



# The Impacts of Climate Change and the Trump Administration's Anti-Environmental Agenda in Louisiana

April 22, 2020

Just in the past three years, the Trump administration has attempted to roll back at least 95 environmental rules and regulations to the detriment of the environment and Americans' public health. Moreover, the administration refuses to act to mitigate the effects of climate change—instead loosening requirements for polluters emitting the greenhouse gases that fuel the climate crisis. This dangerous agenda is affecting the lives of Americans across all 50 states.

To read the personal stories of Americans impacted by climate change and the effects of the Trump administration's anti-environmental policies in your state, visit [OurEnvironment.org](https://OurEnvironment.org).



For citations, please see the web version of this fact sheet.

Between 2017 and 2019, Louisiana experienced six severe storms, two tropical cyclones and two flooding events. The damages of each event led to losses of at least \$1 billion.

---

## Impacts of climate change

### Extreme weather

- Louisiana is projected to see its current summer drought level more than double by 2050.
- The state's wildfire threat level is projected to nearly double by 2050, putting at risk more than 45 percent of the state's population.
- Since 1950, the sea level has risen by more than 24 inches around Louisiana's coastline, causing the state to lose about 25 square miles of land per decade. Louisiana is planning to spend more than \$25 billion on mitigation efforts.
  - New Orleans is the largest population center at risk due to sea level rise in the country, with 1.2 million people living within its greater metropolitan area.
  - In 2005, Hurricane Katrina caused an estimated 1,200 deaths and more than \$100 billion in damage in Louisiana.
- Currently, 955,000 people in the state are at risk of coastal flooding. An additional 262,000 people are projected to be at risk by 2050.

### Temperature

- Louisiana currently experiences 35 days of dangerous heat per year, and projections indicate that number will increase nearly fourfold to 115 such days per year by 2050.

This endangers the lives of the more than [160,000](#) people in Louisiana who are especially vulnerable to extreme heat.

- New Orleans is currently the [15th-hottest city](#) in the United States. Louisiana is projected to see one of the nation's largest increases in heat wave days by 2050.

---

## Impacts of the Trump administration's anti-environmental policies

### Climate

- In March 2020, the Trump administration announced its [final rule](#) to overturn Obama-era fuel efficiency standards for cars. These weakened fuel standards will lead to [higher greenhouse gas](#) and particulate matter emissions and will cost Louisiana residents [\\$334,000](#) annually.
- The Trump administration is [attempting](#) to gut climate considerations from major infrastructure projects by [eliminating](#) the “cumulative impact” requirement of the National Environmental Policy Act. This is concerning because Louisiana's economy relies heavily on its tourism, agriculture, and outdoor recreation industries—all of which are highly dependent on climate and weather conditions.
  - **Tourism:** Louisiana's tourism sector employs nearly [241,800](#) people and in 2018 generated an economic impact of [\\$22.5 billion](#).
  - **Agriculture:** The agriculture industry in Louisiana is made up of about [30,000 farms](#) and employs roughly [44,000 producers](#). The annual economic impact totals [\\$11.7 billion](#).
  - **Outdoor recreation:** The outdoor recreation industry in Louisiana generates [103,000](#) direct jobs and more than [\\$12.2 billion](#) in consumer spending.

### Air quality

- Mercury emissions in Louisiana decreased by more than [84 percent](#) from 2011 to 2017, yet the Trump administration [just undermined limits](#) on the amount of mercury and other toxic emissions that are allowed from power plants.

### Water quality

- In 2019, the Trump administration released a [series of proposed changes](#) loosening regulations of [coal-powered plants and the disposal of coal ash](#), which can [threaten](#) drinking water quality. These deregulations are dangerous for Louisiana, where a [2019 report](#) found that [three of the state's eight coal ash units](#) are leaking contaminants into groundwater at levels unsafe for human consumption.
- In January 2019, the Trump administration [repealed](#) the Waters of the United States rule, [removing pollution protections](#) from 60 percent of all waters of the United States. This not only affects the [15 million people](#) within the Mississippi River watershed but also stands to worsen the [Gulf of Mexico dead zone](#) by increasing runoff and dangerous toxins.