



Fall Report

Time for clean air at the Grand Canyon

Arizona's dirtiest power plant fuels air pollution

Arizona is the Grand Canyon State—home to one of the most iconic landscapes in the world. Arizonans love to hike and camp in Grand Canyon National Park, but most of all we love to enjoy its breathtaking scenery. Views at the Grand Canyon are like no other place on Earth, and each year, millions of tourists come from all over the world to see this natural wonder.

However, the views at the Grand Canyon are under threat by a nearby power plant, the coal-fired Navajo Generating Station (NGS). This plant sits less than 20 miles from Grand Canyon National Park, spewing pollutants into the air that create a haze and significantly impairs the views.

We can clean up the air

We can clear the air over the Grand Canyon by requiring power plant owners to follow the law and meet modern-day clean air standards. Proposals have been made by the Environmental Protection Agency and the owners of NGS to reduce the haze pollution, and Environment Arizona is urging the EPA to move forward on a clear and enforceable plan to reduce emissions at NGS and transition to clean energy.

According to the National Park Service, high pollution days at the Grand Canyon can limit visibility by 100 miles. And if the plant continues to break the law, visibility will only get worse.



Arid Anderson/Creative Commons

▲ High pollution day at the Grand Canyon

The pollution has got to go

Environment Arizona is working to make sure the air over one of our most amazing places is cleaned up and that this plant follows the law. But pro-coal special interests like Peabody Energy are trying to let the coal plant continue polluting.

“In 2010, member support helped us protect a million acres around the canyon from new toxic uranium mining. And now we need to stand up for one of our most magnificent places again,” said State Advocate Bret Fanshaw. “Environment Arizona is committed to making sure we have clean air at the Grand Canyon for future generations.”



Alan Stark/Flickr

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For more information on pollution in the Grand Canyon, visit: www.EnvironmentArizona.org.

◀ Navajo Generating Station coal-fired power plant



To our members

I learn something new about Arizona during every campaign goal we set out to achieve.

This past year, one of the most shocking things I discovered while researching our solar campaign was that Arizona gets about 98 percent of its energy from coal, nuclear and natural gas. Less than 2 percent comes from clean energy like solar power, which is a little hard to fathom, considering just how sunny it is every day.

You and I know that relying so heavily on fossil fuels is a dangerous dead-end, with more pollution, more health problems, and more disruption to our climate. I'm happy to be working with you to solve these problems.

Right now, I'm empowered by that 98 percent statistic. I know we've got a lot of work to do, but we'll chip away at it and bring more clean energy to Arizona—the place I see as the future solar capital of the world. Thanks for being there.

Bret Fanshaw
State Advocate

Recent action

Arizona Public Service proposal could kill rooftop solar

Arizona is a national leader in solar, largely due to the effective public policies in place that allow Arizonans to take advantage of this clean source of energy on their roofs.

However, Arizona's largest utility company, Arizona Public Service (APS), is doing its best to stall this progress. In fact, they recently released a proposal that would end a key program that helps Arizonans install solar. APS is asking the Arizona Corporation Commission to end a program called net metering, which allows people who want to put solar on their roof a chance to receive credit for the energy they produce. Instead, the utility wants solar customers to pay \$50-100 more on their bills.

Hundreds of Environment Arizona members have been writing to the commissioners, urging them to make sure we can go solar in the nation's sunniest state and keep our clean energy policies intact.

State parks get half of what they need and deserve

Our state parks are places to enjoy nature and take in Arizona's unique history. Yet lawmakers have consistently underfunded the state park system. This forced some temporary closures and put many parks on Band-Aid funds that could soon run out. This year in the Legislature, two bills were offered that could have helped the state park system. One would have created an optional donation system through vehicle license registration; the other would have fully restored the Heritage Fund—a voter-approved method of park funding that uses lottery money for conservation. Unfortunately, neither made it to the governor's desk.

Ultimately, this legislative session came down to the budget. State parks received just more than \$12 million from the general fund—less than half of what they require to operate fully. Parks will continue to be on shoestring budgets until our elected officials decide to definitively act or the public takes measures into its own hands with a ballot initiative.

The climate is changing – are your investments?

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Dave Bezaire and Susie Havens Bezaire

▲ Hikers outside Tucson

What President Obama's climate plan means for Arizona

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 Hurricane Sandy, devastating wildfires, and record drought, the president's plan to address global warming was loudly applauded by Environment Arizona and many others.

"All of us who have felt the effects of global warming, or simply worried about what's in store for our kids, can take comfort in knowing that President Obama has put the nation on a path toward a cleaner, healthier and safer future," said Bret Fanshaw, advocate.

More drought, unhealthy air days

Left unchecked, global warming is projected to bring Arizona more drought 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.

Focus on cutting carbon pollution

Environment Arizona offered special praise for the president's pledge to cut carbon pollution from existing power plants. More than 3.2 million Americans 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. President Obama acknowledged this and mapped out a plan for cleaning up this pollution," said Fanshaw. "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."



Daniel Borman/Creative Commons

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To learn more about our work to curb global warming, visit:
www.EnvironmentArizona.org

▲ *President Obama speaks to a group of students about the need for alternative energies.*



staff

Catching up with a canvass director

We recently sat down with one of our canvass directors, Maia Randklev, to talk about her work on Environment Arizona's citizen outreach projects to save our state parks and clean up the air at the Grand Canyon. Maia recruits and trains our outreach staff, leads grassroots organizing efforts and helps to sustain Environment Arizona through membership building and fundraising.

How did you decide to get involved with environmental activism?

I decided to get involved in environmental activism in college when I learned about the impacts our consumer culture has on social justice as well as the environment.

What's been your favorite campaign to work on, and why?

So far my favorite campaign has been the effort to save Arizona's state parks. Considering I moved to Arizona in February, the parks campaign was a great way for me to become familiar with the amazing diversity of landscape, history, and culture here in the Southwest.

What do you like best about Arizona?

My favorite part of Arizona is the diversity. I love that I get to see mountains every day living here in Phoenix, but I also can spend the weekend in a pine forest up in Flagstaff just a short day trip away. It's all so beautiful, and there's always so much to do.

130 N. Central Ave., Ste. 202
Phoenix, AZ 85004
(602) 252-9225

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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.

Arizona ranks first in nation on solar

Arizona ranks first in the nation for solar installations per capita, according to a report released in July by Environment Arizona Research & Policy Center. This makes Arizona one of the "Dazzling Dozen" states that have led the nation in solar energy with supportive policies and a commitment to continued expansion. Last year, solar capacity in Arizona grew by 65 percent, bringing it to a total of 1,097 megawatts.

"The sky's the limit on solar energy," said Rob Sargent, energy program director with Environment Arizona. "Arizona's progress should make us confident that we can do much more."

Solar is on the rise across the country. America has more than three times as much solar photovoltaic capacity as it did in 2010, and more than 10 times as much as it did in 2007. Not only that, but the price of solar panels fell by 26 percent in 2012. Environment Arizona attributes the solar boom to the leadership of Arizona officials and those in other leading states profiled in the report.



more inside

Pollution threatens Grand Canyon views; Parks get half of what they need; President Obama's climate plan a victory for Arizona, and more.

◀ *Utility scale solar power plant under construction in Gila Bend*