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## The case for cleaner, more secure energy

Concern about America's oil dependence has risen sharply since September 11. But Phoenix resident Tom Shanahan, a Vietnam veteran, already had done something to build the country's energy security: He visited a local car dealership, cash in hand. "I figured buying a fuel-efficient hybrid car was something small I could do to help reduce America's dependence on oil," Shanahan explains. Evidently, many Americans agree, as sales orders for Toyota's 50-mpg, gasoline-electric Prius have surged.

With cars, trucks and buses responsible for two-thirds of U.S. oil consumption, Environmental Defense and others are pressing Congress to tighten the nation's fuel economy standards, which have barely budged since 1985. "This is the moment when our government can and should put policies in place that improve energy efficiency," says our executive director Fred Krupp.

"Improving gas mileage is the quickest and biggest step we can take to reduce oil dependence and cut greenhouse gases," adds our engineer Dr. John DeCicco, who recently led a study on fuel economy presented to the National Academy of Sciences. "This can be done without compromising safety, size or performance." Boosting the national average fuel economy by just one mile per gallon would save more oil

than the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is projected to produce.

As part of our Clean Car Campaign, we have delivered nearly 100,000 pledges to the Big Three automakers declaring customers' desire for cleaner, more fuel-efficient vehicles. When we launched the campaign two years ago, Detroit wasn't interested in producing gas-electric hybrids. Now, Daimler-Chrysler, Ford and General Motors all plan to put such vehicles on the road by 2004. To prime the pump for new technologies, we are working with Congress on incentives to purchase fuel-efficient vehicles. "A tax credit would put up to \$2,500 directly in a consumer's pocket," says Kevin Mills, director of our Pollution Prevention Alliance.

Coupled with our efforts to reduce urban sprawl and encourage alternatives to single-occupant commuting, these initiatives will help put the United States on the road to a cleaner and more secure energy future.



Coming soon to your highway? Highly fuel-efficient cars can resemble this solar-powered racer or the van behind it.



*Raising  
the bar  
on fuel  
economy*

After the 1973 oil embargo, Congress introduced national Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards, better known as CAFE. The standards required automakers to increase average gas mileage, which soon improved dramatically.

But in recent years, the country has been rolling backwards on this issue. With light trucks, minivans and SUVs—all subject to a lesser standard—now making up half of U.S. vehicle sales, the average new vehicle gets fewer miles per gallon today than in 1981.

I met recently with Ford CEO William Clay Ford Jr. and was encouraged by plans to improve Ford's SUV mileage by 25%. That will help,

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*Higher mileage standards  
are good for America.*

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but much more needs to be done. Affordable technology exists today to raise mileage standards across the entire fleet without sacrificing safety or performance. A recent poll reveals that nearly nine out of ten Americans want more fuel-efficient vehicles. Yet automakers continue to build inefficient cars and trucks. Congress needs to act to reverse this trend.

Strengthening CAFE standards will jump start new fuel-saving technologies and provide far more energy security than drilling in the Arctic Refuge and other pristine areas. It's common sense, sound economics and good for America.

—Fred Krupp



Tim Connor

Curly the bull stays healthy on human antibiotics. But what about the rest of us?

## The campaign to keep antibiotics working

### BIOTERRORISM UNDERSCORES THE DANGER OF MISUSING HUMAN ANTIBIOTICS IN AGRICULTURE

This autumn, as fears about anthrax spread across the nation, some Americans with no likelihood of exposure insisted on taking Cipro as a preventative measure. Doctors warned that such misuse of antibiotics could lead to the development of harder, antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

This is an issue that has long concerned Environmental Defense and major health organizations. An estimated 80% of the antibiotics used in the United States is for livestock. Most is dispensed to healthy animals to promote faster growth and compensate for unsanitary conditions on crowded factory farms. “The overuse of antibiotics in agriculture is undermining the effectiveness of these drugs for treating humans,” says Karen Florini, manager of our Health program. “The more you use antibiotics, the faster you lose them.”

This October, we helped launch a national coalition of environmental, public health and consumer groups to end the overuse of antibiotics in agriculture. The campaign aims to strengthen government oversight and halt sales of animal products raised using medically important antibiotics.

Other countries have demonstrated that meat can be produced safely and cost-effectively without robbing the medicine chest. The European Union has phased out the use of most antibiotics in healthy animals. The American Medical Association has joined Environmental Defense and others in advocating similar action here.

#### CIPRO FOR CHICKENS?

Particularly urgent is the need to ban poultry farmers' use of fluoroquinolones, a powerful class of drugs (including Cipro) that are the last line of defense against many serious infections. Baytril, Cipro's sister drug for animals, is intended to treat sick poultry, but entire flocks—often more than 10,000 chickens—are given the antibiotics even if only a small number of birds are sick.

So far, there is no evidence that Baytril overuse endangers the effectiveness of Cipro in treating anthrax. But in the six years since fluoroquinolones were approved for poultry, resistance among *Campylobacter*, a type of bacteria that causes severe food poisoning in humans, has grown from 1% to nearly 18%.

As we had urged, the U.S. Food

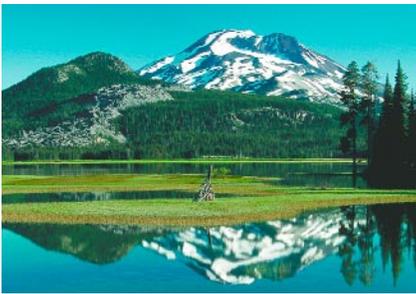
and Drug Administration proposed banning fluoroquinolones for poultry. One of the two makers, Abbott Laboratories, immediately withdrew its drug from the farm market. But the other manufacturer, Bayer (which also makes Cipro) is still fighting FDA's request.

To ensure that doctors retain this potent weapon against serious illnesses, we are pressing Bayer to comply with FDA's request. "America's public health security is increasingly dependent upon effective antibiotics. Human drugs should be used for people, not poultry," says our scientist Dr. Rebecca Goldberg.

Children, senior citizens and those with weakened immune systems are particularly vulnerable to bacterial infections, according to a new Environmental Defense report. "Unless we take action now, we could return to the days before penicillin and other wonder drugs, when minor infections often proved lethal," warns Florini.

**More on the web:** For more on antibiotic resistance visit [www.environmentaldefense.org/more/10551](http://www.environmentaldefense.org/more/10551).

## Make your gift last



Your bequest to Environmental Defense can help ensure a healthful world for generations to come. It is also deductible from your estate, therefore benefitting the environment and those you care about most. Act today and make a lasting impact on the future.

To find more information on how to include Environmental Defense in your will, please call Anne Doyle toll-free at 1-877-677-7397 or write her at Environmental Defense, 257 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010.



Robbie LaBelle

This site was scheduled to become a complex of warehouses, funded in part by taxpayer dollars. Acting with our allies, we cleared the way for a future park.

## A field of dreams blossoms in L.A.

When children in L.A.'s Chinatown want to play soccer or tag, their parents have to drive them miles away from home. All over central Los Angeles, there is not a single park. Low-income residents are fully cut off from nature.

But that is beginning to change, with help from Environmental Defense. In November, bulldozers began clearing a 47-acre defunct rail yard in Chinatown for a state park. Called the Cornfield because crops grew there in the 18th century, this "field of dreams" is the brainchild of a coalition of local activists and environmental groups.

Two years ago, a real estate company was set to develop the property for industrial warehouses. Environmental Defense and others sued to halt the development and helped Governor Gray Davis win approval for \$35 million to acquire and clean up the Cornfield.

This success is part of our broader strategy to expand green space in urban centers around the country. "Access to green space is essential to making cities into

healthy habitat for human beings," says Jacqueline Hamilton, co-director of our Living Cities program. "Los Angeles ranks last in the nation in per capita park space." Without attractive livable cities, there is added pressure for the sprawling development that endangers ecosystems.

Working with community groups, Environmental Defense has mounted a campaign to update L.A.'s open space plan and establish an Urban Land Trust to fund small neighborhood parks. Our computer specialists are identifying vacant lots with GIS mapping technology.

With few large parcels available, our focus is on creating numerous "pocket parks," such as the Hope and Peace Park we're helping develop in central L.A. "Before now, there were no safe places nearby to play outside," says 13-year-old Rosa García, an avid basketball player.

"Our goal is for everyone in L.A. to live within a quarter mile of a park and the experience of nature," says our policy specialist Misty Sanford.

## Tragedy brings health concerns

Jammed into a Wall Street hotel lobby, 1,500 residents of lower Manhattan agonized over air quality following the World Trade Center disaster. Joel Miele, the city's commissioner of environmental protection, issued a sobering message: Fear not the fires at Ground Zero, he told residents. Over time, the principal health danger will come from the diesel exhaust spewing from construction vehicles.

Over the next five years, densely populated lower Manhattan will be one of the nation's largest construction sites. Environmental Defense is working to reduce the health impacts of diesel emissions in ways that won't slow the pace of recovery. Non-road engines, which also include agricultural equipment, emit more fine particles than the nation's cars, trucks and power plants combined. These particles pose the single greatest source of cancer risk from air pollution and cause thousands of premature deaths each year.

Our goal is to put in place construction specifications, applicable to all contractors working on the site, that require cleaner management and the use of retrofit technologies. Similar specifications were enacted for Boston's Big Dig. "With EPA considering tough emission standards for non-road vehicles, we want our work to serve as a model for diesel vehicle use in urban areas," says Andy Darrell, co-director of our Living Cities program.



Lower Manhattan is teeming with diesel trucks and equipment.



The state accepted our plan to save over 10,000 acres of wetlands.

## The heart of the Highlands

"Fee-bee," sings a black-capped chickadee from a 10-foot mountain laurel. Nearby is a rock outcrop 1.1 billion years old. A pileated woodpecker drums in the distance.

These are the New Jersey Highlands—the easternmost spur of the Appalachians in the Garden State. The region is just an hour from Manhattan, yet its ridges and valleys boast relatively undisturbed forests and wetlands.

Environmental Defense and the Highlands Coalition have petitioned the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to designate Highlands wetlands that harbor endangered and threatened species as "exceptional-value resources." Under state law, they could then be protected by 150-foot buffers of natural vege-

tation. Tens of thousands of acres would be preserved, improving the survival chances of species like the endangered bog turtle.

We helped identify the wetlands to be preserved through our GIS technology. Among the rare ecosystems we targeted are inland Atlantic white cedar swamps and dwarf shrub bogs.

The state has accepted our proposal. "They even indicated they would apply this approach not just to critical wetlands in the Highlands, but across the entire state," says our general counsel James Tripp.

"It's good policy based on sound science," says Tom Gilbert, who chairs the Highlands Coalition. The new rule will be formally proposed for public comment in December.

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# Sustainable development: A key to global stability

When a consortium headed by Exxon-Mobil announced the largest-ever development project in Africa, a massive oil field and pipeline running through Chad and Cameroon, military officials in Chad threatened to execute local environmentalists who voiced criticism.

Environmental issues are intertwined with human-rights problems in many parts of the world, so frequently our work in Africa, Asia and Latin America is accompanied by efforts to protect human rights. Environmental advocacy in the developing world has become a vehicle for democratic reform as well as sustainable development.

The \$3.7 billion Chad-Cameroon project is a case in point. Chad's president came to power in a bloody military coup. When he was caught using the first profits from the pipeline to purchase weapons, the World Bank acceded to our demands for strict monitoring of the project by an independent commission. The resulting International Advisory Group recently published its first findings, and the World Bank has promised to correct problems identified by the group.

"Without proper monitoring, this project threatens to become an environmental disaster with dire consequences for an already impoverished people," says our economist Korinna



Korinna Horta

Horta has worked for a decade with Cameroon groups to protect the country's forests.



Korinna Horta

Massive environmental devastation would cease if lenders began listening to local voices.

Horta. In giving voice to the people along the pipeline and defending their land rights, the International Advisory Group also hopes to prevent Chad's largely Islamic North and Christian South from rekindling their civil war.

## FOLLOWING THE MONEY

Much of the Earth's richest biodiversity is found in developing nations. Increasingly, this treasure is threatened as the thirst for hard currency leads countries to deplete their natural resources. International financial institutions share much of the blame. They fund nearly \$200 billion a year of infrastructure projects in the developing world, much of the money going to environmentally and socially harmful construction. Our strategy is to follow the money and close the gap between financiers and communities.

With global warming no longer a theory and tropical rainforests fast disappearing, we've provided support for community-based forest protection in Indonesia and Central Africa and have redirected foreign investment away from deforestation in the Amazon.

True international lending reforms must begin at home. This fall, we met with U.S. congressional leaders and Treasury officials to advance our agenda for policy reforms. We are also working with the U.S. Export-Import

Bank to achieve a global agreement on environmental standards for export credit agencies, now the largest source of funds for big infrastructure projects.

The September 11 attacks added urgency to our efforts, as the U.S. government considers funneling billions more dollars into Indonesia and Pakistan. "If this new finance is handled wisely, benefits to both poor and rich countries could flow," says our International program director Bruce Rich. "But international financial institutions are under great pressure to disburse more money under lower standards."

Ill-conceived projects have turned millions of people into environmental refugees, dispossessed of their lands and livelihoods. "Destruction of the environment and the resulting social hardship remain a major cause of instability," says Horta. "The case has never been stronger for sustainable development."



Korinna Horta

Your tax dollars at work.

## Snug as a bug

The following resources may be helpful if you want to conduct an energy audit or simply learn more about saving energy at home. For more information, visit our web site at [www.environmentaldefense.org/more/10549](http://www.environmentaldefense.org/more/10549) or contact these groups directly:

The Alliance to Save Energy's online Home Energy Checkup measures your consumption and shows how to reduce it. 1200 18th Street, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036; 202-857-0666.

The American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy offers numerous easy-to-follow tips for homeowners. 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036; 202-429-0063.

The Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Network (EREN) offers ways to save energy and utilize renewable sources. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20585; 202-586-9220.

National Association of Energy Service Providers (NAESCO) contains information about specific energy companies. 1615 M Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20036; 202-822-0950.

National Association of State Energy Officials lists state energy offices, a good source of local audit options. 1414 Prince Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-299-8800.

Rocky Mountain Institute fosters efficient resource use. 1739 Snowmass Creek Road, Snowmass, CO 81654-9199; 970-927-3851.



Jim Motavalli

Colonial revival: A traditional house can still save energy.

## Saving energy starts at home

### YOUR HOUSE CAN BE BOTH COZY AND GREEN

The roof of Peter and Lucy Lowenthal's brick colonial in Bethesda, MD, lets the sunshine in, not through skylights but through 48 solar panels, which produce electricity, generate hot water and even provide radiant heat to cold floors. Lucy, who directs marketing and membership at Environmental Defense, says the cost of the electric panels will be amortized in seven years.

Simple changes can translate into big savings for our nation as we strive to cut our dependence on oil. By one estimate, blocking heat loss through poorly sealed windows and doors alone would conserve the amount of energy now carried through the Alaska pipeline. Since fossil fuels are a major source of air pollution and greenhouse gases, saving energy also helps reduce pollution and global warming.

Is your house an energy star or a power hog? It's easy to tell through an energy audit—a roof-to-cellar appraisal of your home's environmental perfor-

mance. Auditors can locate drafts and heat leaks, check insulation, assess appliances and track usage. They can then suggest alternatives.

### HOW DOES YOUR HOUSE RATE?

Start by finding an energy auditor through your local utility (call the customer service number on your electricity bill). Utilities often subsidize audits. Numerous tips and online audit guides are also available for do-it-yourselfers (*see box*).

But you can get started even before the auditor arrives. Here are some of the issues every good audit will address:

- Set your thermostat to 68° or below in the winter. Turn down the heat at night or when everyone's at work (a clock thermostat can do the job for you).
- Clean your refrigerator coils regularly. Check your refrigerator's seal by closing the door on a piece of paper. If the paper pulls out easily, the seal is faulty.

*This guest article is one of a series by the editors of E/The Environmental Magazine (for subscription information: 800-967-6572 or [www.emagazine.com](http://www.emagazine.com)). Opinions are the author's and not necessarily those of Environmental Defense staff.*

- Turn your water heater to “warm” (approximately 120°). You’ll still have plenty of hot water. If you also wrap that heater in a \$10 to \$20 insulating blanket, it will pay for itself within a year.
- Replace frequently used incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents. They cost more up front but use only one-quarter as much electricity as regular bulbs. They also burn dramatically longer, up to 10,000 hours.
- Install low-flow showerheads, which cost just \$10 to \$20 each and will cut hot water use in half.
- Run your clothes washer on warm or cold rather than hot. It will cut the cost per load by 50% or more while still cleaning effectively.
- Check the insulation in your attic. Ensure that pipes, ductwork and chimneys are properly sealed.
- Many homes have storm windows. Insulated windows have a vapor barrier to prevent room moisture from passing through and condensing on cold panes. Increase effectiveness by installing self-sealing floor-length

drapes. Thermal drapes, with two layers of fabric separated by an air space, provide even more protection.

- To detect drafts, wait for a windy day, then hold a lighted candle up to windows, doors, electric boxes, plumbing fixtures and attic openings. A flickering flame is evidence of a significant air leak. If windows and doors rattle in their frames, it’s also a sign of escaping air.

By Jim Motavalli

## IN BRIEF

### BIG VICTORY OVER OFFSHORE OIL DRILLING

Off California’s central coast, sea otters cavort in the kelp forests and wrap themselves in the floating fronds for a night’s rest. This part of California and much of the U.S. shoreline has been protected by an annual congressional moratorium on new offshore oil leases. In 2001, however, Congress came under intense pressure to lift the moratorium.

Things looked bleak, but in the end, Congress once again blocked new oil drilling. Lawmakers even passed an amendment, which Environmental Defense helped draft, closing loopholes that would have allowed damaging exploratory work by oil companies.

Our marine advocate Richard Charter attributes the success to a proven alliance of coastal communities, conservation groups and members of Congress. “America’s coastlines are safe for one more year,” says Charter.

### U.S. MISSES THE TRAIN IN MARRAKESH

In October, more than 170 nations reached agreement in Morocco on the fine print of the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change. The negotiations pave the way for implementation of the landmark accord.

With the United States left at the station, Russia and Japan became essential to the talks. Environmental Defense played a central role in engaging those two countries. Ratification of the pact could happen later this year.

Meanwhile, the Department of Energy reported that U.S. emissions of heat-trapping gases increased by 3.1% last year, the biggest jump since the mid-1990s. “As the world’s largest producer of greenhouse gas pollution, it’s well past time for the United States to get on board,” says our chief scientist Dr. Michael Oppenheimer.



John Rae

Saying no to offshore drilling: Richard Charter teamed up with allies he gained in twenty years of coastal protection work.

### HOMEWARD BOUND: AGREEMENT BRINGS RARE BIRD BACK TO HAWAIIAN ISLAND

For the first time since 1778, nene goslings are back on Molokai. A novel conservation agreement with a private ranch has given the endangered Hawaiian goose—the state bird—a new start on the sparsely populated island. The nene was introduced under the Safe Harbor model, pioneered by Environmental Defense, which assures landowners that cooperation in conservation efforts will not result in new land use restrictions.

After decades of hunting, habitat loss and predation by introduced animals, prospects for the nene’s survival in Hawaiï had recently appeared grim. Once native to Molokai, the bird had disappeared from this island by the time Europeans arrived.

# A place for the kit fox to hide

WE HELP WIN CALIFORNIA'S FIRST SAFE HARBOR

Leggy and delicate, with huge ears, the San Joaquin kit fox has been called “the ballet dancer of the canid world.” This small, graceful carnivore has been on the endangered species list since 1967. More than 95% of its grassland and desert scrub habitat in California’s San Joaquin Valley has been eradicated by housing, mega-malls and farms. But a recent agreement brokered by Environmental Defense improves the tiny fox’s chances for survival.

Kit foxes share the San Joaquin with larger, faster coyotes that prey on them. In self-defense, the mostly nocturnal foxes have for millennia been digging escape burrows where they hunker down until it’s safe to come out. But in cultivated fields and orchards, there are few places left to dig. The foxes have become increasingly easy pickings for the coyotes, their leading cause of death, according to Dr. Patrick Kelly, director of the endangered species recovery program at California State University, Fresno.



Better digs: A kit fox escape burrow under construction.

Kelly studied kit foxes in the vicinity of the Paramount Farming Company outside Bakersfield, and conceived a new way to help: Why not install artificial burrows for the foxes to escape from coyotes on farmland?

It seemed simple, but there was a catch. Paramount, if it cooperated, might become liable under the Endangered Species Act for its farming activities near the burrows. Why would the landowner take such a risk?

“Unfortunately, a history of conflict has made private landowners extremely wary of the Endangered Species Act,” says Michael Bean, director of our wildlife program. Some valley farmers have reportedly resorted to plowing fallow fields to keep endangered species away.

“Our concern was that we’d do the right thing, and it would backfire,” says Scott Hamilton, Paramount’s resource manager.

## SAFE HARBOR'S PROMISE

Kelly enlisted Environmental Defense and our Safe Harbor initiative. Safe Harbor agreements, introduced by us in 1995 and adopted nationally by the Fish and Wildlife Service, allow landowners to help endangered species voluntarily while being protected from new liability. Bean was pleasantly surprised when, after hearing about Safe Harbor, Para-



B. "Moose" Peterson/WRP

Under our program, more kit foxes can find mates.

mount “took about 10 minutes to agree.”

Safe Harbor agreements now cover more than two million acres nationwide, aiding such endangered species as the red-cockaded woodpecker, northern aplomado falcon, Attwater’s prairie chicken, Schaus swallowtail butterfly and several rare fish.

After our plan was embraced by Paramount, the company built 25 escape burrows on its land and even volunteered to pick up the cost. Bean and Kelly are impatient to open the dens, which are still capped in anticipation of final federal approval of the agreement. “The foxes need some time to check them out,” Kelly says. “And their breeding season is coming up soon.”



ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE

finding the ways that work

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## Will the delta thrive again?

The Colorado River delta, at the northern tip of the Gulf of California, is home to the world's smallest and rarest marine mammal, the vaquita porpoise. The desert pupfish, all but extinct, thrives in a delta wetland. But thirsty cities and farms use up most Colorado River water before it reaches the delta, reducing what was once one of the world's great desert estuaries to a series of brackish ponds. Many observers have declared the delta dead, but Environmental Defense is working to bring it back to life.

Last fall, we helped organize the first delta symposium sponsored by the U.S. and Mexican governments. An amendment to the 1944 U.S.-Mexico water treaty now requires the two countries to study the delta. At the meeting in Mexicali, senior Mexican officials called for a speedy restoration.

"The wealth of scientific information unveiled at this event should help silence critics who claim too little is known about the delta to restore it," says our resource analyst Jennifer Pitt, one of three environmentalists selected to study the delta. She is optimistic the countries will find a way to bring the delta back. Recent high-water years have sent water to the delta for the first time in decades. Our job is to ensure that water continues to flow.

**More on the web:** Our report, *A Delta Once More*, is at [www.environmentaldefense.org/more/10550](http://www.environmentaldefense.org/more/10550).



Jennifer Pitt

Some people say the delta is dead. We think otherwise.



Larry Ditto/KAC Productions

Policymakers are often unaware of new irrigation options.

## Curing a water addiction

Some day soon, Texans may be watering their lawns with rainwater when there's not a cloud in the sky. Storing rainwater for later use is one strategy in a water conservation guide to be released this month by Environmental Defense and the Texas Water Resources Institute.

With the population of this semi-arid state expected to double by 2050, water is becoming a precious resource. Simple strategies, like letting residents know how much to water their lawns based on the weather, can significantly reduce water use, says economist Mark MacLeod of our Austin office.

Unfortunately, a \$17 billion statewide water plan overlooks many opportunities for conservation. The plan includes large projects including dams that will

divert water from bays and estuaries, where many species begin life. Warblers and other migrating birds could also be harmed.

"Many people, including policymakers, aren't aware of the range of conservation options," says MacLeod. Our guide outlines these options and offers strategies to implement them, such as financial incentives and regulations. Options include more efficient irrigation systems, water-wise landscaping and recycling the water used in industrial processes.

To be distributed to local and state policymakers, the guide will help ensure that agencies fund water projects that include conservation measures, so the environment doesn't lose out in this thirsty state.

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## Helping wildlife on the Missouri

When Lewis and Clark first journeyed up the Missouri River 200 years ago, they marveled at the seemingly limitless wildlife. Since that time, America's second largest river has been tamed by six major dams. With most of the original wildlife struggling to survive, improper management of the dams has caused three more species—the piping plover, least tern and pallid sturgeon—to be listed as endangered or threatened.

At our urging, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is considering reforms to help these species. Since 1960, dam managers have replaced natural flows—high in the spring and low in the summer—with steady flows to support barge traffic. This has been disastrous for fish and birds, yet our study shows the barge industry is relatively tiny, only \$7 million a year.

This fall, hearings were held in states along the river. Environmental Defense testified in favor of restoring natural flows, and our Action Network rallied activists. “Over and over, we heard heartfelt pleas to help nature as well as the barge industry,” says our attorney Scott Faber.

The reforms we advocate would not cause economic problems. Barges would still be able to use the river in spring and fall, when most farm cargo is shipped, and flooding would not increase.



Rick Egenbright

Restoring natural flows will aid rare species.



A. Morris/VIREO

As prairies return, so will birds like this eastern meadowlark.

## Saving grasslands for the birds

Prairie chickens, meadowlarks and other rare grassland birds will benefit as 15,000 acres of critically located Wisconsin grasslands are restored with new government funding for a program pioneered by Environmental Defense.

After three years of negotiations, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has committed \$198 million to restore these grasslands and another 85,000 acres of wetlands and stream buffers to counter agricultural pollution in Wisconsin. The money comes through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, which restores wildlife habitat and reduces erosion through voluntary agreements with farmers who are paid to improve their land. The program, proposed by us in 1996, has already

committed \$2.5 billion in federal money to 18 states to revive 1.2 million acres.

To obtain funding for Wisconsin, we galvanized a coalition of hunting, fishing and conservation groups and secured funds from the state legislature. Many of these groups had never worked together and our staff and allies struggled at times to bridge differences between farmers and environmentalists.

But the program has proven popular and in some counties there are waiting lists of more than 100 farmers wanting to take part. “With this program, farmers can afford to do the right thing,” says consulting attorney Terry Schley-Noto. “It’s good for everyone. It’s important for people to hear a meadowlark.”

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## Seeking justice in hog country

“Everyone should be able to sit on their front porch or open a window,” says Elsie Herring. “You can’t do that here in southeastern North Carolina, where the hog industry is concentrated.”

Herring is referring to the sickening odor of hog waste that wafts over her home from a nearby hog factory in Duplin County. She is one of 13 “community voices” we recorded to publicize the plight of the mostly low-income people who live around these huge operations. The hog factories use primitive waste lagoons that pollute ground water and can cause health problems for residents.

Evelyn Powell of Edgecombe County says, “You can’t go outside and have cookouts. They’re out. Your whole lifestyle is a disaster.” The video interviews are available on our Hog Watch web site at [www.hogwatch.org](http://www.hogwatch.org).

“We hope these real stories of real people challenge every lawmaker in the state to listen,” says Kris Thornburg, our project coordinator. “We’re pushing for a mandate to replace the outdated waste lagoons with systems that protect health and the environment.”

Those interviewed say their pleas have gone unanswered so far. Our scientist Dr. Joe Rudek is involved in a major study of alternatives to waste lagoons and hopes to be able to point the way to a solution soon.



Melva Fager-Okun

Family farmer Jeff Hawkins insists the hog factories won’t make him move. “I’m a survivor,” he says.



A Morris/VIREO

A naturalist’s paradise, Pea Island is home to the endangered piping plover. An Army Corps project may destroy its nests.

## Boondoggle on the Outer Banks

Since 1970, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been itching to build twin jetties at Oregon Inlet on North Carolina’s Outer Banks. Intended to stabilize the constantly shifting inlet, the controversial project would destroy 93 acres of Cape Hatteras National Seashore and 33 acres of Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge.

The Army Corps argues the mile-long jetties are needed to ensure safe navigation. Environmental Defense and other critics maintain that goal could be better met by dredging and say the project’s \$108 million cost far outweighs its benefits.

“Economically wasteful and ecologically destructive” is how the Biodiversity Legal Foundation’s Sidney Mad-

dock describes the project. The jetties would reduce important habitats—tidal marsh, mudflats and sea-grass beds—that need sediment passing through the inlet.

To mitigate the severe beach erosion they would otherwise cause, the jetties would also include sand-bypassing technology, but “there’s extensive debate whether it would actually work here,” says our scientist Michelle Duval. Required in perpetuity, the sand-transfer operation would convert Department of Interior land into a construction zone.

Senator Jesse Helms seeks to build the jetties before he leaves office. We are toiling equally hard to keep this 30-year-old pork barrel from becoming a reality.

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## River of hope for rainbow trout

The magnificent Tule River once joined other Sierra streams to create Tulare Lake, a giant inland sea at the foot of the San Joaquin Valley. But a century of water overuse has drained the lake, severing the river from the valley into which it once flowed.

John and Dagny Grant want to change that. For years, the ranchers diverted water from the river to irrigate pastures for their cattle. But the cow business is slow these days, and they have decided to put their water to better use. With technical and legal help from Environmental Defense, the Grants want to transfer their water rights to CalTrout, a state conservation group. They hope that by increasing water flows they can improve the habitat for native rainbow trout and other species.

“We’ve not talking about much water here,” admits John Grant. “But what we’re doing could serve as a model.”

Transferring water rights to improve river flows isn’t an easy task. It’s only been tried a few times in the state’s history. But after months of negotiations with the state water resources control board, we helped the Grants obtain a temporary transfer application, and approval is expected soon.



Maxine Cass

Our project to transfer water rights offers hope for trout.



Susan Austin

This farm recycles its runoff by blending it with new irrigation water.

## Cleaning up California’s farms

In 1994, Environmental Defense created an innovative program to reduce pollution from farms in California’s San Joaquin Valley. The program has been so successful that farmers working with us recently agreed to extend it another eight years.

For years, irrigation water contaminated with selenium—a naturally occurring element in the soil—had been washing into area waterways, degrading water quality and harming threatened fish and migratory waterfowl. Regulators had long been at a loss as to how to make farmers accountable for this pollution.

Our scientist Terry Young came up with a solution. Working with local government, farmers and regula-

tors, she devised a program that set enforceable limits on selenium levels, yet allowed farmers flexibility in meeting the requirements. Five years into the program, selenium has been reduced by more than 15%. Farmers use a variety of methods to meet this goal, including recycling irrigation water and trading discharge permits.

“We’ve debunked the conventional wisdom that farmers cannot take responsibility for their pollution,” says Young. The new contract has an even loftier goal: By 2009, farmers are required to reduce selenium discharges by 50%. “It will be tough, but I’m confident we’ll meet these goals,” says Dennis Falaschi, a local farmer and district manager of the Panoche Drainage District.

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