Imagine a million solar roofs in Colorado

A game-changing goal

Environment Colorado is announcing a campaign to power a million homes with the sun by 2030.

Colorado is famous for its “300 days of sunshine”—making solar a no-brainer in our state. But the vast majority of our energy still comes from fossil fuels, leaving us with less than 1 percent of our power coming from the sun.

It’s time for us to fulfill our solar potential, to reduce our dependence on coal, and embrace 21st-century energy.

Imagine driving to work and seeing solar panels on your neighbor’s roof, your kid’s school, and on your office building. This is our vision for Colorado.

And the benefits would be enormous: The carbon pollution avoided would be the equivalent of taking over 2 million cars off the road, which would clean up our air and save much-needed water.

So, with all these upsides, what’s standing in the way? Cost is one thing. Consumer awareness is another. Colorado can overcome these hurdles by lowering the cost of solar and putting it in the hands of you and me. But to get there, we need leadership.

Calling on our leaders

This is where Gov. John Hickenlooper comes in. If he makes our million solar roofs goal a priority, we can put in place the key policies needed to get there.

The coal and gas industry, and utility companies will undoubtedly pressure him to back down. So we need to let the governor know that if he leads the way, thousands of Coloradans stand in support.

A plan to show public support

That’s why we’ve teamed up with the Colorado Solar Energy Industry Association: to make this goal a reality. Already more than 1,000 Environment Colorado members have signed the petition to the governor, urging him to back this big solar goal. And this summer, our citizen outreach staff will be talking to Coloradans across the state about our plan. With enough public support, we can power a million homes with the sun by 2030.

take action

Joe Lucas looking at his Denver home. He is participating in the Solar Benefits Colorado program.

Visit our website to voice your support for a million solar roofs in Colorado: EnvironmentColorado.org
I love the summer. I love going to the South Platte River, hiking in my favorite parks, or having a barbeque with neighbors on the back porch—but my favorite part of summer? Working with our citizen outreach team.

All across the state, passionate folks will be educating your neighbors about our plan to make Colorado a solar-leader. We have a big, bold goal of generating enough solar to power a million homes by 2030. All we need is to build enough public support to make going solar a priority for Gov. John Hickenlooper.

I know we just have to bring passionate, committed Coloradans together. And our staff in blue T-shirts will likely be in your neighborhood doing just that. When you see them—say hello for me!

Sincerely,

Jeanne Bassett
Senior Associate

Recent action

Rep. Polis speaks out for clean water


Right now, fracking is exempt from key provisions of our nation’s environmental laws, but Rep. Polis’ bill, introduced with at least 37 co-sponsors, would build on a long-standing effort to close a loophole in the Safe Drinking Water Act. As it stands now, fracking operations can skirt permitting requirements for industrial stormwater runoff, which often leaves our waterways pay the toll.

If passed, the FRESHER Act would help clean up Colorado’s waterways from toxic pollution—leaving cleaner rivers and streams for kayaking, fishing and for our drinking water.

Fort Collins bans fracking

In March, with a 5-2 vote, the Fort Collins City Council passed an ordinance to ban exploration, drilling and fracking within city limits. The vote came after weeks of highly charged public testimony, and at the meeting, over 50 people spoke. The mayor and four councilmembers supported the ban to protect public health in Fort Collins.

“Fort Collins took an important step forward to protect our health, land and water today,” said Margaret McCall, field associate with Environment Colorado. “Fracking is a dangerous process that has a track record of tearing up land, fouling the air, and contaminating drinking water across the country.”

Fort Collins follows on the heels of Longmont, whose voters approved a ban on fracking in the November 2012 election.

To our members

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Senior Associate

Toward 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 to build a cleaner, greener, healthier future.

For more information, call 1-800-841-7299 or send an email to: PlannedGiving@EnvironmentColorado.org

www.EnvironmentColorado.org/newsletters
**Conserving the best of Colorado**

**Despite demonstrated support, parks lack funds**

Our decision-makers are shortchanging some of the most beautiful places in Colorado—from Rocky Mountain National Park to White River and Mesa Verde—making them vulnerable to threats ranging from overdevelopment and mining, to crumbling facilities and shortened hours.

Environment Colorado is working to protect our parks by urging our representatives in Congress and President Obama to give our parks the funding they deserve.

Parks all across Colorado are where some of our families’ most unforgettable memories are formed—our first hikes, our first times camping, our first encounters with wildlife. No wonder writer Wallace Stegner called our nation’s park system “America’s best idea.” Still, drilling, mining and other industries in Colorado consider the lands in and around many of our parks as something else—“investment opportunities” to be exploited.

While we all know how special these places are, the funds that are meant to protect them are being diverted and spent elsewhere leaving them vulnerable to damage. Each year, in fact, Congress raids the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the program dedicated to protecting treasured places like Rocky Mountain National Park and South Boulder Creek, and diverts the money to other purposes.

All of our parks deserve the funding that will help protect them from threats like overdevelopment and the pollution that comes with drilling and mining. So, we are working to build the public support needed to convince our representatives in Congress and the president to protect our parks. If Congress doesn’t act this summer, funds for our parks will be slashed.

In March, Environment Colorado and 90 groups released a letter to President Obama calling for lasting protections from drilling and pollution for our parks. With groups from Trout Unlimited to the Great Old Broads for Wilderness signed on, as well as Mayor Pitts of Grand Junction and Reverend Liefert of Namaqua Unitarian Universalist Congregation, the letter underscores the value that citizens, outdoors organizations, and local business owners place on Colorado’s public parks.

“President Obama has a great opportunity to help ensure that parks like Rocky Mountain National Park are protected by calling for full and dedicated funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund,” said Environment Colorado Field Associate Margaret McCall. “Our parks and future generations are depending on it.”

Funds like the Land and Water Conservation Fund have protected our parks for decades, and they can again with enough public support. Members and supporters like you make it possible for our staff to conduct research, make our case to the media, testify in Denver and Washington, D.C., and build the grassroots support needed to protect all of our state’s parks forever.

**More wind power for Colorado**

Wind power in Colorado is helping our state save water and clean up our air pollution. And thanks to policies we’ve won in the state Legislature, and tax credits we’ve protected on the federal level, we’ll be seeing even more benefits of wind power in our state in the coming years.

Environment Colorado Research & Policy Center’s report, “Cool Breeze,” details how in 2000, Colorado produced no electricity from wind. But today, Colorado is a national wind energy leader, generating nearly 10 percent of our electricity from wind—enough to power almost half a million households. And so far, wind energy in Colorado has eliminated about 2.7 million metric tons of global warming pollution annually—equivalent to taking more than half a million of today’s passenger vehicles off the road. We’ve also saved more than a billion gallons of water each year.

If Colorado stays on track, we could more than double the amount of wind energy in our state by 2016—and the benefits that would come with it. To keep wind power working for Colorado, we helped save federal wind energy tax credits that help wind projects in our state, and across the country, get off the ground.
In February, roughly 400 Coloradans gathered in Denver for our state’s “Forward on Climate” rally. Tens of thousands across the country gathered at dozens of simultaneous rallies in support of rejecting the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline; putting a cap on carbon pollution from new and existing power plants; and expanding renewable energy programs.

Earlier this year, President Obama renewed his promise to tackle global warming, saying “the failure to do so would betray our children and future generations.” And then, in his State of the Union address, he added, “If Congress won’t act soon to protect future generations, I will.”

Environment Colorado is working to garner the public support he needs to tackle global warming and cut carbon pollution from the source.

Moving ‘forward on climate’ at the capital

What the president can do on global warming
• Reject Keystone XL pipeline
• Approve carbon limits for new power plants
• Propose carbon limits for old power plants