EPA's CLEAN POWER PLAN, CLIMATE CHANGE AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

Carbon pollution threatens the health of Americans and our environment. We are already seeing an increase in temperatures, extreme weather events, drought, flooding, and sea level rise in areas across the United States, and these impacts are expected to get worse as carbon pollution in our atmosphere increases. On August 3, 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as part of President Obama's Climate Action Plan, finalized a historic plan to cut carbon pollution from power plants – the largest source of carbon pollution in the United States. EPA's Clean Power Plan will maintain an affordable, reliable energy system, while cutting pollution and protecting public health and the environment now and for future generations.

IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON OUTDOOR RECREATION

Recreation is influenced by weather and climate. Climate change will alter the places where recreation, tourism, and leisure activities are best suited. Weather conditions that differ from historical patterns will pose a challenge for tourism that relies on predictable water and air temperatures, including boating, recreational fishing, diving, snorkeling, skiing, and other recreational activities.

Climate change will influence the distribution and composition of plants and animals across the United States. Fishing, bird watching, hunting, and other wildlife-related activities will be affected as habitats shift and relationships among species change. [National Climate Assessment, 2014]

Changes in precipitation and warmer weather will challenge tourism and recreation in many states. The West will be increasingly affected by drought, reduced stream flow, warmer weather, and a shorter snow season, influencing everything from the ski industry to lake and river recreation. In the West and Northeast, snow accumulation is expected to decrease, likely decreasing the number of days when recreational snow activities can take place, and potentially resulting in considerable job losses. [National Climate Assessment, 2014]

Coastal areas will be adversely affected by climate change impacts. Recreation and tourism along the coasts is the largest and fastest-growing sector of the U.S. service industry, accounting for 85% of the $700 billion annual tourism-related revenues. Coasts are expected to be affected by sea level rise, beach erosion, increased severity of storms, changes in the distribution of marine species, changes in wind patterns and wave heights, and, in some regions, increased coral bleaching and die-offs. In the United States, reported cases of seafood-borne illness from Vibrio bacteria increased by 116% between 1998 and 2012, due to higher

ocean temperatures which have enhanced the growth and range of this harmful bacteria. [National Climate Assessment, 2014]

Climate change threatens recreational freshwater fishing, which contributes significantly to local economies in many parts of the country. Most fish species thrive only in certain ranges of water temperature and stream flow conditions. Without considerable global action on climate change, a recent EPA analysis found that habitat suitable for cold-water fisheries (e.g., trout) could decline nationally by over 60% by 2100, and disappear almost entirely from Appalachia. [EPA, Climate Change in the United States: Benefits of Global Action, 2015]

THE CLEAN POWER PLAN: SIGNIFICANT CLIMATE AND PUBLIC HEALTH BENEFITS

The Clean Power Plan achieves significant reductions in carbon pollution from power plants while advancing clean energy innovation, development and deployment. It follows on and will help advance current trends in the power sector towards increased use of low- and no-carbon electricity generation and greater use of energy efficiency, in ways that will preserve affordability for consumers and continues U.S. leadership in addressing climate change. States and businesses have already charted a course toward cleaner, more efficient power, and the Clean Power Plan builds on their progress.

The transition to clean energy is happening faster than anticipated. This means carbon and air pollution are already decreasing, improving public health each and every year. The Clean Power Plan accelerates this momentum, putting us on pace to cut this dangerous pollution to historically low levels in the future. When the Clean Power Plan is fully in place in 2030, carbon pollution from the power sector will be 32 percent below 2005 levels, securing progress and making sure it continues.

The transition to cleaner sources of energy will better protect Americans from other harmful air pollution, too. By 2030, emissions of SO2 from power plants will be 90 percent lower compared to 2005 levels, and emissions of NOx will be 72 percent lower. Because these pollutants can create dangerous soot and smog, the historically low levels mean we will avoid thousands of premature deaths and have thousands fewer asthma attacks and hospitalizations in 2030 and every year beyond.

Within this larger context, the CPP itself is projected to contribute significant pollution reductions, resulting in important benefits.

The Clean Power Plan will:

- Cut hundreds of millions of tons of carbon pollution and hundreds of thousands of tons of harmful soot- and smog-forming particle pollution that makes people sick. Together

these reductions will result in significant near-term public health benefits, especially for the most vulnerable citizens.
    - From the soot and smog reductions alone, for every dollar invested through the Clean Power Plan—American families will see up to $4 in health benefits in 2030.
    - The Clean Power Plan will significantly improve health by avoiding each year:
        - Up to 3,600 premature deaths
        - Up to 1,700 heart attacks
        - 90,000 asthma attacks
        - 300,000 missed workdays and schooldays
- Put our nation on track to cut carbon pollution from the power sector by 32 percent by 2030 while maintaining electric system reliability and affordable electricity.
    - In addition to helping make our electric system cleaner, the Clean Power Plan will make electricity more affordable in the long run. EPA's analysis of impacts on electricity bills shows that Americans are expected to save over $80 annually on their utility bills by 2030.
- Reduce CO_2 emissions from power plants—an essential step towards reducing the impacts of climate change and providing a more certain future for our environment, our health and future generations.
    - By acting on climate now, we are fulfilling a moral obligation to our children and grandchildren to leave them with a healthier, more stable planet.
- Change the international dynamic and leverage international action. Climate change is a global challenge and requires global action. When the U.S. leads, other nations follow.

GET INVOLVED

Public engagement was essential throughout the development of the Clean Power Plan, and EPA will continue to engage with communities and the public during the rule's implementation. The EPA will also be conducting a robust outreach effort for communities throughout the comment period for the proposed federal plan.

To ensure opportunities for the public to continue to participate in decision making, EPA will be providing training and resources throughout the implementation process. EPA is also requiring that states demonstrate how they are actively engaging with communities in the formulation of state plans developed for the Clean Power Plan. To learn more please visit the Clean Power Plan Portal for Communities at www2.epa.gov/cleanpowerplan/clean-power-plan-toolbox-communities.

LEARN MORE

For more information on the Clean Power Plan, visit www.epa.gov/cleanpowerplan.

For tips on how you can reduce your carbon footprint, visit www.epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/.