

# Climate First!, Inc.

## 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

If we organize, we win!



The People's Climate March in New York City, Sept. 21, 2014.

Climate First! began to mature in its second full year as it strived to grow the climate movement and reduce corporate greenhouse gas emissions in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. While the organization's focus and the vast majority of its actions and events continued to occur in the D.C. region, its Board of Directors brought on a member from Delaware, as well as a member from central Virginia, a move that portends to spread the reach of the group. In addition, after receiving tax exempt status from the IRS, Climate First! closed-out the year by running a very modest, but successful, fundraising campaign. Finally, Climate First! continued to collaborate with other groups and organizations in various trainings, direct actions, and other events.

The following are some of the highlights from 2014:



- On a chilly February night, Climate First! joined with other groups in organizing and attending a vigil in front of the White House, one of over 200 such gatherings across the country. We asked the president to reject what was then thought to be an impending final decision regarding the Keystone XL pipeline.



As we gathered around the giant plastic pipeline, we, of course, had no idea at the time that the fate of the dreaded climate-wrecking pipeline would eventually be delayed at least into the following year.



- The first day of April brought the start of daily afternoon protests at the Department of State's headquarters in anticipation of an imminent release of the Dept.'s final assessment of the KXL pipeline. The campaign – organized by Climate First! and dubbed "Occupy State Dept." – lasted 18 straight days before being suspended due to agency's announcement of a prolonged delay of its determination regarding the dirty pipeline.



- In mid-April in the District of Columbia, 17 people attended Climate First!'s second training on how to engage in civil disobedience at the Dept. of State over the KXL project. The participants enjoyed the scenarios where they acted-out a human blockade of the Department's doors.

- A few days later, Climate First! staffed a table at the City of Takoma Park’s second Earth Day Festival. The pretty spring weather brought out many folks to the event, and numerous volunteers and supporters were there to share with them Climate First!’s mission, strategies, and tactics. Events like these often enlist newcomers to the climate movement.



- In May, a large crowd attended a Climate First! protest/rally at the Canadian Embassy in Wash., D.C. over the KXL pipeline. The action was successfully managed by a member of the organization’s Board of Directors, Carrie Biggs-Adams.

- From June to December, Climate First! organized and ran four successful direct actions against PNC Bank and TD Bank in the District of Columbia. In many of the actions, the bank branch locked its doors, denying entry to its customers and us scary-looking activists alike. While we weren’t able to confront the bank managers about their employers’ environmental wrongdoings, the banks were losing business. That’s a win any way you look at it!



• One of our major bank campaigns focused on PNC Bank. The big East coast lender, which somewhat ironically possessed deep Quaker roots, had financial relationships with numerous coal companies that engaged in the devastating practice of mountaintop removal (MTR) mining in the Southeast. Climate First! continued its collaboration with Earth Quaker Action Team (EQAT) in hounding PNC over its funding of MTR.

- In a “Day of Action” against PNC Bank in December, Climate First!’s direct action in Wash., D.C. was just one of 31 such events from Florida to New York and even to the Midwest, nearly all on the same day! And while we had no way of knowing that PNC would be giving into our demands regarding MTR mining in the



coming year, that one day in December might well have been the final straw for lender's upper management.



- While Climate First! wasn't as outwardly successful in its actions against TD Bank – TD Bank's parent bank was bankrolling the company that was pushing the Keystone XL pipeline on the U.S. government – you should have seen the look on this manager's face when we entered his bank!

- In July, Climate First! ran a protest at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Wash., D.C. over the business organization's unfair attack on the U.S. EPA's recently released regulations to reduce emissions from coal-fired power plants. The mid-week protest was followed by a march to the EPA's home office for a rally in support of its regulations.
- A humid day in early August brought good news to Climate First! when the IRS awarded tax exempt status to the organization under section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



- On a fair day in September, Climate First! volunteers and supporters marched with well over 300,000 others in the People's Climate March in New York City. The marchers were demanding that soon-to-be arriving world leaders get to work on protecting the climate at the upcoming U.N. climate negotiations in the Big Apple.



- November brought a two-day Rainforest Action Network workshop in Wash., D.C. hosted by Climate First!. Over 50 people were treated on the workshop's first day to a visioning session regarding a post-carbon future, followed by interactive break-out sessions on how we would in reality reach such a sustainable future.



- Climate First! closed-out its second full year by holding its first Annual Meeting in December. Randy Hayes inspired board members and other supporters with a short talk while we all enjoyed a home-cooked meal.

In yet-to-be completed 2015, Climate First! is upping its game. Some highlights include:

- Occupy State Dept re-started in January in an effort to stop the KXL pipeline.
- Also in January, three Climate First! Board members jumped into the Potomac River as part of the Polar Bear Plunge fundraiser.
- The big victory against PNC Bank – the 6<sup>th</sup> largest bank in the U.S. -- finally gave-in to our demands and decided to leave MTR.
- As part of the first Climate Mobilization day, Climate First! organized and ran its first-ever rally and march on the Nation's Mall.

By any measure, Climate First! enjoyed another successful year in 2014. Climate First! profusely thanks its Board of Directors who gave the organization fine advice and direction, the many volunteers and supporters who selflessly gave their time to making the group's events happen, and the donors who provided financing so it could all go forward.

#### MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

##### Board of Directors - 2014

1. Carrie Biggs-Adams
2. James Collins
3. Ted Conwell, President
4. Dennis Eshman, Treasurer
5. Brian Higgins, Vice-President
6. Molly Snyder, Secretary

##### Contact info

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Climate First! is a nonprofit, tax exempt 501 (c)(3) corporation.

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