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On behalf of those who breathe the air...

On behalf of those who breathe the air, drink the water, and play on the land...

I thank you. I thank each of you who looks beyond your daily life and sees what is possible. Who sees something in our natural world that can be protected. Who sees something that can be preserved for coming generations. Who sees the value in being part of a movement to build a society in harmony with our environment.

I am struck by your generosity. Your support means that you are part of our team, working to secure healthy air, land, and water for all who call Ohio home. Your support means that we are able to undertake the great work that you can read about in this newsletter.

Your support is not abstract -- it matters. It is not abstract whether or not our electricity comes with the price tag of mercury pouring out of coal smokestacks. It is not abstract whether or not we have true wilderness for backcountry hiking. These are real world issues, ones that impact our everyday lives, and those of our children.

Together we are succeeding at building a culture in Ohio that acknowledges the importance of healthy communities, strong safeguards on pollution, robust investment in clean energy, and tough enforcement of environmental laws. I am grateful for the opportunity to work towards these goals. And I am indebted to you. Thank you!

Keith Dimoff
Executive Director

Connect With Us!
Victory! Together we kept toxic sediment out of Lake Erie

OHIO EPA DENIES US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS OPEN-LAKE DUMPING PROJECT

To keep the Cleveland harbor open, the Cuyahoga River and the harbor must be dredged twice every year. This year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed to dredge and then dump this toxic-laced waste into the open waters of our Lake Erie, right next to Cleveland's drinking water intake pipe.

Usually the dredged sediments are safely stored on-shore. This protects drinking water and fish from “legacy” pollutants that can remain in the environment for decades.

According to experts, the Corps' plan would have lead to an increase in PCBs, a known carcinogen, throughout the food web - from fish and birds to other wildlife, all the way up to humans. To make matters worse, these toxins exist in higher concentrations as they move up the food chain, putting people at great risk.

The consequences could have been grim:

- The sediment chemicals would have accumulated in fish caught for human consumption, exposing people to toxins associated with liver damage, cancer, and reproductive problems.
- Cleveland Water Department customers could have paid untold dollars for treatment to ensure the safety of their drinking water.
- The waste would have smothered vital habitat for fish and other wildlife, and disrupted an $11 billion regional tourism and recreation industry.

This was a reckless proposal that put both humans and wildlife at risk.

Our attorneys filed formal comments opposing the plan. We advised U.S. Senators Rob Portman and Sherrod Brown, and the Ohio General Assembly's Lake Erie Caucus to speak out about the problem. We helped recruit more than 100 commercial fishermen, charter boat captains, and local residents to voice their concerns at the Ohio EPA public meeting about the outrageous plan to dump toxic sediment into Lake Erie.

Because of all of this hard work – work that you share the credit in – we won! On April 14, the Ohio EPA denied the Corps' proposal. As a tribute to our efforts, the Ohio EPA recognized the Ohio Environmental Council as a state leader in this important decision.

Shockingly, this is not an isolated incident. Dredging happens in the Toledo harbor and this “open lake disposal” occurs all along the Lake Erie shore. We're planning our next steps to carry this momentum forward and end the practice of open-lake dumping altogether.

We are already engaging decision makers on this issue, including state and federal lawmakers. We are also working with the Cleveland Port Authority, Ohio EPA, and the Corps to advance discussions and plans for innovative and beneficial ways to reuse dredged materials. Dredging has to happen, but we need better solutions to make sure these materials don’t end up in our beautiful Lake Erie.

And the good news doesn’t end there. US Representatives Bob Latta (R-Bowling Green) and Marcy Kaptur (D-Toledo) recently introduced legislation to ban open-lake disposal. We will be working hard to pass this bill and will make sure to keep you informed on ways to get involved.

Keep up with the latest news on this issues at www.theOEC.org/Newsroom.

From left to right, Gildo Tori of Ducks Unlimited, Congressman David Joyce, Kristy Meyer of OEC, Hyle Lowery of Alliance for the Great Lakes.
Devastating fracking fire highlights gaps in Ohio law
LEARN HOW WE PLAN TO CLOSE THEM

Can you imagine waking up to the sound of explosions, thick plumes of black smoke, and a roaring fire in your backyard? Residents near the Eastern Ohio village of Clarington awoke one Saturday morning to just that.

Several trucks at a nearby fracking site caught fire that morning, triggering a series of more than 30 explosions. The fire was so intense that safety officials had to evacuate more than 20 families living nearby. Among them was Gordon Dennis, a lifetime resident of Clarington who shares a home with his son and young grandchildren about 1-mile from the site.

“I just kept seeing real black smoke and I could hear the fire trucks,” Gordon said. “Next thing we knew, state patrol came along and asked folks to evacuate.”

Fortunately, only one person was injured as a result of the fire. This is remarkable, given the fact that two homes were located within 200 yards of the well pad site.

Although the poisonous smoke was initially a big concern for local officials and safety workers, problems with the water quickly became apparent. Within a few hours of the fire, about 70,000 fish and other creatures were floating belly up in nearby Opossum Creek – a once pristine, sparkling stream officially recognized by the state for its quality.

Water sampling of the creek on June 29 confirmed the presence of several dangerous chemicals. To make matters worse, Opossum Creek flows into the Ohio River just two miles upstream from a public water intake.

The Monroe County incident has shined a light on gaps in Ohio’s laws and regulations given today and tomorrow’s “Big Shale” realities. Bottom line: current law is not up to the task of protecting the health and well-being of Ohioans and our environment.

For example, shale wells can be located a mere 50 feet from streams and 100 to 200 feet from people’s homes. The well pad in this case was within 200 yards of two homes, and even closer to Opossum Creek.

Additionally, first responders and local officials were denied access to the list of chemicals stored on the site. This left them unable to come up with a plan to adequately address all the risks associated with the fire.

That’s why we’re calling on state lawmakers and regulators to strengthen Ohio law by requiring:

• Instantaneous disclosure of all fracking chemicals stored or in-use at an oil and gas well to fire departments, first responders, Ohio EPA, and drinking water authorities.

• Emergency rules mandating that all horizontal oil and gas wells adopt approved spill prevention measures and install earthen berms or other approved secondary containment systems to control well pad spills.

• Strengthened minimum distance setbacks separating all new oil and gas wells from occupied dwellings, waterways, and other areas that may be especially sensitive to a fire, explosion, or chemical leak.

• Dedicated revenue from the state oil and gas severance tax for training and equipment for emergency response to oil and gas incidents by the Ohio EPA, local fire departments, and emergency management agencies.

These common sense changes in Ohio law will better protect our environment and health from future fracking incidents. We cannot afford to wait any longer.

Keep up with the latest news on this issues at www.theOEC.org/Newsroom.
Behind the Toledo water crisis
TOXIC ALGAE LEAVES HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF OHIOANS WITHOUT SAFE WATER

The Problem
One weekend this summer, nearly half a million Toledo-area residents had to shut off their tap water because it was too toxic for drinking or bathing. Why? Pollution triggered a huge bloom of toxic algae in Lake Erie, creating dangerous levels of a substance known to cause liver damage in people and animals.

The blue-green algae that has come to be a regular plague in Lake Erie each summer is fueled by phosphorous pollution from raw sewage, fertilizer, and animal manure. While these harmful algal blooms are clearly a threat to our drinking water, they also can have disastrous impacts on local and regional economies that depend on recreation and tourism.

Water and beaches covered in toxic green slime is just bad for business.

Algae-causing pollution comes from several sources. But, research has demonstrated that the improper use of fertilizer and animal manure on farm land makes up the bulk of the problem here in Ohio. Unless properly mixed into the soil, fertilizer and manure can simply wash off farm fields and into our waterways when it rains or snows.

In response to a similar toxic algae crisis in 1970 and the Cuyahoga river fire of 1969, lawmakers went to work to pass the Clean Water Act, a shining achievement for environmental policy in the U.S. Although the CWA addresses numerous sources of algae-causing pollutants, namely phosphorous-laden laundry detergents and inadequate sewage systems, it leaves a gaping hole in the way of regulating agriculture. This omission has greatly contributed to the growing menace of toxic algae in Ohio waterways ever since.

While some steps have been taken to address problems with commercial fertilizer, the amount of manure placed on farm fields and the way in which it is applied is woefully unregulated in Ohio, a reality our lawmakers need to change - now.

The Solution
Toxic algae is dangerous, expensive to treat, and entirely preventable. That's why we've put forward several remedies to Ohio's toxic algae plague:

- Declare lands that drain into the Maumee River a "distressed watershed," ensuring that all farmers and livestock producers take quick action to implement a variety of best management practices.
- Direct the Ohio Dept. of Agriculture to establish minimum best management practices for all agricultural activities, such as the 4R's of applying the right fertilizer source at the right place, right time, and right amount.
- End the bad practice of spreading manure on frozen or snow-covered ground.
- Close the manure loophole that allows people to spread thousands of tons and millions of gallons of manure with no certification or approved plan.

Through these reasonable reforms we can better keep our water clean and prevent another waterless weekend in Toledo, or elsewhere in Ohio.

Following the crisis we asked our members to tell Governor Kasich to take real action on toxic algae. Thanks to people like you we were able to send hundreds of letters to the Governor, and you are making a difference!
Standing in a committee room in the Ohio House of Representatives on May 28th, I watched alongside many fellow advocates as the Public Utilities Committee approved Ohio Senate Bill 310. The moment was significant, but felt somewhat anticlimatic after all of the ups and downs. After all, it had been, at that point, an 18 month battle to save Ohio’s Clean Energy Standards.

The rollback of our clean energy standards does present a challenge for green power. However, it is becoming ever clearer that Ohioans are ready for innovative energy solutions that save us money, while causing minimal damage to the planet.

At the same time that we’ve been fighting to retain Ohio’s renewable and efficiency standards, a fundamental shift within electricity providers has been taking place. There’s a real debate happening as to how they will continue to earn profits as their customers are moving toward generating their own electricity through rooftop solar and small wind projects. These customers also are opting for options to save - rather than waste - energy. The heat is on investor-owned utilities to adapt, and figure out how to survive in a truly competitive market.

On June 2nd, the U.S. EPA released its Clean Power Plan, setting in motion the first-ever limits on carbon pollution from coal-fired power plants. Coal plants account for nearly 40% of our carbon dioxide emissions, and the new regulation will curb these emissions significantly over the next 15 years.

This new regulation could encourage the State of Ohio to utilize renewable energy and energy efficiency in its plan to meet the requirements. If the state elects to deploy more renewables and efficiency as our path to reduced carbon emissions, we could see Ohio utilities having to invest heavily in clean technologies each year in order to meet the state’s carbon reduction goal of 28% by 2030. Dare I say that there might even be annual targets set in order to ensure we meet the 2030 goal?

These two broader realities - a shifting business model and federal carbon standards - will not undo all the damage done by SB 310. For example, there remains a permanent repeal of the “Buy Ohio” provision for renewables. This requirement to rely on Ohio-based renewable energy projects to meet the standards not only helped clean up our environment, but also boosted Ohio’s clean energy sector.

While the arguments put forth by proponents of SB 310 were about "mandates," the real motivation behind SB 310 was a push to preserve an outdated utility business model that depends on wasteful use of electricity, outdated assumptions that consumers are going to continue wasting energy, and perverse incentives that keep dirty, expensive power plants running.

Fortunately, the tide is turning against the old way of doing things and is putting the power of the market in the hands of consumers. With a little help from the game-changing Clean Power Plan, we’re ready for the next steps toward Ohio’s clean energy future.

Trish Demeter named to Columbus Business First’s 20 People to Know in Energy. Congrats, Trish!
We need thriving forests in Ohio

ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILDERNESS PROTECTION ACT, IT’S TIME TO RE-EVALUATE OHIO STATE FORESTS

"In wildness is the preservation of the world."
- Henry David Thoreau

Mature, old-growth forest habitat is now virtually extinct in the Ohio. In addition to providing vital habitat for numerous plant and animal species, mature forests help to mitigate global warming, and contribute to a higher quality of life and enjoyment for Ohioans of all backgrounds.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the federal Wilderness Act. On September 3, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed this historic piece of legislation – an action that has ultimately led to the preservation of more than 100 million acres of old-growth forest, pristine dunes, untouched desert, and other wild land across our country.

The Wilderness Act is the single most important law in our country’s history for protecting wild places.

Sadly, the state of Ohio has not benefited greatly from its passage. Ohio’s only federal wilderness area is West Sister Island, an 82-acre island in the western basin of Lake Erie. Ohio’s lone state wilderness area - established under state law - is the 8,000-acre Shawnee Wilderness Area in the Shawnee State Forest.

Deep within the Shawnee State Forest, right beside our only state wilderness area, is another tract of unbroken state forest land called the Shawnee Backcountry Area.

Bobcats, timber rattlesnakes, eastern box turtles, and other threatened, endangered, and sensitive species survive in this precious swath of forest habitat once roamed by the native Shawnee people.

For more than a decade, the Ohio Division of Forestry (DOF) has pledged to take special care of the Backcountry Area, limiting timbering and consulting state wildlife and natural areas managers to protect its state-listed endangered species.

But in the summer of 2013, DOF managers wanted to reverse course by opening a road through sensitive species habitat and eliminating the Backcountry Area as a special unit altogether.

But the OEC, Buckeye Forest Council, and thousands of our members and supporters like you convinced DOF to do the right thing. We told them to protect, not destroy, this special habitat! DOF responded by tabling its plans to eliminate the Backcountry.

Unfortunately, the Shawnee Backcountry is once again on the chopping block. DOF is currently contemplating opening a road through the Backcountry and changing its legal status.

In response, we have launched a public education campaign that includes hikes and advocacy efforts to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the federal Wilderness Act.

Without wilderness designations or similar “future old-growth forest” limitations on commercial logging, truly mature “old-growth” forest types will remain only a distant memory, forever missing from our beautiful Ohio.

Read more about this issue in our 4-part web series at http://bit.ly/WildernessActTurns50

Bobcats are a state endangered species known to roam the Shawnee Backcountry

more news & info at www.theOEC.org  SUMMER/ FALL 2014 | 7
The Ohio General Assembly’s long recess continues, punctuated by random bill introductions and occasional committee hearings. But this summer calm precedes an autumn storm that promises to rage soon after Election Day in November. Here is a sneak preview of unfinished business the Ohio Environmental Council is urging lawmakers to complete this fall, and the environmental-conservation consequences of the legislature’s action or inaction.

**Farmland runoff = nutrient pollution = toxic algae**

Too much of a good thing can bring a bad result. Nowhere is this truer than with the overabundance of farm nutrients that melting snow and spring rains carry from fields to waterways before each year’s growing season. Scientists and state regulators agree that commercial fertilizer and manure are a primary food source for the toxic blue-green algae that plague many of Ohio’s lakes in late summer.

The threat of toxic algae to humans was made abundantly clear during the recent Toledo drinking water crisis. Nearly half a million Toledoans were left without safe water due to a massive toxic algae growth in Lake Erie (read more page 5).

The OEC is advocating for comprehensive solutions to reduce nutrient pollution. We want to:

- Prohibit the spreading of manure on frozen, snow-covered, or wet ground. This would help assure the fertilizer actually is absorbed by the soil and isn’t washed away into rivers and streams when it rains or snows.
- Close the “manure loophole” in Ohio law that allows 3rd-party manure brokers to evade state reporting and tracking requirements.
- Encourage more farmers to take advantage of state and federal funding that helps underwrite the cost of sensible soil and water conservation measures, such as grass filter strips and cover crops.

**Incomplete fracking laws + inadequate ODNR oversight = mixed results**

Picture the following nightmare scenario: A high-pressure hydraulic line on a piece of equipment at a fracking well in Eastern Ohio breaks, sparking a raging inferno and leaking well pad that bedevils firefighters and local water suppliers with unknown chemical risks, forces the evacuation of local residents, and kills an estimated 70,000 fish, leaving a five-mile trail of aquatic wildlife destruction.

Unfortunately, this was not an imaginary scenario. These shocking events are documented in an incident report filed by USEPA inspectors who responded to this massive fire and resulting spill in Monroe County just before the July 4th weekend.

The OEC is calling on the Kasich administration and state lawmakers to immediately bolster state and local emergency response capability. See the summary of our proposals on page 4.

**November game plan**

The OEC has warned lawmakers and agency officials that Ohio’s incomplete laws contribute to the toxic algae problem and are inadequate to handle the challenges of fracking. We are working with agency officials and lawmakers to build support for the reforms we desperately need to keep Ohioans healthy and safe.

In our sights for amending our proposals is the Kasich administration’s “mid budget review” bill for the state’s agriculture, natural resources, and environmental protection agencies (House Bill 490).

**Read about the latest proposed legislation and Statehouse news at theOEC.org/legislation.**
Green Gala 2014

Saturday, November 15
6 - 9 p.m.
COSI
333 W. Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Join us for an inspiring night with Ohio’s environmental-conservation family.

Immediately before the Green Gala, hear from the OEC staff and leadership at the Annual Meeting. Attendees will learn about the OEC’s current work and our plans for 2015, including legislative and policy priorities. OEC members also will have the opportunity to elect members of the Board of Directors. The meeting is free and open to all OEC members and their guests.

Afterward, enjoy dinner, cocktails, networking, and a fun silent auction as we congratulate our environmental heroes and the contributions they make daily to keeping Ohio clean and beautiful.

Find details, tickets, and sponsorship info at www.theOEC.org/GreenGala2014
#Our_Ohio Photo Contest

OHIO’S MORE THAN CORNFIELDS AND COWS (THOUGH, THEY CAN BE STRIKING TOO)

We’re so excited about this year’s photo contest! We’ve had so many stunning entries, deciding the winners will be difficult. Stay tuned to find out who this year’s winners are!

You can see some of the amazing entries at www.theOEC.org/photocontest.

Need to spread the word about your upcoming event?

We can help.

Just send the details of your event to OEC@theOEC.org and we’ll do the rest!

The OEC’s events calendar includes exciting learning and networking opportunities from environmental organizations across the state. Please visit www.theOEC.org/calendar to learn how you can get involved.
Environmental Lobby Day 2014

HUNDREDS OF CITIZEN-ACTIVISTS LIKE YOU TALKED TO LAWMAKERS ABOUT OHIO’S MOST PRESSING ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, AND WE’RE SEEING RESULTS

A huge thanks to all of our members and friends who joined us at the Statehouse for Environmental Lobby Day!

More than 130 citizens from across the state, many who had never lobbied before, made 69 legislative visits over the course of a single day.

Marisol Bacerra, a PhD student from the Ohio State University and first-time lobbyist (pictured left), came with a group of environmental studies students. She said “Environmental Lobby Day provided the opportunity to meet with our legislators, share our environmental concerns ranging from agriculture to sustainable redevelopment, and learn more about our legislators’ perspectives. Lobby Day can be pivotal, and our experiences can help inform legislators who are ‘on the fence’ on an issue.”

Marisol and other Environmental Lobby Day participants asked lawmakers to:

- Support Gov. Kasich’s proposal in the Capital Budget Bill (HB 497) to invest $100M in the Clean Ohio Fund.
- Support increased funding for ODNR’s Orphan Well Program.
- Support legislation to ban the surface application of manure on frozen or snow covered ground.
- Reject proposals to “freeze” Ohio’s clean energy standards.

Thank you! We’re already seeing some success on three of our four legislative goals!

- Lawmakers approved an additional $100 million for the Clean Ohio Fund.
- The Ohio House passed a bill to step up ODNR’s orphan well plugging program.
- State Rep. Mike Sheehy (D-Oregon) announced plans to introduce a bill that would ban the use of manure on frozen or snow-covered ground.

We hope everyone enjoyed their day as much as we did and look forward to seeing all of you again next year!
Green Giving Club Donor Spotlight: Paul Bingle

Monthly donations are one of the best ways to support the OEC because they provide steady, ongoing support to the issues you care about. We had a chat with Paul Bingle, one of our awesome Green Giving Club members, to ask him about why he decided to start giving monthly.

Why did you first decide to give to the OEC?
I first became a member almost 15 years ago. OEC is the only Ohio organization that pulls it all together in terms of green issues. I had been giving to so many of the individual groups that are connected to OEC that I wanted to add you to my plan. You are the bridge organization that links all of the green organizations in Ohio.

Why is it important to you to give monthly?
I support many charity organizations. If I wrote one large check it would assuredly bounce! Giving monthly allows me to make a meaningful gift in a convenient manner.

What are some of the issues you are concerned about?
- As a northwestern Ohio native, Lake Erie issues are foremost in my thoughts.
- Secondly, being aware that Ohio is one of the largest contributors to air pollution in the eastern United States is a big concern.
- Third, I like being able to count on the OEC to educate me on the questions I have about the environmental issues of the day.

Say hello to our new OEC team members!
You can read their bios on www.theOEC.org/aboutus

Adam Rissien, MS
Director of Ag and Water Programs

Jennifer Woodruff
Development Associate

Brennan Howell, JD
Director of Clean Energy Campaigns

Hannah Tyler, MPA
Director of Marketing & Communications
Shop for the Environment!
VISIT WWW.THEOEC.ORG/OTHER-WAYS-GIVE FOR FULL PROGRAM DETAILS

Kroger Rewards in Central Ohio
Raise funds for the Ohio Environmental Council just by shopping! Kroger grocery stores in central Ohio will donate to the OEC every time you shop. Each year, we raise about $2,000 from this program, so thank you very much!
Visit www.theoec.org/Kroger to learn how to register your Kroger card and start earning donations for the OEC! Don’t forget that you need to re-enroll each year in April.

Staples Rewards
Staples will donate 5% of your purchase to the OEC through their Staples Rewards program. Simply email your receipt/order # to the OEC at OEC@theOEC.org and we’ll enter the information for you.

iGive - Shopping for a Cause
iGive really is as simple as it sounds. Just use the iGive links or install the easy iGive button and shop as you normally would. You can generate donations for the OEC when you shop at more than 1,200 stores. There are no costs, obligations, or any hidden fees. iGive is a free service to both shoppers and the Ohio Environmental Council.
You don’t need to enter any codes, or notify the store or iGive. Simply shop via the iGive.com web site, the iGive Newsletter, or the iGive Button. The OEC will receive 100% of the donation amount advertised on the iGive website.

AmazonSmile
Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. To start donating to the OEC, simply go to www.AmazonSmile.com and in the search box type “Ohio Environmental Council.” We’re the first group that pops up and it says 1969 by our name. This is a very simple way to shop online while supporting our work to protect Ohio’s land, air, and water.

Ebay Giving Works
If you’re shopping on Ebay, check out www.ebay.com/fornonprofits. You can search for us in the search bar at the top of the screen and then click the heart button that says “Add to my charities.” Note: you’ll have to have an Ebay account for this to work. Then, you can select to have a portion of your Ebay purchases sent to us when you check out!
Thank You to Our Supporters

Thank you to all our donors, group members, community supporters, and volunteers. This list reflects contributions received between July 1, 2013, and June 30, 2014, plus current Group Members and Community Supporters.

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Buckeye Forest Council
Buckeye Trail
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Columbus Metropolitan Club
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Ohio Hispanic Coalition
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We extend an extra measure of gratitude to our members who have included a bequest or gift to the OEC in their estate plan.
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Charity Navigator has awarded the OEC the top, four-star rating for 9 years in a row. This rating places us in the top 1% of non-profits in the U.S. for fiscal responsibility.

Thank You!
All of the work described in this newsletter was made possible by the support of our members!