



# Winter Report

## Legislators express support for state parks

### New legislative session brings new opportunity

Environment Arizona is working to make 2012 the year we save our state parks by ending the raids on voter-approved parks funding and winning lawmakers' commitments to keep our parks open and in public hands.

As this newsletter goes to press, Lyman Lake and Oracle are closed while Tonto Natural Bridge, Tubac Presidio, Red Rock and others are struggling to survive with band-aid funds provided by local governments and non-profit groups.

### Lawmakers indicate support...

In the run-up to the start of the current legislative session, Environment Arizona Advocate Bret Fanshaw urged state leaders to support a strong parks system, meeting with state Senate President Steve Pierce (Prescott), Senate Minority Leader David Schapira (Tempe), House Environment Committee Chair Amanda Reeve (Phoenix), House Minority Leader Chad Campbell (Phoenix) and the office of House Speaker Andy Tobin (Prescott).

"There seems to be support in both parties for protecting park funding," Fanshaw said. "But it's clear to me from these meetings that public input will continue to be vital to ensure that decision-makers act in the best interest of our parks."

### ...yet budget raids threaten parks

From Tonto Natural Bridge to Kartchner Caverns and Lost Dutchman, our state parks let us experience the wonder of Arizona's landscape, provide a place for



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▲ *Environment Arizona Field Campaign Manager Alex Flood enjoys the view at Red Rock Secret Mountain Wilderness north of Sedona.*

wildlife to thrive, and add immeasurably to our quality of life. And while they cost \$34 million to run, they bring more than \$223 million to the state economy.

Yet state parks have received no funding in the last two state budgets, and worse: Money previously designated for state parks—including visitors' fees collected

by the parks themselves—has been diverted to other projects.

Backed by thousands of Arizonans who've contacted their lawmakers, we're working to ensure that our legislators stop these short-sighted budget raids and protect our natural heritage.



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### take action

To tell Gov. Jan Brewer to keep our state parks open and in public hands, visit [www.EnvironmentArizona.org](http://www.EnvironmentArizona.org)

◀ A ranger gives a tour at Lost Dutchman State Park.



## To our members

In Tucson on January 8, 2011, our state experienced a horrible tragedy.

One year later, I'm reminded of the feeling shared by many at the time that we needed to renew our commitment to open, respectful dialogue with those whose points of view are different from our own.

Working to defend Arizona's beloved places, the air we breathe, and the water we drink, I see again and again that protecting our environment is not a Democratic or Republican issue, but a human issue. And that engaging with each other as citizens, even when we disagree, is crucial as we demand that our leaders make the best decisions possible for our environment and our state's future.

If this sad anniversary can also lead us to reflect on our shared values, then the environment—and our democracy—will benefit.

Thanks for being with us,

Bret Fanshaw  
Environment Arizona Advocate

## Recent action

### Gov. Brewer threatens clean air and climate progress

Gov. Jan Brewer has now forced Arizona to withdraw from or cancel two key initiatives designed to slow the rise in greenhouse gas emissions and protect the public from airborne pollutants.

The first, the Western Climate Initiative, is a comprehensive regional plan to reduce global warming pollution to 2005 levels by 2025—a key step to ameliorating the effects of climate change. The second, Arizona's clean car standards, are a big part of the reason we're seeing more electric cars on our roads.

A decade of drought and wildfires shows the serious effects climate change is already having on our state, and the American Lung Association's recent "State of the Air" report gave five major Arizona counties "F"s for air quality.

We are disappointed in Gov. Brewer's decisions and will continue to advocate for policies that reduce emissions and protect public health.

### Arizona ranks third in the nation for solar jobs

This fall, Environment Arizona released new data showing that Arizona has the third most solar-related jobs in the country, with an estimated 4,786 people employed by 980 separate companies. Nationwide, only California and Colorado have more people working in the solar industry.

Gov. Jan Brewer, the Arizona Solar Industries Association and First Solar joined Environment Arizona in making the announcement.

The new data comes from an analysis by The Solar Foundation, a non-profit solar education and research organization that measures current employment and projected growth of the solar workforce in the United States. The report, titled "National Solar Jobs Census 2011: A Review of the U.S. Solar Workforce" shows that the solar industry is growing 10 times faster than other sectors of the economy.

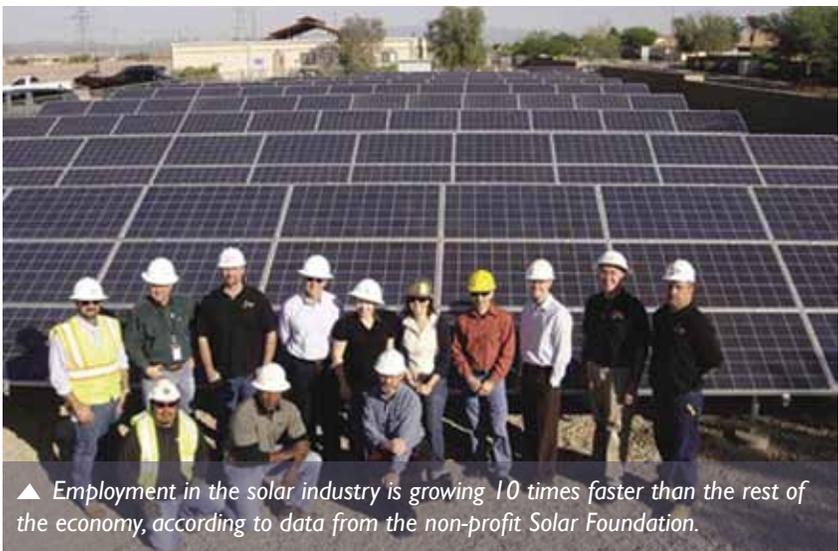
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▲ Employment in the solar industry is growing 10 times faster than the rest of the economy, according to data from the non-profit Solar Foundation.

epa.gov

# By mid-year, 25 days of unsafe air

By August of 2011, residents of the Phoenix metro area had been exposed to dangerously polluted air on 25 days, according to a new report by Environment Arizona. The report ranks Phoenix as the 26th smoggiest large metropolitan area in the country.

## Report highlights dangers of smog, ozone pollution

Smog is a harmful air pollutant that leads to asthma attacks and exacerbates respiratory illnesses, especially among children and the elderly. Our new report, "Danger in the Air: Unhealthy Air Days in 2010 and 2011," shows that smog levels exceeded federal safety standards on 10 days last year, and exceeded the federal ozone standard on 22 days.

## Safety standards need update

On an additional 15 days, smog exceeded stricter safety levels set by a national scientific panel. But because of outdated federal air quality rules, those at risk were never alerted to the danger.

"Arizonans deserve clean air. But on far too many days, people in the Phoenix area are exposed to dangerous smog pollution," said Environment Arizona Advocate Bret Fanshaw. "For the sake of our children, we must make every day a safe day to breathe."

Will Greene, chapter president of the Arizona Student Environmental Coalition, joined Environment Arizona in releasing the report at Civic Space Park in downtown Phoenix. The report was covered by ABC15 news.

"Smog puts the lives of kids, students and seniors on the line," said Greene. "It's time to protect our health and set strong rules to reduce smog pollution."

## Thousands of lives at stake

Under the federal Clean Air Act, the Environmental Protection Agency is required to set a national standard for smog pollution according to the latest

science on air quality and public health.

However, the current standard was set at a level that the EPA's own board of independent scientists agrees is not adequately protective. The Obama administration considered updating the standard to protect public health, but the president recently decided to abandon the effort until 2013. Environment Arizona and prominent public health groups expressed deep disappointment with his decision.

We'll continue to call on the president to protect the health of Arizona's children and seniors by establishing a science-based standard for smog pollution. A strong standard could save up to 12,000 lives and prevent up to 58,000 asthma attacks each year.



## breaking news

As this newsletter went to press, President Obama announced a plan to require some of the nation's worst polluters to cut their emissions of mercury—another airborne toxin—by 90 percent. For up-to-the-minute reports on our work to cut air pollution and protect public health, check out our new website at [www.EnvironmentArizona.org](http://www.EnvironmentArizona.org).



EPA Administrator  
Lisa Jackson

**The EPA has recently worked on several clean air standards including the Mercury and Air Toxics Standard and the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule. Can you explain what these standards mean for the average American family?**

*These new Clean Air Act standards mean cleaner, healthier air for American families.*

*The Mercury and Air Toxics Standards and the Cross-State Air Pollution Rule are part of a series of commonsense steps under the Clean Air Act to reduce emissions of mercury, acid gas, particulate matter, arsenic and other harmful chemicals from some of the biggest polluters in the nation.*

*These reasonable steps will provide dramatic protections to our children and loved ones—they will save tens of thousands of lives and prevent hundreds of thousands of asthma and heart attacks.*

**What's the best way for our members and supporters to express their opinions on these issues?**

*Unfortunately, we are at a point where we have to remind some leaders in Washington to put the health of their constituents above the wish lists of special interests. Speaking directly to those who want to undermine commonsense environmental protections is one of the best ways to stand up for your right to clean air and clean water.*

For the full interview with Lisa Jackson, visit [www.EnvironmentArizona.org/page/azel/newsletters](http://www.EnvironmentArizona.org/page/azel/newsletters).

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# Environment Arizona

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## Winter Report

VOLUME 6 | NO. 1 | 2012

## 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.

## Good news for Arizona's open spaces

This past fall, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar highlighted the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area and Lake Havasu National Bluewater Trail System as preservation projects worthy of federal funding and technical support.

The decision is part of the Obama administration's "America's Great Outdoors" initiative, designed to create a conservation and recreation agenda for the 21st century by gathering public input and supporting popular outdoor places.

"We applaud the Obama administration for working to protect Arizona's great outdoors," said Bret Fanshaw. "From Lake Havasu to the Grand Canyon, our public lands truly represent the best of Arizona."

Petrified Forest National Park was also expanded this fall after receiving support from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which Environment Arizona has been working to protect against attacks in Congress.



azstateparks.com

### more online



#### ◀ *Painting on the shores of Lake Havasu*

*The Obama administration's "America's Great Outdoors" report highlighted Lake Havasu as worthy of federal assistance. To read more about what we're doing to protect Arizona's beloved places, visit [www.EnvironmentArizona.org](http://www.EnvironmentArizona.org).*