PENNSYLVANIA'S WATCHDOG FOR CLEAN AIR, PURE WATER, AND A HEALTHY CLIMATE.
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About PennFuture
PennFuture is leading the transition to a clean energy economy in Pennsylvania, fighting big polluters with legal muscle, enforcing environmental laws, and supporting legislative policy that protects public health. PennFuture is engaging and educating citizens about the realities of climate change, and giving them the tools needed to influence lawmakers on the issues.

About this Annual Report
PennFuture’s Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report is a summary of program, financial, and donor information for the period of July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. For more information about current program activities please visit our website at pennfuture.org. Previous annual reports are available at www.pennfuture.org/financial-information.
Dear Supporter,

As I reflect on PennFuture's story over the fiscal year that ended in June 2020, I'm struck by how the forces of stability and change worked on our organization. Since this note is being written in February 2021, it's no surprise those forces continue to affect us.

The context and time horizon are dominated by a global pandemic, racial reckoning and American democracy under attack.

PennFuture, while just 21 years old, has great potential to evolve into a powerful Pennsylvania institution.

- We've become a significant organization in Pennsylvania, known for our work on behalf of the environment, and for the communities that will only truly prosper when our air, water and climate are healthy, and our economy is greener and sustainable.
- Our staff are thought leaders. Their expertise and opinions are sought out by the elected officials who shape laws and regulations. Our staff complement includes not only team members with decades of policy experience, but exciting young advocates who have tremendous ideas and energy to make their marks on policy and advocacy.
- Our relationships with our funders and supporters have deepened. These relationships have been foundational to PennFuture's ability to add the capacity and the talent needed to do our work in increasingly sophisticated ways. This support is helping us deliver on our forward-looking mission. This mission aspires to help lead Pennsylvania's transition into a cleaner energy economy, an economy that has been defined by extracting fossil fuels since the 1700's. We are urged on in this mission by the climate emergency.
- Over the time period covered by this annual report, PennFuture has expanded into Erie, expanded our civic engagement and democracy program, been vigorous in our legal activities, fought back over 80 legislative attacks in Harrisburg, appeared in hundreds of media outlets statewide, and issued important policy reports and recommendations.

Coupled with solid governance from our Board and our strong financial underpinnings, this growth in impact, influence and capacity are all factors that lead me to conclude the organization has never before been this stable, and has the makings of a Pennsylvania institution.

At the same time, however, we must continue to navigate a global pandemic that has claimed more than 500,000 American lives, racial injustices that have never been prioritized in the environmental field, and unprecedented attacks on our democracy that are being felt not only in Washington, but here in our state.

PennFuture has remained stable even as we have navigated the nexus of three of the most significant, simultaneous events in recent history: A global pandemic, the resurgence of unprecedented violence against Black people (including at the hands of law enforcement) and attacks on our democracy.

PennFuture's raison d'être persists through the changes imposed by the pandemic. The legislature and courts remain in session, and polluters keep polluting, so our role as a watchdog is still very relevant. We were able to move quickly to all staff working from their homes, but a lot of adaptation was needed to get the outcomes and output we were working towards, and achieved. (See our Board Chair Thomas B. Schmidt III's note for more.) And while we are nimble enough to keep on task, keep our team employed and taken care of, the long-term impacts of the pandemic on the organization are hard to envision. Our staff is getting weary, and the isolation from each other and from the activists and partners that help fuel our advocacy is grueling. In order to survive the pandemic with our well-being intact, as an employer we have been doing our best with the matters in our control, while remaining open to personal and professional changes.
PennFuture’s racial reckoning, which began in 2019 when our strategic plan contemplated how to raise diversity, equity and justice and inclusivity throughout the organization, has grown stronger and garnered increased commitment from staff and Board alike. We quickly realized the work we anticipated doing to promote justice, and the ways in which we planned to do it, were too modest in terms of what has been needed for far too long, and can no longer be put off as priorities. In a field that is dominated by white-led organizations, staffed by mostly white professionals, PennFuture is now making bolder commitments to being truly inclusive and affirming, both internally with our staff and Board, and externally with how we prioritize the needs of communities of color who are disproportionately affected by negative health outcomes due to lop-sided and loophole-ridden policies and insufficient environmental regulations.

Lastly, dangerous threats to our cherished democracy, many of which are playing out in Pennsylvania as much as they are in Washington, D.C. and across the U.S., are a source for concern. How can PennFuture be effective with its mission in a large state that is so politically divided? Working across urban/rural divides and within a state and local government system that seems to have broken down along intractable party lines is more than perplexing.

Pennsylvania’s legislature is controlled by an increasingly anti-environmental and anti-democratic majority, emboldened by staunch partisans. PennFuture’s ability to advance state level, pro-land, air, water, climate and clean energy legislation is constrained. Likely the current two-year legislative session will be a repeat of the last one, where we fought off so many attempted regulatory rollbacks and bad legislation. The greater opportunity for pro-environment, pro-green economic recovery and pro-climate legislation will be at the national level and so we are adapting and pivoting some of our work in that direction.

But over the long term the people of Pennsylvania must renew the common love of our landscape, wildlife, clean air and water that have gone to the wayside because of extreme partisanship. Can this dangerous trajectory be interrupted? How can PennFuture change to help rebalance the dialogue across our state?

PennFuture has initiated civic engagement and democracy work as a strategic pathway to establishing legislative bodies that are more balanced in their environmental views, including with broader representation of environmental justice communities and their concerns. This was a major addition to the strategy of the organization. The work started out as highly transactional, focusing on registering more individuals of color to vote, and helping “get out” those votes. But now, we must engage with a range of threats including attempts to amend the state constitution to provide for gerrymandering of our judicial elections, and attempts to roll back voting opportunities that were just recently expanded with bi-partisan support.

Managing change is not a foreign concept to leaders. But managing change in response to multiple and intersecting reckonings that are touching everything from individuals to institutions may be for many of us. Over 21 years ago, PennFuture was born from the proposition that the environment needed lawyers and lobbyists; that was our purpose. I believe we should accept—and push—change with that origin story in mind. We welcome the eyes that are upon us as we make our way forward, and look for those—like so many of you—who will help and support us along the way.

Jacquelyn Bonomo
President and CEO
jbonomo@pennfuture.org
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD

Organizations, like people, make their own history, but not in circumstances of their own choosing. Near the end of the fiscal year that is the subject of this Annual Report, the COVID-19 pandemic swept around the world, affecting all of us as individuals and affecting the communities in which we all live. I need not try to catalogue the economic consequences of the pandemic, or its impacts on our social fabric and government at every level. But, the important work to enhance the protection of Pennsylvania’s environment and to fight climate change could not be suspended.

As this Report will show, even though many of the ways PennFuture’s staff did their work had to be changed, much has been accomplished and groundwork for more progress has been advanced.

One of PennFuture’s strategic goals has been Pennsylvania’s participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). During the time period covered by this report, Gov. Tom Wolf issued an executive order to craft a carbon reduction program in Pennsylvania similar to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, and work has progressed steadily in the year and a half since to advance this important work which continues to be a priority for PennFuture.

Another goal achieved was the opening of our Erie office and the campaign for “Our Water, Our Future: A Common Agenda for Protecting Pennsylvania’s Lake Erie Watershed.” This campaign exemplifies PennFuture’s commitment to restore badly damaged water resources. But, just as importantly, it also recognizes that engagement with local communities and civic partnerships is both a strategy for success and an investment in the future of environmental stewardship where it matters most.

PennFuture did not ignore the challenges brought forward by the pandemic. Rather, it published its “A Green Stimulus and Recovery Platform for Pennsylvania” report, setting out a realistic and widely-praised program that reflects our core position—vigorous environmental stewardship and responsiveness to climate change make economic sense now, and for the future.

Nor has PennFuture ignored the many ways a degraded environment affects communities also harmed by racial injustice, economic adversity, and political disenfranchisement. Aware that its own practices must reflect its goals, PennFuture’s strategic plan and its work this year were internal as well, with its staff and board of directors undertaking self-evaluation and improvement.

I cannot end this message without thanking Char Magaro, whose passionate leadership as chair of PennFuture’s board was fundamental to our success and an inspiration to all of us as we continue the work.

Thomas B. Schmidt, III
Chairperson
PennFuture
On January 31st, 2020 the Department of Environmental Protection released its proposal to advance a cap-and-invest program to reduce carbon emissions in Pennsylvania that is compatible with the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Facing the prospect of actually having to pay for their pollution rather than being allowed to dump it in the air for free, polluters and their friends are mobilizing to oppose the proposal with fallacies and mistruths.

Below are three of the most inaccurate statements made so far by polluter-friendly elected officials in Pennsylvania, along with responses debunking these dubious and misleading claims.

**Myth: Legislative approval is required to execute a carbon cap-and-trade program.** On Jan. 16., state Rep. Daryl Metcalfe sent a letter to the executive committee of RGGI, asking them not to move forward with Pennsylvania’s proposed entry into RGGI. In his letter, Metcalfe claimed Pennsylvania has a “rogue governor” and that “Pennsylvania law requires that in order for the governor to execute a carbon cap-and-trade program such as RGGI, explicit approval is required from our Common-wealth’s legislative branch.”

**Response:** Legislative approval is not required. Pennsylvania’s Air Pollution Control Act gives the DEP, through approval of the Environmental Quality Board (EQB), very clear authority to set limits on pollution and, where necessary, cooperate with other states to do so. The DEP’s proposed rule couldn’t be more clear that interstate compact is required. It says “The Department will determine...”
whether to participate in multistate CO2 allowance auctions in coordination with other participating states or to conduct Pennsylvania-run auctions...”—the proposal also contains specific provisions for a Pennsylvania-run program and says that we will only participate in a multi-state auction if the DEP determines there is one that is compatible with our program and the benefits of doing so outweigh the costs.

Article I § 27 of Pennsylvania’s Constitution says that our “public natural resources are the common property of all the people” and that the Commonwealth acts as trustee to “conserve and maintain” those resources. Instead of questioning the governor’s authority to act, Rep. Metcalfe should ask himself why he thinks it’s acceptable for polluting industries to dump their waste products into our air for free. How is that consistent with his oath of office?

Myth: Pennsylvania is already a leader in cutting carbon emissions, so joining RGGI is not needed. In an Oct. 16 edition of the Pennsylvania Business Report, Pennsylvania Senate Majority Leader Jake Corman argued that “Pennsylvania is out ahead of many states when it comes to reducing carbon emissions through the RGGI compact...But joining a compact where you give up state independence, in an area where we are already making improvements, seems shortsighted and leaves us open to the possibility of being stuck with the poor decisions and outcomes for others in the agreement.” Similarly, in a news release issued on Oct. 3, the House Republican Caucus argued that “Pennsylvania’s energy sector is currently reducing greenhouse gas emissions by as much as 30 percent in recent years, according to some estimates, and the industry is doing this without burdensome regulations.”

Response: Of course Senator Corman and the House Republican Caucus know they are comparing apples and oranges—they just hope you don’t notice. For all its “progress,” Pennsylvania is the fourth-highest emitter of carbon pollution in the nation behind California, Texas, and Florida. New natural gas plants have driven most of our coal generation out of business reducing our emissions, but we started with about one and a half times the coal generation as all of the other RGGI states combined. This is a case of being so far behind, the Senator thinks we are in first place. The real issue though is not what we did, but how we move forward.

We don’t have enough coal left for the trends of the past to continue and neither the Senator nor the Republican Caucus have a plan to solve our emissions problem. Rather than reducing emissions, they are working on a package of bills to further subsidize fossil fuel generation. Gas has likely already become a bigger source of carbon pollution than coal in the state and replacing additional lost generation with gas will result in net increases in pollution—we can’t drill our way to a clean and healthy environment.

Instead of more fossil fuel subsidies, we need to implement a program like RGGI to cap carbon pollution and invest in carbon-free alternatives like clean renewable energy and energy efficiency. A recent report by The Analysis Group shows CO2 emissions in the RGGI states have dropped from over 180 million tons per year to under 80 million tons per year while providing over $1.4 billion in net economic benefits. That is the kind of progress we need.

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Myth: Joining RGGI will increase electricity prices and result in job losses. In a June 24 article published by the Commonwealth Foundation, the author implies that RGGI will result in a 64 percent increase in the price of electricity, while it will also result in a loss of between 7,000 to 11,000 jobs per year.

Response: To come by those shocking numbers, the Commonwealth Foundation relies on a “working paper” by David Stephenson of the Caesar Rodney Institute. Both organizations are part of a Koch-funded umbrella organization called the State Policy Network that actively opposes climate change regulations, so it shouldn’t surprise anyone that they are cherry-picking data to try and make their point.

What is surprising is that the Commonwealth Foundation found it necessary to cherry-pick data from a report that already cherry-picked data. The underlying report actually says prices in RGGI increased less than the average in the US, they just increased more than “comparison states.” If you skip their alternative facts altogether and go directly to the Energy Information Administration’s (EIA) report on average state prices (the authority they cite) you get a much different picture.

Average price per megawatt hour (MWh) across all sectors in RGGI did rise 7% from 2007 through 2016, but the prices in Pennsylvania and the U.S. as a whole rose more than 12% over that same time period. If you update the data to 2018 (the most current available) RGGI is even better with a 6.6% increase from 2007 compared to an 11.2% increase in Pennsylvania and 15.3% for the U.S. as a whole.

The other critical factor groups like this purposely ignore is that the cost per MWh is only one part of your bill. If a family or business installs solar generation or invests in energy efficiency, their monthly electric bills can drop substantially even if the retail price of power goes up. The RGGI states take advantage of this by investing in efficiency and renewable—far more than Pennsylvania.

To make their claims on job losses, the Commonwealth Foundation resorts to another report from a State Policy Network affiliate, this time from Rhode Island. The really surprising thing about this report is that it doesn’t pretend to be about RGGI at all—this is a report about renewable energy portfolio standards that tries to claim investing in clean renewable generation though programs like Pennsylvania’s Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards (AEPS) causes job losses.

What we know for a fact is that the remaining large coal plants in Pennsylvania are all nearing retirement age and no plans are on the table to build more. These plants will eventually close with or without RGGI—we need to plan for what is next. Adding more natural gas is a climate killer so we need better choices. Right now, far from being sources of job losses, the largest job growth sectors in the U.S. are solar installers and wind technicians. Pennsylvania in particular has over 68,000 energy efficiency jobs and over 9,000 renewable energy jobs. Clean and renewable energy has more potential job growth than dirty fossil fuels.

Next steps
The title of this blog says it’s “Part 1” of a series debunking lies, myths, and misconceptions about RGGI and carbon pricing. While it would be nice if a “Part 2” was not required, the people who are making these claims are not likely to stop. Back in 1710, Jonathan Swift wrote that “if a lie be believ’d only for an hour, it has done its work, and there is no farther occasion for it.” Unfortunately, that is just as true today.

Stay plugged into PennFuture and our blogs as we follow the rule-making process that could end with Pennsylvania joining RGGI.
There is power in unity and there is power in numbers. When we all come together and speak in a unified voice, decision makers have no choice but to listen.

That was the primary takeaway from a rally on March 9 when 35 environmental, faith and civic groups from across Pennsylvania banded together on the steps of the Capitol rotunda in Harrisburg. We came from all corners of the Commonwealth for one common cause: to speak out against House Bill 1100, a dangerous piece of legislation that could radically alter Pennsylvania for decades to come.

The bill, passed by the General Assembly on Feb. 4, offers billions of dollars in taxpayer subsidies to the fracked gas and petrochemical industries. If this legislation becomes law, it means Pennsylvanians everywhere will be paying for and subsidizing massive amounts of pollution, environmental degradation and sickness that come along with fracked gas and petrochemical expansion.

For PennFuture and dozens of other organizations, this is an unacceptable vision for our future.

Our world is at a crossroads when we need to be moving away from fossil fuels, not using taxpayer money to fund their expansion. This bill completely disregards the need for immediate action on the climate crisis, and it asks Pennsylvanians to trade their health for the promise of jobs.

As soon as the final vote on House Bill 1100 came through on Feb. 4, we at PennFuture knew there had to be a strong and strategic response. Over the next four weeks, PennFuture staff worked diligently—some of them working solely on this event—to make sure this rally unfolded in a professional and powerful way.

It was obvious from the start that PennFuture couldn’t pursue this endeavor alone. If there was truly to be a powerful and impactful response to House Bill 1100, it would have to be a coordinated effort amongst partners to not only spread the word, but to pack the steps of the rotunda in a show of force. We needed to show that it wasn’t just industry and labor that has a voice in this process.

The response from other organizations—and even regular citizens—was immediate and forceful. It didn’t take long before we compiled a list of 34 other co-sponsors that lent their skills, time and passion to the
cause of rallying against House Bill 1100. We enlisted the help of a number of legislators in Harrisburg, and two—state Rep. Sara Innamorato and Sen. Katie Muth—were able to speak at the rally.

The final list of sponsors was as diverse as it was long: statewide groups like PennEnvironment, Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, One Pennsylvania and others joined with us, as did regional groups like the Center for Coalfield Justice, The Climate Reality Project – Pittsburgh and Philadelphia chapters, Capital Region Stands Up, and the Delaware Riverkeeper Network. There were faith groups, civic groups, and political groups of all shapes and sizes.

A tremendous amount of work occurred behind the scenes, too.

PennFuture staff worked on renting charter buses from Pittsburgh and Philadelphia and coordinated the effort to fill those buses with supporters. PennFuture staff created and printed signs to be used at the rally, while other staff worked on securing enough food to feed more than 100 people at the rally. Finally, our development team worked hard to secure donations to make this event—and everything that went along with it—possible from a financial perspective.

To say that this event was a team effort isn’t strong enough, and not just from PennFuture staff. This was a coordinated, strategic effort from hundreds of people representing dozens of organizations across Pennsylvania.

Even on the morning of the rally—when it became clear that half the people who registered for seats on our buses weren’t going to show up because of coronavirus fears—we knew there was no way this rally could fail.

Even though so many people stayed away, we still packed the steps of the rotunda with friends, supporters and colleagues who all banded together to speak in a unified voice. Conservative estimates put the number of attendees at more than 120 people.

It’s safe to say that people listened. Those on the other side of the issue—labor unions and industry—put together their own, much smaller rally as a response to ours, a rally that took place directly after ours in the Capitol. Media coverage was swift and included a mix of newspapers, radio stations, television stations and blogs. The entire intent of the rally was to make a statement, and that’s exactly what happened.

Our rally was a resounding success, but the purpose of this blog isn’t to pat PennFuture on the back. To the contrary, this was the very definition of teamwork, of many different groups with many different priorities coming together for the common good to defeat a very bad, very dangerous bill.

None of this is to say that the fight is won. It’s not, because the fight isn’t over. The Legislature on Wednesday sent House Bill 1100 to Gov. Tom Wolf, who has vowed to veto it. Even if the governor does the right thing and vetoes House Bill 1100, a certain faction within the General Assembly has promised to try to override that veto.

So, the fight remains. Will you do your part to help beat back this horrible legislation? Will you contact your legislator, write a Letter to the Editor, or get in touch with PennFuture to see how else you might help?

Even with these uncertain times amidst a global pandemic, threats to our environment and to the health of our people will not stop. PennFuture, and indeed dozens of our partner organizations, will remain vigilant on this and other issues of great importance to Pennsylvanians everywhere.

Will you join us?
The environmental, economic, and social impacts of Covid-19 are profound and are reshaping how we work, recreate, and live our daily lives. While the impacts of this crisis will continue to shift and grow with each passing week, a number of critical environmental observations relevant to Pennsylvania are becoming clearer:

1. The importance of our outdoor and green spaces is vital now more than ever. Governor Tom Wolf issued a “stay-at-home” order to compel citizens across the Commonwealth to limit their daily interactions with others to curb the spread of the coronavirus. The order allowed engaging in outdoor activities as long as safe social distancing guidelines were followed. Pennsylvanians have responded by visiting their state parks, state forest lands, and municipal parks in record numbers. The opening of trout season was pushed up by a week to provide anglers more access to fish stocked streams. Whether for exercise, taking in the warm weather, getting our children outside, or wholesome recreation, it’s clear that connecting—or for many re-connecting—with the historic trails, forests, streams, and lakes of Pennsylvania has been an important escape from the pandemic. The health crisis is re-teaching us how important our green spaces—and by extension the conservation of these special places—are to our mental and physical wellbeing. While for terrible reasons, new and old generations of hikers, anglers, birders, walkers, boaters, hunters, and runners are experiencing the state’s natural beauty, which could have long term positive impact on the use and conservation of our public lands.

2. Covid-19 is exacerbating the equity and justice gap between communities impacted by pollution and those that are not. Much reporting has been done on how the pandemic is impacting people differently. While blue collar workers are filing for unemployment, poor, immigrant, and black and brown neighborhoods are experiencing higher levels of infection and death than those that are more affluent. The pandemic is not necessarily an equal opportunist as its consequences are being felt more acutely by those without access to healthcare, those who can’t work from home, and those with underlying health and morbidity conditions, such as those caused by chronic pollution. According to new research from Harvard University, Covid-19 patients in areas with high levels of air pollution had a higher likelihood of death. Chronic air pollution from traffic, factories, and fossil fuel power plants cause...
more cases of asthma, lung disease, and cardiovascular disease that, when combined with severe lung inflammation caused by Covid-19, is often fatal. It brings into clear view the long-term damage caused by chronic pollution to our environmental justice communities and how reducing pollution should now more than ever be a top public health priority.

3. **The Commonwealth’s boom-and-bust fossil fuel economy is unsustainable.** Even before the pandemic, Pennsylvania’s fossil fuel economy was on its heels. Oil and gas company stock prices are down 60 percent this year irrespective of the pandemic and companies are now drastically cutting project costs and their workforce. Petrochemical companies worry that Covid-19 will result in yet another year of falling profits and production. And any recession caused by the Covid-19 crisis could mark the end of already struggling coal plants and coal mines. In other words, the pandemic is laying bare an unfortunate truth many already know—the Commonwealth’s fossil fuel industry has no clothes. The economic hopes hung around fracked gas, petrochemical facilities, and coal plants are a boom-and-bust mirage. It’s what makes the state legislature’s attempts to provide billions in taxpayer subsidies to the petrochemical industry even more unsettling. It puts into question why the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) would want to provide waste coal plants yet another subsidy. And it is inconceivable why the state Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has made supporting a natural gas and plastics buildout its top economic priority. It’s clear that Pennsylvania needs a new economic development strategy that doesn’t rely on fossil fuels because our reliance on that industry is destroying not only the health of our communities, but their opportunity for long term, sustainable prosperity.

4. **The anti-environmental movement continues to advance even during a public health crisis.** While the rest of the country and Commonwealth is focused on their safety and health during the Covid-19 crisis, the anti-environmental movement continues to advance its agenda. The Trump Administration made a stunning announcement to suspend enforcement of environmental and public health rules during the pandemic. The EPA is finalizing a rollback of fuel efficiency standards that the car manufacturers originally helped write and celebrated. The Pennsylvania Senate waited until the health crisis was in full swing to send to the Governor House Bill 1100, which would have provided open-ended subsidies for petrochemical plants (he vetoed it). And right now, a group of state legislators are pushing legislation to strip funds from environmental programs that conserve public land (see #1) as well as limit environmental protections. These efforts unveil how little regard the anti-environmental movement has for conservation, public health, and sustainable communities.

5. **Post-Covid-19, the Commonwealth has a generational opportunity to reshape the economy toward sustainable economic development.** I’m an eternal optimist. Pennsylvania will make it through this health crisis. A new normal will set in, but our policymakers will need to get to work to restart the economy. The federal government already passed a $2.2 trillion stimulus to provide a 2-month bridge for workers and businesses and they already know that isn’t enough to make it through the economic recession we’re settling into. Federal, state, and municipal governments will need to enact a series of stimulus and economic recovery packages to get us through the economic inactivity caused by the crisis and then get everyone back to work. But it’s clear we can’t just restart what we were doing pre-pandemic for the reasons described above. The Commonwealth’s economy was already on unsettled ground and throwing more money at unsustainable fossil fuel businesses puts our communities back in the same fear of boom-and-bust industries and fear of pollution impacts. Policymakers needs to get this right and invest in sustainable, shovel-ready projects that provide family-sustaining wages as well as invest in industries that create jobs without harming our air, water, land, and climate. This crisis should be a wake-up call to get moving on a stronger, better, more sustainable economy.
Fundraising, Events, and COVID-19
May 18, 2020 I Travis DiNicola, Director of Development

Celebrating Women in CONSERVATION Awards

On Monday, March 9th—what seems like a lifetime ago—PennFuture and 35 other environmental groups from across the state participated in the “Fighting for Our Future: Pushing Back Against Taxpayer Subsidies for Fossil Fuels” rally at the State Capitol.

More than 100 people turned out to encourage Gov. Wolf’s veto of House Bill 1100, which would have provided ridiculous incentives and billions in taxpayer subsidies to lure more petrochemical plants to Pennsylvania. We’re very glad to say that the Governor did veto the bill, though the Legislature could still mount an attempt to override that veto. We are proud to have packed the room during the rally, but it’s obvious that more people would have attended if not for fears about the coronavirus pandemic, which was just starting to spread in Pennsylvania.

A week later on March 16, all PennFuture staff were working from home, and all PennFuture events had been either cancelled or postponed. It was up to us to improvise and find a way to still do our important work virtually, in accordance with quarantine and stay-at-home orders implemented in mid-March.

Our first effort at working within the new normal was partnering with Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania. In that partnership, we were able to successfully pivot the in-person Earth Day events we had planned into a 30-Day Challenge online to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day virtually.

Other events were left in limbo, including our 6th Annual Women in Conservation Awards Dinner. It was to be held on April 30th at the National Aviary in Pittsburgh, and we were really looking forward to it! Each year, PennFuture honors the accomplishments of exceptional women conservationists in Pennsylvania.

The awards are designed to encourage continuing excellence in conservation and to forge a stronger network of exceptional women working to protect Pennsylvania’s environment. Each year the event moves to a different part of the state to honor these women: this year to Southwest Pennsylvania.
Before I continue on about the event, let’s take a moment to congratulate the 2020 Women in Conservation Honorees:

- **Women of Lifetime Achievement in Conservation**
  
  *Caren Glotfelty – Executive Director of Allegheny Parks Foundation*
  
  *Beverly Braverman – Executive Director of Mountain Watershed Association*
  
  *Patricia DeMarco, Ph.D. – Author and Documentary Film Producer*

- **Woman of Environmental Community Engagement**
  
  *Maren Cooke – Environmental Science Educator, Sustainability Salon Host*

- **Woman of Renewable Energy and Climate**
  
  *Sharon Pillar – Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Solar Center*

- **Woman of Environmental Arts**
  
  *Ann Rosenthal – Environmental Artist & Educator*

- **Woman of Environmental Media, Marketing, and Communications**
  
  *Kirsi Jansa – Documentary Filmmaker and Journalist*

- **Woman of Environmental Education**
  
  *Camila Rivera Tinsley – Director of Education at Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy*

- **Woman of Environmental Justice**
  
  *Raina Rippel – Director at Southwest Pennsylvania Environmental Health Project*

- **Woman of the Watershed**
  
  *Melissa Reckner – Program Manager for Penguin Court, Brandywine Conservancy*

- **Young Woman of Conservation Leadership**
  
  *Leandra Mira – Leading Organizer of Pittsburgh’s FridaysForFuture & Climate Youth Strike*

With a list like this it would have been a night to remember. Having it at the National Aviary would have made it unforgettable. The Aviary is a bird-lover’s treasure. Two years ago PennFuture hosted a fundraising party there to honor our retiring president Larry Schweiger. A bald eagle greeted our guests across from the check-in table. Cocktails were had with flamingos. Along with the amazing food and beverages served in view of the penguin exhibit, we also had visits to our dinner tables by an owl and a falcon. Combine that with family and friends coming together to celebrate these women—live events don’t get much better than that.

We knew we had to postpone it. At first we thought we could schedule it for June, but quickly realized even that would be too soon. Now, we hope we can have the event safely at the Aviary on October 8th but know that it may not be possible to have a live event at all this year.

Later this summer, if we determine we can still have the event live, we’ll be sure to let everyone know and make tickets available for purchase. If instead we have to host a virtual event, we’ll do so with enthusiasm and hope that you can join us in safely honoring these women, in whatever way we can.

The Women in Conservation event is a fundraising event for PennFuture. The funds it brings in from our generous sponsors and from tickets sales provide unrestricted support for our environmental watchdog work. Not having the event makes it more difficult for us to do this work.
Most of PennFuture's funds come from grants which are restricted to very specific projects which are planned out months, if not years, in advance. Unrestricted funds from events and from individual donors allow us to have the flexibility we need to respond to environmental threats in real time. For example, if not for the generosity of a handful of concerned donors this spring, we would not have been able to quickly organize the March rally against HB1100 and create the successful publicity campaign around it. Unrestricted dollars make a difference.

That’s why I want to give a special shout out to the corporate sponsors of the 2020 Women in Conservation Dinner who have stayed with us in their support during these difficult times. Thank you to NextEra Energy Resources, Signature Financial, MaherDuessel, and CLA (CliftonLarsonAllen)! If you are affiliated with a company that is interested in joining them in sponsoring the 2020 Women in Conservation Awards, please let us know.

EDITOR’S NOTE: The Women in Conservation event was held virtually on October 8th, with more than 150 supporters in attendance for a wonderful evening! Thanks for your support!

Though it has been difficult for us, and all charities, to change and postpone our fundraising events, there has been some good news this spring for the nonprofit world. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provided new incentives for donors to contribute to their favorite charities this year.

We know that right now making a charitable donation may be the last thing on your mind, and perhaps something not even possible to consider. The pandemic has created unfortunate and worrisome economic conditions. If you or your family have been adversely impacted by workplace closures or furloughs, you have our deepest sympathies. We are thinking of you and hope to hear from you when things get better.

However, if you are in a position to make a donation to PennFuture, or to any other charity you care about this year, then because of the CARES Act it may be one of the most economically advantageous times to do so. Think of it as a stimulus donation.

These are difficult, unprecedented, and unpredictable times we are living in. Nothing can be done as it was before. Before we do anything we now first think “how can I do this safely?” And if we can’t do it safely then how do we “pivot” and change our expectations so that we can be safe? It requires determination and flexibility to stay successful. And it requires trust and hope to make it worthwhile.

PennFuture is determined to be your environmental watchdog regardless of the challenging circumstances, and we are very grateful for the trust you have given us to support this work.

Stay safe!
PennFuture Launches the Our Water, Our Future Campaign to Unify Erie Around Clean Water Goals
June 4, 2020 I Sarah Bennett, Campaign Manager, Clean Water Advocacy

After years of careful and intentional planning, PennFuture recently opened a new office in Erie. We initially envisioned an opening that included an office in downtown Erie, a press conference with local media, and a meet-and-greet opportunity for community members to connect with PennFuture leadership.

Like every other organization, our best laid plans evaporated in mid-March with the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic that would completely shut down Pennsylvania’s economy and our ability to travel.

Instead of a new office space or the benefit of in-person introductions and conversations, I started my new role as a Campaign Manager for Clean Water virtually with many emails that began “I am writing to introduce myself... I’d love to set up a Zoom meeting with you.” Not exactly how we envisioned PennFuture’s entry into Erie, of course.

I was worried about being able to connect with people and organizations remotely, but I have been incredibly surprised by the positive responses I have received. I have met remotely with dozens of people in northwestern Pennsylvania and beyond through Zoom and phone calls. From citizens and non-profit organizations to government agencies and others, I have been amazed by the breadth of
work being done and passion for protecting our water resources. I have also seen the need for that work and its importance to be communicated to a broader audience.

Erie is the fifth PennFuture office to open in Pennsylvania. We now cover all four corners of the state in addition to our strong presence in Harrisburg. By expanding into Erie with the “Our Water, Our Future” campaign, PennFuture seeks to increase and amplify the voices for the environment and citizens of Erie by developing a coalition of existing organizations dedicated to protecting our most important asset: our water.

The initial goal for PennFuture in Erie is to bring together organizations to develop a Common Agenda for Clean Water Advocacy. The process for developing this agenda has been taking shape with COVID-19, economic struggles, racial inequality, and social unrest in the background.

As I sit meeting with people at my computer to discuss this very specific goal, the world is changing outside my window. It would be naïve to think that this endeavor will not be impacted by this changing world. But now more than ever people need to organize and stand up for what is right. It is right to stand against inequality and injustice. It is right to stand up for environmental protection. The two are not mutually exclusive and both are intimately connected with our mental and physical wellbeing.

The intersection between inequality, injustice, and environmental protection is well illustrated by the situation with Erie Coke Corporation. For decades this plant, which sits directly on Presque Isle Bay, continued operations despite routinely skirting environmental regulations. Coal and contaminated waste water escaped into the nearby waterways and emissions with benzene and toluene above DEP action levels were regularly spewed into the air. The community surrounding Erie Coke has a 49 percent poverty rate and its population is 54 percent minority. Clearly an injustice was occurring that was disproportionately born by people who were already disenfranchised.

Citizen activists banded together to demand justice for all of Erie, but especially for the community directly surrounding the plant. They formed a group called Hold Erie Coke Accountable (HECA) and asked citizens to share their experiences. Through these actions, HECA raised awareness of the injustices of Erie Coke and eventually, continuous pressure from citizens and the City of Erie led to the plant’s closure.

By unifying around a common goal, citizens and decision makers earned a huge win for Erie and accomplished a step in the right direction to defend the citizens living closest to the plant. I hope to build off of this success on a broader scale and bring people together to continuously protect our water resources, and in doing so, protect our citizens and preserve resources for future generations.

In a time filled with great uncertainty and fear, bringing people together for a positive common goal of protecting water resources has offered me solace and purpose. I look forward to working with the passionate people of Northwest Pennsylvania to advocate for the clean water that our lives and livelihoods depend on.
Looking in the Rearview Mirror

June 8, 2020 I Char Magaro

In all honesty, by 1994 after six years leading two environmental movements—the PA Rainforest Action Committee and Central PA Earth Day Committee—I became disillusioned that the 20th anniversary of Earth Day would reignite action from Washington to address the threat of global warming, as it was referred to then. For the next 10 years my activism took the form of writing, publishing and studying this country’s history of environmental irresponsibility.

In 2004, John Hanger—the first Executive Director of PennFuture—asked me to join the Board of Directors of the organization. At the time, their motto was “Every environmental victory is an economic success.” Bingo! I found my tribe.

PennFuture has always, even from inception, been highly respected within Pennsylvania’s environmental community. Where it had tremendous impact was in the halls of the Capitol. Those were ‘good times’ for the environment.

We had the ear of Governor Ed Rendell, who had faith in Hanger and PennFuture. There was more balance in the legislature. DEP and DCNR were doing good work and our Energy Center was busy paving inroads for alternatives and throughout those years, our funding from Heinz and Pew Foundations remained strong. In sum, the staff of PennFuture were laying the foundation of what would become a distinguished environmental organization in Pennsylvania.

By 2008 we were celebrating our 10th anniversary with Vice President Al Gore in attendance to support us. Mr. Gore describe PennFuture as “the only statewide environmental organization in the country with a three-tier focus of policy, legal and energy work.”

We were riding high on successes until the chessboard pieces shifted. Hanger moved onto head DEP, Gov. Tom Corbett replaced Rendell, and the Marcellus Shale created new environmental challenges while gaining more influence on policy.

At the same time, PennFuture was going through what seemed like a revolving door of leadership. In hindsight, these were the most challenging years for the board. I give credit to the leadership of Chair David Lane for guiding the organization through several years of executive searches. For both the staff and the board members, it was our commitment to PennFuture’s mission as “the watchdogs of Pennsylvania’s environment” that we refreshed our efforts.

By 2014, I moved into the Chair’s shoes and we were again searching for an Executive Director. In 2015 PennFuture was fortunate to hire Larry Schweiger who had recently stepped down from the National Wildlife Federation. To be frank, we felt we hit payday. And it turns out we did.

Larry brought new ideas and opened doors for the organization. It was Larry’s leadership that began the conversation to partner with Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania, which has strengthened our policy and advocacy work and expanded PennFuture’s influence.

Larry insisted he hire Jacquelyn Bonomo as his chief operating officer. Jacqui came with decades of environmental leadership and discipline, and she brought structure to the organization and always had an ear for my input, which made working with her one of the highlights of my tenure.
When Jacqui became President/CEO in 2017 and hired Matt Stepp as chief operating officer, they began restructuring PennFuture to meet the political, environmental, financial and personnel challenges of the time. This was hard work that required serious communication, organization and action. Throughout, the board was there to guide and support this transition.

During my time with PennFuture, I have witnessed the organization being transformed into a highly organized, focused and impressive instrument for change. Our reach throughout Pennsylvania has expanded beyond anything I could have imagined 16 years ago when I joined the board.

I leave PF confident and grateful. Confident that the executives are clear, dedicated and driven leaders. Grateful that climate change is now a main focus of PennFuture and grateful for my fellow board members who have always taken their position seriously and when needed, rolled up their sleeves, put in the time and got the work done with the understanding they are the caretakers of this important organization.

EDITOR’S NOTE:

Though she wouldn’t admit it, Char Magaro was working on climate change issues long before anyone else was really aware of it. Her activism on this issue, and others, emanates from her early work advocating for rainforest protection.

Over the years, Char allowed PennFuture to use her restaurants for fundraisers and other events. We always knew that our guests would feel welcomed and really appreciate Char’s high standards and hospitality.

Char was key to the success of PennFuture’s 10th anniversary gala. She conceived the look and the style of the event so that it rose to fit the stellar line of speakers including Al Gore, Rebecca Rimmel of Pew Charitable Trusts, and Teresa Heinz of The Heinz Endowments. It was elegant, coordinated and it ran smoothly because of Char’s attention to detail.

Char was essential in the transition and recruitment of PennFuture’s CEOs, often a time consuming process, not once but twice. Hours of meetings and interviews were involved in this process. Char had great influence on the board, many times offering a point of view which was unique and creative. She blended well with all of the different personalities and thought big picture.

For 16 years Char has been a significant part of the life of PennFuture, as we have been part of her life. She has supported us financially, offered wise guidance, floated many ideas, led the board ably as chair, and has been an inspiration and friend to many of us.
Since the murder of George Floyd at the hands of police in late May, we have witnessed an ignition of individual, communal and global action against racism, injustice and inequality.

People are mobilized in anger and in peace, hearts and minds are active and anguished, and consciences are toiling. Aligned institutions, organizations and businesses are grappling with responsibility, and endeavoring to respond and support.

And so it is at PennFuture. My thinking about what the diversity work implanted throughout our 2019 strategic plan would look like has been thoroughly upended.

It’s overly simplistic to say that I anticipated a great deal of our effort would play out the way it has been described in trainings we’ve been exposed to—fairly prescriptive pathways and a lot of checking of boxes. I had anticipated that organizational culture would need to be explored, and assessed, and eventually transformed.

But I did not grasp, until now, and because of now, the extent to which the work must begin with conversations about racism, bigotry and hatred. These conversations have always been part of the diversity curriculum but now stand at the front of a long line of issues we must work our way through in an aspiration to be an inclusive, diverse, fair and just organization.

I knew a path to diversity would be painful and difficult, but I thought it might be a collective pain and discomfort, and now am figuring out the discomfort will be felt personally and deeply. But it
will never be commensurate to the pain and hurt America has laid on communities of color since the birth of this country and right up to today.

Over the last weeks, the PennFuture staff that I work with has responded so admirably, and with so much bravery and leadership. The environmental community wants to be a leader in helping solve racism and prejudice, but do we really have a clue to how that can happen?

I believe we do, and I believe that knowledge at PennFuture resides with our younger and newer staff members who bring diversity and fresh ideas to the table, but also deeply personal experiences that have shaped their worldviews and perspectives.

These individuals have stood up with a generosity of spirit, with clear words and thoughts and with an insistence that they be heard within the organization. They are pushing our organization forward. They have expectations and desires for the future and realize we are in a moment when the time to assert them is ripe.

This team wants our organization to be an ally to the marginalized people of our state, to find new partners, to understand from them how we can use our privilege and access and resources and yes, expertise, in service to these impacted communities and the issues they prioritize. Will it always be possible for us to help? Probably not, but we must figure out some mechanisms and programs to contribute.

On Monday, June 1, after the first weekend of justice actions took place throughout the state, PennFuture offered a brief statement of solidarity for the justice activists and their calls for change. Since the next day, June 2, was Election Day, we included our hopes that everyone who is eligible to vote is registered to vote, and voting regularly as one pathway to that change. In fact, that is one goal of PennFuture’s new Democracy for All program, which reaches out to communities of color and provides civic engagement opportunities.

We grasp that the same dynamics of power that have perpetuated racism also have systematically manipulated the people’s ability to engage with, and have faith in, our elections and civic opportunities. But I hope we do not give up on our democracy or the American flag as a symbol of our dreams and vision for the future.

I’ve shared some early thoughts here but to say more would immediately put me back in a place where I think I know something I really don’t, which is what the road to diversity will look like for PennFuture.

I will have contributions to make to that future, along with many others here. It is within my ability and control to say with certainty the matter will not be relegated to the back burner.
PennFuture is committed to charitable transparency. This is a summary from the Independent Auditor’s Report for the Fiscal Years ending June 30, 2020. Complete audited financial statements for these years, and 990s, are available upon request or by visiting [www.pennfuture.org/financial-information](http://www.pennfuture.org/financial-information). PennFuture participates in GuideStar, the premier source for advancing transparency in philanthropy. Financial information is also available at guidestar.org.

### Revenues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Sources of Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contributions</td>
<td>includes memberships and non-cash</td>
<td>Philanthropic support</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instigated earned income</td>
<td>includes gross rents, legal fees</td>
<td>Earned income</td>
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<td>investment income</td>
<td>Investment income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>$3,373,307</strong></td>
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### Expenses

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Program Expenses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>all programmatic dollars attributed</td>
<td>Program</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and general expenses</td>
<td>all management and general attributed</td>
<td>Operations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>all fundraising attributed</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$2,752,137</strong></td>
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</table>

#### Source of Income

- Grants and contributions: 93%
- Instigated earned income: 2%
- Accounts accruing interest: 5%

#### Program Expenses

- Programs: 70%
- Management and general expenses: 15%
- Fundraising: 15%
### FISCAL YEAR 2019 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

#### Revenues

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Sources of Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grants and contributions</td>
<td>includes memberships and non-cash</td>
<td>Philanthropic support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instigated earned income</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>includes sales of assets and other</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL $3,084,168**

#### Expenses

<table>
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<th>Category</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Program Expenses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
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<td>Management and general expenses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>all fundraising attributed</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
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**TOTAL $3,230,194**

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#### Source of Income
- Grants and contributions: 95%
- Instigated earned income: 1.5%
- Accounts accruing interest: 3.5%

#### Program Expenses
- Programs: 75.5%
- Management and general expenses: 11%
- Fundraising: 13.5%
THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

We extend our gratitude to each donor who made a gift to PennFuture during our last complete fiscal year, July 1, 2019-June 30, 2020. The individuals, organizations, and businesses listed here provide the philanthropic support that makes it possible for PennFuture to do our work. Each gift makes an impact.

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The Campbell Foundation

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Colcom Foundation

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Artistic Resources in Action Foundation
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Katharine Dodge
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PennFuture’s President’s Leadership Council (PLC) is a statewide group of diverse individuals who provide thoughtful leadership and networking on behalf of PennFuture to fulfill our mission of leading the transition to a clean energy economy in Pennsylvania and beyond.

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