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, Indiana experienced two floods and seven severe storms. The damages of each event led to losses of at least $1 billion.

Impacts of climate change

Extreme weather

- Indiana experienced 16 tornadoes in 2018, and the state experienced 16 widespread thunderstorm outbreaks in 2019. Research suggests that climate change creates conditions—such as a warming atmosphere—that are conducive to the clustering of tornadoes. Additionally, warming sea surface temperatures contribute to the formation of extreme thunderstorms.
  - By 2050, Indiana is projected to see a 105 percent increase in its index of the severity of widespread drought. This could lead to an increase in the risk of multyear droughts in the state.
  - In Indiana, more than 270,000 people live in areas at an elevated risk of inland flooding.

Temperature

- Indiana rarely experiences days when heat exceeds dangerous levels, but projections indicate that the state may experience 40 such days per year by 2050. This endangers the lives of the more than 170,000 people in Indiana 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 Illinois residents $701 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 Indiana’s economy relies heavily on its agriculture, tourism, and outdoor recreation industries—all of which are highly dependent on climate and weather conditions.

  • Agriculture: In 2012, agriculture in Indiana supplied 107,500 jobs and nearly $15 billion in total value-added impact to the state.

  • Tourism: In 2018, tourism in Indiana generated more than $9 billion to gross state product and supported more than 152,600 jobs, or 5 percent of all jobs in the state.

  • Outdoor recreation: The outdoor recreation industry in Indiana generates 200,000 direct jobs and nearly $16 billion in consumer spending.

Toxics

• In 2020, the Trump administration proposed cutting the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) budget by more than one-quarter and the Superfund program by more than $100 million. Indiana has 51 superfund sites—contaminated former industry sites managed by the EPA—the 10th-highest number in the nation. Exposure to contamination from toxic sites can lead to adverse health effects such as cancer and birth defects.

Air quality

• Mercury emissions in Indiana decreased by nearly 86 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 Indiana, where more than 9.5 million tons of coal ash are generated annually—the second-highest amount in the country. A recent test found that all 15 of Indiana’s coal ash sites are contaminating groundwater.