



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

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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.

By 2050, Hawaii's sea level could rise by 3 feet, putting thousands of structures at risk and making parts of the islands inaccessible.

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.



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

Impacts of climate change

Extreme weather

- Hurricane Lane struck Hawaii in August 2018, dumping 52 inches of rain on the state. The Category 4 storm was the second-wettest tropical cyclone on record in the United States, and total reconstruction costs are expected to total around \$8 billion, according to one estimate.
- Hawaii's sea level has risen 10 inches since 1950, and forecasts project that by 2029, the sea level will have risen another 6 inches. Hawaii is preparing to spend \$6 billion on solutions for sea level rise.
- One of the most popular tourist attractions in the state, Waikiki Beach, is in danger of being underwater in the next 15 to 20 years due to sea level rise. The loss of Waikiki Beach would also mean losing \$2 billion in annual tourism revenue.
- A number of Native Hawaiian cultural resources and sites are vulnerable to rising sea levels and other impacts of climate change.
- Currently, 66,000 people in Hawaii are at risk of coastal flooding. By 2050, that number is expected to rise to 218,000 people.
- Coral reefs in Hawaii are at risk of ocean acidification and coral bleaching due to the heat and carbon dioxide oceans absorb. The net benefits of Hawaiian reefs to the state's economy are estimated at \$360 million annually, and their overall asset value is estimated to be nearly \$10 billion.

Temperature

- 2019 was the hottest year ever recorded on Hawaii's most populated island, Oahu.
- The hottest day ever recorded in the state was also in 2019.

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 Hawaii residents \$44 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 Hawaii's economy relies heavily on its agriculture, tourism, and outdoor recreation industries—all of which are highly dependent on climate and weather conditions.
 - **Agriculture:** Agriculture in Hawaii supports 42,000 jobs and generates nearly \$3 billion for the state's economy annually.
 - **Tourism:** Tourism is the largest single source of private capital for Hawaii's economy. In 2019, visitors spent nearly \$18 billion in the state and supported 216,000 jobs.
 - **Outdoor recreation:** The outdoor recreation industry in Hawaii generates 68,000 direct jobs and more than \$7.8 billion in consumer spending.

Air quality

- Mercury emissions in Hawaii decreased by nearly 34 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.