

# ARIZONA FAMILIES, WILDLIFE, PUBLIC LANDS, AND WATERS ARE THREATENED BY ROLLBACKS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS

Rollbacks in environmental protections over the past three years have created numerous threats to Arizona's public lands, waters, and wildlife - even the air we breathe.



These rollbacks pose very real threats to the health of our families and communities and will accelerate the impacts of climate change.

**OVERALL, NEARLY 100 SAFEGUARDS HAVE ALREADY BEEN ELIMINATED OR UNDERMINED, WITH NUMEROUS ADDITIONAL ROLLBACKS BEING PROPOSED**

Even during the COVID-19 global pandemic and the social unrest across the nation, the administration has announced policies that threaten the health and well-being of all Arizonans. It has even used the crisis to order a complete pause in enforcement of pollution rules which will disproportionately threaten minority and low-income communities.



## - PUBLIC LANDS -

- Despite the global pandemic, the administration announced its intention to **expand uranium mining**, including on a million acres of land near the Grand Canyon. Mining there would destroy wildlife habitat, stifle the outdoor recreation and tourism economy, jeopardize the **drinking water** for millions of people downstream, and threaten tribal communities which still suffer devastating health impacts from the legacy of past uranium mining.
- The BLM is proposing to **lift protections** on more than a quarter of a million acres in the Sonoran Desert National Monument in southern Arizona, which could threaten the most biologically diverse desert ecosystem in North America.
- The administration has proposed **allowing motorized electric bikes** on non-motorized trails in our national parks, wildlife refuges and BLM lands. This will degrade habitat, threaten wildlife and ultimately lead to conflicts with other recreationists who want to enjoy the pristine nature of these lands.

## - WATER -

- The administration's decision to repeal Waters of the U.S. protections is particularly troublesome in Arizona, where unlike other states, there are no similar state-level regulations to fall back on. This means that more than **90% of Arizona's streams and lakes are now completely unregulated** and unprotected, putting them at risk of pollution and destruction from development, oil and gas production, and other industrial activity.
- Nearly half of all Arizonans—48%—get their drinking water from streams that were covered by that safeguard and are now unprotected.



- The administration has decided to weaken regulations designed to get toxic PFAS chemicals out of water supplies, which disproportionately affects **low-income and minority communities**.

## - WILDLIFE -

- At least **75 endangered species** have been put at risk because of rollbacks in wetland protections
- Two-thirds of all species are vulnerable to climate change, which is expected to accelerate because of administration policies.
- More than **3 billion birds** have been lost since 1970. Dismantling the Migratory Bird Treaty Act could kill millions more from industrial activities. Over 320 bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act visit Arizona every year. Learn more about the threats to irreplaceable bird habitat in Arizona [here](#).



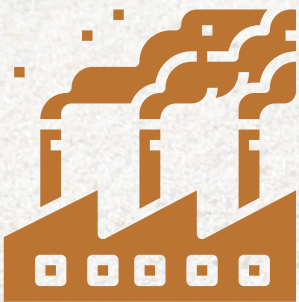
## - AIR -

- The United Health Foundation regularly ranks all 50 states based on the exposure to dangerous **[fine particle pollution](#)** in the air, with 1st representing the healthiest state and 50th the least healthy. **Arizona dropped from 37th in 2015 to 49th in 2019—the second worst ranking in the country.**
- According to a recent [report](#), in 2018 the Phoenix metro area reported 153 days with high ozone and/or particulate matter levels. Particulate matter poses a threat to human health and can lead to premature death, an irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma and other cardiovascular and respiratory problems.





- Rapidly rising temperatures in Arizona pose health risks everyone but are especially worrisome for people with heart conditions, respiratory illness and the elderly.
- A **coalition of public health organizations** said the EPA rollbacks of mercury and air toxic standards endanger the health of babies, children, pregnant women and other vulnerable populations.
- The EPA announced it wouldn't enforce pollution regulations during the COVID-19 pandemic, even though a recent **Harvard study** showed that people living in areas of higher pollution were more likely to die from COVID-19.



- An **executive order** issued by President Trump in early June eliminates environmental review of major infrastructure projects which are often built in or near minority communities. Left unchecked, those projects are more likely to pollute the air, water and soil which ultimately affects the health of nearby residents.

- CLIMATE CHANGE -

- The severity of summer droughts in Arizona is expected to more than **triple** by 2050, giving it the second-largest projected increase in the United States.
- Arizona is the **fourth fastest-warming** state in the United States, according to data on warming rates since 1970.
- Arizona currently experiences **80 days** of high **wildfire**. By 2050, that number is expected to increase to **115 days**—the **second-highest** number in the country. Nearly **2.9 million** Arizona residents, or **45 percent** of the state's population, currently face an elevated risk of wildfire. And the wildfires are threatening wildlife, including fish which need to be **evacuated** in order to survive.
- Proposed rollbacks to NEPA means large highway construction plans, government building proposals and other large infrastructure projects will **no longer have to take potential climate impacts into consideration.**

