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Annual Report 2020

Texas Campaign for the Environment Fund worked successfully on a range of projects in 2020, primarily focused on petrochemical facilities, fossil fuel and plastic pollution, and zero waste initiatives.

Fighting Petrochemical and Fossil Fuel Pollution

We have joined in coalition efforts to pressure the major banks and insurance companies that are providing financial support for fossil fuel projects in Texas. We organized with allies to hold an action on climate change outside Liberty Mutual's Plano office building and attended their policy-holder meeting to ask the company to stop insuring and investing in fossil fuel projects. TCE Fund canvassers called our supporters across the state, and we have generated more than 6,000 emails to Liberty Mutual executives.

Since its inception, fracking has been sold to the American public as a way to attain energy independence. In reality, oil drilling in the Permian Basin is now primarily for export. Just before the COVID-19 pandemic, our organizers went to Brazoria County to alert residents about a public hearing on a plan to build a new export facility called the Sea Port Oil Terminal (SPOT). Few people in the community were aware of this proposal, and our efforts helped jumpstart organizing work by local residents in Surfside Beach and other communities whose economy depends on tourism and fishing. TCE Fund has joined with them and a host of regional, state and national allies to continue fighting SPOT and a number of proposed crude export facilities up and down the Gulf Coast. We are also helping to organize opposition to a host of proposals in the Port of Corpus Christi—which is already the largest fossil fuel exporting port in the U.S.—to expand and build new even larger crude export facilities, including an offshore oil export terminal.

In Corpus Christi, our work to build public opposition to several proposed baywater desalination plants meant to provide fresh water for new petrochemical and plastics facilities resulted in desalination becoming one of the top three issues in the local elections. With door-to-door organizing suspended, TCE staff were redeployed to call and text voters, ultimately identifying thousands of residents who consider these issues in their voting. Some voters were also willing to reach out to like-minded friends and family. TCE Fund also sent out mailers to voters highlighting the ways in which the city was endangering the health of the bay system, drinking water and environment more generally. Corpus Christi mayor Joe McComb—who was the most vocal proponent of desalination—was the only incumbent to lose his re-election bid this year's elections, and now the City Council has an opportunity to re-evaluate its water planning priorities.

TCE Fund has worked to heighten awareness of the climate change impacts of oil and gas production—and particularly gas flaring—in the Permian Basin. We are contacting residents, especially in Ector County and Odessa, to find people who are concerned about pollution problems and willing to come forward. TCE, Environmental Integrity Project and other allies signaled that residents wanted to participate in the process to contest an application by ConocoPhillips for additional flaring permits—and that was enough for the company to withdraw these waivers, which prevented this additional pollution that would have affected the Odessa region.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of TCE Fund is to engage people and communities through face-to-face public education, grassroots organizing and action-oriented research for a cleaner and healthier Texas.

Moving Forward on Zero Waste

In 2020 Austin completed its implementation of curbside composting and continued to expand recycling in city parks. However, our work is far from done: we are opposing an expansion of a problem landfill near Austin-Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA) as well as a plan for a massive new trash operation in Northeast Travis County. Both of these facilities are located in communities that are already overburdened with pollution.

In the Metroplex, we educated Dallas residents on local climate solutions and helped them participate in the public input process for Dallas's first ever Climate Action Plan, which passed in May 2020. Dallas also implemented its recycling policy for multi-family buildings in 2020, and we are working with allies to move forward with a program for food enterprises to divert organic waste. In Denton we helped organize residents to attend a virtual public meeting on the city's application to expand its landfill, and we continued working to encourage the city to expand recycling access to multi-family buildings and businesses.

In Houston, TCE Fund has done years of community education on the need for long-range plans on solid waste and climate. The city adopted a long-term recycling plan and a climate action plan in 2020 that both include some Zero Waste programs. Between 2021–2025 the Houston climate action plan will begin implementing public recommendations for recycling, food generation, and input for disaster debris recycling.

Texas Grassroots Mini-Grants

Thanks to renewed funding from a generous donor and a partial match by another supporter, TCE Fund has been able to continue our program to provide mini-grants to grassroots organizations in Texas. Some of the most recent awardees include the Rio Grande International Studies Center, Society of Native Nations, Southern Sector Rising, and Our Afrikan Family. Oftentimes we are the first funder for some of these emerging organizations, and at least half the funds will go to groups led by and serving indigenous communities and people of color.

Strong Support for TCE Fund Initiatives

TCE Fund has diversified its support from philanthropic foundations. Our 2020 backers included Chrest Foundation, Harold Simmons Foundation, Jacob & Terese Hershey Foundation, Lush Charity Pot, Rockefeller Family Fund, David Rockefeller Fund, New World Foundation, Tides Foundation, High Tide Foundation, Schmidt Family Foundation, William J. J. Gordon Family Foundation, Garver/Black/Hilyard Family Foundation, Winkler Family Foundation, and Juan M. Cordova Foundation.

TCE Fund also receives funding from community giving days such as Amplify Austin and North Texas Giving Day, in addition to events such as the Trash Makeover Challenge. We participate in EarthShare of Texas, which facilitates employee giving through payroll contributions and other corporate partnerships. Other generous major donors and community contributions from people contacted through canvassing continue to be critical to our success.

2020 Financials

Balance on hand 12/31/19	\$522,667
Total 2020 Income	\$923,440
Total 2020 Expenditures	\$1,005,388
Balance on hand 12/31/20	\$430,138

Over \$200,000 raised prior to 2020 toward projects in 2020 & 2021

2021 ROSTER TCE FUND BOARD & STAFF

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