ROOTED IN RESILIENCE

2020 ANNUAL REPORT
This has been a difficult year for many. However, the Ohio Environmental Council continues to thrive despite the challenges. The global pandemic has changed how we interact and where we work, but not our dedication to our mission of serving Ohio’s environment and its people. Throughout 2020, the OEC powered key wins and progress in the environmental movement.

Because of your support, we are resilient in our fight for a healthy environment for all Ohioans.

Scandal rocked the statehouse this year, as the FBI revealed House Bill 6—the state’s dirty energy bailout—was passed as part of the largest bribery and money laundering scheme in Ohio’s history. We immediately called for the repeal of this bad bill and continue to fight HB 6 every step of the way. Though the statehouse has largely turned its back on climate policy, we have seen galvanized leadership on clean energy solutions at the local level. This year saw major successes with local ballot initiatives and the Power a Clean Future Ohio campaign to encourage cities to act.

But that’s not all. This year, the OEC and our partners won a three-year federal court battle to protect the Wayne National Forest from extensive fracking and oil and gas development. We played an important part in the launch of H2Ohio, one of the most comprehensive, science-based plans for clean water in state history. And we fought alongside local and statewide partners for safe and fair access to the ballot box on behalf of all Ohio voters.

November saw electoral progress for the environment—our sibling organization, the OEC Action Fund, and its affiliated PAC, helped elect key environmental champions across the state, supported successful local park levies, and passed energy aggregation initiatives to spur more clean energy usage. At the national level, President-elect Joe Biden ran on the strongest climate, clean energy, and environmental justice platform ever advanced by a presidential ticket. He and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris have made climate action one of their top transition priorities, providing us with hope going into the new year.

The fight for social justice was at the forefront throughout 2020. The OEC spent the year growing and strengthening our focus on our core values of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. We created our first paid internship program this summer, provided several grants to social and community justice partner organizations, and made significant progress to update our hiring practices to better diversify the organization and the environmental movement. The OEC also ratified its first collective bargaining agreement in June. Our contract recognizes the important work OEC staff members do every day to secure healthy air, land, and water and empowers staff to have a larger voice at the decision-making table. The OEC is a proud, long-term partner of labor unions. Unions make our world better and the labor movement has been central to major advancements in the protection of people and the environment.

Our success and our resilience is made possible by generous support from OEC members and allies like you. You are deepening our understanding of climate change, expanding the environmental movement, and ensuring a healthier future for ALL Ohioans. This work takes all of us and we’re grateful you are by our side as we travel this path. From the whole OEC team, thank you for all your support!

Yours in the fight,

Heather Taylor-Miesle
Executive Director
TOGETHER, WE’RE ROOTED IN RESILIENCE.

Our members have always shown us that we are stronger, smarter, and more effective when we work together. Whether we’re at the Statehouse fighting for good bills and against bad ones, 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.
While the OEC Energy and Legal Teams began this year by officially closing our legal challenge to the House Bill 6 (HB 6) referendum fight, 2020 wasn’t done with HB 6 quite yet. On July 21st 2020, the FBI unveiled charges against former Speaker of the House Larry Householder as well as four lobbyists and political operatives for racketeering and bribery related to the passage of HB 6. This was “likely the largest bribery, money laundering scheme ever perpetrated against the people of the state of Ohio” according to the U.S. Attorney David M. DeVillers.

The OEC Action Fund sprang into action, calling for a full and immediate repeal of the worst energy bill of the 21st century. We again provided evidence that HB 6 was costing Ohioans’ money, hurting our health and damaging Ohio clean energy businesses and careers. We continue to remind our legislature of the widespread opposition to this bill: more than 2,150 OEC Action Fund supporters, 34 prominent local elected officials, and dozens of Ohio Clinicians for Climate Action members called for the repeal of HB 6. When lawmakers dragged their feet on inviting public testimony supporting repeal of the corrupt legislation, the OEC Action Fund partnered with a number of stakeholders to host three virtual hearings. Nearly 75 individuals—representing organizations, businesses, and concerned Ohioans—shared their powerful testimony on the need to repeal this bad bill.

At the time of publication, the OEC family of organizations continues to work with coalition partners, building pressure to repeal HB 6. Whether this corrupt legislation is repealed or not, you can count on the OEC family of organizations to continue advocating for Ohio’s clean energy future.

THE SAGA OF HOUSE BILL 6

While the OEC Energy and Legal Teams began this year by officially closing our legal challenge to the House Bill 6 (HB 6) referendum fight, 2020 wasn’t done with HB 6 quite yet. On July 21st 2020, the FBI unveiled charges against former Speaker of the House Larry Householder as well as four lobbyists and political operatives for racketeering and bribery related to the passage of HB 6. This was “likely the largest bribery, money laundering scheme ever perpetrated against the people of the state of Ohio” according to the U.S. Attorney David M. DeVillers.

The OEC Action Fund sprang into action, calling for a full and immediate repeal of the worst energy bill of the 21st century. We again provided evidence that HB 6 was costing Ohioans’ money, hurting our health and damaging Ohio clean energy businesses and careers. We continue to remind our legislature of the widespread opposition to this bill: more than 2,150 OEC Action Fund supporters, 34 prominent local elected officials, and dozens of Ohio Clinicians for Climate Action members called for the repeal of HB 6. When lawmakers dragged their feet on inviting public testimony supporting repeal of the corrupt legislation, the OEC Action Fund partnered with a number of stakeholders to host three virtual hearings. Nearly 75 individuals—representing organizations, businesses, and concerned Ohioans—shared their powerful testimony on the need to repeal this bad bill.

At the time of publication, the OEC family of organizations continues to work with coalition partners, building pressure to repeal HB 6. Whether this corrupt legislation is repealed or not, you can count on the OEC family of organizations to continue advocating for Ohio’s clean energy future.

VICTORY FOR ROOFTOP SOLAR CUSTOMERS

Thanks to supporters like you, the OEC stood up for our climate, our communities, and all Ohioans who have embraced solar energy. A shadowy group with ties to large utilities submitted an anti-solar petition to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that would have negatively impacted solar owners’ pocketbooks—including nearly 6,000 residential solar owners throughout Ohio. The OEC filed a motion to intervene in the case and submitted hundreds of comments from our members to reject the disastrous proposal. We were not alone in our advocacy—more than 450 organizations, 57,000 individuals and 37 states spoke out. Together, we successfully stopped the petition. FERC unanimously dismissed the petition in July, protecting rooftop solar and the compensation solar owners receive when sending power back to the grid.
COLUMBUS CLIMATE ACTION PROGRESS

The City of Columbus leaned in hard on fighting climate change this year. Mayor Andrew Ginther announced in his State of the City address the city’s commitment to become carbon neutral by 2050. In February, the city council passed an ordinance to require energy benchmarking for public and private buildings over 50,000 square feet, including residential buildings.

In November, Columbus residents overwhelmingly approved a ballot measure committing the city to 100% renewable energy through community choice aggregation. The OEC Action Fund endorsed the ballot measure enthusiastically. We were deeply engaged in the community choice aggregation campaign from the beginning, joining city officials for the press conference to officially launch the campaign. With the help of OEC’s Emerging Leaders Council, we educated voters on the environmental and economic benefits of the ballot initiative and testified several times on how community choice aggregation would support efforts to combat climate change. This single initiative will help reduce Central Ohio’s carbon emissions by 19% and bring in over $1 billion in new investment to Ohio, including hundreds of construction jobs and dozens of permanent jobs. These are huge steps toward reducing air pollution, reducing respiratory impacts for city residents, and remedying environmental injustices within the community fighting to protect environmental justice communities in our city. The OEC and the OEC Action Fund look forward to continuing to work with the City of Columbus and other partners to ensure full implementation of the policy and to secure Columbus’ clean energy future.

LOCALS LEAD THE WAY - POWER A CLEAN FUTURE OHIO SUCCESS

We know that most climate action victories over the past several years have occurred in cities and counties where pragmatism and practical solutions drive decision-making. In February, the OEC joined leaders from across Ohio to launch Power a Clean Future Ohio, a bipartisan organization dedicated to working with local officials to develop equitable climate change solutions. To date, the cities of Athens, Cincinnati, Dayton, Euclid, Lakewood, Lorain, Lancaster, Reynoldsburg, and Silverton have officially joined the campaign by making climate action commitments. While some of these cities are just starting to investigate and implement strategies to reduce pollution from dirty fossil fuel sources of the past, others are taking more advanced approaches to build upon their clean energy successes. As one of many Power a Clean Future Ohio partners, the OEC is proud to provide technical and advocacy support to the effort, including development of the Ohio Clean Energy and Sustainable Communities Toolkit. Together, we are building momentum for a clean, prosperous, and healthy future for all Ohioans.
CLEAN WATER

ENSURING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE WATER FOR ALL OHIOANS

We’re fortunate to live in a state where water is a plentiful resource. Too many Ohio families, however, struggle to pay for basic water and sewer services. This challenge has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, when the need for clean, safe, running water in our homes has never been greater.

We have called on state and local leaders to issue moratoriums on water shutoffs during the pandemic to reduce health risks and water stress. The DeWine administration and the Ohio EPA implemented a prohibition on water shutoffs for three months. While the order was unfortunately rescinded in July, many municipalities have maintained their moratoriums until further notice due to the coronavirus crisis. Following our 2019 report on water affordability with the Alliance for the Great Lakes, we continue to collaborate with national experts and our partners to develop case studies and policy solutions to address water security concerns across the state.

LOCAL ACTION: WATER EQUITY IN TOLEDO

Community dialogue on water issues rarely stops in Toledo and the surrounding region, with good reason. Not only did Toledo and other cities go without drinking water after a toxic algae bloom in Lake Erie contaminated their water supply, but area residents have spent more than $2 billion dollars over the past two decades to maintain the basic safety of their drinking water. As a result of these critical improvements, most Toledo residents have, unfortunately, seen their water bills more than double since 2000. The conversation in Northwest Ohio has shifted from addressing problems on Lake Erie to addressing the problem of water access and affordability.

The OEC’s Northwest Ohio Regional Director has been working in partnership with grassroots and community stakeholders, including Water Equity Toledo, to develop water affordability policy recommendations. In response to these advocacy efforts, the City of Toledo not only created the city’s first Water Affordability and Consumer Protection Task Force, but it was also the first Ohio city to issue a moratorium on residential water shutoffs during the pandemic. The city has extended that order for the benefit of residents during this troubling time.

YOUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

$300M
IN FEDERAL FUNDS RENEWED FOR GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE

Education and advocacy efforts not only resulted in renewed funding to protect and restore the Great Lakes, but also an increase to $475 million by fiscal year 2026.

$172M
IN THE H2OHIO PLAN

Thanks to our advocacy efforts, the General Assembly invested big in solutions to help ensure safe and clean water for all Ohioans, including $725,000 for lead line replacement in the City of Cincinnati.

$473
IN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FROM THE STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND FOR COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

75+
CONGRESSIONAL AND STATE LEGISLATOR MEETINGS

Our policy experts worked the halls of the Statehouse and the US Capitol and via zoom during the pandemic, talking to lawmakers on both sides of the aisle about issues that matter to Ohioans.

IN FEDERAL FUNDS RENEWED FOR GREAT LAKES RESTORATION INITIATIVE

Education and advocacy efforts not only resulted in renewed funding to protect and restore the Great Lakes, but also an increase to $475 million by fiscal year 2026.

IN THE H2OHIO PLAN

Thanks to our advocacy efforts, the General Assembly invested big in solutions to help ensure safe and clean water for all Ohioans, including $725,000 for lead line replacement in the City of Cincinnati.

IN WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FROM THE STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND FOR COMMUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

CONGRESSIONAL AND STATE LEGISLATOR MEETINGS

Our policy experts worked the halls of the Statehouse and the US Capitol and via zoom during the pandemic, talking to lawmakers on both sides of the aisle about issues that matter to Ohioans.
H2OHI0 SUCCESSFULLY LAUNCHES

This year, the OEC and our members played an important part in the launch of H2Ohio, one of the most comprehensive, science-based plans for clean water in state history. Specifically, our work through the Ohio Agricultural Conservation Initiative (OACI) has become a key part of the program’s effort to tackle toxic algae. Together with our agriculture, environmental, and research partners, we created a widely supported farmer certification program and a best management practice benchmarking program to increase conservation practices across Ohio. Nearly 2,000 farmers enrolled in the H2Ohio program this year and have been working with their local soil and water districts to develop individualized nutrient management and conservation plans encompassing up to 1.1 million acres across Northwest Ohio. We thank the DeWine administration for their continued investment in H2Ohio and our partners for their collaboration on this effort. Supporters like you have been critical in combating the problem of toxic algae and improving water quality for all Ohioans.

WORK TO COMBAT HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS EXPANDS

Even with the early progress of H2Ohio and OACI, harmful algal blooms continue to endanger Lake Erie and Ohio waterways and threaten the quality and safety of our drinking water. While scientists measured this year’s overall harmful algal bloom in the Western Lake Erie Basin as less severe than previous years, there were still causes for concern. In early July, a harmful algal bloom formed near downtown Toledo in the Maumee River, triggering a public health advisory. The outbreak provided a striking visual reminder—we have a long way to go to reach the 40% phosphorus reduction goal to improve Lake Erie’s water quality.

With that in mind, the DeWine administration is gearing up to establish a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for the Maumee River watershed to reduce phosphorus pollution in Western Lake Erie. After a long debate among stakeholders, the administration announced in April 2020 that it would establish a “phosphorus diet.” The OEC will work with partners to ensure sound science and community input drive the process to protect our Great Lake for years to come.

SECURING SAFE, LEAD-FREE WATER FOR OHIO FAMILIES

Everyone deserves access to safe drinking water, especially Ohio’s children. At the OEC, we continue to advocate for policies to protect Ohio families from harmful contaminants, including PFAS and lead. Our lead-free water education efforts this year include hosting a webinar with nationally-recognized water advocates Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha and Elin Warn Betanzo—the powerhouse women who uncovered and exposed the lead-in-water crisis in Flint, Michigan. Additionally, our water policy experts continue to monitor the progress of the state’s Lead Advisory Committee and actively share our water policy expertise with the Ohio Lead Free Kids Coalition. We also worked with Representatives Allison Russo and David Greenspan to introduce a bipartisan bill to replace lead service lines throughout the state within two decades.
The OEC and our partners won our three-year federal court battle to protect the Wayne National Forest from extensive fracking and oil and gas development. In March, the Southern District of Ohio ruled that the federal agencies behind the fracking proposal failed to consider threats to public health, endangered species, and watersheds. The proposal would have opened more than 40,000 acres of the forest for fracking (equivalent to about 30,303 football fields). This victory for Ohio’s environment sets key legal precedent, emphasizing that federal agencies must consider the impacts of fracking. For now, the ruling stops oil and gas development in the Wayne. And, since it requires the agencies to go back to the drawing board, it may stop fracking in Ohio’s only National Forest for many years to come.

Your support helped us achieve this significant victory. We celebrate with you, as well as frontline communities in Southeast Ohio and our legal partners, including the Center for Biological Diversity, the Sierra Club, and Heartwood. Together, we stopped fracking in its tracks and protected a significant portion of Ohio’s only National Forest.

The OEC Action Fund endorsed and helped pass levies for Ashland County Park District, Darke County Parks, Erie Metroparks, Stark County Park District, and Metroparks Toledo.

We are proud to work with these entities in our campaign for Ohio’s first major Backcountry Area.

We spared a significant portion of Ohio’s only National Forest from fracking in a major legal victory.

The OEC Action Fund endorsed and supported several successful local park district levies this year, including Ashland County Park District, Darke County Parks, Erie Metroparks, Stark County Park District, and Metroparks Toledo. These local park districts will now be able to expand and improve their parks for the benefit of their visitors, improving local quality of life and economies. As the pandemic has shown, our parks and public lands are more important than ever so people can recreate safely while social distancing. The OEC Action Fund has helped local parks secure more than $1 billion in public funding since beginning parks support efforts just four years ago.

We met with key members of the Ohio Congressional Delegation to help pass $9.5 billion in federal lands maintenance assistance and $500 million in annual funding of the LWCF, which has benefited nearly every county in Ohio—through grants for new parks, trails, and playgrounds.

The OEC Action Fund endorsed and helped pass levies for Ashland County Park District, Darke County Parks, Erie Metroparks, Stark County Park District, and Metroparks Toledo.

We are proud to work with these entities in our campaign for Ohio’s first major Backcountry Area.

We spared a significant portion of Ohio’s only National Forest from fracking in a major legal victory.

The OEC Action Fund endorsed and supported several successful local park district levies this year, including Ashland County Park District, Darke County Parks, Erie Metroparks, Stark County Park District, and Metroparks Toledo. These local park districts will now be able to expand and improve their parks for the benefit of their visitors, improving local quality of life and economies. As the pandemic has shown, our parks and public lands are more important than ever so people can recreate safely while social distancing. The OEC Action Fund has helped local parks secure more than $1 billion in public funding since beginning parks support efforts just four years ago.
OEC AND PARTNERS LAUNCH MAJOR FOREST PRESERVATION CAMPAIGN

In early January, the OEC launched a grassroots campaign to preserve some 30,000 acres of the Wayne National Forest as Ohio’s first federal Backcountry Area. The Backcountry Campaign seeks to protect a large portion of the Wayne for wilderness qualities, old growth habitat, and carbon sequestration. Located north of Athens and east of Hocking Hills, the proposed Backcountry extends over an area the size of Cuyahoga Valley National Park. It would cover some 100 miles of hiking and backpacking trail, including portions of the Buckeye Trail and the North Country National Scenic Trail. Protecting the forest will bring economic benefits for nearby communities and the surrounding Appalachian Ohio region. Our initial grassroots outreach efforts have generated impressive results so far, with more than 40 organizational signatories, ranging from local businesses to village governments and county commissioners. And, we’re just getting started: the campaign will continue through the completion of the Wayne’s forest plan revision process, which is currently expected to finalize in 2023.

GREAT AMERICAN OUTDOORS ACT PASSES CONGRESS

The Great American Outdoors Act was officially signed into law this year with broad bipartisan support. The Act will ensure full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) every year going forward, at $900 million annually. This is a major win for conservation, as Congress has fully funded the LWCF only twice in its more than 50 year history. Additionally, the Great American Outdoors Act incorporates Senator Rob Portman’s Restore Our Parks Act, providing up to $9.5 billion over five years to help address the more than $20 billion in deferred maintenance backlogs facing our National Parks and other federal public lands.

LET’S CELEBRATE OHIO NATIVE PLANT MONTH!

Ohioans celebrated this April as the first “Ohio Native Plant Month.” Ohio became one of the first and only states in the nation with an official native plant month when Governor DeWine signed Ohio Native Plant Month into law in July of 2019. The OEC Action Fund worked with former First Lady Hope Taft and horticulturalist Nancy Linz of the Garden Club of Cincinnati to make the designation happen. On top of their beauty, native plants are essential for our declining pollinators, birds, and so many other species. With Ohio Native Plant Month, schools, nurseries, and citizen-gardeners now have an official platform for raising awareness of the importance of native plants.
YOUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

466 LETTERS
OEC members sent letters to Ohio lawmakers demanding voter protections.

1.3M OHIO VOTERS
The OEC reached a record number of voters through our nonpartisan Get Out the Vote efforts ahead of the General Election.

200 DEMOCRACY VOLUNTEERS
Volunteers from across the state helped us get out the vote in their communities.

5.8M OHIO VOTERS
Together, a record number of Ohioans voted in the 2020 General Election.
THE FIGHT FOR VOTER RIGHTS

Over the past year, the OEC joined advocacy and voter rights organizations to ensure safe and equitable access to the ballot box—in this important election year and for years to come.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced much of the state to shut down in March, including the state’s Primary Election. We not only called on the General Assembly and the Secretary of State to enact a number of important voter protections, but we also worked with our partners to inform Ohioans of the changes to the Primary. We continued this advocacy in advance of the November General Election.

Looking beyond the 2020 election cycle, the OEC endorsed Ohioans for Secure and Fair Elections, a campaign gathering signatures to place a voting rights constitutional amendment on the November 2020 ballot. The ballot initiative aimed to modernize Ohio’s elections by updating our registration system and early voting procedures. Though the pandemic put an unfortunate stop to signature gathering, the OEC remains committed to advocating for automatic voter registration and other improvements to our election system which will continue in the years to come.

INNOVATIVE WAYS TO GET OUT THE VOTE

When everyone votes, our communities and our environment win. This year, getting out the vote required more innovation and collaboration than ever before. Ahead of and during Ohio’s extended Primary Election, OEC’s Cleveland Metro Director supported Cleveland VOTES and other local partners in their dynamic efforts to reach tens of thousands of voters. Together, partners hosted creative voter registration and vote-by-mail engagement events, including tele-townhalls with local celebrities and bilingual caravans canvassing neighborhoods.

Ahead of the General Election, OEC’s Democracy team worked with volunteers across the state to help Ohio voters make their plan to vote. We supported more than 100 dedicated volunteers in contacting their networks about voting through OEC’s 20x20 Election Commitment campaign. We worked with the All in for Ohio campaign to activate environmental voters, especially young voters and students, through a peer-to-peer texting effort. And we connected Ohio medical professionals with voter information for their patients through the Ohio Clinicians for Climate Action network. Thanks to supporters like you, the OEC will continue to collaborate on innovative and creative engagement strategies to get out the vote in elections to come.

PAVING THE WAY FOR FAIR MAPS IN 2021

Throughout 2020, the OEC worked with statewide partners and local coalitions to count each and every Ohioan in the 2020 Census. Not only was this effort critical to our share of federal funding for critical community improvements and environmental protections, this count will help us in the fight for fair maps during the 2021 redistricting process. Ohio is home to some of the most gerrymandered districts in the country. In 2015 and 2018, Ohio voters took a stand against gerrymandering by overwhelmingly supporting two redistricting reform measures that will help guide the drawing of Ohio’s new legislative and congressional districts. Building on our collective efforts to secure an accurate census count, the OEC will continue to work with partners to demand a transparent, inclusive, and fair redistricting process.

Stay tuned for ways you can get involved in the fight for fair maps in 2021. Supporters like you are critical in upholding Ohioans’ right to a fair and democratic system. Our environment depends on it.
LAW CENTER

VICTORY IN PERRY STATE FOREST

Since early 2018, the Friends of Perry State Forest—a grassroots community organization of concerned citizens, all-purpose vehicle riders, farmers, and business owners—have worked collectively to protect 500 acres of their forest against a proposed coal strip mine. In early 2019, the OEC Law Center joined forces with the group to appeal the water permit for the mine. In the face of our litigation, the Ohio EPA terminated the water permit for the proposed coal mine at the request of the coal company in February of this year. We cannot understate the power of the community’s voice and their rapid response to an attack on their public lands. Our Law Center was proud to join the residents of Perry County to litigate the permit. In the end, strong community opposition and our legal challenge convinced the coal mining company to abandon plans to mine this natural treasure.

AMICUS BRIEFS IN THE COURTS

Over the past year, the OEC Law Center has filed two important amicus briefs in support of the fight for a healthy environment. In late 2019, we filed an amicus brief to support the citizen referendum effort run by Ohioans Against Corporate Bailouts. Due to lengthy procedural requirements enacted by the General Assembly, referendum efforts to overturn House Bill 6 were cut short. While the referendum failed to make the ballot, we were proud to stand in support of the efforts to repeal HB 6 while also advocating for good policy regarding the interpretation of Ohio’s constitutional provisions governing referendums. In early 2020, we supported the efforts of Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost to sue Rover, a pipeline company who spilled millions of gallons of drilling fluid into Ohio wetlands. The case is still pending before the Ohio Supreme Court, and we are hopeful the Court will rule in favor of the environment.

OFFSHORE WIND MOVES FORWARD WITH APPROVAL FROM THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

For nearly ten years, the OEC has carefully studied and supported the development of the Icebreaker Wind project—an exciting six wind turbine demonstration project near Cleveland that would be the first freshwater offshore wind farm in North America. Despite expert testimony and agreement, the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) inserted a poison pill provision at the last minute that would have made this project unworkable. Thanks to your support, the OEC Law Center was there to fight back against this egregious action through legal action and public pressure. Together with our members and a bipartisan coalition of Northeast Ohio lawmakers, the OPSB reversed their earlier decision under pressure from Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Director Mary Mertz to follow the recommendations of OPSB and ODNR experts in this case. This important move clears the way for the Icebreaker Wind project to move forward in the development process.

AT THE CROSSROADS OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY

The OEC Law Center’s third annual Ohio Public Interest Environmental Law Conference focused on the intersection of environmental justice and democracy. By organizing a virtual event this year, we were able to spread the conference out over two days and provide attending attorneys with seven continuing legal education credits—more than we’ve ever provided in the past. The conference featured experts from a variety of backgrounds whose presentations inspired attendees to think deeply about the complexities of our democracy and its impact on the environment. More than 170 attorneys, students, and environmental advocates tuned in from across Ohio—and around the world—for the conversation.
THE FIRST OEC ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE WRITING COMPETITION

The OEC Law Center has always been devoted to educating the next generation of environmental champions. This year, we transformed that devotion into action by launching the OEC Law Center’s first writing competition, designed to reward passionate students for their academic work. For our inaugural competition, we asked students to explore a specific environmental justice issue impacting Ohioans—whether legal, political, economic, or scientific in nature. A panel of five judges read each excellent submission without any information regarding the identity of the students. Marissa Lazaroff (pursuing her Masters in Environmental Policy and Planning at University of Michigan’s School for Environment and Sustainability) won our grand prize scholarship for her article, The Crossroads of Environmental Racism and Public Housing. Juliana Discher (pursuing her Bachelor’s in Political Science & Spanish at The Ohio State University) earned a runner up scholarship for her submission, Environmental injustice leading to disproportionate number of COVID-19 cases in Black Ohioans. An honorary mention goes out to Matthew Kline and Youngjo “John” Lee for their outstanding articles. To read all of the submissions, please visit theoec.org/blog/ejarticles2020/.
JUSTICE, EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

BUILDING A MORE JUST, EQUITABLE, DIVERSE, AND INCLUSIVE ORGANIZATION

As a global pandemic, the climate crisis, and unjust police violence have disproportionately disrupted and taken the lives of Black, Latinx, and Indigenous people, it is more clear now than ever that systemic racism threatens the basic health and safety of our communities. The OEC is committed to combating racism and its pervasive, dangerous impacts. That work begins inside our organization as we continue to integrate racial equity into our work.

Over the past year, we have evaluated our recruitment and retention practices and we are taking actionable steps to build a more equitable and inclusive work culture. We are in the process of analyzing our policies and procedures with an anti-racism lens and altering them accordingly. We are committed to advocating for policies that fight environmental injustice and supporting leaders in this work. More specifically, we continue to amplify the leadership of those on the frontlines, build partnerships, and find new ways to share resources and power.

BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERS

Guided by our Strategic Plan to build a “leaderfull” movement, the OEC hosted eight outstanding interns over the summer. Despite majoring in a range of different fields—from English to theater, and environmental studies to firefighting—this year’s intern cohort demonstrated a deep understanding of how protecting our air, land, and water impacts every area of our lives.

For years, the OEC has endeavored to live into our values by seeking funding to financially support interns working with the organization to protect the environment. Providing paid internships helps ensure that a diverse pool of candidates has opportunities to participate in this high quality internship program regardless of financial status. This year, we were successful in hosting paid internships for our intern cohort. Thanks to supporters like you, we are able to invest in and train these young leaders not only on how to engage in the environmental movement, but in how to embody our values of pragmatism, transparency, and justice.

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

In our effort to fight environmental injustice and support frontline leaders in this work, the OEC provided small grants on an accelerated basis to organizations dedicated to providing essential resources and environmental programming to those most often left out of the environmental movement. For example, we provided funding for the Junction Coalition in Toledo to deliver personal protective equipment (PPE) to families in their community as well as virtual support for those experiencing water access issues during the pandemic. In Columbus, we supported Remember Us Urban Scouts in their development of a program to provide free lawn care and maintenance for members of the community highly susceptible to contracting COVID-19, while also providing youth with job training and mentorship opportunities. In Lorain, we helped the Harrison Community Cultural Centre go solar as a means to decrease their carbon footprint and save money on their utility bills. Finally, thanks to support from the Cleveland Foundation, we were able to support eight Greater Cleveland organizations leading environmental justice programming and advocacy efforts in the community.
COMMUNICATING IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

In the wake of the coronavirus, the OEC Communications Team shifted our strategy to meet the needs of our members and our followers. Over the past year, we have created more online engagement opportunities including webinars with special guests, Facebook Live updates, and social media campaigns.

Our online conversations included national leaders, statewide advocates, and local champions. We interviewed Bill McKibben of 350.org. We hosted a conversation with nationally-recognized advocates Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha and Elin Warn Betanzo, who uncovered and exposed the lead-in-water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

We celebrated our legislative win in creating Ohio Native Plant Month during an interview with First Lady Hope Taft and Nancy Linz of the Garden Club of Cincinnati. We also discussed state-wide announcements from Lake Erie’s harmful algal bloom forecast to the House Bill 6 scandal.

We chatted with Columbus Metroparks on where to opt-outside in Central Ohio. We interviewed the Oak Openings Green Ribbon Initiative about their conservation work in Northwest Ohio. We hosted a panel with Rural Action and Clean Fuels Ohio on the Appalachian Clean Transportation initiative. And OEC’s Cleveland Metro Director hosted a full series of Kitchen Table Talks with local leaders on topics ranging from recycling to rule making.

OEC’s Emerging Leaders program hosted an outstanding series of online conversations this year as well! In August, we hosted a lively and profound book discussion with New York Times bestselling author, Robin Wall Kimmerer, on the weaving of her indigenous wisdom with the pursuit of scientific knowledge in Braiding Sweetgrass. In September, we hosted a critical conversation on Confronting Racism from an Environmental Perspective featuring speakers from the League of Conservation Voters, Sierra Club, Showing Up for Racial Justice Ohio, and Root + Branch. Finally, in October, OEC Emerging Leaders joined Columbus Urban League Young Professionals, Create Columbus, John Mercer Langston Bar Association, and New Leaders Council - Columbus to provide viewers with the tools to get out the vote ahead of the General Election.

We encourage you to view these conversations by visiting: theoec.org/blog/2020conversations/
ENGAGEMENT NUMBERS
JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020

EMAIL MESSAGING

1.4M EMAILS DELIVERED
197 EMAILS SENT

ENGAGED WITH
21,000 SUBSCRIBERS

---

TWITTER

- 8,900 Total followers
- 450 New followers
- 5,800 Engagements

FACEBOOK

- 17,300 Total followers
- 490 New followers
- 49,490 Engagements

INSTAGRAM

- 2,450 Total followers
- 350 New followers
- 4,725 Engagements

TARGETED ACTIONS

- 11,500 Total action takers
- 10,120 Engaged actions taken
- 5,128 Petition signatures

---

OEC Emerging Leaders Climate Forum (January 2020)
OEC 2020 Emerging Leaders Council Retreat (February 2020)
OEC Interview with WCBE (February 2020)
YOUR DOLLARS AT WORK

THE OEC IS A CAREFUL STEWARD OF YOUR INVESTMENT IN A HEALTHIER, MORE BEAUTIFUL OHIO.

FY 2020 JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020**

**The grant revenue reported includes an internal revenue hold-over for future fiscal years as a result of GAAP accounting guidance related to grant revenue recognition. What remains represents the amount of grant revenue attributable to FY20 expenses.

**These numbers include in-kind contributions and corresponding expenses, plus restricted contributions.

TOTAL RAISED FROM INDIVIDUAL DONORS

INCREASED BY $36K

TOTAL NUMBER OF ONLINE DONATIONS

INCREASED BY 7.5%

PARTNER FUNDING

INCREASED ACCESS TO FUNDING FOR 6 PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAMMATIC EFFICIENCY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>$1,747,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin</td>
<td>$283,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>$357,331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$2,388,967</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUE BY SOURCE</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants*</td>
<td>$1,770,277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Donations</td>
<td>$825,262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$23,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$2,618,684</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LEGACY CLUB

*An asterisk denotes a Legacy Club member who has passed away. We are especially grateful to these generous donors who have included the OEC in their wills.

Penelope Allen
Marketa Anderson
Anonymous (3)
Josh Asbury and Michele Simmons
Dayna Baird Payne and Tommy Payne
Kathleen L. Barber*
Richard C. Behymer*
Linda Butler and Steven Nissen
Beth Crane and Richard McKee
Ryan Donzelli
Ruth Ellen and Gerald Butler*
Babette Gorman and Jack Buckingham
Peter and Joanne Griesinger
Ann Hagerman and Vince Hand
Patricia Hammel
Helen and David Horn*
Andrea Jones
Rosemary Joyce
Maryann and Roger Kafer
William Katzin and Katherine Solender
Jeremy King and Susan Studer King
Paul and Jane King
Nancy Kremer
Calvin and Ilene Kunin
Alan and Susan Lapp
John Marshall and Angela Plummer
Kristen Moosmiller and Jeff Theado
Molly Muth and Judy Herendeen
Jan Oakley
Joanne Ogando
Anne Powell Riley
The Richards Family
Helen Richards*
Martin Sabol
Lynn Schreiber*
Steve Sedam and Virginia Weiss
Rick and Jan Segal
Jack Shaner and Peggy Gerds
Michele Simmons and Josh Asbury
Jeanne C. Smith*
Joe Sommer
Wendy Stewart
Heather Taylor-Miesle and Don Miesle
Chris Thorman
Ellen Weston
Gene and Sandy Wright

Learn more about the Legacy Club at WWW.THEOEC.ORG/BEQUESTS

DONOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We value each and every contribution that is made in support of our collective mission to secure healthy air, land, and water for all who call Ohio home. Each contribution is important to building a broad, equitable base of support to protect our environment. This list represents only a fraction of the generous Ohioans who make our work possible. Thank you to all our donors, group members, community supporters, and volunteers. Below, we’ve listed the grantors, organizations, and individual donors who gave $1,000 or more between July 1, 2019 and June 30, 2020. We thank these donors—and everyone who made gifts of less than $1,000.

Bob Allen
Dianne and Tracy Allen
Alliance for the Great Lakes
Barb Andreas and Dennis Cooke
Anonymous
Apex Clean Energy Holdings, LLC
Julia Backoff and Christopher Burke
Dayna Baird Payne and Tommy Payne
Daniel Barash and Maureen Zorndorf
John Barber
Doug Bell
Arthur V.N. Brooks
Beth Buchanan and Bob Heath
Capital Wholesale Company
D. R. Clark
The Cleveland Foundation
Cleveland and Cuyahoga County Port Authority
Cliff Bar Family Foundation
The Columbus Foundation
Community Shares of Mid-Ohio
AI and Mary Compana
Conroy Funeral Home
The Conservation Alliance
Ensign Cowell
Beth Crane and Richard McKee
Kenneth Dahms
Jack Davis and Vivian Witkind Davis
Phyllis Davis
Henry Doll
Kelly and Brad Dufour
EarthShare Ohio
The Energy Foundation
Environmental Defense Fund
Jill and Brandon Evans
Elmore Evans
Scott and Glenna Felker
John Funk
Marianne Gabel and Donald Lateiner
Ann Geddes
Babette Gorman Jack Buckingham
Clyde Gosnell and Omie Warner
Suzanne Gray
Ellen Greene Bush
Peter and Joanne Griesinger
Tom Grote and Rick Neal
The George Gund Foundation
Ann Hagerman and Vince Hand
William and Patricia Hanavan
Dorothy Hauk
Joann and Philip Hawley
Hollomon Price Foundation
Robert E. Holmes Natural Resources Fund of The Columbus Foundation
Helen and David Horn
Huntington National Bank
Andrea Jones
The Joyce Foundation
Roger and Maryann Kafer
William Katzin and Katherine Solender
Paul and Jane King
Jeremy King and Susan Studer King
Sue and George Klein
Paul and Cathy Knoop
S. Lee Kohrman
Melodee Kornack and Albert L Moore
Cindy Kuhlmans-3os and Charles Voss
Calvin and Ilene Kunin
Roger and Barbara Kussow
Tracee Laing and Paul Hammond
Julie Lange Peyton
Alan and Susan Lapp
Mary Lazarus
Trip and Lexie Lazarus
League of Conservation Voters
League of Conservation Voters Education Fund
Logsdon Family Foundation
Lucky’s Market
Maureen Lynch and Richard Lapedes
Cheryl Roberto and David Magee
Peggy Malone
Maloney + Novotny
John Marshall and Angela Plummer
William and Aggie Martin
Daniel Medallie and Diana Prufer
James Medling
Meshewa Farm Foundation
Eric and Debby Miller
Graham and Sharon Mitchell
Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
Juliana Mulroy
Jane Mykrantz and Kiehner Johnson
Bruce and Rebecca Nation
National Wildlife Federation
Naturepedic
Dan and Lori Nelson
New Morning Energy LLC
Newhouse, Prophater, Kolman & Hogan, LLC
Rory and Dedee O’Neil
Wynne Odell, Warren and Zoann Little Dusenbury
Charitable Trust
Ohio Voice
Bill and Lynn Ondrey Gruber
Harold and Melanie Oyster
Kimberly Parks
Patagonia
Anne Powell Riley
Pete Precario and Cheri Brown
RE-AMP Network
The Richards Family
Larry and Janet Robertson
Christopher Schroeder
Sears Swetland Family Foundation
Peter Seidel
Rich and Kathy Shank
Mike and Gena Shelton
Ruth Sherbon
Elizabeth and John Sidorensko
Sierra Club
Matthew and Linda Smith
Karen and Michel Sou beyrand
Nancy Stephens and Rick Rosenthal, Rosenthal Family Foundation
Gina and Andy Stevenson
Wendy Stewart
Joyce M. and Herbert W. Stielau Foundation
Ted and Frances Strickland
Tom and Tracy Tappan
Heather Taylor-Miesle and Don Miesle
The Nature Conservancy in Ohio
The Ohio State University
The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company
The Thomas C. and Mary Ann Hays Family Charitable Trust
M. Jane Toth
David Trout
Dick Tuttle
Steven VanAukens
Robert and Mary Wagner
Michael Walker
Maury Walsh and Beth Lenoble
Andrew and Randy Watterson
Chuck Wellman and Ann Eckstein
Hugh Westwater and Linda Larrimer
The Wilderness Society
Thomas Winston
Dave and Joanne Woodyard

We work very hard to ensure all donors are listed correctly; however, we do make mistakes. Please e-mail OEC@theOEC.org with any questions or corrections.
The Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund conducted OEC’s statehouse lobbying, campaign tactics, and legislative communications.

You can learn more about the Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund at www.OECActionFund.org