



Annual Report

A recap of our work in 2012 for our members



To our members

"I'm proud to look around our 'land of enchantment' today and know that we have had a huge, positive impact."



Bernadette Del Chiaro
Regional Director

Dear Members,

As I reflect on another year of work, I am astounded by the accomplishments we have made together. I'm happy to report that it's been quite the year of victories. From protecting our air quality and health with a 90 percent decrease of mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants, to establishing historic clean car standards, to standing up for the places we love like Otero Mesa and El Rio Grande Del Norte, I'm proud to look around our 'land of enchantment' today and know that we have had a huge, positive impact.



John Rumpler
Staff Attorney

Despite these successes, we still face opposition around New Mexico and in Washington, D.C., and we won't be free of threats in 2013. That's why in order to continue making progress, your support is as critical as ever. But this year has certainly made me confident that we'll continue to be successful in protecting the places we care about and values we share.



Rob Sargent
Energy Program
Director

Together, we can keep making a difference. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Sanders Moore
Director

Go Solar New Mexico

In the past year, Environment New Mexico enlisted new support for repowering our state by promoting the many benefits that solar could bring to New Mexico and its citizens. In 2012, through reports and citizen outreach, we documented and shared the many environmental and economic impacts of expanding our solar industry, including 19,000 new jobs in solar by 2016.

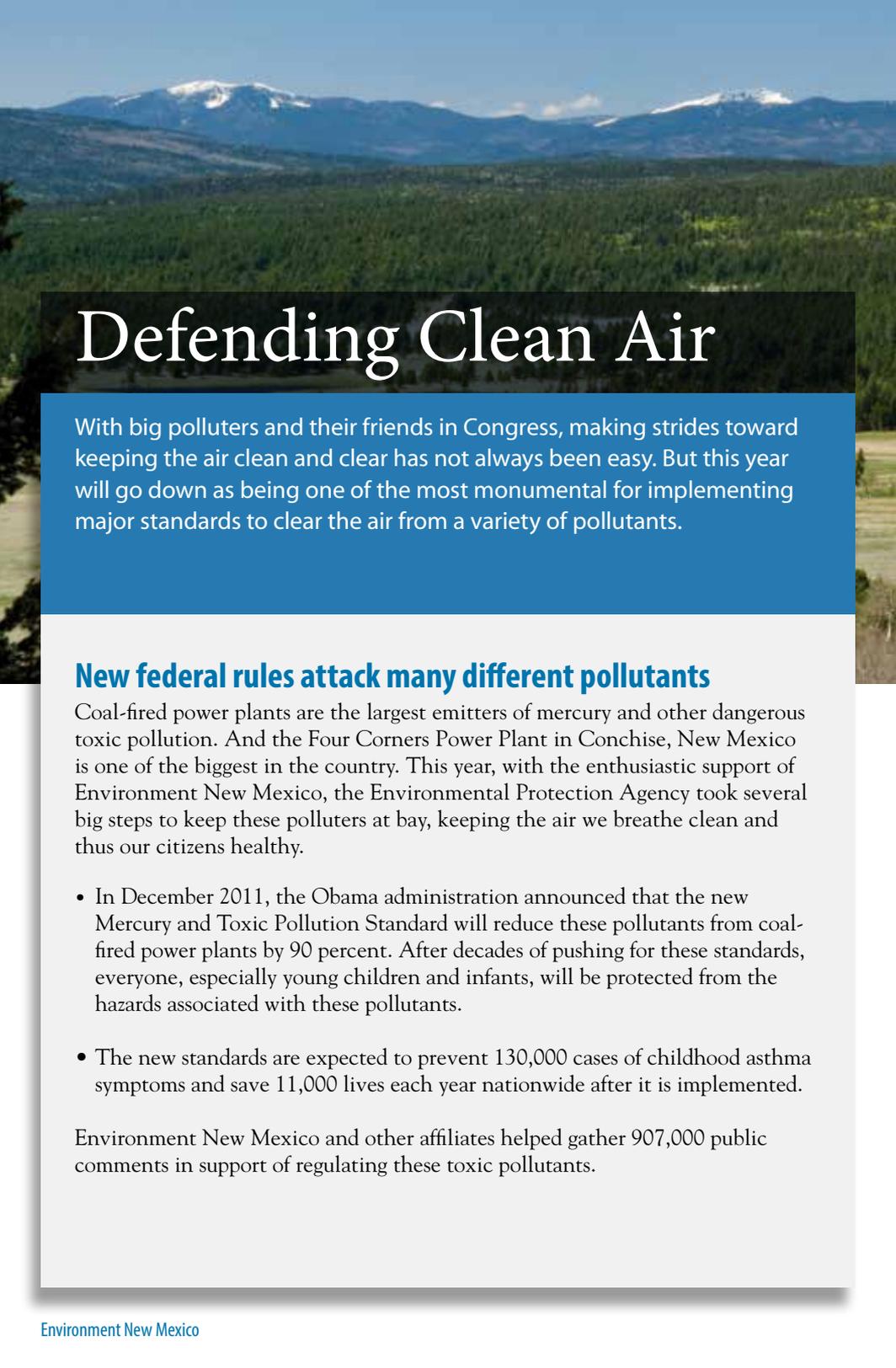
Living up to our solar potential

New Mexico ranks second in the country for solar potential, yet we are not even in the top 20 for solar production. Environment New Mexico is working to change that and make our state a leader in the solar industry by bringing businesses, decision makers and concerned citizens together to harness the power of the sun.

- Solar energy will reduce dependence on traditional energy sources, such as coal and oil, that pollute the air and water and cause respiratory and cardiovascular problems.
- The solar industry in New Mexico is growing and is estimated to employ 19,000 New Mexicans by 2016. This would be a huge boost for our economy. Environment New Mexico aims to ensure that those jobs include installing more solar panels on homes and businesses across the state.



In addition to the many environmental benefits, solar could greatly benefit our economy by providing 19,000 New Mexicans with jobs by 2016.



Defending Clean Air

With big polluters and their friends in Congress, making strides toward keeping the air clean and clear has not always been easy. But this year will go down as being one of the most monumental for implementing major standards to clear the air from a variety of pollutants.

New federal rules attack many different pollutants

Coal-fired power plants are the largest emitters of mercury and other dangerous toxic pollution. And the Four Corners Power Plant in Conchise, New Mexico is one of the biggest in the country. This year, with the enthusiastic support of Environment New Mexico, the Environmental Protection Agency took several big steps to keep these polluters at bay, keeping the air we breathe clean and thus our citizens healthy.

- In December 2011, the Obama administration announced that the new Mercury and Toxic Pollution Standard will reduce these pollutants from coal-fired power plants by 90 percent. After decades of pushing for these standards, everyone, especially young children and infants, will be protected from the hazards associated with these pollutants.
- The new standards are expected to prevent 130,000 cases of childhood asthma symptoms and save 11,000 lives each year nationwide after it is implemented.

Environment New Mexico and other affiliates helped gather 907,000 public comments in support of regulating these toxic pollutants.

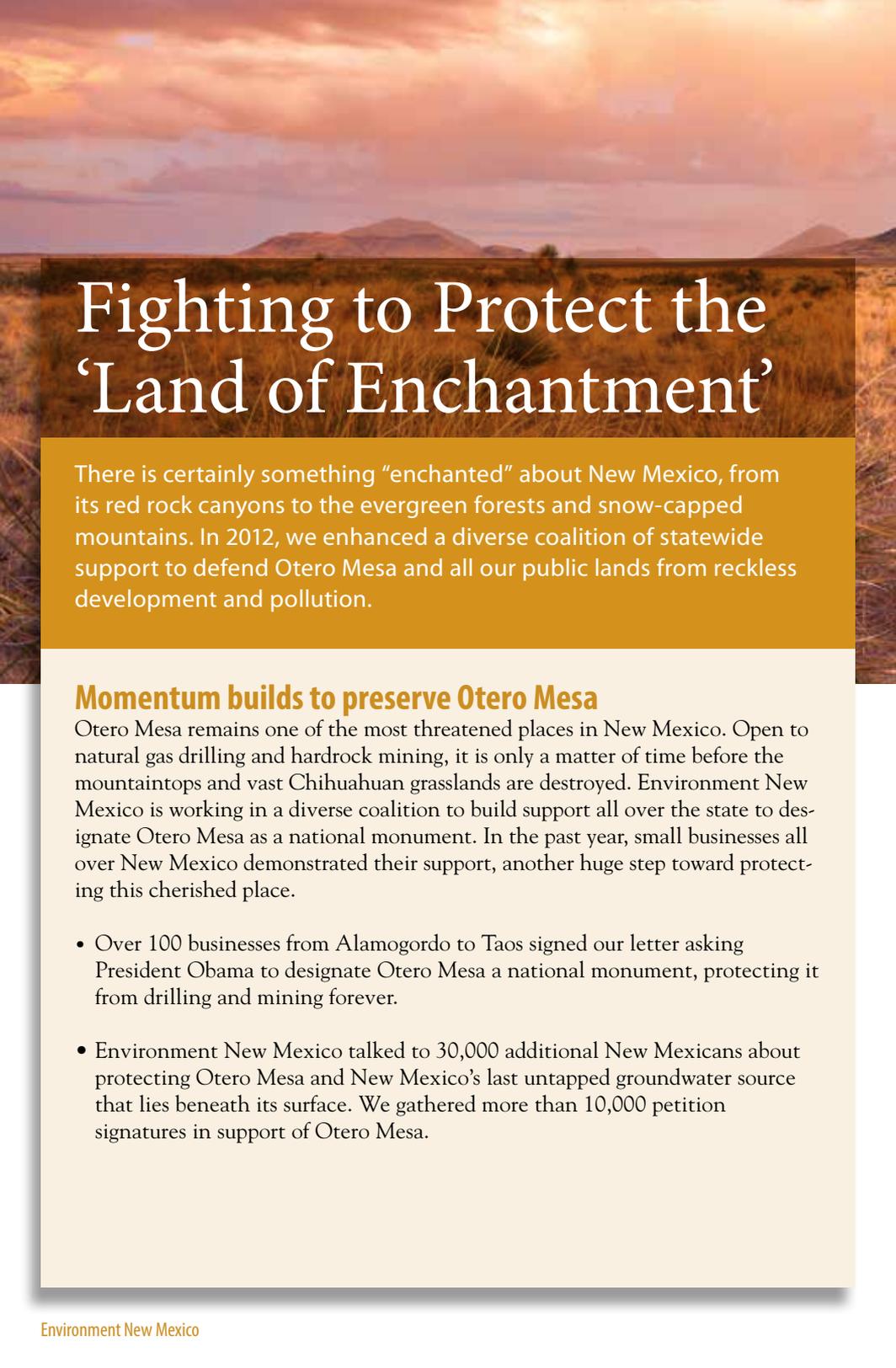
Historic carbon pollution limits set

The impacts of global warming are becoming more immediate, from extreme weather to increased health problems associated with greenhouse gas emissions. At the urging of Environment New Mexico and allied groups across the country, we made significant strides to mitigate these issues by reducing carbon pollution—the main culprit of it all.

- Environment New Mexico, along with partners around the country, collected 3 million comments on the Environmental Protection Agency’s Carbon Pollution Standard, the greatest amount of public comments on any EPA rule in its history.
- In August, the Obama administration finalized historic clean car standards that will double the fuel efficiency of today’s vehicles by 2025. The standards, which require vehicles to meet a 54.5-miles-per-gallon standard, will cut carbon emissions by 270 million metric tons.



New pollution standards for coal-fired power plants are expected to prevent 13,000 cases of childhood asthma symptoms and save 11,000 lives each year nationwide.



Fighting to Protect the 'Land of Enchantment'

There is certainly something “enchanted” about New Mexico, from its red rock canyons to the evergreen forests and snow-capped mountains. In 2012, we enhanced a diverse coalition of statewide support to defend Otero Mesa and all our public lands from reckless development and pollution.

Momentum builds to preserve Otero Mesa

Otero Mesa remains one of the most threatened places in New Mexico. Open to natural gas drilling and hardrock mining, it is only a matter of time before the mountaintops and vast Chihuahuan grasslands are destroyed. Environment New Mexico is working in a diverse coalition to build support all over the state to designate Otero Mesa as a national monument. In the past year, small businesses all over New Mexico demonstrated their support, another huge step toward protecting this cherished place.

- Over 100 businesses from Alamogordo to Taos signed our letter asking President Obama to designate Otero Mesa a national monument, protecting it from drilling and mining forever.
- Environment New Mexico talked to 30,000 additional New Mexicans about protecting Otero Mesa and New Mexico’s last untapped groundwater source that lies beneath its surface. We gathered more than 10,000 petition signatures in support of Otero Mesa.

Pushing back against Congressional attacks

Protecting our public lands, like Otero Mesa, is essential for maintaining our state's natural beauty and safeguarding our waterways, natural resources and ecosystems. Three bills moved through Congress that threaten vital lands in New Mexico and across the country.

- In a new report, “Trashing our Treasures,” Environment New Mexico analyzed and published the effects these three bills would have on special places in New Mexico and around the country.
- The three bills include movements to: open roadless areas in national forests, leaving some of the nation's most sensitive lands vulnerable to habitat destruction and pollution; permit widespread vehicle access and logging through pristine natural areas; and permit the government to sell 8 percent of federal land to private interests every year.



Director Sanders Moore meets with Jorge Silva-Bañuelos from Sen. Jeff Bingaman's office as we impress upon federal officials the importance of permanently protecting Otero Mesa and its rare wildlife.



Our Water, Our Future

In the past, shortsighted legal decisions have left 88 percent of New Mexico's rivers and streams vulnerable to development and dumping, putting the drinking water for over 280,000 New Mexicans at risk. But in 2012, we fought back to make sure that the Clean Water Act applies to all our state's waterways and special interests stay out of our way.

Turning the tide against toxic pollution

Right now, more than half of America's streams and millions of acres of wetlands and waterways are vulnerable to toxic pollution and development. Nearly 50,000 pounds of toxic chemicals were dumped into New Mexico waterways in 2012, according to "Wasting Our Waterways," a report released by Environment New Mexico Research & Policy Center in March.

- Over 1,000 pounds of toxics were discharged into the Chama River in the Apache National Forest and Morgan Lake, near Farmington. The biggest polluter in our state was the Department of Defense, releasing over 46,000 pounds of toxics at Holloman Air Force Base.
- In response, Environment New Mexico urged the Obama administration to finalize guidelines and conduct a rulemaking to clarify the Clean Water Act. Due to two polluter-driven Supreme Court decisions in the last decade, the Clean Water Act may no longer protect the 95,611 miles of streams New Mexicans depend on for clean drinking water.
- We also called on the EPA and state agencies to issue permits with tough, numeric limits for each type of toxic pollution discharged, ratchet down those limits over time, and enforce those limits with credible penalties.

Blocking special interests and dirty water bills

More than 88 percent of New Mexico's rivers and streams, such as the Gila, the Pecos and the Rio Grande, are vulnerable to dumping and development. Despite their importance to our health, these critical waterways are continually left unprotected, because large agricultural operations and other special interests fight state and federal efforts to restore and protect these critical waters.

- Long-overdue protections have yet to be finalized. Special interests and their allies in Congress have the intention of striking down our critical environmental safeguards. In fact, some of these polluters have vowed to completely eliminate the Environmental Protection Agency.
- Despite three separate attempts from polluters to block the Obama administration's efforts in Congress, our efforts are paying off. Our work demonstrated enough public support this summer to help convince leadership in the Senate to protect these unique waters and stop one of the dirty water bills from coming up for a vote.



Environment New Mexico and its national federation talked with thousands about the importance of cracking down on polluters trying to poke holes in the Clean Water Act.

2012 Annual Report

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