Environment New Hampshire pushes for stronger protections

This summer, Environment New Hampshire launched a campaign to strengthen protections and improve restoration efforts for New Hampshire’s lakes.

From swimming in Lake Sunapee to boating in Lake Winnipesaukee, New Hampshire’s lakes are part of our natural heritage and part of the environmental legacy that we want our kids to enjoy. But the health of our lakes is at risk, and efforts to protect them are falling short.

Pollution, sewage and overdevelopment

New Hampshire’s lakes can only be as healthy as the rivers and streams that feed them. Yet recent Supreme Court decisions effectively removed Clean Water Act protections from thousands of streams and millions of acres of wetlands. As a result, more than half of New Hampshire’s streams may no longer be protected from pollution under the Clean Water Act.

This comes at a critical time for our lakes, which are threatened by encroaching overdevelopment. In the past 30 years, the population of New Hampshire’s Lake Region has increased 77 percent.

This year we have a chance to protect New Hampshire’s lakes, and all of our state’s waters. We can close these dangerous legal loopholes by convincing New Hampshire’s members of Congress to vote for legislation to restore the Clean Water Act. Our staff also wrote and released a new report, entitled “America’s Great Waters”, highlighting the steps needed to restore protections to our waters. Our staff are working with lawmakers and building public support to overcome the opposition of polluters and break through political roadblocks in Congress. Our goal is to pass new protections into law this year, so we can restore New Hampshire’s lakes for generations to come.

Building support on the street

To ramp up support this summer, our citizen outreach team went door to door across the state, speaking to tens of thousands of people and gathering more than 2,000 postcards urging our members of Congress to restore the Clean Water Act. Our staff also wrote and released a new report, entitled “America’s Great Waters”, highlighting the steps needed to restore protections to our waters. Our staff are working with lawmakers and building public support to overcome the opposition of polluters and break through political roadblocks in Congress. Our goal is to pass new protections into law this year, so we can restore New Hampshire’s lakes for generations to come.
Recent action

400,000 strong against new offshore drilling

In the wake of the Gulf oil disaster, Environment New Hampshire helped in an effort to rally more than 400,000 people to speak out against expanded offshore drilling.

The impact of America’s dependence on oil became tragically apparent when BP’s Deepwater Horizon drill rig exploded in April, gushing more than 120 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. The spill devastated wildlife, coastal marshes, and the people who depend on the Gulf for their livelihoods—and the aftershocks will be felt for years.

The surest ways to prevent a catastrophe like this from happening again are to better regulate existing drilling and ban drilling in new areas. In June, Environment New Hampshire and our allies submitted more than 400,000 petition signatures asking the president to stop the rush to expand offshore drilling.

Thousands join call to protect America’s Great Outdoors

This summer, our national federation, Environment America, launched a campaign to protect and revitalize America’s national parks, rallying more than half a million people nationwide to speak out for America’s most beautiful places.

While national parks are hailed as “America’s best idea,” many of them are threatened by development or pollution, including Maine’s Acadia—the only national park in New England. Known for its mountain trails and stunning coastal views, Acadia is home to moose, bears and bald eagles. Yet development within the park threatens to spoil this beautiful place.

In April, President Obama launched the America’s Great Outdoors Initiative to strengthen protections for America’s best-loved national parks. As part of the initiative, Environment New Hampshire is urging Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to give Acadia the resources it needs to preserve all its lands for future generations.

To our members

BP’s Deepwater Horizon stopped gushing—but we don’t know what long-term damage the disaster will cause for the ecosystem and communities of the Gulf. There's no better reason to push toward a future in which Americans use as little oil as possible, protecting our oceans and beaches and reducing global warming pollution, as well.

Our staff is working in Concord and Washington, D.C., to ensure BP is held fully responsible for the disaster, and to win a permanent ban on new drilling off our shores. But we must do more to prevent future tragedies.

Thus, Environment New Hampshire is launching a major program to reduce our dependence on oil. Our work with New Hampshire leaders, Congress, and with the Obama administration will slash oil consumption and move America toward a clean energy future.

Sincerely,

Paul Burns
New England 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 New Hampshire.

For information, call 1-800-841-7299, or e-mail PlannedGiving@EnvironmentNewHampshire.org.

Environment New Hampshire

Acadia National Park, Maine. Acadia, the only national park in the Northeast, is in need of protection.
Environment New Hampshire is joining our national federation, Environment America, to launch a major new program to free America from our dependence on oil.

The United States just suffered the greatest environmental disaster in our history. At least 120 million gallons of oil poured into the Gulf after BP's Deepwater Horizon drill rig exploded on April 20—the equivalent of more than 10 Exxon Valdez spills. Oil contaminated 580 miles of coastline from Texas to Florida, and the spill has already proven catastrophic for local wildlife—from oil-soaked pelicans, to dolphins choking on fumes, to the sea turtles that live in the Gulf’s warm waters. It has also been catastrophic for shrimpers, fishermen, and the men and women who work in the Gulf’s $20 billion tourism industry, all of whom now face a difficult and uncertain future. It may take decades for the ecology and the economy of the Gulf Coast to recover.

As we begin the long process of cleaning up this disaster, compensating those affected, and rebuilding the Gulf Coast, we must ensure that a crisis of this magnitude never happens again. We have known for decades that America’s dependence on oil is environmentally and economically unsustainable. Beyond the threat of catastrophe, our addiction to oil pollutes our air, endangers our climate, enriches our enemies, and robs our economy of billions of dollars every day.

**We can get off oil permanently**

Environment New Hampshire is launching a new campaign with our sister organizations across the country to get America off oil. We want American-made electric cars instead of more air pollution, walkable communities and public transit instead of price shocks at the pump, and clean electricity instead of oil spills. The result will be more jobs, less pollution, improved public health, and thousands of dollars in savings for New Hampshire families and households across the country.

Environment New Hampshire is bringing together a coalition of environmental groups, public health organizations, consumer advocates and national security groups to build a sustained campaign to end America’s addiction to oil. Even with all this support, getting off oil will be no simple task. There is no easy solution, and there is no silver-bullet legislation. It will require a sustained commitment from supporters and activists to change policy at every level of government, from the local zoning board to the president of the United States.

Right now, we are fighting to ensure that any climate or energy bill passed by Congress includes strong policies to reduce oil dependence. U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon recently proposed visionary legislation that could reduce our oil consumption by over 40 percent by 2030 through increased fuel efficiency, support for electric vehicles, and regulatory reform to ensure our tax dollars support public transit and smart growth instead of highways and sprawl. Environment New Hampshire is calling on our senators, Jeanne Shaheen and Judd Gregg, to support Sen. Merkley’s oil savings legislation. Visit our website to write our senators and express your support for ending America’s addiction to oil.

**Next step on clean cars**

The BP oil disaster in the Gulf demonstrated in heartbreaking terms why we need to move away from oil as quickly as possible. That’s why Environment New Hampshire is working to set aggressive new standards requiring cars and trucks to go farther on a gallon of gas.

In May, President Obama announced historic new clean car standards, which Environment New Hampshire and our national federation helped secure. These new rules are expected to cut gasoline consumption by more than 11 billion gallons per year in 2016, nearly as much as all the vehicles in Texas use annually. This is a great start, but not nearly enough—especially since the standards are slated to expire in 2016.

The disaster in the Gulf demands that we go further after the current standards expire, so Environment New Hampshire is calling for even stronger rules requiring the average car and light truck to travel 60 miles on a gallon of gas by 2025. We know that car companies have the technological know-how to make it happen, so we’re working to convince the Obama administration to make this goal a reality. As our campaign kicks off, we’ll collect thousands of public comments and mobilize support from leaders within the national security community and from areas impacted by the Gulf oil catastrophe.

**To learn more about our Clean Cars program, visit www.EnvironmentNewHampshire.org/issues/global-warming-solutions**
Defending the environment at the ballot box

In 2008, the American people helped usher in dramatic change in the leadership in Washington, D.C.—and Environment New Hampshire did our part to help. We've won some significant victories since then, from open space protections to new investments in clean energy. But despite this progress, the pace of change has been frustratingly slow. The main culprit? Vocal opposition driven by powerful coal and oil interests.

Yet despite the obstacles, a select group of environmental champions, like Senate candidate Rep. Paul Hodes, stood up to those interests in Congress.

This November, voters will decide whether those champions continue in Congress or fall victim to Big Oil and King Coal. We are working to highlight the stakes and support candidates like Rep. Hodes, who will stand for the environment when the going gets tough.


Visit www.EnvironmentNewHampshire.org to learn more about Rep. Hodes' record on the environment.