



CLEAN WATER ACTION
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CLEAN WATER ACTION

CLEAN WATER FUND

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

CLEAN WATER ACTION

PEOPLE



ACTION



JUSTICE

WINNING FOR OUR WATER

2022 marked major Clean Water Action milestones. We celebrated the Clean Water Act, which turned 50 — and our own 50th Anniversary. We also prepared for a successful executive transition, with longtime CEO Bob Wendelgass retiring after 32 years of service. Upon his exit, Bob vowed to continue to support the organization, citing “I won’t be leaving Clean Water Action — this work is too important!” In April 2023, Bob officially passed the torch to incoming CEO Jeff Carter. While leadership has changed, our mission and vision remain the same.



Bob Wendelgass



Jeff Carter

Passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act — combined with promising actions by the Biden EPA — represent real progress fulfilling longstanding Clean Water Action priorities. With these measures, the U.S. is taking bold steps to rebuild aging water infrastructure, get lead out of drinking water systems and promote clean energy and climate solutions that create jobs and help protect our water. Clean Water Action will defend these accomplishments and engage deeply in implementing these new programs in the coming months and years.

Too many people — especially in communities of color — remain on the receiving end of too much pollution. We must ensure clean water and climate solutions and infrastructure investments deliver real

environmental, health protection and economic benefits, where they are needed most.

Other notable highlights of 2022:

- We helped communities organize to keep toxic PFAS “forever chemicals” out of our water, increased federal research and action, and worked state by state to win PFAS bans and phase-outs.
- We organized with communities fighting pipelines, wastewater pits, new drilling and fracking and other dirty fossil fuel infrastructure, and our campaigning for climate solutions helped secure billions in new federal climate investments. We also scored big climate wins in several states while stopping polluters’ efforts to weaken state climate policies.
- We launched major expansions of programs to reduce and prevent throw-away plastic pollution. We worked directly with businesses and consumers and advanced new bans, phase-outs, “zero waste,” and “producer take-back” policies targeting the worst products and practices.
- Clean Water Action and the clean water voters we mobilized had a decisive impact in the fall 2022 elections, electing pro-environment candidates up and down ballots in Michigan, Minnesota, Pennsylvania and several other states.*

**Please contact Clean Water Action for additional details on our nonpartisan 2022 election wins. Clean Water Fund’s programs are limited to those appropriate to its 501-c-3 tax status and expressly exclude any election or candidate-specific advocacy.*

50 YEARS OF ACTION

“We are thrilled by the Administration’s action today to protect water resources critical to public health, clean water and vital communities,” said Clean Water Action President Robert Wendelgass. (June 2015, Clean Water Rule signing event)

MI: Gov Whitmer Moves to Shut Down Enbridge’s Line 5

Hazards of Open Pits for Storing Wastewater From Fracking Is Focus of New Study

A 100-year water resiliency plan that calls for massive underground reservoirs and reuse of wastewater is now city policy after gaining the approval of the Austin City Council

Supreme Court Directs Nixon EPA to Release Impounded Clean Water Funding

4

Texas Senate passes SB 198, to prevent homeowners associations from prohibiting use of native grasses or xeriscapes in landscaping

Clean Water Act & Safe Drinking Water Act Become Law

CA: Bag Ban Victory!

MI Clean Energy Advocates Applaud Coal Plant Shutdown

CA: Plastic Microbeads Should Not Be Fish Food

Pennsylvania DEP proposes strict limits on forever chemicals in drinking water

NJ: School Integrated Pest Management Act Passes

CO: Two Forks Dam Defeated

Solving California’s Oil and Gas Wastewater Mess

Massachusetts seeks solutions to expand access to energy efficiency dollars

NJ: Landmark Environmental Justice & Cumulative Impacts Law

PA: EPA bans disposal of fracking wastewater at public treatment plants

VA Phosphate Ban Adds to Bay Protections

New Mass. law bans list of chemical flame retardants in products

NJ: Defeated Pinelands pipeline that led to powerplant closure

‘Forever chemicals’ found in groundwater at dozens of Minn. landfills

NJ Clean Water Enforcement Act — makes polluting water a crime

Landmark Critical Areas Act to Protect MD’s Chesapeake Shorelines

MA: Boston’s Bid for Zero Waste: When Less Really is More

Groundwater Gold Rush: Banks, pension funds and insurers have been turning Californian’s scarce water into enormous profits, leaving people with less to drink

NJ Adopts strictest PFOA drinking water standard

Newark completed fastest lead service line replacement (22,000 + in 3yrs)

Feds Pull 31,000 Texas Acres From April Fossil Fuel Auction Due to Concerns Over Fracking Impacts to Land, Water, Climate

Deluges and Denials: Baltimore reimbursement program leaves residents burdened with sewage backup costs

MI Legislature Sends Federal Funding To Flint

CA: Major Milestone in Fight for Sustainable Safe Drinking Water Funding

WINNING FOR OUR WATER: 2022 and Beyond

CA: Mission Accomplished: Health and Safety Buffer Zone Unlocked!

MN: Lawmakers rush to introduce bills cracking down on 3M chemicals so cancer victim can testify

Pennsylvania Passes Pesticide Notification Act

With new Mass Save three-year plan, Massachusetts sharpens its best climate-fighting tool

PA: Marcellus Wastewater Permit Challenged: Group Files Legal Appeal of Proposed Discharge to Mon

Proposed Legislation Would Create Environmental Justice Zones in RI

Minnesota legislators consider action on PFAS in drinking water

MI: Polluter Pay Laws Could Return Under New State Legislative Leadership

Clean Water Voters Contribute Winning Margins in Key Races Nationwide

First requirement for stream buffers enacted in PA

MI: Rally Held Against Tribar as Company Faces Violation Notices for Huron River Pollution

New PFAS drinking water standards in RI go a long way, but target only one part of complicated issue

Clean Water Action Hails RI House Vote to Get Toxic PFAS Out of Food Packaging

MI Legislature Approves Clean Energy Standards

MN Bills would ban 'forever chemicals' from cosmetics, cookware, ski wax

MD: Farmers would get green boost with composting bills headed to Wes Moore's desk

Michigan May Restrict Withdrawals for Bottled Water Like Nestle

Mass. Task. Force takes aim at eliminating forever chemicals

As Sept. flooding showed, RI needs to manage its stormwater

MN: Bills regulating toxic chemicals attract high-priced lobbyists

"The bottom line is clear: Our communities need clean drinking water more than polluters need bigger profits."

—Protect Our Waters Rally, Washington, DC, Oct. 2022

Protecting Clean Water



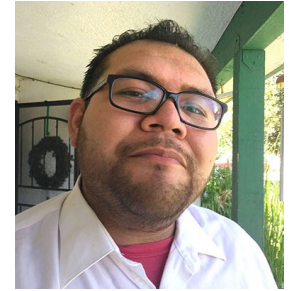
◀ **Defending Clean Water in our Nation's Capital:** Thea Louis, Lynn Thorp, recently-retired CEO Bob Wendelgass and Sean Jackson (*l-r*) rally on the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court. Clean Water Action and allies organized the October event to defend protections for wetlands, small streams and drinking water sources against looming challenges before the nation's highest court. Clean Water Action led efforts to strengthen and clarify these same protections. Our campaigns also helped secure long-overdue federal investments to rebuild crumbling water infrastructure and remove dangerous lead pipes from drinking water systems under 2022's bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act.

▶ **Getting the Lead Out:** Massachusetts co-director, Maureo Fernández y Mora, has been helping New England communities organize to access federal funds needed to replace lead water supply lines.



▲ **Watershed to Water Tap:** From securing new stream buffer protections in Pennsylvania, to organizing with Baltimore communities to stop sewer backups (*above*) from flooding people's homes, and helping protect financially challenged ratepayers in Michigan and other states from having their water cut off, Clean Water Action's programs are about much more than laws and regulations. Our focus is on real-world outcomes that deliver clean water and health benefits for all.

► **Making the Climate-Clean Water Connection:** Kern County organizer Jesus Alonso has been helping communities fight air and water pollution caused by oil and gas development in California's Central Valley. Clean Water Action's programs have long recognized and responded to the many ways climate change and clean water concerns are closely linked. The pollution that warms our planet and inflicts flooding, drought and all kinds of weather extremes that place too many communities in harm's way also directly impacts people's water and health.



Jesus and other Clean Water Action organizers across the U.S. lead winning campaigns to block polluting pipelines, close dangerous wastewater pits and stop reckless investment in other infrastructure that would enable more oil and gas production. Groundbreaking climate policy wins in Massachusetts, New Jersey and Rhode Island, and successful defense against climate program rollbacks in Virginia and other states fueled momentum for national action. Our campaigning helped secure billions of new investments in climate solutions in 2022's Inflation Reduction Act that will also protect clean water and create good paying jobs.



Fighting PFAS Pollution

Clean Water Action is working state by state to win PFAS bans, phase-outs and “polluter-pay” cleanup solutions, building momentum with big policy wins and progress in California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Minnesota and Rhode Island, with additional states poised for action.

Together with coalition partners, Clean Water Action has been calling on big box retailers and outdoor recreation clothing and equipment companies to stop selling consumer products tainted with PFAS chemicals. REI Coop was one of the businesses feeling and responding to consumer pressure.

Helping states, communities and water systems understand and deploy under-utilized clean-up and prevention tools under the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act to tackle PFAS pollution challenges is strategy pioneered by Clean Water Action and seeing increased use over the past year.



► **Amara's Law — On the Horizon:** Amara Strande (*right*) grew up in Oakdale, Minnesota, with dreams of becoming a professional musician. In 2017 at 15, she was diagnosed with a rare form of liver cancer and underwent many surgeries to keep the cancer at bay. Throughout this ordeal, Amara and her family learned that cancer rates were higher in Oakdale than in the surrounding areas, particularly among children. Water testing in 2005 and 2006 showed extremely high levels of PFOS and PFOA, two types of PFAS chemicals. By 2022, there were no more cancer treatment options, but this did not stop Amara. There wasn't a day in 2022 when Amara Strande and her family didn't advocate for PFAS protection legislation in Minnesota, ending 2022 closer to victory than they could have imagined.



Amara continued to advocate in support of PFAS prevention legislation in Minnesota well into 2023, testifying in front of multiple committees as she fought for a healthier future — a future she knew she would not be alive to see. On April 14, 2023, Amara lost her battle with cancer. Just three days later, state lawmakers held their first floor vote on the bill Amara and Clean Water Action had championed, which has since become known as “Amara’s Law.” Amara Strande’s strength, bravery, and tenacity inspire us all.

“We must come together to demand change and hold those responsible accountable for their actions. I urge all of you to take a stand against these toxic chemicals and demand change. Together we can make a difference and protect ourselves and future generations from the devastating effects of PFAS.” —Amara Strande

Solutions: ReThink Disposable

As much as half of the 380 million tons of plastic produced worldwide each year is for single-use purposes. Too much ends up in the environment where it can move downstream into our water and, eventually, the oceans. It breaks down over time into smaller and smaller pieces and “microplastics.” But it never entirely goes away. The drilled and fracked oil and gas used for plastics leaves too many communities with toxic air and water, often without the means to fight back or mitigate the damage.

Clean Water Fund & Clean Water Action’s **ReThink Disposable** programs inspire and mobilize voluntary action toward solutions. We educate and collaborate with local, state and federal agencies, provide direct assistance to businesses and institutions, and educate consumers. ReThink Disposable focuses on the most significant sources of single-use trash — throwaway food and beverage packaging, especially plastics. We help initiate and demonstrate success moving food service operations toward cost-saving and non-toxic reusables.

Since 2011, ReThink Disposable has helped more than 380 businesses and 13 institutions save \$740,000 and eliminate 22.3 million pieces of disposable packaging items — per year. In 2022, Clean Water Fund and Clean Water Action began expanding the program from its start in California to include locations in Minnesota, New Jersey, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. Our partners now include: restaurants and take-out kitchens, local governments, school lunch programs, food pantries, corporate campuses, live music and event/entertainment venues, and more — as well as their clients, students, patrons and customers.



▼**Before and After:** Many ReThink Disposable partnerships feature detailed waste footprint assessments and case studies documenting costs and single-use waste before and after implementing ReThink Disposable's recommendations.



►**Advancing Zero-Waste Solutions:**

Voluntary programs like ReThink Disposable have an even greater impact when they are combined with local, state and federal policies that shift common practices from single-use to re-use. Throughout 2022 Clean Water Action continued to promote and win fees, phase-outs and bans on foam foodware and flimsy single-use plastic bags and other plastic disposables and excess packaging across multiple states. We're also:



- Encouraging businesses, local and state governments to favor durable, re-usable goods in their procurement policies.
- Opposing further subsidies for plastics production and for oil and gas development.
- Supporting food composting to reduce the volumes of trash headed to polluting landfills and incinerators.
- Exposing false, energy-intensive “plastics recycling” solutions that create more waste and spew toxic pollution.
- Fighting industry efforts to classify incineration of plastic wastes as “renewable” energy.
- Promoting “zero waste” policies and “producer take-back” requirements that make manufacturers responsible for disposable waste from their products and packaging.



We all live downstream.

CLEAN WATER ACTION's mission is to protect our environment, health, economic well-being and community quality of life.

Clean Water Action organizes strong grassroots groups and coalitions, and campaigns to elect environmental candidates and to solve environmental and community problems.

JOIN US! Together we're making a difference for Clean Water:

- Take action to protect drinking water and clean up polluted waterways;
- Get health-harming toxics out of everyday products;
- Protect our water from dirty energy threats — drilling and fracking for oil and gas, and power plant pollution;
- Build a future of clean water and clean energy;
- Keep our clean water laws strong and effective to protect water and health.

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Assistant Secretary:

Margi Armstrong



Protecting water and health, from watershed to water tap.

CLEAN WATER FUND's programs reach and involve more than one million households each year through outreach, education, organizing, advocacy and policy action at the local, state and national levels.

Together with Clean Water Action, Clean Water Fund supports the goal of **fishable, swimmable, drinkable water** for everyone.

Priority programs and strategies include:

- Policies that Put Drinking Water First, from watershed to water tap;
- Environmental health solutions that prevent waste and pollution at the source;
- Clean energy and climate solutions that create jobs and protect water.

Clean Water Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose programs build on and complement those of Clean Water Action.

Clean Water Fund and Clean Water Action share some staffing and offices and collaborate on programs, including many described in this Annual Report. ***Clean Water Fund's involvement is limited to those activities appropriate to its 501(c)(3) tax status.***

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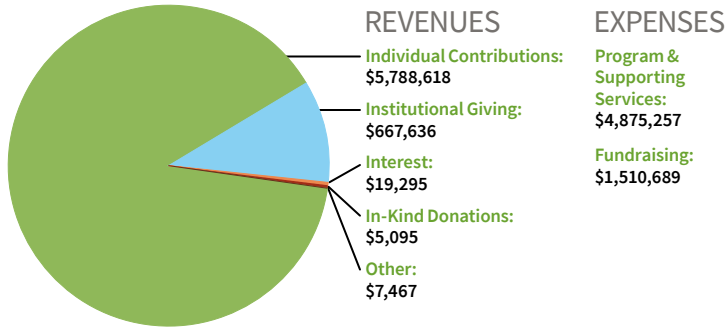
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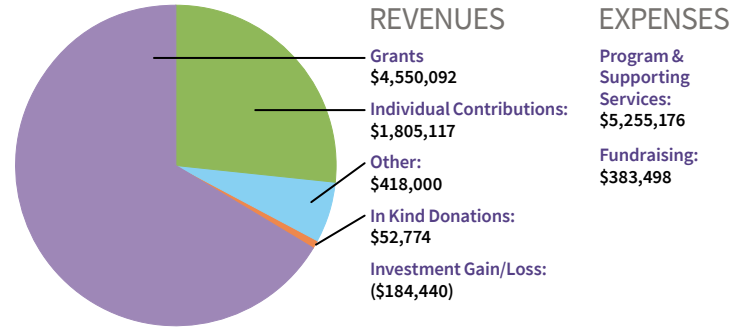
Assistant Secretary:
LeWanda Gipson
Chief Financial and Administrative Officer, Clean Water Fund

Clean Water Fund's Board is an independent governing body with six current members, all of whom serve as volunteers.

CLEAN WATER ACTION FY22 FINANCES



CLEAN WATER FUND FY22 FINANCES



Give Confidently. You have our commitment that Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund will be efficient and effective stewards of the resources you provide. Copies of the latest audited financial statements can be obtained online at www.cleanwateraction.org or www.cleanwaterfund.org or by writing the national offices.

1444 Eye Street, NW, Suite 400 | Washington, DC 20005
www.CleanWaterAction.org | www.CleanWaterFund.org
 202.895.0420 | ✉@CleanH2OAction | 📱@CleanWaterAction
 Email: leadershipgiving@cleanwater.org

Headquartered in Washington, DC, Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund operate programs nationally and locally from a network of state and regional field offices around the country. We have members, donors and activist volunteers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories. Learn more at www.cleanwateraction.org/states

Canvassing and Democracy



▲ **Making Democracy Work:** Person to person organizing — visiting people at home, often with follow-up by phone or online — is a signature Clean Water Action strategy that continues to deliver powerful results. Hard-working crews like this one helped reach 250,000 households during the 2022 election season in Michigan alone. They recruited new members, and identified and turned out clean water voters on election day. Throughout 2022 Clean Water Action sent thousands of texts and email messages to our members, who in turn sent tens of thousands of letters, postcards, emails and public comments to elected and appointed officials at every level. In dozens of close races, clean water voters turned out in record numbers to support pro-environment candidates. This is how we win for our water!



“Organizing door to door brings our environmental campaigns directly into people’s lives. When there is no middleman, political change suddenly becomes immediate and personal. This is a true grassroots experience.”

—Ginu Yang, on her experience during a summer of canvassing with Clean Water Action in Rhode Island



1444 Eye Street, NW, Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005

