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.

Between 2017 and 2019, Wisconsin experienced one flood and three severe storms. The damages of each event led to losses of at least $1 billion.

Impacts of climate change

Extreme weather

- The severity of summer droughts in Wisconsin is expected to increase by 145 percent by 2050.
- Nearly 200,000 people in Wisconsin live in areas that are at an elevated risk of inland flooding.
- 2019 was the wettest year ever on record for Wisconsin. Additionally, 3 of the state’s top 5 wettest years have taken place in the past five years: 2019, 2018, and 2016. Climate change can mean a warmer, wetter climate.

Temperature

- Wisconsin currently experiences 10 days of dangerous heat per year. Projections indicate that by 2050 that number will increase sixfold to 60 such days per year. This endangers the lives of the more than 130,000 Wisconsinites who are especially vulnerable to extreme heat.
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 Wisconsinites more than $400 million 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 Wisconsin’s economy relies heavily on agriculture and its outdoor recreation industry—both of which are highly dependent on climate and weather conditions.

  • Agriculture: Agriculture generates more than $104 billion annually and supplies 435,700 jobs, or 11.8 percent of all jobs in the state.

  • Outdoor recreation: The outdoor recreation industry in Wisconsin generates 168,000 direct jobs and nearly $18 billion in consumer spending.

Air quality

• Mercury emissions in Wisconsin decreased from 2011 to 2017 by 87 percent, 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 Wisconsin, which relies heavily on coal and has roughly 24 coal ash sites.