



## Hobbling the Environmental Protection Agency would threaten New Mexico's health, families, jobs and economy

Support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is essential to protecting New Mexico's air, water, and land. From safeguarding waterways from dangerous runoff to cleaning up toxic sites, EPA grants provided the state with more than \$197 million in funding from 2012 to 2016. Unfortunately, the Trump Administration and many Members of Congress are working to hollow out the EPA and cut its budget to its lowest level since the 1970s, posing threats to millions of New Mexicans who depend on the agency to protect their health and the state's tourism and business climate.

EPA's budget will be negotiated in a backroom by a President and EPA Administrator who have laid out a roadmap to cripple the EPA, along with many Congressional leaders who have shown little interest in protecting environmental safeguards. The EPA's budget could be bargained away in the blink of an eye, and New Mexicans could be the losers.

### Environment and public health are at risk

#### More dangerous runoff in the water

**Program at Risk: Water pollution control grants. Proposed cut: 33%**

Because New Mexico is so arid, 87 percent of its public water supply comes from ground water. The state's five major river systems, and the Rio Grande, the fourth longest river system in North America, supply more than half the water needed to support agriculture in the Rio Grande Basin. EPA Water Pollution Control grants support a wide variety of water pollution prevention and control programs and activities, including monitoring and assessing water quality, developing water quality standards, identifying impaired waters and total maximum daily loads, managing national pollutant discharge elimination system permits, ensuring compliance, implementing enforcement actions, protecting source water, and managing outreach and education programs. New Mexico received \$14.8 million in such grants from 2012 to 2016.

#### Leaking underground storage tank grants, the enemy underground

**Program at Risk: Leaking underground storage tank categorical grants. Proposed cut: Eliminated**

Across the country, thousands of underground storage tanks and accompanying pipes — many of them made from older corroding steel — hold and carry a variety of fuels and chemicals. When tanks leak harmful chemicals such as oil, gas, benzene and toluene into soil and ground water, drinking water and soil are fouled, community health is jeopardized, and economic development is crippled. Preventing and addressing spills from these backlogs is a major environmental priority.

New Mexico has a backlog of more than 830 leaking underground storage tanks, and, from 2012 to 2016, the state received more than \$5.5 million in EPA grant funding to assist in leaking underground storage tank cleanup. EPA has supported essential programs in New Mexico that monitor underground storage tanks, detect leaks of petroleum products, address the causes, repair any damage to soil or groundwater and hold polluters accountable for paying their fair share of cleanup costs. The Trump Administration's proposed budget would cut 48% from the overall Leaking Underground Storage Tank program.

\* FY12-16 funding totals obtained from <https://www.usaspending.gov/Pages/Default.aspx>

## More Code Red days

**Program at Risk: State & Local Air Quality Management Grants | Tribal Air Quality Management Grants**  
**Proposed cut: 33% | 30%**

For decades, the Clean Air Act and EPA grants have helped states and communities make historic strides in reducing air pollution, with EPA grants covering almost 30 percent of state and local air monitoring costs. Since 2012, EPA has provided more than \$12 million in grants to local governments in New Mexico to support their air pollution control efforts, including monitoring of harmful particulates, ozone, lead and other pollutants. Cleaner air means more productive workers, fewer Code Orange days where parents must keep kids indoors, and fewer attacks for the more than 120,000 adults and 34,000 children in New Mexico diagnosed with asthma.

## Fewer clean-ups and economic development at polluted properties

**Program at risk: Brownfield grants. Proposed cut: 28%**

Brownfield sites are properties where contamination prevents economic development and threatens public health and safety. But they have the potential – once cleaned up – to generate new jobs. Research has shown that residential property values near restored brownfield sites increased between 5 and 15 percent and can increase property values in a 1.24-mile radius of that site. A study analyzing data near 48 brownfield sites shows an estimated \$29 million to \$97 million in additional tax revenue was generated for local governments in a single year after cleanup. This is two to seven times more than the \$12.4 million EPA contributed to those brownfield sites.

For the 260 Brownfield sites in New Mexico, before cleanup and redevelopment can happen safely and be permitted to go forward, they must be assessed and tested for soil contamination. The risk of hazardous substances, petroleum or asbestos being released when disturbing soil at the site or dismantling properties. To carry out this assessment work, EPA funds pay for expert tests of soil, ground water, sediment, surface water and vapors. EPA grants also help pay for the actual cleanup. From 2012-16, New Mexico received \$2.9 million in EPA grants that have helped local counties and communities clean up polluted properties to protect people's lives and spark job-creating economic redevelopment.

## Leaving tribes more vulnerable to environmental threats

**Program at Risk: Tribal general assistance program. Proposed cut: 32%**

New Mexico tribes received \$11.6 million from 2012 to 2016 through EPA's Tribal Environmental General Assistance Program. Congress established the program in 1992 to help tribes establish environmental programs and develop and implement plans for handling hazardous waste. Grants to tribes have helped them manage solid and electronics waste, backhaul abandoned vehicles and lead acid batteries, package hazardous wastes and recyclables, research local threats, build management and response capacity, educate and organize their communities. The Trump administration's budget would cut these grants by 32 percent.

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