



Summer Report

Curryfred

On the verge of a clean water victory

Some in Congress want to undo progress

Iowa is on the verge of winning major new protections for hundreds of miles of streams that feed and filter our rivers. But just as President Obama is about to sign off on the biggest victory for Iowa's waterways in a decade, some polluter-friendly members of Congress are doing everything they can to block him.

Biggest victory in a decade

From the Missouri and the mighty Mississippi to the Iowa and the Raccoon, Iowans care deeply about our rivers. Despite their popularity, for many years our waterways have not been nearly as protected or as safe as they once were.

Thanks to two polluter-driven Supreme Court decisions in the last decade, more than 62 percent of our streams and hundreds of acres of wetlands—the same waterways that feed our rivers—may not have been protected by the Clean Water Act. In 2010 alone, industrial facilities dumped 6.2 million pounds of toxic pollution into our waterways.

Thankfully, in April 2011, the Obama administration proposed new guidelines to restore protections to many of Iowa's streams and wetlands, including those that feed and filter our rivers. And in February, the administration announced that it was in the last stage before officially finalizing these protections.

Environment Iowa played a critical role in getting the administration to act. Along with our national federation, we talked to more than half a million people,



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▲ Paddling on the Mississippi River. When finalized, the Obama administration's proposed guidelines will restore Clean Water Act protections to the waterways that feed our rivers.

gathered 88,000 public comments and mobilized more than 500 elected officials, farmers and recreational businesses in support of the proposed guidelines.

As we build support for the President to finalize these guidelines, many in Congress are working to stop him. As of May, there were four separate rollback attempts in the House and Senate. Environment

Iowa is committed to defending these new protections.

From the Big Sioux to the Des Moines and all the smaller rivers and streams in between, we are excited that the Obama administration is about to take this historic step to protect our waterways. Thanks to the support of our members, we will soon have a victory we can all celebrate.



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take action

◀ Fishing in the Big Sioux River.

Visit our website and tell President Obama that you want to see all of Iowa's rivers, streams and wetlands protected: www.EnvironmentIowa.org.



To our members

This winter certainly didn't feel like the Iowa winters we're used to—and it only reinforced the urgency of doing everything we can to avoid the worst effects of global warming. This spring, my staff and I spent a week in Washington, D.C., meeting with our members of Congress, urging them to oppose efforts to roll back the Clean Air Act and move forward on important federal policies to support renewable energy.

Our work is not always easy, and while gridlock in Des Moines and Washington can be frustrating, I have been inspired by the thousands of you who care so deeply about our rivers, our air and our open spaces. It is clearer than ever that citizens across Iowa need to get involved so we can take on powerful special interests and win real results for our environment.

So thank you for all that you have done and continue to do. None of what we do would be possible without your support.

Sincerely,

Dan Kohler
Regional Program Director



How do you want to be remembered?

You can be remembered as someone who cared enough to keep up the fight for a cleaner, greener, healthier future by making a bequest to Environment Iowa or the Environment Iowa Research & Policy Center.

For information, call: 1-800-841-7299, or email PlannedGiving@EnvironmentIowa.org.

Recent action

House bill would drive us deeper into oil dependence

U.S. Rep. John Mica (Fla.) recently introduced a major transportation reauthorization bill. The bill includes proposals to open our coasts and the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to drilling and to open landscapes in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming to oil shale extraction.

At the same time, it cuts all funding for bike and pedestrian safety and cripples environmental review of transportation projects. On top of this, Speaker John Boehner has said that he would attach approval of the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline to this bill if it were not immediately approved.

Bruce Ratain of Environment America, our national federation of state environmental groups, had this to say about the bill: "America has waited long enough—for the sake of our planet, our children's health, and every American struggling to pay for gas, it's time to get our nation off of oil. We need a smarter, cleaner transportation future, not this destructive proposal that drives us down a road to deeper oil dependence."

Tax plan levels playing field for renewable energy

President Obama released his framework for corporate tax reform on February 22, which includes provisions to eliminate tax breaks to the oil and gas industries and seeks to expand the manufacture of clean energy technologies.

Federal Clean Energy Advocate Courtney Abrams issued the following statement in response:

"By cutting tax breaks to oil and gas companies—which for decades have profited at the expense of our health and environment—and instead investing in burgeoning clean energy industries, the administration recognizes that we can both grow our economy and ensure a future with cleaner air and water for all Americans. We applaud the Obama administration's commitment to responsibly developing truly clean energy sources like wind and solar power."



Theodore Scott, Creative Commons

▲ Wind turbines near Hampton, Iowa. President Obama's new tax plan cuts tax breaks to oil and gas companies and invests in clean energy.

U.S. progress on climate need not be stymied by inaction in Congress

Despite gridlock in Congress and the political dominance of fossil fuel interests over energy and climate policy in Washington, D.C., the United States can dramatically reduce global warming emissions, according to a study recently released by Environment Iowa and its allies.

“News reports of droughts and wildfires in Texas, heat waves in the Gulf States and in D.C., floods in Vermont, and melting ice caps are daily reminders of what science tells us to expect more of as fossil fuel pollution warms our world,” said Rob Sargent, our federal energy program director. “We have a great challenge to reduce emissions as quickly as possible.”

We can cut carbon pollution by 34%

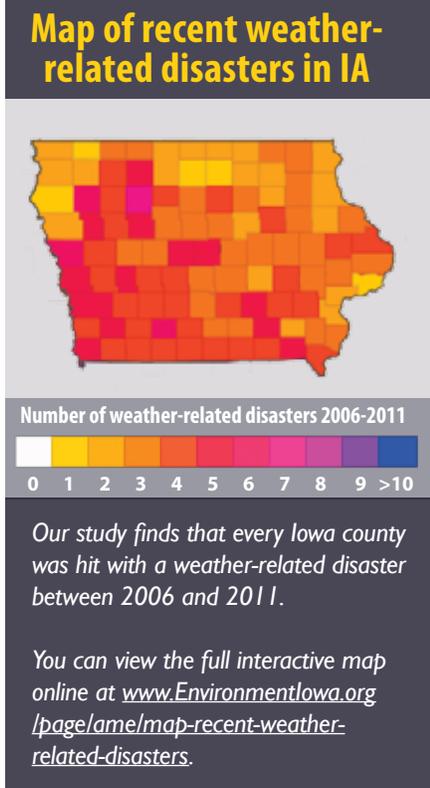
Environment Iowa was recently joined by a number of allies in releasing the study, which shows that local governments and states, with assistance from federal agencies, can cut U.S. carbon pollution 20 percent from 2008 levels by 2020 and 34 percent by 2030.

“Local and state government-led actions have already cut emissions with clean energy—America now produces five times as much wind power and eight times as much solar power as we did seven years ago,” said Sargent. “If state and local-level actions can be implemented more broadly, with the public and the private sector pitching in, we can build on these successes and pave the way forward on addressing global warming.”

The study, entitled “The Way Forward on Global Warming,” evaluates the emission reduction potential of 30 policy tools across 50 states and five sectors and emphasizes concrete gains already secured from actions implemented across the country. According to the analysis, actions by state and local governments—including the implementation of renewable energy standards, energy efficiency policies, state and regional limits on greenhouse gas emissions and

state-led clean cars standards—have already together yielded a reduction of more than 539 million tons of carbon pollution. That is an amount equivalent to 7 percent of U.S. global warming pollution in 2007. America’s emissions of global warming pollutants in 2009 were the lowest they have been since 1995.

“The public and a growing number of stakeholders strongly support saving energy, shifting to clean power, reducing our oil dependence and reducing fossil fuel pollution,” said Sargent. “By tapping into this support, taking action to reduce emissions in any way we can, and then showing that these solutions work, we can overcome the entrenched opposition of the fossil fuel industry and its allies in Congress.”



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Every Iowa county hit by at least one recent weather disaster

Report says global warming to bring more extreme weather

After a year that saw many parts of the country hit by scorching heat, devastating wildfires, severe storms and record flooding, an Environment Iowa report documents how global warming could lead to certain extreme weather events becoming even more common or more severe in the future. The report found that, already, every Iowa county has been hit by at least one federally declared weather-related disaster since 2006. The Missouri River flooding of 2011, which caused an estimated \$200 million in crop losses in western Iowa alone, was one of the extreme weather events highlighted in the report.

Other recent weather-related disasters in Iowa include flooding in Cedar Rapids in 2008, when the Cedar River crested at 31 feet. Waters flooded 10 square miles of the city, resulting in \$2.4 billion in damage to public infrastructure and impacting more than 18,000 people in the area.

“The bottom line is that extreme weather is happening, it is causing very serious problems, and global warming increases the likelihood that we’ll see even more extreme weather in the future,” said Federal Global Warming Program Director Nathan Willcox. “The extreme weather we suffered through in 2011 is a frightening reminder of why we must do everything we can to cut the dangerous carbon pollution that is fueling global warming and lessen the threat of even worse extreme weather in the future.”

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Environment Iowa

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 Iowa. We focus exclusively on protecting Iowa'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.

EPA to cut power plant carbon pollution

On March 27, the Environmental Protection Agency proposed limits on carbon pollution from new power plants. If passed, they will be the first nationwide limits on the largest single source of the carbon pollution that fuels global warming.

The real battle began after the EPA's proposal, as utilities, coal companies and other corporate polluters began spending millions to convince the Obama administration to weaken or abandon the standards. Using paid ads and armies of lobbyists within Congress, big polluters are trying to scare the public into thinking we can't afford to adopt these commonsense standards. However, we know that we can't afford to not adopt carbon pollution standards for power plants—our planet and our health depend on it.

If all goes well, the EPA is expected to finalize these carbon pollution standards for new power plants by the end of 2012. The EPA is also expected to begin developing standards for existing coal-fired power plants in the near future.



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more online

To learn more and send the Environmental Protection Agency a message supporting limits on carbon pollution emissions from power plants, visit us online at www.EnvironmentIowa.org.