From the habitats and ecosystems we’ve protected, to the outings we’ve hosted around the world, it’s not hard to understand why Sierra Club is synonymous with the natural places we’ve preserved.

But in this collection of words and images highlighting our many successes over the past year, it becomes abundantly clear that the true story of the Club is one of people. Since John Muir first walked President Roosevelt through Yosemite, we’ve been encouraging individuals to “enjoy, explore, and protect” the planet.

Passionate, hard-working, generous individuals with an incalculable number of differences—student, executive, retiree, rural, urban, online, offline, staff, volunteer, longtime supporter, first-time activist—share a vision of a planet worth saving. This vision has led to unexpected collaborations producing results worth celebrating.

And it includes you.

We offer this brief review of 2010, with deep appreciation for all that you do to support the work of Sierra Club and the people who make it happen.

Sincerely,

Sarah Hodgdon
Director of Conservation
Sierra Club
BOLD LEADERS, SHARED VISION

Michael Brune

Executive Director Michael Brune brings strategic vision and hard-charging charm to the chief executive’s office. Mike joined the Club this spring from Rainforest Action Network (RAN) where, during seven years as executive director, he used bold-yet-respectful confrontation to encourage corporate responsibility. He famously led a consumer-education campaign that persuaded Home Depot to stop selling wood from endangered forests. *Time* magazine called it “the top environmental story of 1999.”

Mike’s alignment with the Club’s ambitious climate recovery goals is reflected in his acclaimed book, *Coming Clean – Breaking America’s Addiction to Oil and Coal*. Published by Sierra Club Books in 2008, it details a plan for a new green economy that creates jobs, promotes environmental justice, and bolsters national security. As Executive Director, Mike is leading the environmental community in executing that plan.

Carl Pope

This spring, veteran Executive Director Carl Pope became the Club’s second-ever Chairman, spearheading the Club’s Climate Recovery Partnership. Carl’s leadership has been proven through 30 years of success: during his tenure, we protected 100 million acres of wilderness, stood up to Vice-President Cheney’s Energy Task Force, and collected more than one million public comments—the most ever for a single regulatory issue—to protect National Forests. Carl fought arsenic in our drinking water and mercury in our fisheries. The Club’s relationships with organized labor, sportsmen, faith-based groups, the military, and clean tech investors and entrepreneurs all result from Carl’s alliance-building skills.

“Most people respond more to hope than fear. But, we have a responsibility to clearly articulate the consequences of inaction.”

MICHAEL BRUNE
**TOXIC WASTE DOESN’T BELONG IN YOUR BACK YARD**

Every year U.S. coal plants produce more than 130 million tons of toxic coal ash, containing dangerous levels of arsenic, lead, and other heavy metals. Often stored in unlined waste ponds, this sludge poses a cancer risk 900 times above the level the EPA defines as ‘acceptable.’ Yet disposal standards for coal ash are currently less stringent than those imposed on household trash. In May, the agency’s proposed new safeguards for coal ash disposal generated a huge backlash. To ensure the EPA doesn’t give in to pressure from the coal industry, we mobilized the full force of our online and on-the-ground organizing capability to turn out members and volunteers to attend—and dominate—EPA hearings held in eight cities nationwide. In Chicago, more than 400 Club activists participated in testimony, a press conference, and an afternoon rally. In all, nearly 2,000 Sierra Club activists appeared in person, and more than 100,000 comments were delivered through emails and postcards to the EPA demanding strong, federally enforceable safeguards that fully protect the communities living near coal ash sites. The EPA will make their decision to regulate coal ash in early 2011.

**NO NEW PLANTS!**

Two years ago, there were eight proposed coal plants on the table in Michigan—more than any other state. We responded on all fronts, placing three full-time coal organizers in the state and filing ten legal actions against both existing and proposed coal plants. This year, all of the proposed plants have been defeated, abandoned, or indefinitely stalled. In Holland, Michigan, Sierra Club organizers helped turn a manufacturing town that never questioned the local Board of Public Works’ actions into a community engaged in a vigorous debate about the need to expand the city’s coal plant. This August, after reviewing more than 1,000 comments, the state denied the Holland Board of Public Works a permit to expand the James DeYoung Coal Plant, citing their failure to consider clean energy alternatives. With this victory, the Club has successfully stopped 143 new coal plant proposals across the country, preventing annual CO\textsubscript{2} emissions of more than 577 million tons. This is the equivalent of taking 105 million cars off the road—almost half of the cars in the United States.
ABOVE: Sierra Club members and supporters rally at an EPA Coal Ash Hearing in Louisville, KY.

RIGHT: Trimble County Generating Station’s coal ash pond in Louisville, KY.

BELOW: John DeYoung Power Plant in Holland, MI

LEFT: Sierra Club supporters join others at an EPA Coal Ash Hearing in Louisville, KY.
40 YEARS LATER:
CLEAN AIR ACT STILL YIELDING BIG DIVIDENDS

This year marked the 40th anniversary of the passage of the Clean Air Act, a Sierra Club championed-law that has saved lives and provided billions of dollars in benefits to the U.S. **We’re using this landmark legislation to hold polluters accountable and increase opportunities for clean energy progress.**

In 2009, Sierra Club and Environment Texas won a joint lawsuit against Shell Oil concerning Clean Air Act violations at the company’s Deer Park Texas Refinery. The $6 million settlement brought reductions in pollution at the plant and established, among other clean air efforts, a $2 million solar power project at two south Houston schools. This year, the school’s solar project was completed, saving the school district more than $10,000 annually in electricity bills. Moreover, Houston schools are expanding their clean-energy curriculum offering students a personal connection with the innovative technology.

**This is just one of the many solar and wind projects we’ve helped bring to fruition in 2010,** which pleases Sierra Club Texas energy organizer Eva Hernandez (shown below with a public-art-solar installation in a photo from an *Austin Chronicle* cover story about cleaning up the air in the Lone Star state.)

“This is an exciting moment in time. I think the EPA is poised to force change, if enough people voice their concerns.”

EVA HERNANDEZ
FORMALDEHYDE IN YOUR FURNITURE? NOT ANY MORE!

Thousands of people and pets were getting sick—even dying—until Sierra Club advocates stepped in. Families displaced by Hurricane Katrina were given FEMA trailers to inhabit, but soon after moving in they began experiencing nose-bleeds, insomnia, and light-headedness; symptoms that were ignored until Sierra Club Delta Chapter volunteer Becky Gillette listened. With a background in journalism and activism, Becky sampled the FEMA trailers for formaldehyde. Test results revealed unsafe levels of the toxic chemical, evidence Sierra Club helped put before Congress.

This year, bipartisan bill S. 1660 passed with unanimous consent. The law applies California’s formaldehyde emission standard to composite wood products sold, supplied, or manufactured in the United State. Leslie Fields, the Club’s National Environmental Justice and Community Partnership Director, testified at one of the hearings for the bill. She notes, “This is a great example of a coalition between Sierra Club volunteers, the Good Trade Association, and the right industry people coming together and making a difference.”
In August, we helped end the slaughter of gray wolves in the Northern Rockies and Greater Yellowstone region—winning a lawsuit against the Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) to relist the wolf under the Endangered Species Act. **Thanks to our ongoing partnerships with local organizations, the Club is uniquely positioned to help educate the public and ensure our legal victories are not short-lived.**

In 1978, the gray wolf was given endangered status and its population began to recover from near obliteration, reestablishing its numbers to roughly 1,600. Despite scientific conclusions that a minimum population of 2,000 to 5,000 is necessary to ensure survival, the FWS removed federal protection for wolves in Montana and Idaho, while maintaining it only in Wyoming. As a result, 250 wolves were killed during the 2009 hunting season. Sierra Club and 13 other conservation groups sued FWS over this premature delisting. A district judge sided with the Club’s coalition, prohibiting future wolf hunting and protecting the population so that it may continue to grow to more secure and stable numbers.
This spring, the Obama administration launched America’s Great Outdoors initiative, giving citizens a chance to weigh in how public lands should be managed as climate change shifts boundaries between ecosystems. Sierra Club organized members and supporters throughout the U.S. to attend public meetings where they voiced concerns and shared expert opinions on the conservation measures we must enact as the nation faces new environmental threats.

Not only did we share our collective expertise with the administration, but we also engaged America’s youth in the process of planning for their future. Our Building Bridges to the Outdoors (BBTO) program, which seeks to give every child in the U.S. opportunities to get outdoors, gathered more than 150 young people to participate in 10 roundtable events about wilderness management in an era of climate change.

“\nIf you’re talking about a 21st century strategy, you have to think about not only how climate change will affect the places we have fought to protect for the last 118 years, but also how to engage youth to care about these places for the future. 

FRAN HUNT, DIRECTOR OF RESILIENT HABITATS”
SIERRA CLUB RESPONDS TO THE BP DISASTER

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: Executive Director Mike Brune hosted groups of military and faith leaders on tours of the BP Oil Spill on the Gulf of Mexico; Field Organizers Jill Mastrototaro and Eva Hernandez at a New Orleans Clean It Up event; an oil-covered brown pelican, one of 30 bird species that have been threatened by the BP disaster; 10,000 flags sent by Sierra Club activists that spelled out “Freedom From Oil” on the lawn of the Washington Mall; in Florida thousands of people gather their Hands Across the Sand to protest against offshore drilling.
SIERRA CLUB REACTS TO THE BP DISASTER
BATTLING BIG OIL IN THE COURTS

As soon as the devastation caused by the BP disaster began to spread, our in-house environmental law team launched an aggressive plan to address the government’s failure to conduct adequate review and require adequate planning prior to permitting offshore exploration and drilling activities. To date, Sierra Club has challenged:

- A waiver issued by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) that relieved lessees of their duty to develop spill response capabilities. The waiver was rescinded.
- Approval of BOEM’s six drilling exploration plans for failing to conduct adequate environmental review.
- Approval of BP’s response plan that grossly exaggerated BP’s response capabilities.
- BOEM’s permitting of seismic activities without adequate analysis of the effects of these activities on marine life.
- The EPA to better regulate dispersants used in response to spills.

Moving forward, we are investigating other potential legal actions that would hold BP fully accountable and ensure comprehensive clean up and restoration of natural resources. Even as these fights continue, we are working to move America beyond oil, so that disasters like this summer’s BP oil spill never happen again.

GRASSROOTS POWER: TAKING THE FIGHT TO THE STREETS

In June, the Club mobilized a global protest against offshore drilling: Hands Across the Sand. The largest gathering against offshore oil drilling in history included 100,000 people attending 800 concurrent events in the U.S., plus events in 35 other countries. How did we rally the troops? On-the-ground coordination by organizing staff—With an organizer in every state, Sierra Club backed large-scale efforts; managing logistics, speakers, media coverage, and more. Local Sierra Club activists enlisted 21 national organizations to join the global effort, including the National Audubon Society, Surfrider Foundation, Oceana, and Greenpeace.

Organizers coordinated with communications staff to ensure that everyone understood the gravity of the BP disaster. Our media team placed 900 stories in major media markets across the country, including a dozen op-ed stories and prominent hits on major blogs like Huffington Post and Live Green. Further, Executive Director Mike Brune appeared on 26 local news shows in as many days to ensure that every community understood the offshore disaster as a local issue.

Then, our online team built on media’s success. The launch of Sierra Club’s letsmovebeyondoil.org site generated thousands of online actions, including the virtual participation of 10,000 supporters who placed “Freedom From Oil” flags on the National Mall. Just two emails to Club activists identified 1,500 volunteers ready to lead awareness-building events in their hometowns.
LOCAL ACTIVIST FIGHTS POLLUTERS IN MICHIGAN — AND WINS BIG

Ten years ago when Lynn Henning realized that the factory farms proliferating near her family farm in Michigan were polluting the air and water and endangering her loved ones’ health, she took them on. Through Sierra Club, Henning organized her neighbors, lobbied state regulatory agencies and the EPA, and tirelessly amassed evidence of factory farms’ dangerous manure disposal practices—collecting water samples that proved more than 1,000 violations by the Vreba-Hoff Dutch Dairy Cartel. Thanks to her work, 16 Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) dairies were shut down. The state of Michigan has a lien against Vreba-Hoff for $585,000 in environmental fines.

For her work, Lynn won the 2010 Goldman Environmental Prize for North America. In addition to meeting President Obama and EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, she was named in Oprah Winfrey’s O Magazine 2010 Power List. Oprah’s people were so impressed with her efforts they returned to Michigan to examine how farming in her region had changed. Not only did Lynn save her own community, her commitment illustrates the difference our 32,000 activists are making nationwide.

LEFT: A Vreba-Hoff Dairy operation
BELOW: President Obama expresses his gratitude to Sierra Club Organizer and 2010 Goldman Environmental Prize winner Lynn Henning.
REVIVING THE DEAD ZONE

A “dead zone” is an area of water so polluted with nitrogen and phosphorus that oxygen is depleted and the ecosystem is destroyed. The Gulf of New Mexico includes a 7,000 square mile dead zone, resulting from run-off from thousands of square miles of the Mississippi River ecoregion. We’re working to fix that.

Last year, Sierra Club supporters voiced their concern about nitrogen and phosphorus pollution, gathering more than 42,000 signatures on a petition requesting strict regulation of these chemicals. This year, we delivered that petition to the EPA, and the agency now routinely references our work as evidence of widespread public support for nitrogen and phosphorus standards as they continue to develop a strategy to curb this pollution.

This year, we also focused our efforts at the state level. The Club’s 10-state Mississippi River Issue Team worked strategically with local organizers, administrative lobbying at state departments of environmental quality. As a result, New York, Illinois, and Wisconsin—all of which are part of the Mississippi River ecoregion—passed regulatory standards that limit the discharge of nitrogen and phosphorus.
YOUNG LEADER PROTECTS PUERTO RICAN HABITAT

Inspired by her father, Ana Elisa Pérez-Quintero began her conservation work at an early age. Today she’s a Sierra Club campaign leader in the fight to protect Puerto Rico’s Northeast Ecological Corridor and the 2010 recipient of our Brower Youth Award. The Corridor—over 3,000 acres of critical habitat for more than 900 species, including the world’s rarest sea turtle—is highly sought after by the resort industry.

In 2005, Ana Elisa’s Club-supported efforts resulted in an executive order from the Governor to protect the area from development. When the new Governor repealed the order, putting the ecoregion again at risk, Ana Elisa and Sierra Club kept fighting, implementing education programs and supporting research stations to monitor local species. Also, by promoting local recreation, we are strengthening the connection of the community to the Corridor. As a result, the area is becoming too valuable to allow it to be lost to development.
OUT OF A GANG AND INTO THE WOODS

“If the outdoors hadn’t been there for me, I’d probably be in jail. Now I’m a whitewater rafting guide, outings leader, youth mentor, and full-time college student,” says Arturo Cervantes, 20, of East Palo Alto. Arturo grew up surrounded by violence in a neighborhood that saw 42 killings in less than one year. He joined a gang, which eventually led him to jail. Not wanting to go further down this destructive path, Arturo joined Sierra Club’s Inner City Outings, a choice with life-changing results.

His story is just one example of how the Club is helping young people establish lifelong connections with nature through our diverse youth programs: Sierra Student Coalition, Military Families Outdoors, the Environmental Apprenticeship program, Water Sentinels, Building Bridges to the Outdoors, and Inner City Outings. Research shows that America’s children face a ‘nature deficit disorder.’ This year, Sierra Club took 200,000 young people, like Arturo, into nature. With young leaders like the ones profiled here, we are building the next generation of environmentalists.
The millennial generation (ages 18-29) is the most diverse, civic-minded, globally-aware, and technologically-adept generation ever. **Sierra Student Coalition (SSC) draws upon those characteristics to empower 75,000 young leaders, nationwide, engaging in broad-based education efforts to involve young people in the process of advocating for clean energy.**

In April, SSC brought “The Great Coal Debate” (between Sierra Club’s energy programs director Bruce Nilles and Vice President at the world’s largest private-sector coal company Fred Palmer) to 500 people on the campus of Washington University at St. Louis and more than 5,000 online viewers around the country. SSC student leaders designed and coordinated the event, arranging to stream it live over the internet for free. They also maximized publicity for the evening by tapping into the local community as well as their broader social networks and the news media.

In November, more than 60 colleges participated in Sierra Club’s national Day of Action on campuses, displaying over 6,000 hand-made pinwheels, nationwide, to symbolize opportunities to bring clean energy alternatives to each participating campus. All 6,000 pinwheels were then sent to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson as a thank you for her work to regulate dirty energy and level the playing field for a clean energy future.
170,000 ARCTIC ACRES - PROTECTED

Located in the Western Arctic Reserve, Teshek-puk Lake lies at the heart of one of the most productive and sensitive wetlands complexes in the world, providing prime habitat for bird nesting and molting, as well as caribou calving grounds. It also provides the foundation for a historic and continuing subsistence culture of the Inupiat Natives who have lived in this area for thousands of years.

For the past decade, as part of our pan-Arctic strategy, Sierra Club has put forth a sustained effort to protect this increasingly threatened area. In partnership with other conservation groups, we filed a lawsuit that halted a proposed oil and gas drilling lease. We engaged in public education and media outreach leading up to a 2008 decision to defer leasing around the lake. And we spent much of 2010 working with Alaska Natives and our Arctic Activist Network to convince the Obama Administration to protect the Western Arctic (both on- and offshore areas) from oil and gas development. In July, the Administration responded, protecting 170,000 acres of critical habitat in buffer zones near the lake.
“We have a choice. We can stick with the old fossil fuel economy and watch as the rest of the world waves goodbye from a clean energy bullet train. Or we can reinvent ourselves as a clean energy nation, choosing efficiency and sustainable alternatives in support of—not in spite of—economic growth.”  

MIKE BRUNE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“We have a choice. We can stick with the old fossil fuel economy and watch as the rest of the world waves goodbye from a clean energy bullet train. Or we can reinvent ourselves as a clean energy nation, choosing efficiency and sustainable alternatives in support of—not in spite of—economic growth.”  

MIKE BRUNE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“The accomplishments we’ve achieved through 118 years of conservation are threatened by climate change. I’m committed to ensuring we maintain those protections—even expand them—by building a clean energy economy that increases jobs and decreases greenhouse gas production.”  

CARL POPE, CHAIRMAN

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