



# Fall Report

Photo: Gregg M. Erickson

## Thousands act to protect North Cascades

### Campaign to protect wilderness picks up

This summer, Environment Washington staff fanned out across the state and talked to tens of thousands of citizens about our campaign to protect more than 200,000 acres of unique habitat and old-growth forests in the North Cascades.

### Old-growth forest, critical habitat

The North Cascades are some of the most rugged and wild places in the country: jagged peaks, old growth forests, and pristine wildlife habitat. While some of this amazing habitat is protected in North Cascades National Park, there are too many fragile places next to the park that are not protected from logging and mining.

That's why we're working to protect more than 200,000 acres in the Cascades, including: the Baker Rainforest, a rare American temperate rainforest, where visitors can stand at the base of ancient trees 15 feet wide; and the Skagit River and its headwaters, where hundreds of salmon, including the endangered Chinook salmon, come to spawn.

Right now, there's virtually nothing to stop timber and mining companies from clear-cutting and otherwise spoiling these ecologically important areas of the forest.

### More than 38,000 conversations

The North Cascades are too important to be left at risk of development, clear-cutting and other destruction. That's why Environment Washington is working to build massive public support and protect more than 200,000 acres of the North Cascades.



Photo: Pffly/Flickr

▲ *Environment Washington is working to protect more than 200,000 acres in the North Cascades.*

This summer, Environment Washington staff pounded the pavement and talked to more than 38,000 people, educating them about the threat to the North Cascades and the urgent need to take a stand. And more than 12,000 people signed petitions to their members of Congress, urging them to protect one of

Washington's last wild places.

### Building the support to win

This fall, Environment Washington will continue to educate the public, advocate directly with elected officials, and build the strong grassroots momentum it will take to protect the North Cascades.



Photo: Staff

### more online

◀ *This summer, Environment Washington staff talked to 38,000 people about protecting the North Cascades.*

*To learn more and take action, visit us [www.EnvironmentWashington.org](http://www.EnvironmentWashington.org).*



Photo: Staff

## To our members

In June, President Obama announced a plan to address global warming. The plan includes increased clean energy and energy efficiency, as well as cuts to carbon pollution from new and existing power plants.

These are crucial steps in the increasingly urgent fight against global warming, and President Obama's announcement comes after years of advocacy from Environment Washington and our allies.

The president's speech was heartening and exciting. But it will take strong, committed activism to make this plan work—at the grassroots level, in Olympia, and in D.C. We need to cut our dependency on dirty energy, increase our use of clean energy like solar and wind, boost energy efficiency, and dramatically cut our carbon emissions from coal-fired power plants.

Here at Environment Washington, we're ready for the work ahead of us. And we're so grateful to have you on our side.

Sincerely,

Katrina Rosen, Field Director

## Recent action

### Proposed fracking rules fail to protect natural heritage

In May, as one of the first major policy decisions for new Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposed scant protections for America's natural heritage with its revised rules for hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking." The move comes even as the oil and gas industry is seeking to expand drilling near treasured places and drinking water sources for millions of Americans.

In fall 2011, the Obama administration's science advisory panel on fracking recommended the "preservation of unique and/or sensitive areas as off limits to drilling." Yet the BLM's proposal does nothing to implement this core principle: It fails to bar the use of toxic chemicals near sensitive areas; establish safe standards for fracking well construction; or even ban the use of open fracking waste pits. "We urge President Obama to step in and protect our natural heritage—and our drinking water—from dirty drilling," said John Rumpler, senior attorney for Environment Washington.

### Fighting back against cuts to our parks

In June, the National Park Service released a memo planning for cuts to parks across the board—cuts to every park, including treasured places like Mount Rainier National Park here in Washington. The cuts would result in reduced hours of operation, fewer services, and in some cases, even closure.

Our parks aren't just an integral part of our natural heritage; they're also a major economic boon. Washington's national parks, monuments and historic sites attracted \$261 million in tourism spending in 2011 alone. But year after year, Congress slashes funding for programs that keep our parks open.

Together with our national federation of state groups, Environment Washington is mobilizing broad public support for our parks and calling on Congress to give these special places the resources they deserve.



Photo: Walter Siegmund

▲ Mount Rainier National Park. Environment Washington is calling on Congress to stop the cuts and give our parks the funding they deserve.

# Obama announces new plan to address global warming

Photo: Kid Clutch/Flickr

On June 25, 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 severe droughts across the country, Hurricane Sandy, and other extreme weather events, the president's plan to address global warming was loudly applauded by Environment Washington and many others.

"Today, President Obama responded to the millions of Americans who have spoken out on behalf of their communities and their families, urging him to lead on climate," said Katrina Rosen, field director for Environment Washington.

## Responding to an urgent threat

Left unchecked, global warming is projected to bring to Washington more intense storms and more 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. It will:

- **Limit carbon pollution from new and existing power plants.** The president directed the Environmental Protection Agency 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 the carbon pollution fueling global warming.

- **Invest in energy efficiency.** New efficiency measures for buildings and new appliances will cut carbon pollution by reducing our overall energy demand.

- **Build more renewable energy.** The plan focuses on expanding production of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar, especially on public lands.

- **Support 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.

- **Rebuild U.S. leadership internationally.** The president's plan calls for the U.S. to actively engage in international efforts to address global warming.

## Massive grassroots support

Environment Washington offered special praise for the president's pledge to cut carbon pollution from existing power plants. More than 3.2 million Americans, including thousands of Environment Washington members, supporters and allies, 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. Today, President Obama acknowledged this and mapped out a plan for cleaning up this pollution," said Rosen. "We also know that this plan is just one important step in a multi-year effort, and that the proof of the plan's success will be in the pudding. Environment Washington stands ready to assist the president in following through on this critical commitment."



## research

*In June, the president announced a plan to address global warming.*

*To read our report on global warming and extreme weather, "In the Path of the Storm," visit [www.EnvironmentWashington.org/reports](http://www.EnvironmentWashington.org/reports).*



## Solar crucial to climate change plan

Clean, renewable energy like solar power will be an integral part of federal efforts to address global warming.

In June, in his speech on climate change, President Obama emphasized the importance of clean energy in his plan to fight climate change: "The plan I'm announcing today will help us double again our energy from wind and sun."

## 250,000 by 2030

Washington has huge solar potential, but we still get less than 1% of our electricity from the sun.

We're pushing to change that. Environment Washington is working for 150,000 new solar roofs in Washington by 2020.

To fulfill our state's solar potential, Washington needs to establish concrete policies that can turn this vision into a reality. While solar power systems are becoming more and more accessible and affordable, Washington can do much more to encourage the growth of solar. Smart solar initiatives have proven highly effective at expanding rooftop and community solar projects and creating a strong, long-term market for solar power.

As the Obama administration moves forward in implementing its plan to address climate change, solar energy in Washington will continue to grow. And Environment Washington will continue to push leaders at the local, state and federal level to support solar power and the clean, renewable electricity it provides.

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# Environment Washington

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Photo: June/Bigstock

### Environment Washington

#### 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 Washington. We focus exclusively on protecting Washington'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.

## Leaders called on to support energy efficiency

In June, with the House Energy and Commerce hearing on the Department of Energy's budget taking place, Environment Washington urged Congress to fund a critical energy efficiency program.

America's buildings are responsible for nearly one-third of our global warming pollution. Energy efficiency programs are the fastest, cheapest and cleanest way to cut the pollution fueling global warming, and save consumers money at the same time.

The Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) is a key federal program that helps low-income families, seniors and individuals with disabilities make energy efficiency improvements to their homes. But in 2012, Congress drastically slashed funding for the program; without an increase in funding for the coming financial year, it's unlikely that the WAP will be able to continue to operate at all in some states. Environment Washington called on Congress to fully fund the WAP and support commonsense energy efficiency improvements.



Photo: NREL

### more inside

*Thousands act to protect North Cascades; fighting back against cuts to parks; Obama announces climate plan, and more.*

◀ *Installing energy efficiency measures.*