"As 2010 draws to a close, I find myself looking back on just how much progress we’ve made together for our environment in Colorado."

Pam Kiely
Program Director

From the director

We’ve come a long way over the last four years. As 2010 draws to a close, I find myself looking back on just how much progress we’ve made together for our environment in Colorado.

In 2006, clean energy was still an experiment, and drilling and mining had free rein on our western slope. Colorado had a 10 percent renewable electricity standard in place, but the number of uranium mining claims was starting to surge, and oil and gas drilling was booming without adequate protections for our land, air and water.

Yet thanks to your support, we were able to chart a new course on energy and protecting our natural environment—with leadership from a pro-conservation Legislature, and a governor who profoundly understood the importance of “protecting Colorado.”

Over the last four years, 56 pieces of Environment Colorado-backed clean energy legislation have been signed into law. Our clean energy goal has increased twice in the past four years; now standing at 30 percent, it provides the foundation for Colorado’s New Energy Economy. In 2010, we helped create the first framework in the country to actually shut down dirty, coal-fired power plants—which will clean up our air and dramatically cut down our global warming pollution.

Environment Colorado, with the support of members across the state, pushed for some of the strongest protections on oil and gas development in the country to ensure Colorado’s mountains, rivers and rolling ranchland are protected. Next, we took on the mining industry, putting landmark water quality standards in place for uranium mining operations and ensuring that uranium milling facilities were required to clean up.

Underlying all these efforts has been our vision for a greener, healthier Colorado, where the health of the economy and the environment go hand in hand. Whether it’s building a strong, robust renewable energy industry that will bring new jobs and attract investment dollars, or ensuring that our land and wildlife are protected for our outdoor recreation industries, we are making sure that we keep Colorado’s natural legacy intact for our kids and grandkids to enjoy.

Thanks for being on our team.
Cleaning up Ralston Creek, drinking water source for 1.5 million people

When uranium pollution threatens the rivers and streams that provide our clean drinking water and give us places to swim, fish and raft, we stand up and take action. In 2010, we helped break the news that Ralston Creek was being contaminated by the Cotter Corporation’s Schwartzwalder uranium mine—then helped ensure that Cotter will pay for the cleanup.

Too much pollution, 1,200 times over
Inside Cotter’s defunct Schwartzwalder uranium mine, located in Jefferson County, a pool of water had reached uranium contamination levels more than 1,200 times state health standards. This contamination was directly polluting Ralston Creek, and uranium pollution in Ralston Creek itself reached over 10 times state standards.

Ralston Creek feeds Ralston Reservoir, which is part of the drinking water supply for 1.5 million people in Arvada and the Denver metro area. But despite the risks to our health and threats of emergency action from the state, the Cotter Corporation refused to clean up, and even argued that environmental regulations did not apply.

Alarm raised, troops rallied
Environment Colorado helped break the news about the contamination and the threat to our drinking water by releasing public documents demonstrating that contamination was reaching critical levels.

Teaming up with the Western Mining Action Project, we called on the state mining division and mining board to seek immediate action. As a result of our efforts, the mining division ordered the immediate treatment of both contamination in Ralston Creek and treatment of the mine pool. The mining board issued Cotter the maximum fine possible for failing to meet cleanup orders.

Ralston treatments have begun
Cotter is now treating surface water at Ralston Creek. Meanwhile, the additional scrutiny put on Cotter’s operations has exposed new issues at the mine, including drainage pipes that are discharging uranium pollution into Ralston Creek.

And while Cotter is still fighting the order to clean up the contaminated pool within the mine, Environment Colorado will continue to work to ensure that the contaminated mine pool is cleaned up. We are also working to make sure the state adopts a long-term plan that protects our drinking water.
In the wake of two Supreme Court decisions that left Colorado's rivers, including the Arkansas and South Platte, more vulnerable to polluters, Environment Colorado and our allies took action to convince government officials to close new loopholes and keep our rivers running clean. As the year drew to a close, new Senate legislation and proposed EPA rules would move us in the right direction—but we have a long way to go.

On another clean water front, when uranium mining claims surged, we helped establish new groundwater protections for Northern Colorado farms and land owners, and closed a uranium mining loophole in order to protect the treasured Dolores River Canyon.

Standing up for miles of streams
The court decisions called into question whether the Clean Water Act protects the small streams that flow into the Colorado and other major rivers. As a result, nearly 65,000 miles of Colorado's streams may no longer be protected by the Clean Water Act. These streams feed the drinking water supplies for over 3.5 million Coloradans—more than half of the state.

This past summer, our citizen outreach team went door to door in communities across Colorado, talking to more than 55,000 people, organizing them to call on our congressional delegation to restore Clean Water Act protections to all of our waterways.

Our efforts began to pay off when a bill was introduced in the Senate that would restore the Clean Water Act’s original meaning and scope.

EPA moved to close loopholes
Later, U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson announced the “Coming Together for Clean Water” proposal to strengthen her agency’s enforcement of the Clean Water Act. We joined the other members of our national federation, Environment America, in helping to rally the public to support the policy as the agency invited public comments.

In the months to come, Environment Colorado will continue to work with our allies to encourage our members of Congress and the EPA to restore Clean Water Act protections and prevent stormwater pollution at construction sites—so we can keep Colorado’s rivers safe and healthy for swim-
After a two-year fight, Colorado’s Mined Land Reclamation Board adopted new rules creating the strongest groundwater protections from in situ uranium mining in the country, which will help landowners and farmers in Northern Colorado.

The mining board also voted unanimously for the right of the public and local governments to appeal mine prospecting decisions which can have huge impacts to water quality, air quality and communities.

During the rulemaking, Environment Colorado worked to generate thousands of comments, turn out our members and coalition partners, and keep uranium mining front-and-center in the media to make this victory a reality.

Streams and small rivers like this one in the Rocky Mountains are a source of drinking water for millions of Coloradans.
Colorado has more than enough sun and wind to power 100 percent of our energy needs. Even as clean energy begins to take off in Colorado, Environment Colorado worked in 2010 to further increase investment for solar and wind, and up our goal for generating power from renewable sources to 30 percent by 2020—more than tripling our clean energy goals from 2004.

We’re making incredible progress: Colorado capped off the 2010 legislative season by passing our 56th clean energy bill in the last four years.

Three times more clean energy
Our most important clean energy victory in 2010 was to raise Colorado’s clean energy goal to 30 percent. Signed in April, the new standard is the second strongest in the country.

Working with Gov. Bill Ritter and other champions in the state Legislature, Environment Colorado Program Director Pam Kiely helped write the legislation, gather the facts (including the release of the report, “Investing in the Sun,” with Vote Solar), and build the coalition of supporters from solar companies to Xcel Energy to labor unions in order to pass the new standard. Environment Colorado joined a rally on the steps of the state capitol with major solar installers, labor unions and activists.

By 2020, at least 30 percent of the electricity we use in our homes and other buildings in Colorado will come from clean sources.

“Over four short years we’ve tripled our commitment to renewable energy, and by taking a bold swing at a time when our energy challenges are the most profound, we’ve proven to the nation that Colorado can step up to the plate and deliver,” said Pam Kiely, program director of Environment Colorado.

100,000 solar rooftops
A key provision in the 30 percent clean energy standard is a requirement that a portion of clean energy development go to local projects like home solar photovoltaic systems. The result will be an estimated 100,000 solar rooftops installed in the state in the next decade.

Rooftop solar panels and other local projects are especially important because they reduce the energy lost by transmission, and create more jobs per dollar spent than any other type of energy development.
Solar gardens
Investing in rooftop solar photovoltaics is sometimes impractical or impossible for residents that rent apartments or have shaded roofs, but the Environment Colorado-backed Community Solar Gardens Act will change that.

The program allows you to purchase a share of community solar projects, qualify for rebates, and get the credit on your utility bill. This program, combined with new incentives and rebates, provides the next step forward in reaching our vision that everyone be able to produce their own reliable electricity.

“Colorado is on the cutting edge of harnessing the sun to power our homes and businesses, ranches and farms,” said Kiely. “As the ‘Community Solar Garden’ bill blooms, more Coloradans will be able to plug into our vast solar resources.”

Other legislation that we worked on included a measure that will create the Green Jobs Colorado Training Program, a two-year pilot that offers grants to community colleges, vocational schools, apprenticeships and other organizations to train workers for Colorado’s clean energy industries. We also supported the New Energy Jobs Creation Act, which enables Colorado residents to opt into a financing program to help them meet the upfront cost of renewable energy and energy efficiency upgrades.

Solar = Jobs

As part of the effort to pass a stronger renewable energy standard, Environment Colorado released a report with Vote Solar called “Investing in the Sun” to show the benefits of developing rooftop solar projects.

The report analyzed the benefits of building 1,000 megawatts of local solar projects in Colorado. Our research shows these projects would:

- Create 23,450 jobs in the next 10 years, and
- Cut 30 million tons of global warming pollution, the equivalent of taking nearly 670,000 cars off the road.

“Investing in the Sun” proves that going solar is a smart economic and environmental decision for Colorado.

For more on why going solar will benefit Colorado, both economically and environmentally, visit our reports page online at www.EnvironmentColorado.org/reports
Clean Air, Clean Jobs: Colorado to replace dirty coal power plants

In 2010, Colorado took a giant step toward becoming the first state to replace aging, dirty, coal-fired power plants with cleaner sources of energy, after Gov. Ritter signed the Clean Air, Clean Jobs bill into law. As a result, five metro-area coal units are being evaluated for replacement by cleaner sources of energy, cleaning up the air for 3 million Coloradans.

More clean energy, less coal
For years we’ve been working hard to boost the amount of electricity generated from clean, renewable resources in Colorado. This path has made sense for Colorado because renewable energy works. It is a better investment, creates jobs, and cuts air and global warming pollution.

Up to this point, however, we’ve been working hard to simply ensure that we were investing enough in energy efficiency and developing enough renewable energy resources so we can meet Colorado’s growth in demand for electricity. To meet existing demand, we’re still dependent on dirty energy sources.

Yet in 2010, we hit a critical turning point, and were ready to make the case to actually shut down existing, dirty coal-fired power plants.

How Clean Air, Clean Jobs will work
Last spring, Environment Colorado took the promise of a clean energy future to the next level by teaming up with utility executives, energy companies, environmental organizations and Gov. Ritter’s administration to chart a bold new course for clean air in Colorado. The Colorado Clean Air, Clean Jobs Act (HB10-1365), passed with strong bipartisan support at the end of March, setting the wheels in motion for a landmark rule-making process at the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) this past fall that was watched across the country.

The bill directed the utility Xcel Energy to submit a plan to the PUC that evaluated the retirement of at least 900 MW of coal-fired generation. After months of organizing, negotiating, and formal proceedings the PUC will issue a ruling, determining whether or not to accept a proposal to shut down five metro-area coal units by 2017.

3 million will breathe cleaner air
Clean Air, Clean Jobs will not only make Colorado a clean energy leader, it will help address serious air problems. More than 3 million Coloradans are adversely impacted by air pollution from coal.
plants, ranging from mercury emissions that end up in our rivers and streams, to haze pollution clouding our national parks. Over 65,000 children in the Denver metro area suffer from asthma, and metro-area coal plant pollution is associated with adult mortality and respiratory disease.

The PUC is poised to make a decision that will really set the stage for a dramatic transformation here in Colorado. We’re hoping it’s the opening act to a debate that will take place in states across the nation over the next few years.

As part of an overarching effort that includes ensuring that Colorado is making bold new commitments on clean energy and traditional resource development is done right, Clean Air, Clean Jobs will move Colorado towards a cleaner, healthier energy future.
Uranium processing facilities have left behind a toxic legacy in Colorado, contaminating groundwater with heavy metals and releasing radioactive pollution into communities—often leaving the public to foot the bill for cleanup.

In 2010, Environment Colorado helped pass legislation requiring uranium facilities to meet cleanup orders before expanding operations. The legislation will ensure that uranium processing facilities, like the one in Canon City, won’t be able to further jeopardize local groundwater before dealing with their toxic mess.

A mess in Fremont County
Fremont County, home to the Royal Gorge and the Bighorn Sheep Canyon section of the Arkansas River, has been struggling for decades with toxic pollution issues at the Cotter uranium mill in Canon City.

Cotter has been cited for over 100 violations at their Canon City facility over the last ten years by state and federal agencies. Ongoing issues at Cotter include expanding groundwater pollution, unaddressed radon emissions (the second leading contributor to lung cancer worldwide) at tailing ponds, and onsite spills and contamination.

“New law to safeguard Coloradans from uranium processing

It’s time Coloradans stop paying the price for toxic uranium pollution,” said Sharyn Cunningham of Colorado Citizens Against Toxic Waste (CCAT). Cunningham moved to Canon City in 1994 where her family unknowingly drank water contaminated with uranium for eight years before learning about the Cotter Corporation’s groundwater pollution issues.

Since 1984, the Cotter mill has been listed as a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Superfund site, the national priorities list for toxic waste cleanup. The toxic mess has come into direct conflict with the region’s budding tourism and recreation industry, which is the third most important sector of the local economy.

“We need to be protecting long-term investment opportunities in Fremont County like tourism and recreation. Having a uranium facility with ongoing pollution problems can harm other parts of our economy,” said Fremont County Commissioner Mike Stiehl (R-Canon City).

Cotter announced plans to reopen and expand in 2014, despite the fact that cleanup of the facility would not be complete. Given the dangers faced by Fremont County
residents, coupled with a new proposal to create a uranium facility in the beautiful Paradox Valley on Colorado’s West Slope, Environment Colorado launched a major effort to strengthen state standards on uranium mills.

In 2010, Environment Colorado and CCAT, with support from the nonprofit law firms Western Mining Action Project and Energy Minerals Law Center, teamed up to help pass legislation requiring uranium facilities to meet cleanup orders before expanding operations. Environment Colorado spearheaded the campaign, garnering support from more than 100 business owners, organizations, and past and present local elected officials.

The bill became one of the few pieces of bipartisan legislation passed in the state Legislature this year.

No more toxic bailouts
In fact, taxpayers have spent a billion dollars cleaning up past uranium milling operations in Colorado alone.

“Taxpayers have given uranium companies a $1 billion bailout,” said Matt Garrington, advocate with Environment Colorado. “If uranium companies want to operate in Colorado, it can’t be at the expense of taxpayers and our air and water.”

Moving forward, Environment Colorado will work to ensure that uranium companies meet the new standard laid out in the bill and that our communities and water are protected.

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Toxics cleanup
Funds secured for cleanups of 18 Colorado sites

Cotter isn’t the only toxic mess we’ve got.

In Colorado, the U.S. EPA has listed 18 sites in the Superfund program, a list of toxic waste sites needing urgent cleanup. These sites include examples such as the notorious Summitville gold mine which devastated all aquatic life for a 17-mile stretch of the Alamosa River.

Ninety percent of the Superfund program is funded with federal money matching funds to state government. Colorado provided its 10 percent funds through the Solid Waste User Fees and general state funding.

Unfortunately, to help balance the state budget, the Legislature cut funding for Superfund enforcement and re-allocated $32.5 million from our Superfund program in 2009. Without action to restore funding, this shortfall would have stopped cleanup of Colorado’s most hazardous toxic waste sites.

Environment Colorado worked with the state health department and organized state leaders to convince Senate leadership that reauthorizing and extending the funding program through Solid Waste User Fees was critical for Colorado communities.

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Colorado’s Superfund Sites

1. Broderick Wood, Adams County
2. California Gulch/Yok Tunnel, Leadville
3. Captain Jack Mill/Lefthand Canyon
4. Central City / Clear Creek
5. Chemical Sales Company, Denver
6. Denver Radium Sites, Denver
7. Eagle Mine, Gilman/Minturn area
8. Lincoln Park (Cotter), Canon City
9. Lowry Landfill, Arapahoe County
10. Marshall Landfill, Boulder County
11. Nelson Tunnel / Commodore Waste Rock, Mineral County
12. PJSE Air Force Base, Jefferson County
13. Rocky Flats, Jefferson County
14. Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Adams County
15. Standard Mine, Crested Butte
16. Summitville Mine, Rio Grande County
17. Uravan Mill Site, Uravan
18. VB/I70, Denver

Defunct Summitville mine, Rio Grande County, Colorado.
As Coloradans, we treasure the rural character of the Eastern Plains, the green mountain valleys of South Park or the Roaring Fork Valley, and the redrock canyons of the Arkansas and Dolores rivers.

Protecting the Colorado landscape is critical for our quality of life, as well as our economy, as it fuels outdoor recreation, tourism and agriculture. In 2010 Environment Colorado backed new rules to stop oil and gas drilling from chopping up wildlife habitat and protected key conservation programs from being cut from the budget.

Conservation tax credit defended
In the 2010 Legislature, Environment Colorado joined the land trust community to defend the Conservation Easement Tax Credit. The program gives a tax credit to landowners who agree to preserve their own land as open space, and is one of the most successful tools in protecting private land, open space and agricultural lands.

Amid this year’s state budget crisis, the future of the program was in jeopardy, but advocates backed a compromise measure that saved the program.

From the Eastern Plains to the Rockies, protecting our natural treasures

“Our rural lands provide wildlife habitat, open farm and ranchland, and scenic beauty in addition to playing a crucial role in our state’s economic health.”

John Swartout, executive director of Colorado Coalition of Land Trusts.

Tough road ahead for state parks
The signature Great Outdoors Colorado program, county open space initiatives and Colorado State Parks keep Colorado beautiful by protecting the Colorado landscape. Conservation is important for more reasons than open space. In fact, outdoor recreation activities contribute $10 billion to our economy. Also, 12 million people visit our state parks each year.

The bad news is that Colorado is facing another billion dollar budget shortfall in 2011. Colorado State Parks funding is so abysmal that the state board is considering leasing our parks for drilling. When we pull through this tough economic downturn, we'll still want a beautiful Colorado. We'll continue to work to make sure that we protect our natural legacy.

New oil and gas drilling rules issued
For the last few years, drilling permits have been steeply rising. There are now more than 40,000 active oil and gas wells in the state of Colorado. Those wells are industrializing what was once amazing country, chopping up wildlife habitat, and polluting our air and water in the backcountry.
Environment Colorado launched our “Save the Rockies!” campaign to protect mountain landscapes from drilling. We worked to support efforts by U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar to protect our lands and water by ensuring oil and gas companies have to play by the rules. Working with sportsmen and energy and environment experts, we made the case for why the administration needed to bring law and order to decisions about drilling on federal lands.

In May of 2010, we celebrated a step forward when Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar issued directives to require strict environmental review before drilling takes place and create opportunities for the public to weigh in on leasing decisions.
Fiscal year 2010 financial support

Citizen support is the cornerstone of Environment Colorado. Thousands of Colorado citizens supported Environment Colorado and/or Environment Colorado Research & Policy Center by making membership contributions in fiscal year 2010. The members listed below were particularly generous in backing the organizations’ research and advocacy. Names that appear in italics denote Monthly Supporters. These members provide stability to the organizations’ resources through our monthly giving program.

Foundation support

The Environment Colorado Research & Policy Center is a 501(c)(3) organization, and conducts research and public education on emerging environmental issues. Contributions to the Environment Colorado Research & Policy Center are tax-deductible. To find out more, contact Pam Kiely at (303) 573-3871.

The following foundations supported our work in 2010:

• Center for Native Ecosystems
• Edwards Mother Earth Foundation
• Energy Foundation
• General Service Foundation
• Grace Jones Richardson Trust
• L.P. Brown Foundation
• Luff Family Fund of the Denver Foundation
• McTaht Gifting Fund
• Talley Donor Advised Fund
• Resource Engineering Group Fund
• The Dreamcatcher Fund
• The New-Land Foundation, Inc.
• Western Clean Energy Campaign
• Western Energy Project

Environment Colorado also would like to thank the Green Tech Action Fund for their support this year.
Environment Colorado and Environment Colorado Research & Policy Center financial information

The charts below represent the combined financial information for Environment Colorado and Environment Colorado Research & Policy Center for the Fiscal Year 2010.

**FY 2010 income**
- Citizen members 82%
- Foundation grants 18%

**FY 2010 expenses**
- Program 73%
- Fundraising 19%
- Administrative 8%

**FY 2010 program expenses**
- Go solar 44%
- Clean energy 20%
- Our rivers, lakes & streams 17%
- Global warming solutions 12%
- Preservation 4%
- Stop toxic pollution 3%

*Building a greener future*
Environment Colorado and Environment Colorado Research & Policy Center gratefully accept bequests, beneficiary designations of IRAs and life insurance, and gifts of securities to support our work. Your gift will assure that we can continue to protect Colorado’s air, water and open spaces for future generations. For more information, call 1-800-841-7299 or email plannedgiving@environmentcolorado.org.
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