



Summer Report

Gov. Jan Brewer vetoes state parks bill

...despite bipartisan support in Legislature

Following a year-long grassroots campaign by Environment Arizona, lawmakers in the Arizona House of Representatives overwhelmingly voted for a bill to protect state park funding. The measure also found bipartisan support in the Senate and was presented to the governor in April. She vetoed it.

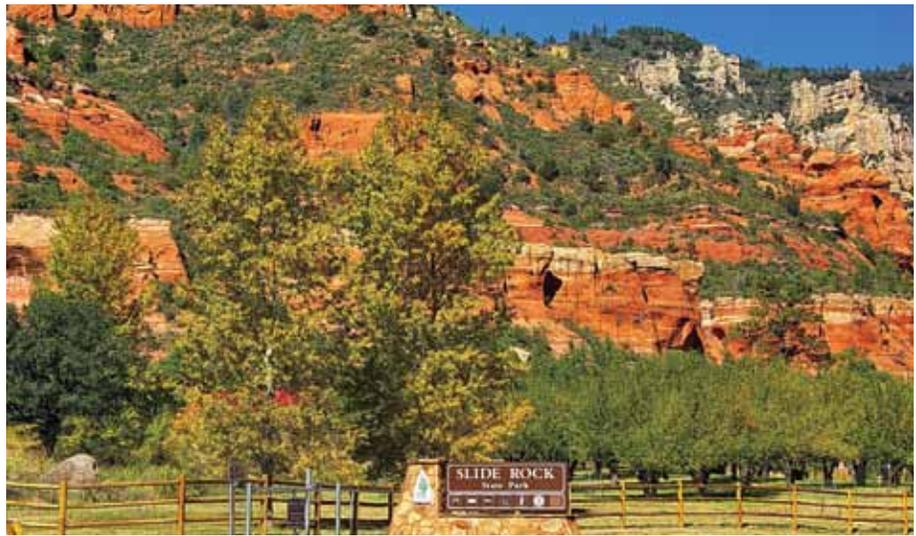
“We’re outraged that Governor Brewer vetoed this common-sense, non-partisan bill to allow the most basic level of funding for our parks,” said Environment Arizona’s Bret Fanshaw. “The governor says she wants to find other ways to strengthen our state parks system. We’re saying: ‘Prove it.’”

This summer, our outreach staff is pounding the pavement, building the groundswell of support it will take to keep this issue in the spotlight until the governor and the Legislature can agree on a permanent solution to keep our parks open and in public hands.

Rep. Fann stands up for parks

The vetoed bill, sponsored by Rep. Karen Fann (Prescott), would have created a protected fund for state park revenues, donations, appropriations and other dedicated sources of income.

While it would have been an important step in the right direction, Environment Arizona continues to make the case that our state parks need a permanent, stable source of funding that will keep them fully open and maintained for future generations to enjoy.



▲ The Legislature passed a bill that would allow state parks like Slide Rock (pictured) to keep the money they collect in admission fees. Gov. Jan Brewer vetoed the measure.

“State parks should be open and public, and Rep. Fann’s legislation was the right first step toward that,” Fanshaw told the Arizona Capitol Times. “We just hope the same legislators who voted to support state parks will follow through when it comes time to actually do the budget.”

\$80 million raided

Over the last few years, Gov. Jan Brewer and the Legislature have raided over \$80

million from dedicated state park funds. This forced nearly all of our state parks to set closure dates in 2010, and many did indeed shut down.

With the short-term help of local communities, donors and non-profit organizations, parks began to re-open on temporary funding agreements. Currently about half of our state parks are operating on funds that will run out within the next two years.



more online

For updates on our work to save our state parks, bring more clean energy to Arizona and more, visit us at www.EnvironmentArizona.org or find us on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/EnvironmentAZ.



To our members

I'm excited.

This summer, we're launching our biggest public outreach campaign ever to keep our state parks open and public. By raising awareness about the threats facing our state park system and building a groundswell of public support, we're showing our elected officials that they need to get serious about finding permanent, sustainable solutions for our state parks.

Our goals for the summer are huge—we'll hold tens of thousands of face-to-face conversations with Arizonans about the threats facing our parks, including budget cuts and privatization. A big win requires big effort, and I'm proud to be working with you to keep our state parks open and in public hands once and for all.

Thanks for being part of the team!

Bret Fanshaw
Environment Arizona Advocate

Recent action

More than 100 supporters meet with legislators

Environment Arizona joined many of the state's top conservation organizations to bring more than 100 citizen advocates to meet with their legislators in Phoenix for Environmental Day in March.

Advocate Bret Fanshaw led a dozen citizen advocates in a meeting with Sen. David Schapira and Rep. Ben Arredondo to solidify support for Rep. Karen Fann's state parks legislation, which would have protected money earned by state parks from being swept by the Legislature for other uses. Though the bill was ultimately vetoed by Gov. Jan Brewer, it won broad support in both the House and Senate. (see p.1)

"This was a great opportunity for citizens to talk face-to-face with people whose decisions will shape the future of our parks system," Fanshaw said. "They helped show that Arizonans love our state parks and want to see them protected."

Palo Verde plant could put drinking water at risk

The drinking water for 124,500 Arizonans could be at risk of radioactive contamination from a leak or accident at the Palo Verde nuclear power plant, says a report by Environment Arizona and the Arizona Public Interest Research Group.

According to the report, "Too Close to Home," the drinking water source for 124,500 people in Peoria is within 50 miles of the Palo Verde Nuclear Power Plant—the distance the Nuclear Regulatory Commission uses to measure risk to water and food supplies.

The report recommends that the United States retire existing nuclear power plants, abandon plans for new plants, and make up the difference by increasing energy efficiency and expanding production of clean, renewable energy such as solar and wind power.

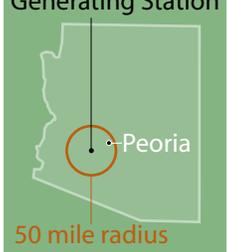


How do you want to be remembered?

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 Arizona or the Environment Arizona Research & Policy Center.

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

Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station



Peoria

50 mile radius




◀ According to our recent report, Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station poses risks to Arizona's drinking water.

Palo Verde Generating Station: NRC.gov. Boy: flickr user: Ken Bosma



Extreme weather hits close to home

After a year that saw many parts of the country hit by scorching heat, devastating wildfires, severe storms and record flooding, a report from Environment Arizona Research & Policy Center documented how global warming could lead to certain extreme weather events becoming even more common and more severe in the future. Our research found that one-third of Arizonans live in counties affected by federally declared weather-related disasters between 2006 and 2011.

“More than 2 million Arizonans have lived through extreme weather, causing big problems for Arizona’s economy and public safety,” said Environment Arizona’s Bret Fanshaw. “Given that global warming will likely fuel even more extreme weather, we need to cut dangerous carbon pollution now.”

One-third of Arizonans affected

The report, “In the Path of the Storm,” examined county-level weather-related disaster declaration data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for 2006 through 2011. The report determined that since 2006, federally declared weather-related disasters affected 11 counties in Arizona housing over two million people—or nearly one-third of all Arizonans.

Coconino County experienced two federally declared weather-related disasters in that time, including the devastating Schultz Flood in late July 2010. The Schultz Fire on the San Francisco Peaks set the stage for heavy rains to cause flash floods northeast of Flagstaff. Coconino County officials reported washouts on Highway 89 and other public roads, interior flooding of 85 homes and damage to Flagstaff’s municipal water line. The flood also contributed to the death of a 12-year old girl.

“Profound changes in weather”

Roger Clark, Air & Energy Program Director for the Grand Canyon Trust,

joined Environment Arizona in releasing the report.

“Profound changes in weather now threaten our region’s entire economic and ecological well-being with severe drought and localized flooding, dying forests, devastating wildfires, declining snow packs, evaporating lakes, deadly dust storms and disappearing springs,” Clark said.

Fanshaw noted that global warming is expected to have varying impacts on different types of extreme weather events. While the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recently concluded that it is “virtually certain” that hot days will become hotter and “likely” that extreme precipitation events will continue to increase worldwide, there is little scientific consensus about the impact of global warming on events such as tornadoes.

In addition, every weather event is now a product of a climate system where global warming “loads the dice” for extreme weather, though in different ways for different types of extreme weather.

The report calls for the adoption of energy-efficiency measures and investment in clean energy sources such as wind and solar to cut global warming emissions.



research

In the Path of the Storm

Read the full report online at:
www.EnvironmentArizonaCenter.org



New limits on carbon pollution

On March 27th, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposed historic new limits on carbon pollution from new power plants. Carbon pollution fuels global warming which, among other serious consequences, leads to poor air quality that triggers asthma attacks and other respiratory problems.

Coal-fired power plants like the Navajo Generating Station near Page are the largest single source of carbon pollution in the U.S., yet there are currently no federal limits on how much pollution these plants can emit. The standard proposed this spring will correct that for new power plants by limiting their emissions of carbon pollution.

Environment Arizona’s Bret Fanshaw issued the following statement in response to the announcement:

“This proposal from the Obama administration is an historic step in protecting Arizonans’ health and our environment. By setting the first-ever standards for the largest source of the carbon pollution that fuels global warming, President Obama and EPA Administrator Jackson are standing up for Arizonans—and putting our health above the demands of the polluter lobby.

“We look forward to working with Administrator Jackson and the rest of the EPA to address carbon pollution from existing power plants. The health and safety of current and future generations depends on us tackling this problem.”

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Environment Arizona

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 Arizona. We focus exclusively on protecting Arizona'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.

Victory for the Grand Canyon

A million acres around the Grand Canyon will be off-limits to new uranium mining claims for the next 20 years, the longest time possible under current law, U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced in January.

Our staff and allies helped lay the groundwork for this preservation victory by digging up the facts, shining a media spotlight on the dangers of uranium mining, helping more than 300,000 people submit comments to Sec. Salazar.

In the months leading up to this landmark decision, Environment Arizona worked with conservation advocates and outdoor enthusiasts in Arizona and around the country to urge the Administration to halt toxic uranium mining around the Grand Canyon.

"Every uranium mine ever opened has required some degree of toxic waste clean-up," said Environment Arizona's Bret Fanshaw. "We thank Secretary Salazar for not allowing the Grand Canyon to be turned into a toxic waste dump."

flickr user: RightBrainPhotography



more inside

Bipartisan support for state parks; report exposes danger to drinking water; and more