



The Protect California campaign is an effort by California environmental organizations, environmental justice organizations and their allies to fight back against the pervasive messaging that pits the environment against the economy. Our message is simple: You can't have a healthy people and a healthy economy without a healthy environment.

This is a message that is supported by vast majorities of Californians who want clean air and clean water. Protect California is a campaign to elevate the conversation about the environment and push back on those who would exploit a down economy to weaken environmental protections.

We cannot survive if we continue to pit the environment against the economy: a healthy, clean environment is vital to our success. Strong public support for clean air and water has not wavered, even in these tough economic times and firm majorities of Californians across all demographics support aggressive policies to curb pollution, shift to renewable energy, and move fast to reduce global warming emissions.¹ It is up to policy and opinion leaders in Sacramento to stand up for the environment that all Californians enjoy.

Clean air, clean water, and a healthy vibrant future should not be a luxury. Give up on the environment and we risk everything – our health, our economy, and our future. We must act now to protect an environmental legacy for future generations.

Californians want our state to lead the way in:

Clean Air

Air pollution kills—and not just this generation, but the next. Californians consistently rank air pollution as one of their greatest concern, and it's no wonder why: More than 90 percent of Californians live in areas that suffer from health-threatening air pollution. Children in this state have among the highest asthma rates in the nation, and recent research has linked our bad air to brain tumors, heart disease and low birth weight. In the Los Angeles air basin, economists have concluded, not meeting federal clean air standards costs the region at least \$22 billion annually. That's nearly the entire state budget deficit. More than 30 years after the federal clean air act was adopted, Californians are still waiting for truly clean air.

¹ See the Public Policy Institute of California's annual poll about Californian's and the environment, published July 2011. Access at: <http://www.ppic.org/main/pressrelease.asp?p=1136>.

Clean Water

Clean water is life. Yet, millions of Californians are without access to clean, affordable water. From San Diego to Yreka, from urban to rural, great swaths of California are subject to ground water pollution. Some of the state's poorest communities are forced to buy bottled water because their tap water is polluted. Additionally, water pollution costs the state millions of dollars annually. We must protect the laws that exist today and give regulators the authority to address non point source pollution so that no California community has to be told not to drink their tap water.

State Parks

Closing state parks is squandering our children's inheritance. Don't lock them out. Over seven decades, California has built the most vibrant state parks system in the world. These parks are home to much of California's unique wildlife, bring valuable tourism dollars to our state, and provide open areas where families can hike, bike, fish and play in our beautiful state. With budget cuts already threatening 70 state parks, we must commit to finding solutions to keeping our state parks open and accessible to the public.

Toxic Substances

How much poison have you been exposed to today? You shouldn't have to wonder. Despite various initiatives over the years, Californians continue to be exposed to health- threatening levels of toxic substances through consumer products, air pollution, water pollution and direct and indirect exposure to pesticides.

Clear Cutting

Clear cutting is waging a war on our forests. This practice dramatically transforms a clear cut area's ability to provide food and habitat for wildlife; to contain and shade snow and reduce rapid snowmelt; to absorb water and restore aquifers; and to prevent mudflows and landslides into streams and rivers during extreme storms. Our forests are a tremendous resource, as a home for wildlife, source of water and recreation, and one of the state's largest carbon sinks. The forest management decisions we make today, will determine what kind of legacy we leave for future generations. Cutting our forests short now has impacts that we can never undo.

Transit Funding

Public transit gets Californians to work. We need to keep it rolling. Nearly everyone involved in issues related to transportation and the environment recognizes that improving mass transit is a key measure that must be in place if people are to reduce their auto dependence and their oil consumption. Yet California's transit picture is spotty because there is not a sustainable source for operations and maintenance of the system.

For More Information:

Visit our website at <http://www.protectcalifornia.org> or look for Protect California on Facebook. Follow us on twitter @ProtectCA.

You can also contact Sierra Club California for more information about the campaign: 916-557-1100.