



EARTHJUSTICE

Because the earth needs a good lawyer



Exploring Legal & Advocacy Strategies

Stephanie Maddin
October 2012

Who We Are



- **Founded in 1971 as the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund**
- **Name changed to Earthjustice in 1997**
- **9 offices and ~195 Employees**
- **Litigators, lobbyists, and communications staff**
- **Green Group Coalition Member**
- **Over 1,000 clients represented for free**
- **Issues:**
 - **Climate and Energy**
 - **Wildlife and Places**
 - **Health and Toxics**

How Do We Select Cases?



HIGH STAKES: If there is much to be lost, or gained, as there are with nationwide standards for clean air, Earthjustice will likely get involved.

LANDMARK IMPACT: Will the potential ruling affect other cases or environmental policy across the country? We believe that successful precedent-setting cases can lead to broad-based positive change.

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS: Earthjustice looks for cases that help build strong, lasting partnerships with national and local groups. These strong regional partnerships greatly contribute to our success in court.

Beyond Litigation- Policy and Legislation



AFTER WE WIN CASES TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

Our hard-won legal victories are often targeted by polluting industries that use their congressional allies to dismantle or weaken the results.

WE WORK TO DEFEND LEGISLATIVE ROLLBACKS

To prevent legislative rollback of our victories, Earthjustice's Policy and Legislation team works with members of Congress to strengthen environmental laws and uphold our legal accomplishments.

Advocacy v. Lobbying



Advocacy

- When nonprofits seek to affect some aspect of society by appealing to individuals, businesses, and the government.

Lobbying

- refers specifically to advocacy efforts that attempt to influence legislation.
- Grassroots lobbying appeals to the public to contact government about legislation
- Direct lobbying is contacting the government directly to influence legislation

Advocacy & Lobbying



Turn supporters into grassroots lobbyists



Key Concepts for Advocacy/Lobbying



Coalition Building-

Group of interdependent people focused on advancing one particular issue. Power stems from its united front. Serves to mobilize allies through grassroots efforts.

Public Engagement-

Unlike public relations, public engagement strives for a dialogue and common understanding based on education and creative campaign strategies.

Publicizing Environmental Data



FOIA and Coal Ash Ponds in the U.S.

- Originally government admitted to 710 toxic ash ponds
- After FOIA request, another 451 sites were found



Publicizing Environmental Data



FOIA “Demand Groups”

- Impacted communities
- Invested environmental nonprofits
- Supportive elected officials

FOIA Data “Audiences”

- Government Stakeholders
- Media
- Other potential demand groups (other NGOs etc.)

Outcomes: *Unclear.* Efforts to clean up coal ash ponds continues to get press and organizing support. However, no government action on a federal standard.



50 States

**United for Healthy
Air**

Right to Breathe Campaign



Partners: National Council of Churches, Hip Hop Caucus, American Nurses Association, Physicians for Social Responsibility.

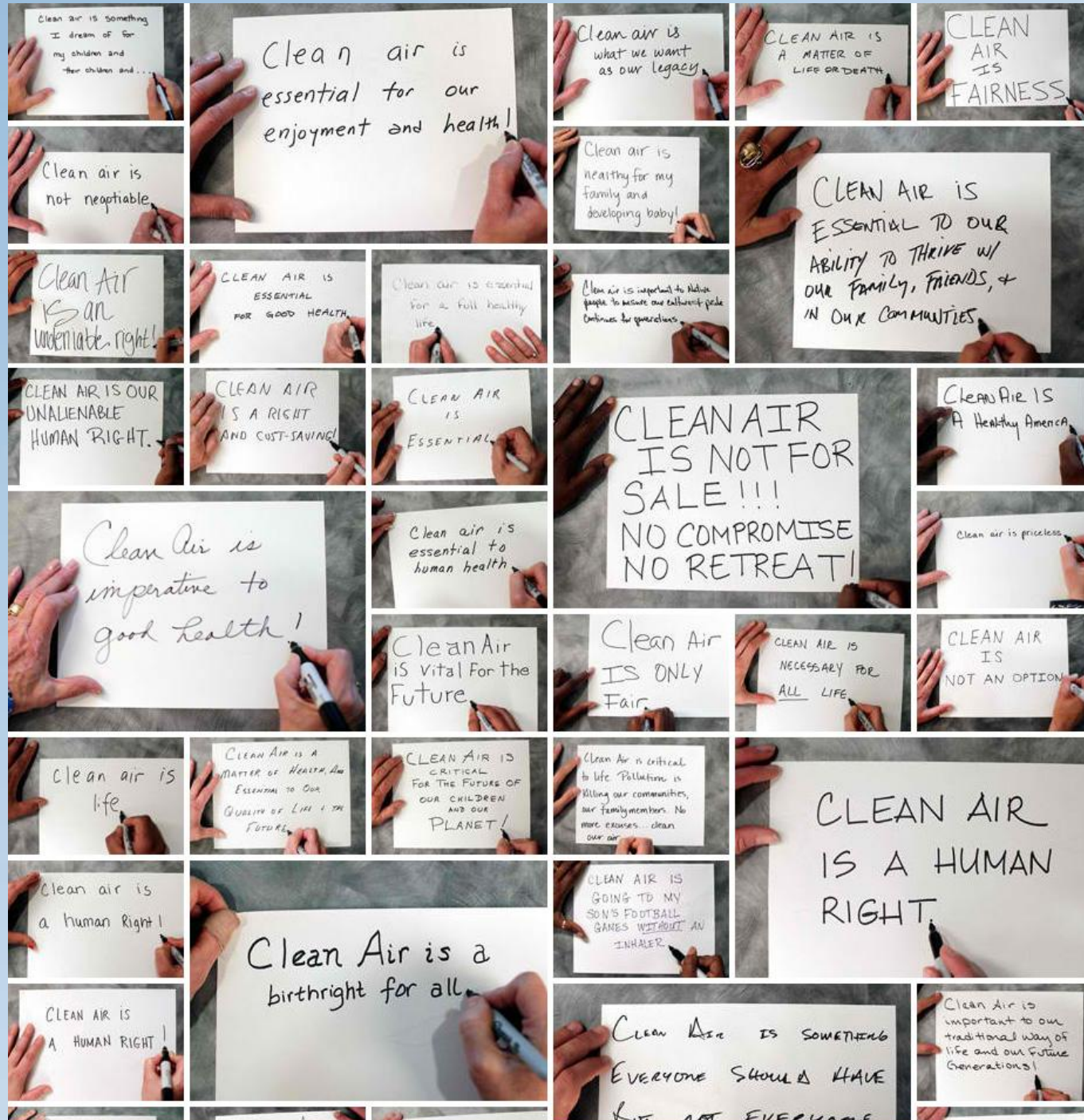
Targets: Federal environmental stakeholders (administrative and legislative)

Overview: Nearly 90 folks from all 50 states and Puerto Rico (clergy, mothers, nurses, advocates etc.) came to DC to lobby for the completion of clean air standards and to oppose legislative rollbacks on pending standards.



REASONS FOR CLEAN AIR





Clean Air is...

Observations



- **FOI laws can be critical to obtaining environmental data**
- **Environmental data is critical to cultivating demand populations for future data gaps**
- **Environmental data can drive media coverage and aid coalition building for broader public engagement**
- **Environmental data must be distilled into a user - friendly product to have a significant impact**

THANK YOU



Stephanie Maddin

Earthjustice

smaddin@earthjustice.org