



CONSERVATION VOTERS NEW MEXICO

Turning Environmental Values into State Priorities

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Election 2010: Political Climate Change

The results of the 2010 elections brought both exciting victories and crushing defeats.

These elections centered around the economy, and rightly so. New Mexican voters, like most around the country, are scared and angry. This year, those emotions accompanied voters to the polls and made their marks up and down the ballot.

Unfortunately, many great conservation champions in the NM State Legislature got caught in the tide of voter anxiety and lost their seats. These champions had fiercely and consistently fought for the health of our families and our children's future. They also had fought tirelessly for building a clean energy economy and sustainable economic development. They will be deeply missed.

But there were bright spots on November 2nd, including the return of a strong conservation ethic to the State Land Office (SLO). Ray Powell will restore the trust and transparency that is so crucial to the mission of the SLO – managing our state lands to generate healthy, sustainable revenues for our schools.

His opponent's campaign was backed by huge contributions from the oil and gas industry. But despite being outspent nearly 3 to 1 in the general election, Ray won by 4.6%, with the strong support of Conservation Voters New Mexico Action Fund. In the end, the resources we devoted to that race represented more than 10% of Powell's expenditures – a considerable sum in a statewide race.



Ray Powell



Rep. Bill O'Neill

Our most significant contribution in the race for Land Commissioner was a statewide telephone town hall with Powell in the closing days of

the election. More than 7,000 New Mexico voters participated, asking him questions, raising their concerns, offering opinions, and learning more about Ray's values and priorities.

"CVNM's support was critical to my election success," Ray said. "I am grateful for the opportunity their telephone town hall provided me to engage with New Mexican voters."

Knowing that our state trust lands are back in the care of someone so thoughtful, conscientious and principled should give us all comfort. We offer Ray our congratulations and best wishes.

In another bright spot, freshman State Representative Bill O'Neill fended off an extremely tough challenge to hold onto his legislative seat. A strong ally who is working hard to make government more efficient and effective, Bill won by less than 160 votes.

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Executive Director's Message



Dear Conservation Voter,

Well, the dust has settled from November 2nd and a new political landscape has emerged.

We can't sugarcoat the fact that we lost too many friends this election cycle. That is very disappointing, of course, and it means our efforts to protect New Mexico's air, land, and water will be even more challenging. But we must keep our heads up and keep moving forward, and also appreciate some of the victories we did win.

Although the election brings some difficult changes to New Mexico's political climate, **57% of CVNM's endorsed candidates** won their elections or re-elections this November. CVNM Action Fund made well over 150,000 voter contacts, produced several radio ads, hung thousands of GOTV doorhangers, and conducted our first-ever "tele-town hall". Thanks to your help, some key environmental champions will be able to fight for what we love here in New Mexico.

We expect the year ahead to be challenging, but with your continuing support we will defend the environmental progress we have made and fight any attempts to roll back common-sense conservation policies.

Again, thank you for all you do for Conservation Voters New Mexico. We look forward to hearing your perspectives on this election so that we may prepare for victories ahead. Onward to the Legislature!

Sandy Buffett
CVNM Executive Director



STAFF

Sandy Buffett, Executive Director

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CVNM is a nonpartisan, non-profit 501c(4) organization that works to protect New Mexico's natural environment and our cherished way of life by:

- Educating legislators and voters on critical conservation issues;
- Lobbying on behalf of pro-conservation legislation;
- Holding legislators accountable for decisions that impact the environment; and
- Endorsing and electing pro-conservation candidates to public office.

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“The Inside Scoop”

Environmental Alliance of New Mexico (EANM)

Each year, CVNM and CVNM Education Fund facilitates the “Environmental Alliance of New Mexico,” (EANM) an alliance of nearly two dozen environmental groups working collaboratively on diverse policies to elevate environmental issues before the New Mexico State Legislature. The mission of the Alliance is to convey a unified front on the political priorities of the environmental community in our state.

Meeting monthly throughout the year, EANM works hard to identify the top issues of the year ahead. Then, in the fall, the Alliance meets to decide on the priorities for next year’s legislative session.

Looking ahead to 2011, EANM has three priorities for the upcoming legislative session:

- **Commercial Buildings Energy Use Disclosure**, which will require the disclosure of commercial building energy use at the time of a real estate transaction. This will allow consumers to make informed decisions about their real estate purchases; increase the market’s knowledge about energy use; and provide a market advantage to efficient buildings.
- **Private Right to Enforce Environmental Statutes**, which will allow citizens to enforce the pollution provisions of the Environmental Improvement Act, Water Quality Act and the Oil and Gas Act.
- In addition to the two proactive priorities, the Environmental Alliance of New Mexico will **work to defeat any anticipated attacks** on existing safeguards and protections of the environment.

Election Results

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In Bill’s race, CVNM Action Fund mailed 3,968 homes with specific early and Election Day voting locations. We also made 2,221 live phone calls and provided 2,386 door hangers with personalized voting information—and of course helped distribute them! Given the razor-thin margin of Bill’s win, we

are incredibly pleased with the role our efforts played in his victory. Congratulations, Bill—we know you will continue the fight to protect our Land of Enchantment.

After every election, we lose some friends and allies. Although we will miss them dearly, the new political landscape offers opportunities to

build new relationships and find new allies, perhaps in unlikely places. As Thomas Alva Edison once said, “Most people don’t recognize opportunity when it comes, because it’s usually dressed in overalls and looks a lot like work.” However daunting the road ahead may seem, the CVNM team is up for the challenge.

The Results: CVNM’s Endorsed Candidates

Governor: Diane Denish - lost
Lt. Governor: Brian Colón - lost

State Auditor: Hector Balderas - won
Attorney General: Gary King - won

Public Regulation Commission:
Stephanie DuBois (District 2) - lost
Bill McCamley (District 5) - lost

Commissioner of Public Lands:
Ray Powell, Jr. - won

NM House of Representatives:

HD14 Rep. Miguel Garcia - won
HD15 Rep. Bill O’Neill - won
HD21 Rep. Mimi Stewart - won
HD23 Rep. Benjamin Rodefer - lost
HD25 Rep. Danice Picraux - won
HD26 Rep. Al Park - won
HD30 Rep. Karen Giannini - lost
HD31 Rep. Bill Rehm - won

HD37 Rep. Jeff Steinborn - lost
HD47 Rep. Brian Egolf - won
HD53 Rep. Nate Cote - lost
HD33 Rep. Joni Gutierrez - won
HD48 Rep. Lucky Varela - won
HD59 Ellen Wedum - lost
HD60 Rep. Jack Thomas - lost

CVNM Welcomes Development Director Allison Fabara

Allison Fabara joined CVNM in July as our new Development Director!

What made you decide to move to New Mexico and join CVNM?

When my husband and I first met in Washington, D.C., we discovered that we had both traveled to New Mexico on our own and loved it. We talked about visiting together, but something always derailed our plans. Six years later, we finally came out for a vacation and felt compelled to move here. The day after returning home, I found out that CVNM was hiring a development director. It seemed like it was meant to be, and I was thrilled about the chance to work for an organization that protects a place as special as New Mexico. Thankfully, I was offered the job, and two months later we were here!

Tell us about your background in development.

I started working in development at the American Humanist Association, a small non-profit in Washington D.C. Because I was the only development staff, I had the chance to learn about various facets of fundraising—direct mail, major gifts, planned giving, events, grants, you name it. After two years, I took a position at NARAL Pro-Choice America planning fundraising galas around the country. I have been lucky to have wonderful mentors who have taught me a lot and allowed me to grow and take on more responsibility. I am excited now to have the opportunity to lead CVNM's development programs, and



Allison and Lucy, her lab-border collie

I believe (in fundraising and in life) that there is always more to learn.

What do you like best about fundraising?

I enjoy connecting with people, especially those who share the same ideals and want to work for positive change. Fundraising can be challenging, especially in this economy, but it is reinvigorating and inspiring to work with people who care enough to invest their time, energy, and resources to achieve a mission.

What do you like to do when you're not working?

My favorite thing to do is go hiking and enjoy the outdoors with my husband Francisco and my dog Lucy. The best hike we have had so far in New Mexico was up in the mountains near Santa Fe when the aspens were changing colors. I hope our members who are reading this will email me (allison@cvnm.org) about their favorite hikes, as there is so much of the state we have yet to explore.

Thank You!

House Party Update

This September and October, CVNM traveled around the state for a batch of successful house parties in Las Cruces, Pinos Altos, Taos, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and a "Green Chile Politics" event in Washington, D.C.

Thanks to your generosity, CVNM raised critical funds leading up to the elections and welcomed approximately 150 new members and friends to the CVNM family!

A special thanks to our host committee members and honored guests for their amazing support and for opening their homes - your friendship and hard work will not be forgotten.



CVNM Executive Director Sandy Buffett and Political Director Leanne Leith pose with Gov. Richardson and Speaker Lujan at our Santa Fe event

Issue Spotlight: The Necessary Role that Regulation Plays in New Mexico

The role of oversight and protections

The environment is an important part of New Mexico's culture and economy - from our agriculture and drinking water, to hunting, fishing, outdoor recreation and tourism industries. The health and well-being of our families and communities, as well as future generations, are dependent on a clean and safe environment.

Regulations play a critical role in protecting our communities. They safeguard the quality of the medicines we need, the food we eat, the cars we drive, and the toys our children play with. Every single day, we count on regulations to help keep our families safe.

Regulations also protect our families from harmful air and water contamination. In New Mexico, most environmental regulations are set by the Environmental Improvement Board.

What is the Environmental Improvement Board?

Created in 1971, the Environmental Improvement Board (EIB) sets standards regarding the quality of New Mexico's air and food, the monitoring of hazardous and solid wastes, and worker safety. The Board is also responsible for some aspects of water quality protection.

The Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate.

Since the creation of the EIB, the State Legislature has passed many laws—like the Solid Waste and Air Quality Control Acts—that require or authorize the Board to adopt regulations to protect public and environmental health. The Board must also hear petitions filed by stakeholders or members of the public.

When considering regulations, the Board is required to conduct extensive public hearings. The hearing process allows everyday citizens and stakeholders to provide comment and examine witnesses. This offers New Mexicans a unique opportunity to weigh in on how a new rule will impact their finances, health, environment, and community.

Through this comprehensive process, the Board has adopted rules that:

- address asthma and health risks, and improve our air quality, by reducing toxic car emissions through the Clean Cars Program,
- protect New Mexico's children from mercury contamination, and
- protect families from exposure to toxins in homes that were once used for illegal drug production, like former meth labs.

Recently, the EIB held exhaustive hearings to evaluate two proposals to help tackle climate change by taking steps towards capping carbon pollution. After months of debate and discussion, the Board voted to adopt the first of the two proposals in early November—a measure that allows New Mexico to join other states and provinces in a regional program to reduce carbon emissions. The board is set to make a decision regarding the second proposal in December. If approved, the proposal to ratchet down New Mexico's carbon emissions would be a significant step forward in fighting the climate change that is exacerbating drought, wildfires, biological pests and public health problems.

Want to know how you can get more involved with this effort? Contact Molly Brook, at Molly@cvm.org.



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