating cuts to the state’s core environmental protection programs. Over the course of the two month legislative session, Environment Washington’s Heather Shute voiced our objections at meetings with legislators, hundreds of our members and other supporters contacted decision-makers, and we teamed up with groups such as Washington Environmental Council. Legislators got the message. As a result:

- $65 million were restored to efforts to clean up the nearly 10,000 sites in Washington that are contaminated with toxic chemicals, heavy metals, oil, gasoline and other pollutants.
- Nearly half a million dollars were restored to programs that monitor and reduce toxic pollution in our air—helping our children, seniors and others avoid asthma attacks, lung disease, heart attacks and cancer.
- More than $6 million were restored to programs designed to clean up and prevent pollution of our waterways, including Puget Sound.

Cleanup will continue

Toxic metals and petroleum have spoiled the shoreline of Irondale Beach Park in Jefferson County, one of the 10,000 sites across the state where cleanup is needed. Because of our work to protect funding, cleanup at the beach will continue.
The Carbon River Valley rainforest is one of the most species-rich ecosystems on the planet, providing critical habitat for chinook and sockeye salmon, steelhead trout, mottled marbled murrelet and the Van Dyke’s salamander. By extending the protective border of Mt. Rainier National Park to include the rainforest, we can create a wildlife corridor from the park to Puget Sound—and guarantee that the beauty and ecological value of this forest remains unspoiled for generations to come.

Grassroots support advances rainforest protection
This summer, the Department of the Interior sought public input on America’s Great Outdoors—including which of our most treasured landscapes deserve better protection. Seizing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to permanently protect the Carbon River Valley rainforest, Environment Washington made the Mt. Rainier National Park expansion our top priority.

• Our canvassers and online organizers reached out to people in dozens of communities, from Vancouver to Bellingham, gathering thousands of signatures in favor of our plan. Dozens of small businesses also joined in support.
• In July, at least 100 Environment Washington supporters attended a “listening session” organized by the Obama administration. As we roamed among the small break-out groups at the hearing, we heard person after person urging administration officials to protect the Carbon River Valley rainforest.

A big first step toward funding
• Also in July, the U.S. House approved legislation that would provide the funding (only $2.2 million) needed to add the rainforest to Mt. Rainier National Park. We made our case to Washington’s representatives, and in the end, Reps. Brian Baird, Norman Dicks, Rick Larsen, Jim McDermott and Adam Smith voted with us.
• In November, we delivered the letters, comments and signatures we collected over the summer to Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, urging him to prioritize protecting this rare forest by expanding Mt. Rainier National Park.

The next step to expanding Mt. Rainier National Park is securing the support of Washington’s senators for funding the expansion. To get the latest on our work, check out our website at www.EnvironmentWashington.org.

Without permanent protection, the Carbon River Valley rainforest remains unprotected from logging and development.

Drive launched to protect Carbon River Valley rainforest

Expanding Mt. Rainier
It’s hard to imagine “improving” upon Mt. Rainier National Park. How do you improve upon breathtaking? Yet this past year afforded us a rare opportunity—to expand the park so it would encompass one of our nation’s last inland rainforests. Our dream is not yet a reality, but by year’s end we had earned the attention of decision-makers and taken steps toward securing the funding necessary to make it come true.
Preserving Puget Sound

On the surface, Puget Sound and its adjacent waters offer us a natural playground. We can kayak in Elliott Bay or watch orcas swim around the San Juan Islands. Beneath the surface, decades of industrial dumping and development have left their mark on Puget Sound and its wildlife. To help both recover, we called for action in Olympia and in Washington, D.C. We made progress, but we have a long way to go.

Bringing Puget Sound back to health: Steps made toward recovery

With more than 230,000 pounds of toxic chemicals dumped into Puget Sound in 2007 alone, it’s little wonder that the orca population is struggling to rebuild, or that biological dead zones, such as the one that suffocates Hood Canal, leave fish fighting to survive. To step up Puget Sound recovery efforts, we supported state and federal action, winning a vote in a key U.S. Senate committee and $50 million in new state funds.

Senate panel approves Puget Sound Recovery Act

For every positive environmental goal, it seems there’s a special interest that stands in the way, and restoring Puget Sound to health is no exception. Oil and chemical companies object to pollution control. Developers resist efforts to reduce runoff.

To ensure that the health of the Sound is put before special interests, we released a report highlighting the steps needed to restore Puget Sound and enlisted the support of key lawmakers, including Sen. Maria Cantwell. Our efforts paid off:

• In June, the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works unanimously approved the Puget Sound Recovery Act, which would establish a Puget Sound program office within the EPA to coordinate cleanup action and authorize up to $125 million each year in grants to local communities and tribes for cleanup efforts.

$50 million down-payment to curb runoff

Meanwhile, we went head-to-head with Big Oil’s lobbyists in Olympia and urged state lawmakers to help communities address polluted stormwater runoff—rainwater and snowmelt that washes over streets, parking lots and lawns, picking up chemicals, petroleum and toxic substances along the way, before ultimately reaching Puget Sound.

To make our voices heard over those of powerful industries, we attended hearings, cosponsored a “citizen lobby day,” organized phone banks, and helped bring together local activists, business owners and shellfish farmers.

• In April, the state Legislature approved a $50 million down-payment on solutions to stormwater runoff. These funds will support shovel-ready projects around Puget Sound and across the state to stem the flow of chemicals, petroleum and other wastes into our waters.

These victories provide an important step toward protecting our treasured wildlife, such as orca and salmon, and ensuring that our fish and shellfish industries—vital to the state’s economy—are here for generations to come.
A victory against waste

What a waste: Piles of unwanted phone books and Yellow Pages sitting untouched on porches and in front of apartment complexes. In Seattle, Yellow Pages directories have been dropped on our doorsteps by as many as four different companies throughout a single year. Not anymore. Environment Washington worked to stop the delivery of unwanted phone books by giving Seattleites the choice of which directories they want to receive each year, including the choice to opt out altogether.

Yellow Pages delivery will get a little greener

In 2005, unwanted phone books and Yellow Pages accounted for more than 2,000 tons of Seattle’s waste stream. And the cost of disposing these unwanted directories is paid by the city—which means that taxpayers are left with the bill.

To inform decision-makers and the public of the benefits of giving people a choice to opt out of receiving so many phone books, we met with Seattle city councilmembers, provided testimony at hearings, mobilized business owners and the public to speak at town hall meetings, and mobilized our members to send hundreds of e-mails. The results:

• Soon, Seattle residents will be able decide how many phone books they receive. Residents will be able to indicate their preference online, via phone or by mail.
• Companies that send unwanted books will face penalties. Residents who opt-out and still receive a phone book can file a complaint with the city, triggering an investigation. Penalties will be assessed based upon the findings of the investigation.
• Yellow Pages publishers will cover the costs of the program, as well as the costs of recycling unwanted books.

Response to a disaster

For three months, we watched in horror as BP’s Deepwater Horizon rig spewed more than 200 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Environment Washington joined the other members of Environment America, our national federation, in calling on President Obama to hold BP fully accountable for containing, cleaning up and paying for the spill. We also asked the president to reinstate the moratorium on new offshore drilling. Thousands joined us in our call to action.

400,000 stood strong against new drilling

As the oil spill unfolded in the Gulf of Mexico, Environment Washington’s federal ocean’s advocate, our Gulf organizer in New Orleans, and dozens of other staff members worked around the clock to build support for Gulf restoration efforts and for a bill that would permanently protect our coasts and beaches from new oil offshore drilling.

• In June, we joined our allies in delivering 400,000 comments to the administration calling for reinstatement of the moratorium on new drilling.
• Meanwhile, our supporters opened their homes and their checkbooks to help Gulf coast residents affected by the spill. Throughout the summer, people in Washington and at least 27 other states organized Gumbo for the Gulf dinners to raise funds in support of BP disaster relief and our efforts to prevent future spills.
• Our members also took part in Hands Across the Sand events, including one in Olympia, declaring our outrage at the BP tragedy and drawing a line in the sand against new drilling.

Today, scrutiny of offshore drilling operations has intensified, yet the Obama administration has left the door open to new drilling in sensitive coastal waters. We remain determined to shut that door and keep it closed.
Environment Washington supporters


Foundation support
The Environment Washington Research & Policy Center is a 501(c)(3) organization, and conducts research and public education on emerging environmental issues. Contributions to the Environment Washington Research & Policy Center are tax-deductible. To find out more, contact Heather Shute at (206) 568-2850. The Environment Washington Research & Policy Center would like to thank the Energy Foundation and the Martha L. Clatterbaugh Charitable Gift Fund for supporting our work in 2010.

Financial information
The charts below represent the combined financial information for Environment Washington and Environment Washington Research & Policy Center for the Fiscal Year 2010.

FY10 Income
- Citizen Members 95%
- Foundation Grants 3%
- Other 2%

FY10 Program Expenses
- Renewable Energy 53%
- Wilderness & Land Preservation 24%
- Our Rivers, Lakes and Streams 12%
- Global Warming Solutions 7%
- Sustainable Transportation 4%

Building a greener future
Environment Washington and Environment Washington Research & Policy Center gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities to support our work. Your gift will assure that we can continue to protect Washington’s air, water and open spaces for future generations. For more information, call 1-800-841-7299 or send an e-mail to: plannedgiving@EnvironmentWashington.org.