

# THE SIERRA CLUB

## BIG GAINS FOR CLEAN ENERGY IN 2013



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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction ..... 4

Protecting America’s Wind Industry..... 5

Solar Victories in L.A. and Nevada ..... 6

Saving and Strengthening Net Metering Across the West..... 7

Colorado Doubles its RES..... 8

Mississippi Passes Efficiency Rules ..... 8

Clean Energy, Even in Kentucky..... 8

Making Offshore Wind a Reality in Maryland ..... 9

A Solar Victory in Minnesota ..... 10

Expanding Renewable Energy in the Empire State..... 10

Getting Nebraska in the Game on Wind ..... 11





## INTRODUCTION

From small communities to booming cities, local activists are taking a stand against dirty coal-fired power plants and destructive fracking for oil and gas, and are moving our nation to clean, renewable energy. Since 2010, 150 coal-fired power plants have retired or have been slated for retirement, representing one-sixth of the country’s entire coal fleet. The facts are clear: dirty coal is on its way out and communities are taking a tough stand to make sure that clean energy, not gas, replaces it. At the same time, through the leadership of local activists and a broad coalition of groups, true

solutions like energy efficiency, wind, and solar are providing affordable power and creating American jobs. Just as Beyond Coal activists throughout the country have rallied to say no to fossil fuels, those same community leaders are working to usher in the clean energy economy by supporting and protecting clean energy solutions. The Sierra Club is now raising the bar by setting the bold goal to decarbonize the U.S. electric sector by 2030. This document shows examples of the Sierra Club’s progress to bring at least 444 terawatt hours (TWH) of clean energy online by 2020—more than enough power to replace one third

of the nation’s current coal fleet—and represents a milestone in a coordinated strategy to move beyond all fossil fuels.

In 2013, the Beyond Coal Campaign plans to spend at least \$5.5 million on clean energy initiatives. This includes not only our campaigns to promote energy efficiency and clean energy at the state level, but also our work to enforce and defend existing energy efficiency (EE) and renewable energy standards (RES) and the Sierra Club’s efforts to expand existing mandates and remove market barriers to clean energy.

Clean-energy promotion is woven into the work plan of every Beyond Coal organizer, lawyer, policy advocate, and media expert. We are engaged in more than 135 clean energy dockets across the country. Our near-term work continues to grow and coalesce into a cohesive strategy to end the import and construction of new coal-generated electricity, stop the rush to gas, and showcase how California can be a leader in solving the climate crisis by de-carbonizing its electric sector.

The clean energy story is quite nuanced in each state—even more so than our work to retire existing coal plants. The complex interplay of local political sentiment, existing policies, economic structures, and resource availability (sun, wind, geothermal, etc.) renders “one size fits all” planning impractical. Individual case studies illustrate the nature of our state-based work, though the list below is by no means exhaustive. In places like Maryland this year, local activists partnered with a diverse coalition of over 400 groups to pass landmark offshore wind legislation. In Minnesota, hundreds rallied to push comprehensive clean energy legislation. And across the country, thousands of activists stood up to protect America’s wind industry and American jobs. Today, activists throughout the United States continue to push elected officials, regulators, community leaders, and others to invest in American jobs by supporting wind, solar, energy efficiency, and other clean, renewable sources of energy. As coal-fired power plants continue to move into retirement, the Sierra Club has its sights set on scaling up clean energy and moving America to a new, clean energy economy.

## PROTECTING AMERICA’S WIND INDUSTRY

Over the past few years, the amount of power that the United States receives from wind and solar has more than doubled as clean energy has soared across the country. Today, Iowa and South Dakota receive more than 20 percent of their power from wind, and new wind capacity in the Midwest represents over 35 percent of all new generating capacity in the U.S. since 2007—more than new coal and nuclear capacity



**WIND POWER MAKES  
CLEAN ENERGY,  
GOOD JOBS, AND A  
BETTER FUTURE.**

**DON’T BLOW IT.**

**CONGRESS: Save U.S. jobs and renew  
the Production Tax Credit for Wind.**



combined. Wind is now providing enough electricity to power the equivalent of 15 million American homes.

Wind industry leaders and businesses rely on a modest tax incentive known as the Production Tax Credit to support the continued growth of America’s wind industry. This tax incentive provides critical support for businesses eager to invest in the manufacture and installation of wind energy throughout the United States, and makes wind a cheaper energy option than new coal- or gas-fired power plants in many places. The Sierra Club identified extending the Production Tax Credit (PTC), which was set to expire at the end of



2012, as its major legislative priority last year. Failing to extend the PTC could have cost approximately 37,000 jobs—half of all existing American wind jobs—and stymied the growth of the burgeoning wind industry.

To support the extension of the Production Tax Credit, the Sierra Club launched a new campaign to help protect the growing wind industry in the United States. As part of the new “Wind Works” campaign, Beyond Coal activists joined with local businesses, labor groups, environmental organizations, faith leaders, and a diverse mix of organizations throughout the country to pressure Congress to extend this vital incentive for America’s wind industry. In Ohio, dozens of children crafted miniature wind turbines at Columbus Commons to raise awareness of the importance of renewing the PTC and the enormous potential that wind holds for Ohio families and communities. In Indiana, the Sierra Club joined with local groups and local wind energy businesses to call on congressional representatives to extend the PTC. These organizing efforts were bolstered by aggressive advertising efforts in targeted districts throughout the country.

In November, the Sierra Club joined with labor, environmental, and wind industry groups to announce a national “Wind Week,” urging Congress to renew the wind Production Tax Credit. As part of “Wind Week,” the Sierra Club unveiled a new “station domination” ad campaign in Washington, D.C., where over 50 billboards, banners, and posters took over the [XXneedname] metro station urging Congress to protect American jobs by renewing the PTC.

After months of grassroots organizing throughout the country, at 10:30 P.M. on New Year’s Day, the House of Representatives passed an extension of the Production Tax Credit for wind, biomass, and geothermal generation that will protect America’s growing wind industry and local jobs, and also make it easier for wind projects to qualify for the tax credit in the coming years. We are gearing up to repeat and broaden our success when the PTC is again set to expire at the end of 2013.

**SOLAR VICTORIES IN L.A. AND NEVADA**

For decades, the Moapa Band of Paiutes have suffered from the devastating consequences of one of Nevada’s dirtiest coal plants, the Reid Gardner coal-fired power plant. Located adjacent to the Moapa Band of Paiutes reservation in southern Nevada, the Reid Gardner coal-fired power plant has blanketed the community with toxic coal pollution including soot, a dangerous air pollutant that has been linked to asthma and other respiratory conditions, heart attacks, and premature



death. The Sierra Club forged a close partnership with the Moapa to move NV Energy, the utility operating the plant, to put Reid Gardner on a path toward a retirement.

At the same time that Sierra Club activists in Nevada were working with the Moapa to retire the Reid Gardner coal-fired power plant, Los Angeles Beyond Coal leaders were charging ahead to move Los Angeles completely off coal power and expand clean, renewable energy to fill the void. Working with groups like the Los Angeles Business Council, Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy, and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, LA Beyond Coal laid the groundwork for what would be a major announcement for both Los Angeles and the Moapa Band of Paiutes. In October 2012, LA Beyond Coal partnered with the Los Angeles Business Council to launch a billboard campaign thanking Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa for his leadership in moving Los Angeles toward a clean energy economy, and also push him to keep creating clean energy jobs. Just a few weeks later, those calls were answered.

*“With electricity bills constantly rising, it’s no surprise that Californians are responding strongly to this call to preserve access to a cheaper, safer, cleaner energy option. It’s past time for utilities to ditch dirty, out-dated fossil fuels that burden their customers with asthma and other deadly health problems and embrace clean, cost-effective rooftop solar.”*

— Evan Gillespie, campaign director for Sierra Club’s My Generation Campaign.

In November 2012, the Los Angeles City Council approved a historic plan to purchase 250 megawatts from a planned solar development on the Moapa reservation, enough electricity to power 105,000 homes. In addition to the groundbreaking agreement with the Moapa Band of Paiutes, Los Angeles also developed the largest solar cash-back program in the country, CLEAN LA, which will greatly expand rooftop solar in Los Angeles, generate \$500 million in economic development, and create 4,500 jobs. Sierra Club leaders joined with Moapa Band of Paiutes representatives in Los Angeles for Mayor Villaraigosa’s signing ceremony for the historic legislation.

Just a few months after the signing of the landmark power-purchase agreement, on April 23, 2013, Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune stood with Vice President Al Gore and watched as Mayor Villaraigosa signed an historic agreement to move Los Angeles entirely off coal by divesting the city from the Intermountain Power Plant in Utah and the Navajo Generating Station in Arizona. A few weeks later, the Nevada legislature overwhelmingly passed legislation that will lead to the retirement of the Reid Gardner coal plant and commit the state to build 350 megawatts (MW) of new renewable energy over the next several years. The passage of the bill represents the culmination of a true coal-to-clean-energy story.

A person in a green shirt is speaking into a megaphone at a rally. Other people in green shirts are visible in the background, some holding signs. One sign says "CLEAN ENERGY = GOOD".

**SAVING AND STRENGTHENING NET METERING ACROSS THE WEST**

Utilities in states across the West are mounting a major attack on rooftop solar and the programs that have successfully supported the industry’s explosive growth. According to the most recent statistics, the residential market grew by 48 percent in the second quarter of 2013 compared to the same time period a year ago, thanks in large part to a fundamental policy called net metering, or solar rollover credits. Net metering pro-

grams are under attack in California, Arizona, Colorado, and other states where utilities are facing erosion of their monopoly on selling power to customers where rate payers are increasingly demonstrating their preference for a more distributed model.

In California last year the Sierra Club successfully fought to avoid hitting the upper limit on the state’s solar rollover credit program. By a 5-0 vote, the California Public Utilities Commission upheld a proposed decision by Commissioner Peevey that recalculates the methodology by which utilities count the volume of power provided generated solar rollover credit program participants—an additional 2.8GW (previously, the estimate was 2.1GW) of solar rollover credits will be available for Californians. For years, utilities have been incorrectly calculating the cap such that the state was set to hit the cap prematurely (as soon as 2013).

After the doubling of California’s rooftop solar program last year, utilities and their friends in the legislature launched an offensive over this summer to undermine solar energy’s success. AB 327 was an attempt to turn the economics of rooftop solar upside down, but a concerted backlash from solar supporters across the state and in key districts transformed the bill from a solar killer into a victory for the solar industry.

With incredible environmental justice and Latino community groups as partners, the Sierra Club staged a classic campaign escalation, starting with meetings at key legislators’ local district offices at which dozens of constituent volunteers turned out. We turned up the heat as 8,000 Sierra Club members emailed their senators, followed by an action alert that generated over 300 calls into the bill sponsor’s office. Finally, we took our opposition to the solar-killing language in the bill directly to the utilities with environmental justice partners California Environmental Justice Alliance and Presente Action, culminating in a boisterous rally at SoCal Edison’s headquarters.

The bill was amended before it passed. It will now protect existing customers against forced changes to their existing net metering agreements, and protect future customers from anti-solar taxes and charges. The utilities did win authorization for the PUC to levy up to a \$10 fixed charge on all residential customers, solar and non-solar alike, which the Sierra Club will continue to fight due to its impact on low-income customers and the way it discourages energy efficiency and the expansion of solar.

There’s no question that utilities across the country will continue to throw down the gauntlet on net metering and rooftop solar, but the Sierra Club will be



there every step of the way to organize communities in support of solar and make it politically impossible for utilities to stop solar growth. In 2014, we will get more aggressive in Colorado and Arizona and broadcast widespread demand for this critical program that gives consumers the right to choose clean, affordable energy and support job growth in their state.

COLORADO DOUBLES ITS RES

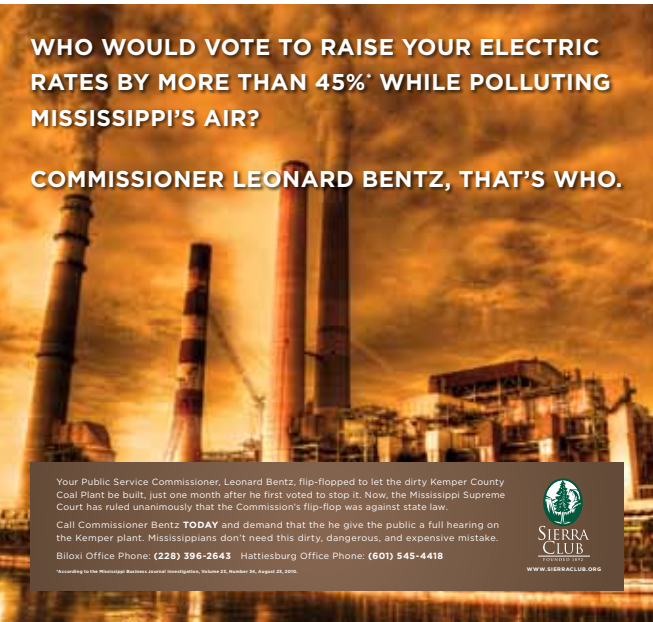
This year Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper signed SB 252 into law, doubling the state Renewable Energy Standard for large rural co-ops, over 100,000 meters, from 10 percent to 20 percent by 2020. The Sierra Club's Rocky Mountain chapter's legislative chair, Mary Edwards, was there with the governor and the progressive coalition for the bill signing ceremony. With help from the Beyond Coal Campaign, the chap-



ter ran paid ads in the Denver Post and raised funds to help local partners get the word out in the rural media markets. We rallied our volunteers and placed phone calls to members and supporters urging them to call the governor's office and to submit letters to the editor. We sent out several effective online action alerts, and in the end, the effort helped give Governor Hickenlooper political cover and support to make the right decision.

MISSISSIPPI PASSES EFFICIENCY RULES

After years of work, a new Energy Efficiency Rule was approved 3-0 by Mississippi's Public Service Commission (PSC) on July 11, 2013. Since 2008, the Sierra Club has been urging the Mississippi PSC to encourage conservation, renewable energy, and other low-polluting energy sources. The Club hired experts to testify at the 2008 Integrated Resource Planning Docket, including an expert specializing in demand-side management and energy efficiency. In part due to Sierra Club's insistence that the state consider alternatives to the dirty and expensive Kemper coal plant, the



PSC opened a docket to consider new energy efficiency rules in 2010. The Sierra Club hired a local consultant to attend the many rulemaking workshops and submitted comments at each opportunity. Local Club activists organized supporters to attend public hearings on those rules and generated over 2,000 emails to the Commission.

In the end, public comments tipped the balance in favor of the rule, much to the surprise of the rural electric cooperatives, which had expected the PSC to kill it. Electric and natural gas utilities in the state, serving more than 25,000 customers, must submit a plan within six months showing the energy efficiency measures they will implement. Commissioners say the program will save customers \$2 billion over 20 years and create more than 9,000 jobs. Mississippi has consistently ranked 51st in the nation for energy efficiency programs, last out of all states.

CLEAN ENERGY, EVEN IN KENTUCKY

The Sierra Club and American Electric Power (AEP) reached an agreement in principle that would resolve the future of power generation in eastern Kentucky after the 2015 retirement of the coal-fired generators at the Big Sandy Power Plant near Louisa, Kentucky. The proposed deal commits AEP subsidiary Kentucky Power to invest in a host of clean energy and energy efficiency programs. Under the agreement, Kentucky power will significantly increase its energy efficiency investments over the next five years, from \$3 million this year to \$6 million per year from 2016 to 2018 and continuing at that level in future years. Further, the agreement commits Kentucky Power to incorporate a request for 100 megawatts of wind power into their



upcoming integrated resource planning (IRP) process, which creates the blueprint for where electricity will be generated and where the company will buy electricity over the next few years.

MAKING OFFSHORE WIND A REALITY IN MARYLAND

For over three years, Sierra Club activists in Maryland have fought relentlessly to push their elected leaders to harness the Bay State's most abundant natural resource: offshore wind. This past year, the Sierra Club joined with more than 400 organizations including faith groups, labor unions, small-business owners, minority business advocates, civil rights groups, students, environmental organizations, and many others to form Marylanders for Offshore Wind Power, a coalition dedicated to passing offshore wind legislation in Maryland. As a leader in the coalition, the Sierra Club led the charge through organizing and communications efforts to pass the critical legislation.

Sierra Club activists made hundreds of phone calls, knocked on hundreds of doors, submitted letters to local newspapers, rallied on the steps of the Maryland State Capitol, conducted town hall meetings, and

engaged Maryland voters to support offshore wind in the state. This year, the Sierra Club worked extensively with the Legislative Black Caucus (LBC) and students from Maryland's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) to advocate for the legislation. Earlier this year, the Sierra Club partnered with students from local HBCUs for a press conference and rally where they lobbied their elected leaders on issues including offshore wind legislation.

In January, the coalition released polling results which showed 72 percent of Maryland voters supporting the development of offshore wind power in Maryland. More than two-thirds of voters cited health benefits as a strong reason to support offshore wind development.

On March 12, after years of organizing, the Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2013 reached final passage in the House of Delegates, securing the future for an offshore wind industry in Maryland that will provide clean energy for the state. The legislation will help to develop a 200-megawatt wind project off the coast of Ocean City, and also bring jobs to historically under-represented groups by securing a \$10 million development fund targeted to small and minority businesses. Following the passage of the landmark legislation, former Sierra Club President Allison Chin authored an op-ed in The Capital Gazette where she heralded the legislation.

Finally, on April 6, Sierra Club leaders stood side by side and watched as Governor O'Malley signed his name to the Maryland Offshore Wind Energy Act of 2013.







#### A SOLAR VICTORY IN MINNESOTA

Late last year, the Sierra Club's Minnesota Beyond Coal team joined with local allies to identify key clean energy policies to pursue in 2013. After working with 40 partners from across the state, the coalition established the new Minnesota Clean Energy & Jobs campaign focused on expanding renewable energy. On March 5, over 30 groups representing labor, energy, faith, green, and youth constituencies launched the new clean energy campaign, which aims to get 50 percent of Minnesota's electricity from renewables by 2030, increase energy efficiency, and make local power generation easier. Just weeks later, more than 62 groups, including the Sierra Club, held a Day of Action at the Minnesota statehouse to urge elected officials to support those very policies. Over 700 people turned out to the rally to show their support for clean energy in Minnesota, including Governor Mark Dayton, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison.

After months of power-building and grassroots mobilization, Minnesota's state legislature passed comprehensive clean energy legislation that will commit the state to increase its solar electricity from 13 megawatts to 450 megawatts by 2020, an increase of more than 1,200 percent. In addition, the legislation will provide new solar incentives to make solar power easier and more accessible to Minnesotans, and also study how

Minnesota can move 100 percent beyond fossil fuels over the next several decades.

#### EXPANDING RENEWABLE ENERGY IN THE EMPIRE STATE

Over the past year, New York has taken strides toward expanding the amount of energy the state and the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA), a major power provider, receive from clean energy such as wind and solar. Beginning in 2012, the Beyond Coal campaign took aim at the Long Island Power Authority to expand the amount of energy that the utility receives from these clean energy solutions.

Last September, the Sierra Club Beyond Coal Campaign launched a poll showing that nearly 9 out of 10 voters supported expanding clean energy sources to power the state. We also ran an aggressive campaign on Long Island, saying "Let's Turn, Not Burn" and targeting LIPA and Governor Cuomo to commit to purchase offshore wind power for new energy generation on Long Island. LIPA was considering several proposals for new energy generation which included building a new gas plant and an offshore wind project. While we didn't secure the commitment from LIPA and the State to move forward with the 750-900 MW offshore wind proposal at that time, we did win a commitment from LIPA to issue a new 100 MW solar Feed-in-Tariff (or "solar cash-back" program), a new 20 MW feed-in-tariff for fuel cells and small wind, and a further commitment to purchase an additional 280 MW of renewable energy (400 MW of new renewable energy).

Then Superstorm Sandy changed the game. Governor Cuomo was furious with LIPA's handling of the Sandy



response, and vowed to pass legislation to reform the Power Authority—and his solution was to privatize LIPA by transferring control to PSEG New Jersey.

The governor's legislative action put our hard-won 400 MW renewable energy commitments in jeopardy. We worked with our state partners and several renewable energy developers, associations, and businesses, and many others to pressure Governor Cuomo and Long Island legislators to hold the line in the LIPA reform legislation on LIPA's renewable energy commitments and current levels of funding (\$900 million, 10-year) for energy-efficiency programs. And we won.

The governor and the LIPA Trustees kept their promise on the 100 MW solar Feed-in-Tariff and we will continue to push the 280 MW renewable energy procurement forward this month.

#### GETTING NEBRASKA IN THE GAME ON WIND

Across the Midwest, states like Iowa and South Dakota are acting on the enormous potential for wind energy, creating jobs and providing affordable electricity to families and business. Both states receive more than 20 percent of their power from wind. The amount of power produced from wind has drawn significant investment and created jobs both in the wind industry and from companies eager to relocate to states investing in affordable wind power. Earlier this year, MidAmerican Energy announced a \$1.9 billion investment in Iowa's wind industry, representing the largest investment of any kind in state history. In April, Facebook announced that it would be building a new data center in Iowa, largely due to the amount of power that the state generates from clean sources. The amount of energy Iowa gets from wind stands in stark contrast to Nebraska, a state which maintains enormous potential but has failed to "get in the game."

Last year, the Sierra Club took on a new effort to get Nebraska "in the game" on wind energy by launching



a new ad campaign at a Nebraska Cornhuskers college football game. According to an assessment from the National Renewable Energy laboratory, Nebraska wind could supply the state's current electricity needs 120 times over. The ad campaign quickly grew into a larger effort, led by the Sierra Club, which pitted Nebraska against its regional neighbors in a competition to develop wind energy, and generated significant momentum for wind energy moving into the new year. In 2013, the Sierra Club continued to put pressure on key decision makers, including Governor Dave Heinemann, to get Nebraska in the game. The Sierra Club's efforts paid off in full when the governor signed legislation granting new tax breaks for energy companies looking to develop in Nebraska, and will expand the wind energy industry in the state.