

# TEXAS PASSES TV TAKEBACK LAW

TCE celebrates success at the State Legislature and takes on a behemoth

Just three words can sum up the year Texas Campaign for the Environment had in 2011: *raising the bar*.

TCE organized unprecedented amounts of public support last year for common-sense recycling policies in Texas. Grassroots organizers went into communities all across the state that TCE had never visited before and found strong new members at every turn. We accomplished many of our top priorities during the 2011 Texas Legislative Session; our biggest victory came when Gov. Rick Perry signed the TV TakeBack Bill into law instead of issuing a veto as he did in 2009. Then we raised the bar again by launching a campaign to convince the world's largest retailer, Walmart, to offer free e-waste recycling at all its stores in Texas. This is our biggest challenge yet, but we've seen this work countless times before—when the people lead, the leaders follow.

## PROGRESS COMES ONE STEP AT A TIME

Passing the TV TakeBack Law is a huge step in the right direction, but it's still just one step. The next task is to ensure the new law actually gets the recycling results we need to keep toxic waste out of our air, water and land. Our state environmental agency (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, or TCEQ) is currently creating the rules it will use to implement and enforce the new law. TCE is pressing the state agency to adopt strong rules that will lead to responsible recycling—and to reject weak rules that will only lead to more toxic dumping. Your letters to State Senators and Representatives are once again the strongest tool in our efforts to convince them to step up and urge the environmental agency to enforce strong rules that will lead to free, convenient recycling for all Texas residents.

## TAKE IT BACK, WALMART!

Quick: after Best Buy, what company is the nation's second-leading electronics retailer? What retailer has established storefront locations in every corner of Texas? Where would the easiest and most convenient place be for most Texans to drop off their old TVs, computers and other e-waste for recycling? If you answered "Walmart" to all three of those questions, then you know exactly why we're urging CEO Mike Duke to take back old and obsolete electronics for free recycling. After all, Best Buy has been doing this since 2009. Our message is simple: "Match it, Walmart!"

## TAKE ACTION

Go online today and send a message to Walmart company officials urging them to offer e-cycling options for all Texans. TCE supporters have sent over 20,000 letters so far...let's keep up the pressure! You'll find a sample e-mail addressed to CEO Mike Duke at [www.takeitbackwalmart.com](http://www.takeitbackwalmart.com).

## MOVING A GIANT

In addition to our grassroots efforts to generate letters to company officials, TCE "flash action" groups have organized creative, theatrical mini-demonstrations inside Walmart stores in Texas and throughout the nation. Direct actions like these were critical to our success in convincing other companies like Dell, Apple and Samsung to start recycling.

To be sure, Walmart is a behemoth, a huge company that doesn't change its business practices overnight. That's why we need you to generate the persistent consumer demand for convenient electronics recycling that we know exists throughout Texas. Take a moment to send Walmart a message—visit [www.takeitbackwalmart.com](http://www.takeitbackwalmart.com) today! You can also watch the videos of our "flash action" groups on this website and share them with your friends, too. With your help, we'll keep right on achieving the improbable. 🌱

ZAC TRAHAN, TCE METROPLEX

*"This law will help every county in the State of Texas. This is just the right thing to do."*

ED JANECKA, FAYETTE COUNTY JUDGE



TCE organizers stayed well past closing time at the State Capitol many nights during the session, so this is a view of the dome we know quite well.



# LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



ROBIN SCHNEIDER

At the risk of sounding like a broken record: TCE just had an extraordinary year. If you're tired of hearing that, you have only yourself to blame! In all seriousness, thank you so much for making all the difference.

In 2011, Texas Campaign celebrated our 20th anniversary in style! An incredible group of Austin volunteers put together an event featuring talented amateur and professional designers who recycled trash into amazing fashion statements. It was such a fun night that we're holding another event next Fall, so be on the lookout for a Save the Date message from TCE.

2011 was a year of extraordinary challenges at the State Capitol. While passing the TV recycling law was our highest priority, there were many other issues coming our way. Here are just a few highlights:

- Our bill to get manufacturers to recycle mercury-containing thermostats passed in the Texas House, but time ran out before it could make it through the Texas Senate.
- When a powerful legislator attempted to change state law to give renewable energy credit for the "gasification" (a fancy word for burning) of trash and recyclables, TCE worked with the renewable energy industry and convinced lawmakers that this would undercut the growing renewable energy sector and waste resources by turning valuable recyclable materials into ash.
- We stopped bills that would have pre-empted local governments from passing comprehensive ordinances to stop pollution from single-use check-out bags. TCE worked closely with local government leaders from Brownsville, Ft. Stockton and South Padre Island—the first three Texas cities to pass such ordinances.
- Late in the session, TCE pulled out all the stops to block two measures that would have eliminated Texans' rights to fight polluting facilities in their communities. We helped mobilized such fierce opposition that even the sponsor of one of the bills withdrew his support for this provision.

2012 marks my 15th year with TCE. I can't tell you what a privilege it is to work with this terrific group. I have the honor of working with talented organizers who go door-to-door every weeknight or speak on the phone and have personal conversations to engage Texans in issues that affect our lives and our children's futures. You and I are among the 45,000 proud members of TCE. Together, we made a huge impact on corporate and government officials on key environmental policies. Please don't hesitate to let me know (robin@texasenvironment.org) how we can do an even better job.

We envision a Texas free from pollution. I know it's a lofty goal and one I probably won't see in my lifetime. But it's worth striving for. Thanks for standing tall with TCE.

*Robin Schneider*

## YOU ARE INVITED!

### 21<sup>ST</sup> TCE ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING

INAUGURAL  
**NATURE HIKE**

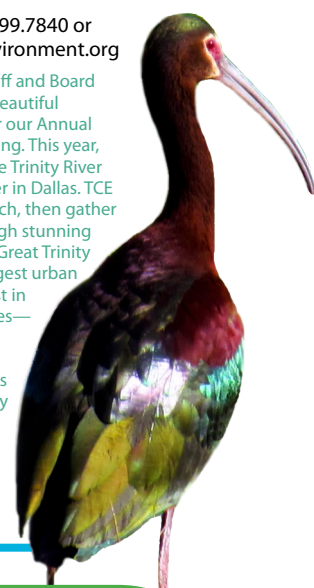
SATURDAY, MARCH 31<sup>ST</sup>  
1:00-3:00 P.M.

TRINITY RIVER  
**Audubon CENTER**

6500 Great Trinity Forest Way  
Dallas TX, 75217

RSVP at 214.599.7840 or  
zac@texasenvironment.org

Join the TCE Staff and Board (and over 130 beautiful bird species) for our Annual Members Meeting. This year, we'll meet at the Trinity River Audubon Center in Dallas. TCE will provide lunch, then gather for a hike through stunning sections of the Great Trinity Forest—the largest urban hardwood forest in the United States—where we hope to meet a Texas White-Faced Ibis (right) and many other colorful characters.



## LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

### In each of our three offices, TCE works on uniquely local campaigns

#### AUSTIN

In Central Texas, TCE won a huge victory in getting the City of Austin to pass the state's first comprehensive Zero Waste plan. Over the next 30 years, the city will divert 95% of its waste from landfills through a combination of reducing, reusing, recycling, composting and other innovative programs. Solid Waste Services has since been renamed the Austin Resource Recovery Department, a signal of new values at City Hall.

Part of the Zero Waste plan is the elimination of persistent waste problems such as those posed by single-use bags—plastic and paper—given out at retail and grocery stores. On March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2012, after months of TCE organizing that resulted in over seven thousand citizen comments, the Austin City Council voted unanimously in favor of an ordinance to eliminate the free distribution of disposable bags at checkout counters.

#### DALLAS-FORT WORTH

In the D/FW Metroplex, TCE is working to ensure that new natural gas drilling operations using hydraulic fracturing—or "fracking"—are carried out in a safe and responsible way. Fracking is the process of using pressurized fluids to break up shale rock formations to release the natural gas trapped within. Fracking creates large amounts of permanently contaminated waste water and adds to smog-forming air pollution.

In 2011, TCE helped convince the Dallas City Council to create a task force that would study and recommend proper health and safety standards for hydraulic fracturing. Those recommendations have been released and are now before the City Council, which is currently considering a new gas drilling ordinance. TCE will continue to work with City Council Members to ensure that the new ordinance upholds strong health and safety standards.

#### HOUSTON

Last year, TCE Houston started a long-term campaign to expand and improve recycling for all Houstonians at home, work and play. The campaign began when TCE helped defeat a city plan to enter into a 20-year, no-bid contract for recycling services that would do little to expand recycling citywide.

Recognizing that Houston is the only large city in Texas that does not yet have curbside recycling for all its residents, we understand that much work needs to be done in the nation's fourth largest metro area. Recycling and waste diversion creates jobs and saves taxpayers money. In a city that is a leader in economic development and the energy capital of the world, there is no reason that Houston cannot be a resource recovery giant as well.

This year TCE will work to encourage the city to create a task force that will draft a uniquely Houstonian, long-term strategy for effective and efficient resource recovery citywide, including public and commercial spaces. ☀️

TYSON SOWELL, TCE HOUSTON

## MEET THE STAFF

During our busiest day in 2011, TCE organizers knocked on 4,897 doors, obtained 1,021 signatures and generated 624 letters to key decision-makers—all in the course five hours! Grassroots, face-to-face organizing remains the most effective way for us to put unrelenting pressure on politicians and corporate executives. When it comes to demanding clean water, healthy air and safe communities, TCE doesn't take no for an answer. That's why members of our canvassing staff don't give up easily when we meet you at the door or on the phone, either! These folks certainly appreciate your willingness to share your time and energy and help create a more sustainable future.



TCE AUSTIN



TCE METROPLEX



TCE HOUSTON

## CONTACT INFO

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214.599.7889 fax

HOUSTON  
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Suite 290  
Houston, TX 77098  
713.337.4192  
713.337.4213 fax



In 2012, TCE is launching the **I Recycle, I Vote Pledge**, a campaign to get 50,000 Texans to keep recycling in mind when they go to the polls. If you haven't yet taken the pledge, please do so! You can simply check the box labeled "i recycle. i vote." on the enclosed return envelope when you send in your membership contribution or sign up online at [www.irecycleivote.org](http://www.irecycleivote.org). Afterwards, we'll send you a bumper sticker so you can show off your commitment to elect politicians in Texas who care about recycling. Of course, TCE is a non-partisan organization and, as always, will not endorse any candidates. However, we believe people running for office at every level should know that Texans want robust recycling policies and the thousands of jobs that come with them.

## NEW 2012 PROJECTS



signing the pledge



just outside of Alice, TX



courthouse in Victoria, TX



canvassers on the beach

## PROJECT 181

This year, TCE begins one of the most ambitious projects in our organization's history: **Project 181**. For the first time, TCE organizers will travel to all 150 Texas House and all 31 Texas Senate districts—which means some Texas-sized road trips to parts of the state we've never canvassed before! The point is to ensure every state lawmaker hears from constituents about the issues we advocate. To kick things off, we reached districts in Alice, Victoria and Corpus, where our intrepid canvassers had a blast camping on the beach at Mustang Island. Most importantly, we organized enough support to convince State Rep. Jose Aliseda (R-Beeville) to contact the state environmental agency in favor of strong enforcement rules for the new TV recycling law. With this kind of fun and success, we can't wait for the next trip!



# SUSTAINABLE GRASSROOTS SUPPORT

After years of grassroots community organizing with TCE, the thrill of winning campaigns still trumps record heat waves and the satisfaction of bringing a fresh perspective on the democratic process to a Texan's doorstep always softens even the loudest dog bark. The progress we've made here in Texas is truly a thing to be proud of—and it all begins with the connections we make on porches across the state. In these short conversations, we interrupt prime-time broadcasting to find common ground on no-nonsense issues that affect all of us. We make a difference, you and I, together with all the canvassers pounding the pavement and supporters like you who write a check and a letter (or eleven). The steps we take each day add up to a cleaner Texas and a stronger democracy. Thank you for being a part of this work...and thanks for all the water-bottle refills!!! 🌱

RENÉE VAUGHAN, TCE AUSTIN

TCE had another record-breaking year in 2011 thanks to your support. As always, we are dedicated to stretching each grassroots contribution to ensure your dollars make profound impacts. Our financial statement is below.

## Where we got the funding in 2011

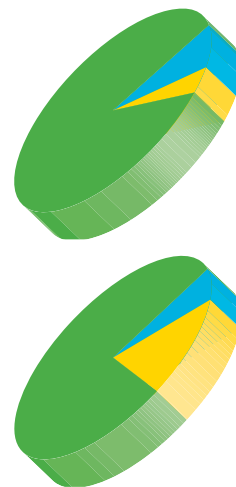
**Revenue Total: \$1,694,362**

- 87% Grassroots contributions from over 63,000 Texans
- 9% Special projects funding
- 4% Reimbursed expenses, miscellaneous

## How we used the funding in 2011

**Expense Total: \$1,638,130**

- 78% Environmental advocacy, community organizing & public education
- 7% Managing TCE
- 15% Fundraising to sustain TCE



SOURCE: TCE FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 2011



**TEXAS CAMPAIGN  
FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

611 South Congress Avenue, Suite 200-B  
Austin, TX 78704

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US POSTAGE PAID  
AUSTIN, TX  
PERMIT NO. 2703

2nd annual  
20th Anniversary

**TRASH  
MAKEOVER**

Fashion Reuse Challenge



## 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION & PARTY FOR A PURPOSE IN 2012

TCE marked its 20th Anniversary by showcasing the eco-friendly talents of dozens of fashion designers and organic chefs at our Trash Makeover Fashion Reuse Challenge. With brilliant designs, a huge silent auction and over 300 attendees, the event was a rousing success. In fact, we had such a great time that we've decided to make it an annual event! This September, we plan to throw an even bigger party when we turn 21, so look out for details!

thanks to our event sponsors!



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