

Your voice. Your OEC.

Every day, the Ohio Environmental Council family of organizations takes on the big challenges to protect Ohio's families and natural heritage. As an OEC supporter, the successes in this report are yours! Whether we're at the Statehouse testifying in favor of a new law, challenging big polluters in court, or organizing communities to stand up for safe drinking water and clean air, this work is for and because of you.



Rich Shank took the reins as the OEC's new board president in March 2017. Rich has tremendous experience addressing environmental issues in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Rich was the Ohio EPA Director under Governor Dick Celeste where he established Ohio's Right to Know laws and revamped Ohio's solid waste laws, working with then OEC Executive Director and current board member Steve Sedam.

"Rich has seen many ups and downs in Ohio when it comes to environmental protection. This perspective is sorely needed as we think about the future of the environmental movement, and how we can draw from lessons of the past to overcome the many challenges of the present."

Heather Taylor-Miesle, Executive Director, OEC

[CLEAN WATER]

Victory Passed resolutions to fight toxic algae

The OEC celebrated World Water Day this year by shining a spotlight on Lake Erie's continued toxic algae plague. We amplified the voices of local leaders who want to get serious about the problem through press conferences on the banks of the Maumee River in Toledo and at the Lorain Port Authority.

Elected leaders including Toledo Councilman Peter Ujvagi, Lucas County Commissioner Carol Contrada, and Lorain Mayor Chase Ritenauer announced the passage of resolutions demanding action to solve Ohio's toxic algae problem. Five cities and counties passed similar resolutions thanks to on-the-ground organizing from the OEC's regional field staff. The work resulted in news coverage across Northern Ohio and sent a strong message to leaders at the Statehouse that Lake Erie communities don't want to wait any longer for real action on toxic algae. Your investment in the OEC is paying dividends in building local, on-the-ground support for restoring Ohio's precious waterways.

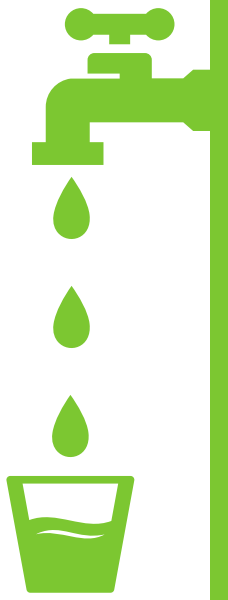
"The Ohio Environmental Council is one of the strongest environmental organizations in the nation, and they do a phenomenal job down in Columbus advocating for Ohioans. Now with a regional coordinator here in Northwest Ohio the work is going to become even better!"

Peter Ujvagi, Toledo City Councilman

Launching a campaign for safe drinking water

The OEC has been a steady advocate for protecting all Ohio waterways since our creation in 1969. However, in the wake of tragedies like the Flint and Toledo water crises, we acknowledge rising concerns about drinking water. After successfully passing one of the most protective lead in drinking water policies in the country in 2016, we got to work researching what other policies are needed to ensure all Ohioans have access to safe, clean drinking water.

We're doubling down on securing drinking water protections by rolling out a multi-year campaign. This campaign will include 1) calls for greater funding to upgrade drinking water infrastructure, 2) standards to prevent dangerous pollutants from flowing from our tap or through our streams, rivers, and lakes, and 3) interactive content to educate Ohioans about where their water comes from and what warning signs to look out for. This people-centered approach to environmental protection will ensure healthier communities across Ohio and wouldn't be possible without the help of our generous supporters!



In response to the Trump Administration's 100 Day Plan, which included a number of anti-environment proposals, we launched our own 100 Days of Action. Each day, we offered those looking to keep environmental protection at the forefront practical actions they could take to get involved. This effort resulted in thousands of actions in all corners of the state, allowed the OEC to elevate local efforts, and connected activists to one another.

18,000
activist messages sent to lawmakers

Nearly
46,000
engaged digital activists

160,000
Ohioans sent non-partisan vote-by-mail applications

Television ads reaching more than
336,000
Ohioans

10
quotes in national media

50
opinion pieces published

225
mentions in newspapers, blogs, radio outlets, & local newscasts

[CAMPAIGNS & COMMUNICATIONS CENTER]

The OEC is using cutting-edge tools and messaging tactics to reach Ohioans who care about the environment, but have not yet been meaningfully engaged to protect it. The OEC family of organizations launched a major effort to reach individuals through targeted digital ads, canvassing, phone banking, and direct mail. We also worked to engage and train a core group of credible messengers through Ohio Clinicians for Climate Action, an OEC campaign to connect medical professionals to opportunities to advocate for their patients through calls for increased environmental protection.

[ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER]

Building a guild of environmental legal experts

Many of the OEC's most significant environmental victories happen in the courtroom. This year, we grew the OEC Law Center Roundtable to nearly 20. This group of seasoned legal professionals has experience and expertise in environmental, energy, and civil rights law and litigation.

The Roundtable plays an important role in advising and assisting the OEC's ongoing legal fights to protect clean energy, water resources, and public lands. Over this year, the Roundtable analyzed legal options to resist the barrage of rollbacks from the Trump Administration, including the Clean Power Plan; engaged in defeating a state legislative proposal that would have allowed County Probate Judges the authority to stifle public participation in issues concerning how local public parks are managed; and analyzed legal options for local governments to address pollution from fracking.

Welcoming the OEC's first Environmental Law Fellow

This year, the OEC brought on its first ever law fellow, Chris Tavenor. The Fellowship is a newly created two-year position designed to provide a new attorney with intense exposure to all aspects of being an attorney for a public-interest environmental organization, and how Ohio's Environmental Law Center uses many different tools to advocate for our environment. The fellowship furthers the OEC's goal of cultivating the next generation of public-interest environmental attorneys.

[CLEAN ENERGY]

Victory Restored Ohio's Clean Energy Standards

Thanks to our supporters, funders, and partners, the OEC defeated new attempts to roll back and weaken Ohio's clean energy standards. After a long and difficult Statehouse battle, Ohio's clean energy standards were restored in December 2016.

In order to fight back against renewed attempts to stall Ohio's clean energy future, the OEC family of organizations held politicians accountable through targeted constituent calls, digital ads, a strategically placed billboard outside of the Statehouse, and one-on-one meetings with legislators. Through these actions we generated 5,000 messages to lawmakers straight from constituents, showing that Ohioans support clean energy and want our state to lead the Midwest in clean energy investment, jobs, and innovation. This victory demonstrates to lawmakers that no matter what the federal government attempts, Ohioans will not tolerate our state moving backwards.

Victory Shut down costly bailouts for dirty coal plants

Ohio lawmakers attempted to pass a bill to bail out old, dirty coal plants by raising Ohioans' electric bills. The bills' supporters wanted to fast-track the bailout bills, giving us very little time to respond.

Thanks to our generous funders and donors, the OEC family of organizations had the resources necessary to quickly launch a digital advocacy campaign including action alerts, digital ads, and television ads. Our television ads gained widespread attention at the Statehouse, and reached hundreds of thousands of Ohioans. On Facebook, our video ad and action alert reached over 88,000 people, resulting in calls, emails, and social media messages to key members of the legislature. As a result, the bailout bills died. We are anticipating a renewed effort to pass the bailouts in the current legislative session, and are working alongside consumer advocates, manufacturers, clean energy companies, and supporters like you to once again urge lawmakers to stop skewing the market toward coal and putting our health at risk in the process.

Working with the OEC has been a critical part of EDF's efforts to ensure strong state policies that boost clean energy development. When we were facing a tough battle to stall costly bailouts of dirty coal plants in Ohio, the OEC was able to quickly put together a plan that allowed us to reach hundreds of thousands of Ohioans through TV and digital ads in a matter of just a few days. Relationships between national and state groups are absolutely critical and the only way we'll continue to charge ahead in the face of what's happening at the federal level!"

Dick Munson, Environmental Defense Fund

Victory Worked with electric utilities to reduce carbon pollution

The only way to make the kind of major changes needed to address climate change is through transformation of the way we power our homes and businesses. The OEC intervened in AEP's Electric Security Plan extension case, and worked directly with AEP and other parties to come to an agreement that will boost clean energy development and help address climate change. The agreement commits AEP to (1) build or enter into power purchase agreements for 900 MW of low-carbon solar and wind projects; (2) to spend \$10.5 million for one or more microgrid projects; (3) to spend \$10.5 million on an EV charging station rebate program; and (4) implement a streamlined approach to cost-recovery for grid modernization projects being lead by the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, PowerForward.

Additionally, the OEC's involvement helped ensure AEP did not raise fixed charges on customer bills, which would have hurt energy efficiency efforts and discouraged investment in residential solar.



Victory Protected public lands from methane pollution

Ohioans overwhelmingly support stronger protections against methane pollution from the oil and gas industry. Despite this, and emboldened by the Trump Administration, Congress attempted to eliminate standards designed to keep methane pollution under control from oil and gas facilities located on public lands.

Thanks to tens of thousands of citizen messages mobilized by the OEC and our great partners across the country, the U.S. Senate ultimately voted to keep the methane protections in place, dealing the Trump Administration its first legislative defeat. This victory means that places like the Wayne National Forest will be better preserved and protected from methane pollution. While public lands are protected for now, we are working against a new legal challenge and will call upon Ohioans once again to speak up for critical public health protections against methane.

[PUBLIC LANDS]

Victory Kept fracking out of Ohio's state parks and forests

The Ohio Legislature laid the foundation for oil and gas leasing in Ohio's parks and forests six years ago. Back in 2011 the Ohio General Assembly passed a law that centralized all the leasing authority for state lands in an Oil and Gas Leasing Commission.

Despite this legislation, leasing of state public lands has been on hold. Governor Kasich never took the required steps to appoint members to the new Oil and Gas Leasing Commission. As a result, leasing of state parks, state forests, and state university lands for oil and gas development has effectively been off the table. The state legislature attempted to wrestle this power away from Gov. Kasich by granting themselves authority to make appointments to the commission in a clear effort to fast-track drilling on our precious state parks and forests. Thanks to the support of OEC members, we stopped this damaging proposal!

Victory Protected local parks from forced fracking

On top of that, the OEC's family of organizations convinced the Ohio General Assembly to abandon a separate proposal that would have allowed fracking operations to force unwilling city and county parks into oil and gas leases.

Defending our national forest from oil and gas development

When the Trump Administration decided to push forward with oil and gas leasing in the Wayne National Forest, the OEC responded with a lawsuit in federal court. Filed in May, our pending lawsuit is currently protecting 40,000 acres of Ohio's only national forest from miles of pipelines, dozens of well pads, and untold amounts of air, water, and noise pollution. Resolution of our case will likely come in 2018.

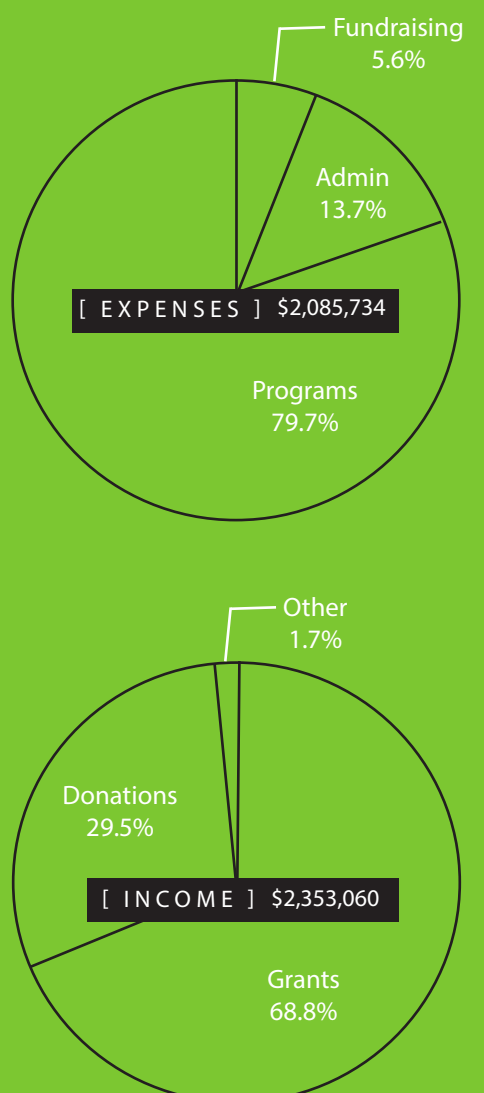
Advocating for special places in the state forest system

Our Communications and Public Lands teams combined to generate thousands of comment letters in support of three very special pockets of the state forest system. The Rock Run watershed in Shawnee State Forest is a haven for biodiversity and rare habitat. The Spruce Run watershed in the Hocking Hills boasts coldwater streams, sandstone cliffs, hidden caves, and some of the oldest oak trees in the state. Mohican-Memorial State Forest has enjoyed special old growth protections for nearly 20 years, but is now in danger of losing them.

Public support for all three projects has been impressive. We optimistically await final decisions by the state, which may come as early as winter of 2017. Wins here will give thousands of Ohioans the opportunity to hike with friends and family through incredible forests they helped save.



[YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK]
FY17 June 1, 2016 - July 31, 2017



The OEC is a careful steward of your investment in a cleaner, more beautiful Ohio.

Thank you!

Donors recognized here gave between January 1, 2016 and August 31, 2017

Due to space constraints, we have listed only donors of \$1,000 or more. We thank these donors and everyone who made gifts of less than \$1,000. If your name or organization has been omitted or listed incorrectly, please notify us at (614) 487-7506 or OEC@theOEC.org.

LEGACY CLUB

We are especially grateful to these generous donors who have included the OEC in their wills.

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Learn more about the Legacy Club:

www.theOEC.org/bequests

The Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund conducted OEC's statewide lobbying, campaign tactics, and legislative communications. You can learn more about the Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund at www.OECActionFund.org.

www.theoec.org

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Ohio Environmental Council [Action Fund]

Ohio Environmental Council

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 **Ohio Environmental Council**

2017 Annual Report

Bringing
one million voices
into the movement for
environmental protection

