For more than 50 years, the Ohio Environmental Council has advocated for a healthier environment for all who call the Buckeye State home. But what does our advocacy look like in action?

It looks like securing the strongest climate legislation in U.S. history…

Just days before Congress passed the single largest investment in climate action signed into law by President Biden, the OEC and our partners testified on Capitol Hill about the costs of climate change that Ohio communities face.

Building a movement to protect Ohio’s wild and wonderful forests…

From community meetings to kitchen table conversations to immersive hikes, OEC Staff are building strong relationships with stakeholders across Southeastern Ohio to protect approximately 30,000 acres of Ohio’s only national forest from logging, fracking, mining, and road construction.

Strengthening critical drinking water protections for Ohio families…

Over the last year, we advocated at all levels of government for stronger protections against water pollution—including efforts to eliminate lead water lines, limit PFAS chemicals in our drinking water, and address toxic algae in our water bodies.

Taking bold legal action to protect Ohioans’ right to fair representation at the Statehouse and on Capitol Hill…

Working with partners, we raised our collective voice to emphasize the important need for fair maps. We filed a lawsuit against the Ohio Redistricting Commission after they severely gerrymandered our state legislative and congressional maps over and over again.

Adopting innovative policies at the local level to ensure healthier environments for our neighbors and friends…

Across the Buckeye State, OEC’s Field Advocacy Team has cultivated relationships with locally elected environmental champions and community partners to update climate action plans, reduce harmful carbon emissions, and creatively finance sustainability investments.

Expanding Ohio’s environmental movement…

The OEC Staff continues to invest in the future of our environmental movement by growing dynamic leadership development opportunities like our Emerging Leaders program, the Ohio Environmental Leaders Initiative, as well as our internship and fellowship programs.

Securing a healthier environment for all Ohioans is complex and challenging work. It takes all of us using every tool in our toolbox and making the most of opportunities at every level of government. You make this important work possible. On behalf of the OEC staff and board, thank you for your tremendous support!

With gratitude,

Rich Shank
Ohio Environmental Council Board President
OUR COLLECTIVE ACTIONS ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

Our members have always shown us that we are stronger, smarter, and more effective when we work together. Over the past year, we’ve taken action together—in our communities, at the Statehouse, and on Capitol Hill—to ensure a healthier environment for all who call Ohio home.
SECURING THE STRONGEST CLIMATE LEGISLATION IN U.S. HISTORY

There is no time to waste when it comes to tackling the climate crisis. That’s why the OEC was thrilled to see President Biden sign the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 into law in August following months of advocacy by partners across the environmental movement and members like you.

The combined investments in this historic legislation put the U.S. on a path to reduce roughly 40% of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, representing the single biggest climate investment in U.S. history. These investments are good news for Ohio families, workers, and communities. The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 will lower consumer energy costs while making historic investments in energy reliability and cleaner energy production—especially Ohio’s growing renewable energy and electric vehicle manufacturing sectors. It will reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions, including potent methane emissions that exacerbate climate change and severe health impacts. Importantly, the bill will support critical environmental justice and climate resiliency investments in Black and brown communities as well as rural communities who have been disinvested in time after time. The OEC will continue to advocate that the state of Ohio take full advantage of this generational legislation, ensuring all Ohioans can access the new jobs, energy savings, and cleaner air and water this legislation will spur.

ADVANCING CLIMATE ACTION, COMMUNITY BY COMMUNITY

Across the Buckeye State, OEC staff are working with local Ohio communities to reduce harmful emissions, embrace clean energy solutions, and secure a healthier environment for their residents. Over the past year, our energy and local advocacy experts supported innovative budget measures for environmental initiatives, climate action plan updates, and efforts across the state to grow the Power a Clean Future Ohio network.

The OEC is proud to partner with Power a Clean Future Ohio (PCFO), a nonpartisan coalition that empowers local leaders with technical support and resources to implement local-level solutions to the global climate crisis. From large metropolitan areas to mid-sized legacy cities and county governments to smaller villages, more than one-third of all Ohioans now live in PCFO communities in every corner of the state. Thanks to your support, the OEC is able to provide technical assistance to these communities by staffing a learning cohort for local sustainability professionals and supporting their efforts to secure federal infrastructure funding.
FIGHTING FOR AN EQUITABLE CLEAN ENERGY FUTURE IN OHIO

After decades of energy policy that largely favors fossil fuels, Ohioans are ready for forward-looking, equitable clean energy solutions that are good for our economy, our communities, and our health.

This year, we celebrated a sunnier day for solar energy with the passage of Senate Bill 61. The bipartisan legislation, sponsored by Senators Louis Blessing (R-Cincinnati) and Nickie Antonio (D-Lakewood), prevents condo and homeowner associations from imposing unfair restrictions on homeowners that want to go solar—expanding access to renewable energy for hundreds of thousands of Ohioans. We also continued the fight against House Bill 6, known widely as the worst energy bill of the 21st century, by focusing on specific legislation to eliminate subsidies for dirty, aging coal plants and reinstate Ohio’s energy efficiency standards. Finally, we supported advocacy efforts around House Bill 429, the Energy Jobs & Justice Act, including its first hearing at the Ohio Statehouse in spring 2022. Together with our partners, we educated members and held days of action to build momentum around this comprehensive energy policy—rooted in equity, carbon emissions reductions, and accountability. We plan to continue advocating for a bold, equitable energy future in 2023 and beyond.

MAKING WAVES WITH OUR GROUNDBREAKING CLIMATE CHANGE REPORT

With the support of members like you, the OEC continues to use every tool in our toolbox to elevate the need for bold climate action with lawmakers at every level of government. This year, the OEC launched a first-of-its-kind report on the staggering costs of climate change on communities across the Buckeye State. The report, produced alongside our partners at Power A Clean Future Ohio and Scioto Analysis, estimates that by 2050, Ohio will need to increase municipal spending by upwards of 82% annually—approximately $5.9 billion—to deal with just 10 of 50 major climate impacts, including increasing precipitation, high heat days, and extreme weather events.

Originally designed to be a helpful advocacy tool for local leaders, the launch of The Bill is Coming Due: Calculating the Financial Cost of Climate Change to Ohio’s Local Governments made significant waves. Local leaders lifted up the report on social media, in op-eds, and at council meetings across the state. Several prominent Ohio news outlets featured the report—from front page articles to headline stories on radio and television broadcasts. These efforts not only caught the attention of millions of Ohioans, but also the attention of U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown. After reading the report, Senator Brown invited us to speak about it at a U.S. Senate Banking Committee hearing in August just days before the Inflation Reduction Act, the strongest climate legislation in U.S. history, was signed into law. The OEC Energy Team continues to present on the report to local communities across the state, empowering local elected officials and community advocates to push for bold climate action.
CLEAN WATER

STRENGTHENING PROTECTIONS AGAINST LEAD IN WATER

From more equitable investment to more rigorous rulemaking, the OEC continues to advocate at every level of government for solutions that prevent lead-contaminated drinking water from reaching communities. Ohio is second in the nation for its number of lead service lines with an estimated 650,000 lines that threaten the safety of Ohioans’ drinking water. To eliminate this threat, full replacement of lead service lines is essential.

At the state level, the OEC submitted comments to strengthen the Ohio EPA’s Lead and Copper Rule. Similar to our comments to the U.S. EPA, we requested that the agency set a more ambitious timeline for lead line replacement and provide technical assistance and support for small and disadvantaged water systems. We also requested that the agency center children’s health and intentionally engage communities of color in their early stakeholder outreach.

At the federal level, we advocated for historic investments—including $15 billion from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act—to accelerate the replacement of lead water lines across the country over the next five years. More than $355 million will be directed at projects across Ohio, where we’re beginning to see progress at the local level thanks to strong advocacy by partners and local activists. For example, the cities of Toledo and Cincinnati approved plans to fully replace lead water lines, including the cost of replacing the private portion of the line for city residents. This will help protect future generations from the threat of lead in their drinking water. The OEC is dedicated to ensuring safe and clean water for all Ohioans, especially our most vulnerable residents. Thank you for your continued support.

YOUR IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

$1.6 BILLION for Ohio’s Water Infrastructure

Thanks to Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act funding, Ohioans will see major investments in our water infrastructure—from replacing lead water lines to upgrading water treatment systems to addressing emerging contaminants like PFAS pollution.

$1 BILLION for Great Lakes Clean-Up and Restoration Efforts

President Biden visited Ohio in February to announce how critical funding from the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act would be used to clean up Ohio’s Black, Cuyahoga, and Maumee Rivers—the state’s remaining areas of concern—by 2030.

$85 MILLION invested in H2Ohio programs and initiatives

14,500 people are now being served by 12 new drinking water projects, nearly 12,000 acres of wetland and ecosystem restoration, and 1.2 million acres of farmland enrolled in best management practices.

13 MEETINGS with Ohio’s Congressional Members

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, climate resiliency, and lead service line replacement need increased investment, and we made the case for it to key members of Congress.

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ELEVATING WATER PRIORITIES WITH OUR LAWMAKERS

Supporters like you help us connect directly with lawmakers on critical environmental issues facing Ohioans. This year, the OEC partnered with the Alliance for the Great Lakes, Black Environmental Leaders, The Nature Conservancy, and Junction Coalition to hold a Water Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse that featured a policy briefing for legislative staff and a number of one-on-one meetings with state representatives and senators. Later in the year, we traveled to Washington, D.C. with the Healing our Waters Coalition to meet with members of Ohio’s congressional delegation. Throughout the year, our water policy experts and regional directors met with local leaders on hikes, at events, and in council chambers. In each of these meetings, the OEC discussed Ohio’s water infrastructure challenges and needs, threats to our drinking water (including lead and PFAS), water access and affordability, and how lawmakers at all levels of government can prioritize environmental justice in their work to address these issues.

FIGHTING “FOREVER CHEMICALS”

This year, the OEC recognized important progress in our fight against per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, also known as PFAS. PFAS are a family of nearly 5,000 chemicals used to make many common products, from food packaging to firefighting foams, that have been dubbed “forever chemicals” for their ability to linger in the environment—including in our drinking water and bodies. For years, the OEC and our members have called for more stringent water standards to address these harmful contaminants. We also saw progress at the state level, as Ohio lawmakers introduced legislation to limit forever chemicals in our waterways and drinking water. There is certainly more work to be done, but with advocates like you by our side, we’ll continue making progress.

GROWING H2OHIO’S IMPACT

Over the past four years, the OEC and our members have strongly advocated for continued investment in the H2Ohio program, one of the most comprehensive, science-based plans for clean water in state history. Over the past year, we’ve celebrated the expansion of several key H2Ohio program components. The Ohio Department of Agriculture, responsible for reducing agricultural phosphorus runoff through conservation partnerships with farmers, expanded its H2Ohio program to 10 more counties—encompassing the entirety of the Ohio portion of the Western Lake Erie Basin and adding 600,000 acres in the program. Our partners at the Ohio Agriculture Conservation Initiative also expanded the area they serve to support more farmers. From the Maumee to the Ohio River watershed, several communities across the state celebrated the successful completion of key wetland restoration projects in partnership with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. And many communities across the state received funding through the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency portion of the H2Ohio Program to evaluate and repair aging water and wastewater infrastructure.

With the support of members like you, we’re working with partners to determine how to make this impactful funding program permanent because every Ohioan deserves access to clean and safe water.
Thanks to members like you, the OEC continues to utilize its legal strength to protect the health of our forests—from towering trees to microscopic mycorrhizal fungal networks that communicate with one another, nurture one another, and protect one another.

In September 2021, the OEC sued in federal district court to stop the implementation of the U.S. Forest Service Sunny Oaks logging project, which would authorize the clearcut logging and heavy timbering of 2,485 acres of oak and pine forests in the Wayne National Forest in Southeastern Ohio. The project also proposes prescribed fire and herbicide applications for tens of thousands of acres, as well as dozens of miles of road construction and bulldozer line. These projects could permanently damage legacy oak ecosystems and their sensitive fungal networks and soils. In 2022, we filed an updated complaint and two merit briefs in the case—Ohio Environmental Council v. United States Forest Service—in an effort to stop this project. Our legal filings touch on several significant environmental factors: the irreversible harm clearcutting causes to our forest communities and their fungal networks, the negative impacts this project would have on numerous species including the white oak (one of America’s most important tree species), the federally endangered Indiana bat, the imperiled Cerulean warbler, and the state-endangered American black bear, as well as the clash between Trump-era federal timber quotas and ecologically sound forest management.

The OEC believes healthy, awe-inspiring public forests are worth fighting for, and we intend to stop the proposed Sunny Oaks Project from moving forward. Stay tuned for future updates in this important case.

The OEC was proud to play a role in securing more than 122,000 comments from across the country calling for more protections for our mature and old-growth forests, like our beloved Wayne National Forest.

Nearly 800 OEC members and supporters joined us in calling on the Ohio EPA to deny a permit that threatens the ecological health of Big Darby Creek, one of the most important streams in Ohio and the entire Midwestern United States.

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CALLING FOR AN OHIO-BASED WILDERNESS SYSTEM

While the majestic old growth and fully mature forests that once covered much of Ohio are largely gone today, they can return if we intentionally cultivate their long-term ecological recovery. We believe that Ohio can—and should—do more to protect and strengthen wilderness.

This year, the OEC and our partners prepared a policy paper highlighting Ohio’s lack of wilderness areas. The state owns and manages more than 800,000 acres of public land, ranging from our state parks and forests to wildlife areas and nature preserves. Strikingly, however, Ohio has only one state wilderness area—the Shawnee Wilderness Area—which amounts to less than 1% of Ohio’s state public land portfolio. In our memo, we examined some of the administrative, legal, and policy solutions Ohio could employ to expand the state’s public wilderness systems. A state-level wilderness system is both feasible and a very real need that we will continue to advocate for with your support.

BUILDING SUPPORT FOR SOUTHEASTERN OHIO’S BACKCOUNTRY

With mature forests, marvelous rock formations, and meandering streams, Southeastern Ohio continues to grow as an outdoor recreation destination. So, too, does our campaign to protect approximately 30,000 acres of the Wayne National Forest between Hocking Hills and Burr Oak State Parks from logging, fracking, mining, and road construction. This portion of the Wayne National Forest has the potential to become Ohio’s premier old-growth forest and epicenter of carbon sequestration. We believe a new “backcountry” designation (similar to a congressionally designated wilderness area) would not only protect the land, but also help the surrounding community leverage their region as a world-class recreation resource.

This year, we nearly doubled the number of businesses, community organizations, and local governments across Southeastern Ohio who have signed on in support of the campaign thanks to our on-the-ground presence. By attending community meetings and hosting gatherings, we have strengthened relationships with more than 140 local stakeholders. It is important to the OEC to intentionally and authentically foster greater local ownership and leadership of this campaign because no one knows the importance of this place and values its protection more than the surrounding communities.

Supporters like you are helping make this collective vision a reality. Together, we can secure this critical designation.
Thanks to supporters like you, the OEC is still fighting for fair maps more than a year into Ohio’s redistricting process. We know a healthy environment requires a healthy democracy, which is why we continue our legal battles and policy work with members and partners across the Buckeye State.

In late September, the OEC joined forces with the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, the Council for American Islamic Relations (CAIR-Ohio), and six individual plaintiffs to challenge the gerrymandered Statehouse redistricting plan. Represented by the nationally acclaimed Brennan Center for Justice at NYU Law and the law firm Reed Smith, we argued that the maps violated the prohibition against partisan gerrymandering and voters’ equal protection under the Ohio constitution. When we dug into the data, we saw how severely gerrymandered state legislative districts diluted the voting power of Ohioans most directly experiencing environmental risks, especially communities of color. We refused to let that discrimination stand.

Over the course of the next year, we won an astounding five times—the Ohio Supreme Court invalidated five different statehouse maps.

In addition to our advocacy for fair state legislative maps, the OEC filed several amicus briefs in support of the plaintiffs in the case appealing the unfair congressional maps in December 2021 and again in May 2022. The Ohio Supreme Court invalidated the gerrymandered congressional redistricting plans both times, once again ruling in favor of redistricting advocates and our fight for fair maps.

Despite these important legal victories, Republican mappers continued to ignore orders from a bipartisan majority on the state’s highest court to obey the constitution and adopt fair maps. They successfully forced Ohioans to vote under illegally rigged maps in 2022, and seem intent on doing the same for future elections. But we won’t let them get away with this.

We will not stop until Ohioans have fair maps. We’re ready to work with partners to lay the groundwork for a new redistricting process that better represents the will of Ohio voters.

FIGHTING FOR FAIR STATEHOUSE AND CONGRESSIONAL MAPS

HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE JUDICIARY

Judges play an incredibly important role in protecting our environment from polluters. Every court hears cases directly impacting the environment and health of our communities, whether it’s a case of national significance, like West Virginia vs. EPA, or a local judge ruling on an illegal dumping case in a small Ohio town. Laws safeguarding our land, air, and water from corporate polluters are only as strong as the judges who interpret them. When polluters are left unaccountable, they often pollute marginalized and disenfranchised communities. Strong judges can protect our lands from waste dumping, water from contamination, and air from toxins. They are essential to centering environmental justice in our collective fight to protect Ohio’s land, air, and water for generations to come.

To spread awareness in local communities about the vital role our judges play in the fight to protect Ohio’s environment, the OEC launched a radio ad campaign to educate community members about the importance of our judiciary.
ADVANCING ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY PRIORITIES IN CLEVELAND: After developing and promoting the Cleveland Comprehensive Environmental Policy Platform throughout 2021, the OEC and partners shifted into advancing key policy priorities in 2022. We were pleased to meet with Mayor Justin Bibb when he took office and to see his administration adopt many of our platform goals in their initial plans. We continue to work with members of the administration and Cleveland City Council members to address issues of environmental justice, water quality and access, land and green space, infrastructure and transportation, as well as energy and air quality. As we’ve tracked platform progress, we’ve celebrated historic investments in lead-safe housing and parks planning, the adoption of an updated Complete and Green Streets Ordinance, the creation of an updated Urban Forestry Commission, as well as outspoken leadership on the need for bold climate action.

DIRECTLY INVESTING IN TOLEDO ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES: The OEC’s Northwest Ohio Regional Director and our partners worked with Toledo City Council to support direct investments in environmental justice and climate action through the city’s budgeting process this year. In March 2022, Toledo City Council passed a budget amendment—widely known as “1% for the Environment”—that provides dedicated funding for environmental protection, sustainability, and climate resilience in the form of a minimum 1% of the annual capital improvement budget. Coupled with the creation of a full-time position in the mayor’s office dedicated to climate action, these budget investments will be pivotal in protecting Toledo’s environment and natural resources while expanding the economic growth that will come as a result of the clean energy transition.

GROWING AUTHENTIC PARTNERSHIPS IN YOUNGSTOWN: Since establishing an Ohio Environmental Council presence in the Mahoning Valley last year, the OEC’s Northeast Ohio Regional Director worked to grow authentic partnerships with dozens of local environmental organizations as well as local elected officials. As a result of this intentional work, the OEC celebrated two important policy wins for the people of Youngstown: a commitment to reduce the city’s greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and the establishment of a citywide Shade Tree and Beautification Commission to support the protection and growth of the local tree canopy.

BUILDING THE BACKCOUNTRY IN SOUTHEASTERN OHIO: Throughout 2022, the OEC’s Southeast Ohio Regional Director has been instrumental in connecting with the community to build a groundswell of support for the creation of a protected Backcountry Area in the Wayne National Forest. To showcase the importance of protecting this special place, the OEC worked with a local storyteller to interview local historians, conservationists, outdoor recreation enthusiasts, entrepreneurs, and elected officials to create Stories from the Forest, a series of audio interviews and a short film highlighting the history of the land and surrounding communities. We were able to share some of these stories with the community and members like you at a first-of-its kind Forest Fest this fall.

ACTING ON CLIMATE IN CINCINNATI: Alongside Cincinnati Mayor Aftab Pureval and City Council, the OEC and other community partners have been working together to update and advance the Green Cincinnati Plan throughout 2022. The OEC’s Southwest Ohio Regional Director was selected to lead the Advocacy, Education & Outreach Subcommittee that helped engage hundreds of residents in the process of updating this important plan, which will not only focus on critical environmental justice priorities, but also establish aggressive carbon neutrality goals by 2050.
CELEBRATING A WIN FOR WIND—10 YEARS IN THE MAKING

For more than a decade, the OEC tracked, studied, and supported Icebreaker Wind—an innovative six-turbine wind energy demonstration project in Lake Erie that would be the first freshwater offshore wind farm in Ohio, in the United States, and on the continent. Once built, this thoroughly vetted project will reduce carbon emissions and bring the economic benefits of the clean energy economy to our northern shore.

Throughout the permitting process, fossil fuel interests funded opposition to Project Icebreaker—notably Murray Energy, a coal company. In 2020, opposed parties appealed the Ohio Power Siting Board’s project approval to the Ohio Supreme Court. In response, the OEC Law Center continued our long history of support for the project by filing an amicus brief, stating how important it is for Ohioans to know that fossil fuel interests are standing in the way of a cleaner, renewable energy future we all deserve. We’re thrilled the Ohio Supreme Court agreed. In August 2022, the court approved the permit in a 6-1 decision, allowing this important project to move forward. As North America’s first freshwater offshore wind power project, Icebreaker could change the energy game for the state of Ohio.

Our Law Center is now focused on another important project that also has the potential to position Ohio as a renewable energy leader. The OEC Law Center filed an amicus brief in June 2022 in support of the Emerson Creek Wind Farm in Northwestern Ohio. We thank you for your continued support of our legal efforts to fight for climate action.

SUPPORTING PARTNERS IN THE FIGHT FOR FAIR MAPS

In addition to the OEC’s extensive legal battle for fair statehouse maps in Ohio’s ongoing redistricting process, the OEC collaborated with eight advocacy organizations to challenge the gerrymandered congressional maps passed by the Ohio Redistricting Commission in early 2022. The OEC Law Center drafted the briefs in partnership with Innovation Ohio, LEAD Ohio, Ohio Citizen Action, Ohio Farmers Union, the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, the Ohio Unity Coalition, OPAWL —Building AAPI Feminist Leadership, and Red, Wine & Blue. The organizations co-signing the briefs represent people from all across Ohio and many different walks of life. While the organizations separately focus on many different issues, communities, and constituencies, we raised our collective voice to emphasize the important need for fair maps for every person who calls this state home.

ENGAGING LAW STUDENTS AND LAWYERS IN PURSUIT OF ENERGY JUSTICE

This year marked our fifth annual Ohio Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, the OEC Law Center’s premier educational project. Building off of previous conferences centered around democracy and water policy, we focused on energy during our 2022 event In Pursuit of Energy Justice for All. Nearly 100 participants attended or tuned in to the conference where they heard from panels of community and policy experts about local, state, and federal energy policymaking, community-driven energy justice projects, equitable electric vehicle and clean public transit policy, and corporate climate accountability.
EXPANDING AN EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE MOVEMENT

SUPPORTING EMERGING LEADERS ACROSS THE STATE

For years, the OEC has invested in the future of our environmental movement through our Emerging Leaders program, where OEC Staff collaborate with organizations across Central Ohio to empower hundreds of local young professionals to take action and become the next generation of environmental champions through education, advocacy, and networking.

This year, we expanded these efforts in collaboration with the Black Environmental Leaders Association to pilot a statewide leadership development program. The Ohio Environmental Leaders Initiative (OELI) brought together rising leaders in the environmental movement and centered its curriculum on racial equity and environmental justice. Over the course of six months, we hosted training sessions designed to grow cohort members’ environmental advocacy skills, including community organizing, work/life balance, board leadership, policy work, and more. At the conclusion of the program, the OELI cohort members designed a series of lesson plans and instructional videos with the intention of highlighting opportunities for taking action to meet the diverse needs of their communities who are disproportionately experiencing the challenges of climate change and injustice. In addition to providing a platform for learning and connection, the program also provided a monetary stipend to cohort members to recognize their work.

Following the success of this year’s program, the OEC and Black Environmental Leaders Association hope to expand OELI to build a more powerful environmental movement that is diverse, inclusive, and better reflects the communities in which we live and work.

GROWING THE OEC’S FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

In addition to hosting a high-quality paid internship program throughout the year, the OEC has expanded its fellowship program. Over the past two years, we welcomed three full-time fellows to our staff: an Environmental Policy Fellow, Energy Justice Fellow, and Water Policy Fellow. Our full-time staff fellowships were intentionally designed to provide a well-rounded, hands-on learning experience to people starting their career in advocacy. The work of the fellowships are intended to focus on the diverse environmental experiences of communities across the state—especially those most impacted by environmental injustice. These fellows have been instrumental in conducting research, supporting broader coalition building efforts, developing campaign and policy strategy, as well as engaging key decision makers and the broader public on our issues. We are grateful for your support of this important fellowship program; it has not only helped the OEC strengthen our advocacy, it has also directly invested in the growth of our fellows.

SUPPORTING YOUR ADVOCACY WORK

Together, we can create a healthier environment and stronger communities by taking action at the local, state, and national levels. In 2021, the OEC launched a new Advocacy Toolkit for our members and partners, providing guidance and resources for everyday Ohioans to connect with lawmakers about the issues they care most about. We also hosted an in-depth virtual training series with experts that highlighted how a bill becomes a law in Ohio, how to understand and advocate for legislation at the state and federal levels, as well as how to make a difference in your own community.

In addition to this work, staff participated in more than 100 community conversations, educational forums, technical conferences, policy briefings, rallies, and other events across the Buckeye State with partners and members like you. From Cincinnati to Youngstown, Athens to Cleveland, online and at in-person gatherings, one thing is certain: we are stronger, smarter, and more effective when we learn, work, and advocate together. And together, we can secure healthy air, clean water, vibrant public lands, and a strong democracy for all who call Ohio home.
The OEC is a careful steward of your investment in a healthier, more beautiful Ohio.

FY 2022 - JULY 1, 2021 TO JUNE 30, 2022**

** The grant revenue reported includes a 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 FY23 expenses.

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

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*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.

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The Ohio Environmental Council Action Fund conducted the OEC’s Statehouse lobbying, campaign tactics, and legislative communications.

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