Fiscal Year 2019 Annual Report
Thanks for making it all possible
From the Director

To be an environmentalist, you’ve got to wrestle with a conundrum: We need bold action on a short timeline ... with broad public support.

We need to do a lot, quickly, to preserve a livable planet. But progress has to earn and sustain the support of the people in order to last—so progress doesn’t often come in one big swooping action. It usually comes one small-ish victory at a time.

At Environment Maryland, we acknowledge the conundrum—and we embrace it. We believe in bold action on a large scale. But we work every day at the local, state and national levels to build, step by step, the support this action demands. Each college, or city or state that deploys more renewable energy helps win more people over to the possibility of a world that runs on the sun and the wind. Each company or state that phases out a single-use plastic product shows more people a way to end harm to ocean wildlife from plastic pollution.

These victories are smaller than the challenges demand. But as their pace picks up, their summary effect grows. A year ago, California became the second state to commit to 100 percent zero-carbon electricity. Now, there are six states with such commitments, plus Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. Back in 2016, California banned single-use plastic bags. In 2019, five more states banned plastic bags, and Maine, Maryland and Vermont banned plastic foam take-out containers. Like all social changes, environmental solutions have tipping points.

Our natural world faces serious problems, and we’ve got to solve them. Our strategy is to make sure that each victory opens a door to the next. Thanks for being with us on the journey.

Sincerely,

Kate Breimann
Advocate, Environment Maryland
Clean Water & Air

Through our Clean Water & Air program, our staff and members tackled problems ranging from the Trump administration’s attempts to roll back clean water standards, to industrial discharges that violate the Clean Water and Clean Air Acts. Below, you’ll find reports on our Get the Lead Out campaign and our efforts to bolster investment in our nation’s water infrastructure.

**The grades are in: Report finds states are failing to ensure safe drinking water for our children**

**MARCH 21, 2019:** Lead contaminates the water coming out of drinking fountains and taps at schools across the country, and at least 22 states aren’t doing enough about it.

“Get the Lead Out,” a study published March 21 by our research partners Environment America Research & Policy Center and U.S. PIRG Education Fund, examined the policies of 31 states and Washington, D.C., and assigned grades based on how well they protect children from lead in drinking water at school. Twenty-two states earned an F grade with only Illinois and D.C. grading above the C range. Maryland received a C.

“Waiting for more tests to confirm that our children are drinking water laced with lead is unconscionable,” said John Rumpler, senior director of our national network’s clean water campaign. “It’s time to get the lead out.”

Environment Maryland and our national network are working in Maryland and more than a dozen other states to protect drinking water for millions of children by advancing policies to proactively get the lead out.

**Congress passes long overdue measures to protect our drinking water from lead, sewage**

**OCT. 23, 2018:** Victories for clean water are rare in Washington, D.C., these days, so this is one to savor.

In October, Congress passed—and the president signed—America’s Water Infrastructure Act (S. 3021), which would double federal investment in safe drinking water, establish a small grant program for schools to address lead contamination, and expand monitoring of contaminants such as per- or polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Our national network’s advocates—and environmental champions such as Sen. Ben Cardin (Md.) and Rep. Paul Tonko (N.Y.)—shaped the legislation and ensured it contained the solutions we need.

“In 21st-century America, we should be able to keep lead and other toxins out of our drinking water, and sewage out of our rivers, lakes and bays,” said John. “These provisions are long overdue.”
Above: Rob Sargent toured the nation’s first offshore wind farm at Block Island, R.I. (upper left). Below: Our national network campaigned for 100% renewable energy across the country, from California (left) to Florida (right).
Clean, Green & Renewable Energy

With support from Environment Maryland’s members, our national network promoted energy efficiency in our homes, educated city leaders about solar, and fostered the development of wind power. Here are updates on our network’s 100% Renewable Energy campaign and our research arm’s “Shining Cities” report.

Maryland officially commits to 50% renewable electricity

MAY 28, 2019: Maryland is setting its sights on renewable electricity.

On May 22, Gov. Hogan allowed the Clean Energy Jobs act to go into law without his signature, instructing Maryland electricity providers to obtain at least 50 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2030. The legislation also calls on the state to create a plan to achieve 100 percent renewable electricity by 2040.

“Without federal leadership, states must step up to address the climate crisis,” said Rob Sargent, senior director for our national network’s Clean Energy Program. “By committing to 50 percent renewable electricity by 2030 and setting a 100 percent goal by 2040, Maryland joins a growing list of states that are sending a message that we’re serious about ending our reliance on fossil fuels and moving toward a greener, cleaner society.”

Our national network’s staff and members have been key advocates for 100 percent renewable electricity and energy policies, including statewide commitments in California, New Mexico and Washington state.

Solar power is growing fast. These cities are shining the brightest.

APRIL 9, 2019: Solar power is booming in dozens of major American cities.

“Shining Cities 2019,” researched by Environment America Research & Policy Center and released on April 9, found that solar energy capacity more than doubled in 45 of America’s 57 largest cities in the past six years. The report’s main event? The latest ranking of America’s top solar cities. Los Angeles topped the list for the second year in a row, and San Diego, Phoenix, Honolulu and San Jose rounded out the top five.

“Cities are rapidly adopting solar energy and driving the renewable energy transition across the country, bringing pollution-free power to our homes, schools and workplaces,” said Emma Searson, director of our national network’s Go Solar campaign.

The report also found that solar is not just a Sun Belt phenomenon. Other leading cities include New York City; Indianapolis; Washington, D.C.; Trenton, New Jersey; and Ypsilanti, Michigan.
Leaders of our national network’s canvass team met in Baltimore before spreading across the country to build public support for putting wildlife over waste by banning single-use plastics (top).
Our network’s staff and members sought to revive the country’s best conservation and recreation program, and to spare Arctic wildlife from oil and gas exploration and drilling. Below, find more on our national network’s efforts to protect wildlife from plastic pollution and save the bees from toxic pesticides.

**Victory: Maryland becomes second state to ban plastic foam**  
**MAY 26, 2019:** Maryland has made a choice to put wildlife over waste.

On May 24, Maryland became the nation’s second state to ban polystyrene foam cups and containers, after Gov. Larry Hogan let the bill become law without his signature. Maine passed a polystyrene foam ban earlier this year. Oregon, New Jersey and Vermont are considering similar bills. Maryland’s ban will go into effect on July 1, 2020, nearly a year sooner than Maine’s.

“This is a great day for Marylanders who want to protect our environment and the wildlife that call it home,” said Steve Blackledge, senior director of our national network’s Conservation program. “Nothing we use for a few minutes should pollute our future for hundreds of years, especially when there are alternatives already available.”

The foam ban bill benefited from the support of the broad-based Trash Free Maryland coalition, of which we were a key member. Next, we’ll focus on reducing the use of other single-use plastics that are clogging our landfills and polluting our communities.

**More than 123,000 join the call to save the bees**  
**JULY 26, 2019:** Wherever you go, you’re likely to find people who have heard about the decline in bee populations and are willing to do something about it.

That was our experience this summer, as our national network sent canvassers across the country to knock on doors, write letters and meet with lawmakers in support of restrictions on the class of pesticides called neonicotinoids (or neonics), which are known to kill bees. Their message resonated. As of this writing, more than 123,000 people have sent messages to governors and state legislators calling for action.

“If we want to save the bees, one of the first things we need to do is stop using the pesticides that are killing them,” Steve said.

Decision-makers took notice, from Idaho, where the governor’s office requested a meeting with Steve, to Texas, where the state Parks and Wildlife Department agreed to stop using neonics in state parks.
Above: Staff from our national research partner Environment America Research & Policy Center, along with their allies, delivered 350,000 public comments in support of federal Clean Car standards to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Below: Andrea McGimsey and Environment America Research & Policy Center staff hosted a tour of an electric bus facility (upper middle and bottom right).
Global Warming Solutions

Environment Maryland worked with other state groups in our network to reduce carbon emissions from power plants, transportation and other sources. Here’s more on what our network did to promote state-level action across the country and defend strong pollution standards for cars and trucks.

Wrong way for the climate: 350,000 oppose rollback of Clean Cars Standards

OCT. 26, 2018: Given the alarming ways our climate is changing, doesn’t it make sense for automakers to focus on making cars that pollute far less, if at all?

On Oct. 26, our network’s national research partner showed the Trump administration that 350,000 Americans think so. Together with coalition partners, Environment America Research & Policy Center delivered that many public comments to the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration opposing plans to roll back federal Clean Car Standards. By freezing the standards at 2020 levels, the plan would lock in more dirty air and global warming pollution.

“With the latest research telling us we’ll have a climate catastrophe on our hands if we don’t significantly slash global warming emissions, we need to move forward, not pull a U-turn,” said Andrea.

Our network is also calling on state leaders to promote zero-emission electric vehicles.

Twelve ways a governor can start tackling climate change right now

JAN. 10, 2019: As 20 new governors took office in January, a new report outlined actions all governors could take to lead the way on climate solutions.

On Jan. 10, our national research partner Environment America Research & Policy Center released a report titled “Climate Solutions from Day One,” which detailed 12 executive actions that governors can take immediately to help solve the climate crisis. These range from updating building codes to improve energy efficiency—as Gov. Kate Brown has already done in Oregon—to collaborating in regional climate initiatives like the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic.

“With the stroke of a pen, governors can start cutting global warming pollution today by increasing renewable energy use, reducing transportation emissions and curbing energy waste,” said Andrea McGimsey, senior director of our national network’s Global Warming Solutions program.

Our network urged governors across the country to adopt these recommendations.
Our staff (partial list)

Kate Breimann  
Advocate

Rob Sargent  
Senior Director, Campaign for 100% Renewable Energy

Bronte Payne  
Director, Campaign for 100% Renewable Campuses

John Rumpler  
Senior Director, Clean Water for America Campaign and Senior Attorney

Andrea McGimsey  
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Emma Searson  
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Bart Johnsen-Harris  
Environmental Defense: Our Water, Advocate

Susan Rakov  
Director, Research & Reports

Doug Casler  
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