

Colorado Conservation Voters

1536 Wynkoop, Suite 4C
Denver, CO 80202

www.coloradoconservationvoters.org

Prst std.
U. S. Postage
PAID
Denver, CO
Permit No.
5455

Colorado Action Network
for a better Colorado

**Keep informed on key
conservation issues
in the Colorado legislature
by joining the
Colorado Action Network.**

**Sign up at
www.coloradoactionnetwork.org**



Colorado Conservation Voters

Colorado Conservation Voters

CCV works to turn conservation values into Colorado priorities. CCV advocates for conservation policies and informs the public about state policy decisions by producing the annual Legislative Conservation Scorecard and Governor's Conservation Report Card. CCV endorses pro-environment candidates and holds legislators accountable for protecting Colorado's water, air, and land.

Online at www.coloradoconservationvoters.org

Colorado Conservation Voters Education Fund

The CCV Education Fund provides education and training to increase the effective participation of conservationists in the civic arena and to educate legislators, the media and the public about conservation issues. Online at www.ccvef.org.

**"There can be no greater issue than
that of conservation in this country."**

- Theodore Roosevelt, August 6, 1912

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bernard Black	Elise Jones
Michael Bowman	John Loewy
Jeff Bridges	Tony Massaro
Lynn Chapman Greene	Karl Nyquist
Michele Christiansen	John Powers
Andrew Currie	Auden Schendler
Roger Freeman	Patty Stulp
Barbara Green	Gary Wockner
Dan Grossman	John Wright

STAFF

Carrie Doyle, Executive Director
Christina Sanchez Werner, Deputy Director
Ellynnne Bannon, Political Director
Taylor Dunn, Major Gifts Director
Ben Gregory, Development Director

VOICE

Colorado Conservation Voters

Turning conservation values into Colorado priorities

Colorado Conservation Voters Voice

January 2009

Environment Wins in 08 Election

Colorado Conservation Voters works at the intersection of conservation policy and politics, so the 2008 election season was an interesting one for CCV members. Energy issues were front and center from the presidential race to county commissioner races in Colorado and across the country. On the one hand, windmills were the prop of choice in political advertising. On the other hand, political rallies echoed with the chant of "drill, baby, drill".

By mid-summer, President Bush had reversed his father's executive order banning offshore oil drilling, and, closer to home, the federal government moved one step closer to giving oil shale development the green light despite the lack of viable drilling technology. But, once the final votes had been counted, it was clear that voters had sent a message that they want clean energy, they want it now, and they will elect candidates who embrace a clean energy future.

Here in Colorado, strong, bipartisan conservation majorities remain in place in the state legislature. Conservation candidates won in all four of our top priority races, and overall 18 out of 25 endorsed legislative candidates won. In a major victory, CCV endorsed candidate Evie Hudak was elected to the State Senate representing Jefferson County with a margin of only 1.9 percent - one of the closest races across the state. Colorado Conservation Voters Campaign Fund knocked on over 58,000 doors in this district.

While Amendment 58, a measure to end a tax subsidy to the oil and gas industry, was defeated thanks to \$12 million spent by oil and gas interests against it, voters also rejected a counter measure which would have slashed funding to the Department of Natural Resources by a two to one margin.

Republicans with solid conservation credentials performed very well at the polls in Colorado. All of CCV's endorsed Republican candidates won their races.

"Protecting our environment is not Democratic or

Republican - it is Coloradan," Executive Director Carrie Doyle said. "When both sides of the aisle support conservation policies and understand the importance of protecting the environment to Colorado's voters, we win environmental protections that will stand the test of time."

While conservation candidates won in large part, there were some losses, and none was more deeply felt than the loss of Representative Bernie Buescher from Grand Junction. Rep.

Buescher worked to protect West Slope water and fought for public health

protections for communities surrounded by oil and gas drilling. But the legislature's loss is the state's gain as Rep. Buescher was just appointed by Governor Ritter to serve as Secretary of State.

Also, Colorado Conservation Voters endorsed in county-level races for the first time in 2008 with mixed results. Coloradans need local elected officials with strong conservation values who will fight to protect their backyards and who will be partners with the legislature and Congress. We will continue to support strong local candidates. In 2008, only one of the four commissioner candidates we endorsed won.

Full results of the CCV endorsements can be found inside and at www.coloradoconservationvoters.org.



The 2008 General Election has (finally!) ended, and our attentions now turn to working with our colleagues and coalition partners to pass strong bills in the 2009 state legislature. Now is when we do the important work of putting policies into place that will protect our water, our wildlife and our communities for decades to come.

After an election year that included bitter fights between oil and gas interests and conservationists, one hope I have for the New Year is that oil and gas companies, conservationists, elected leaders, business leaders, sportsmen—Coloradans—can find new ways to talk about Colorado’s energy future. The question is not will we drill in Colorado. With 100,000 new oil and gas wells projected in Colorado over the next thirty years, the better question is how will we drill? And the very serious question Coloradans and our elected leaders need to answer are: will we drill in a way that, come thirty years from now, our water will still be safe to drink, our wildlife will have adequate habitat, and our communities in the gas patch will still be safe places to raise a family? This is not a rhetorical question. Benzene, a cancer causing chemical, has been found in drinking water supplies in Garfield County. We need to put protections into place that will ensure that benzene in our drinking water is a horrible aberration, not the rule. Colorado is on the leading edge of the new energy economy with over 300 solar energy companies and new windmill manufacturing plants being built. We should also be on the leading edge of minimizing the impact of oil and gas drilling on our air, land, and water and putting safeguards into place to ensure we’re not spoiling Colorado’s natural resources for future generations.



Environmentalists Set Goals for 2009

Colorado Conservation Voters is currently working with conservation organizations from across the state to pass community priorities in the 2009 General Assembly.

“There are four steps to what CCV does,” explained Ellyne Bannon, CCV’s Political Director. “First, we work with conservation leaders to define priorities for the legislature. Next, we communicate those priorities to legislators and highlight key bills that fall within those priorities. We then track the actions of legislators on these priorities and report to the public through publications like the Legislative Scorecard and our website. Finally, we endorse candidates for office based on their actions on these priorities. It’s an ongoing process that creates a cycle of accountability on important conservation issues.”

In 2009 conservationists will focus on an energy agenda. We will advocate for strong protections for water, wildlife and communities threatened by oil and gas drilling, and support a package of clean energy policies.

In 2007, under the leadership of Governor Ritter, the Colorado legislature shifted the balance of power on the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission so that this oversight

agency was no longer controlled by oil and gas interests. This new commission was tasked with the creation of rules to guide how oil and gas drilling is done in Colorado to ensure that our water, wildlife, and communities are protected. After eighteen months, and hundreds of hours of meetings, the Oil and Gas Commission has finished this exhaustive process. The General Assembly now will review these rules. Oil and gas lobbyists are working hard to weaken these protections through this legislative review process. Conservationists, sportsmen, public health officials and community leaders will make it a top priority in 2009 to make sure the oil and gas industry cannot take shortcuts on our public health.

Conservationists will also work to promote clean energy policies in 2009. Priorities include giving new home buyers to option of solar ready homes and giving rural Coloradans the same energy efficiency options available to Xcel customers.

Keep track of key legislation as it moves through the process on www.coloradoconservationvoters.org.



Conservation News

CCV Endorsements

The results are in! Here is how the CCV endorsed candidates did in this Election.

Colorado Senate

SD8 - Al White - WIN (dual endorsement with Ken Brenner)
SD14 - Bob Bacon - WIN
SD16 - Dan Gibbs - WIN
SD17 - Brandon Shaffer - WIN
SD19 - Evie Hudak - WIN
SD21 - Betty Boyd - WIN
SD 25 - Mary Hodge - WIN

House of Representatives

HD25 - Cheri Gerou - WIN
HD27 - Sara Gagliardi - WIN
HD30 - Dave Rose - LOSE
HD31 - Judy Solano - WIN
HD33 - Dianne Primavera - WIN
HD36 - Su Ryden - WIN
HD38 - Joe Rice - WIN
HD46 - Sal Pace - WIN
HD52 - John Kefalas - WIN
HD55 - Bernie Buescher - LOSE
HD56 - Christine Scanlan - WIN
HD57 - Todd Hagenbuch - LOSE
HD58 - Noelle Hagan - LOSE
HD59 - Ellen Roberts - WIN

County Commissioners

Garfield County

Steve Carter - LOSE
Stephen Bershenyi - LOSE

Larimer County

Roger Hoffmann - LOSE

La Plata County

Wally White - WIN

Ballot Initiatives

No on Amendment 52 - WIN
Yes on Amendment 58 - LOSE



Make Your Voice Heard

Sign up today for the Colorado Action Network (CAN) - the premiere online advocacy tool of Colorado's environmental community. When important environmental decisions are being made, the CAN will notify you and put you in touch with your representatives with easy one click links. Join the CAN today at www.coloradoactionnetwork.org.

CCV Launches Corporate Membership Program

Your business can show its commitment to conservation causes in Colorado by becoming a charter member of CCV's Corporate Membership program. With memberships starting as low as \$500 this is an excellent opportunity to show your organization's conservation values. Contact Taylor Dunn for more information at 303-605 3481

Keep Informed with CCV

The CCV website continues to grow as a tool for expressing your conservation values! This year, www.coloradoconservationvoters.org is the place to go to track conservation legislation and make your voice heard on environmental issues facing our state. Use of the CCV website has

doubled since its relaunch last year - be one of the first to see the new improvements in 2009!

LCV a Big Winner on Election Day!

LCV a Big Winner on Election Day! The League of Conservation Voters, CCV's sister organization focused on federal level conservation policies, saw two of their top endorsed candidates win in Colorado this November. Barack Obama and Mark Udall were endorsed by LCV on the basis of their strong conservation records in Congress. Udall and Obama are expected to bring a new urgency to conservation policy in Washington that should reinforce the work of our state level Conservation Champions.

Volunteer!

Colorado Conservation Voters is looking for volunteers to help with fundraisers, mailings, and to assist in important campaigns. Contact Ben Gregory at 303-454-3349 today to sign up.

Save a Tree: Sign up for an EcoCopy!

Colorado Conservation Voters Voice is always available online at www.coloradoconservationvoters.org. If you would rather view this publication online than receive it in the mail, let us know by e-mail at info@coloradoconservationvoters.org. We'll let you know when new issues are posted and remove you from the mailing list. An archive of past issues is also available at the same address.