

How hobbling the Environmental Protection Agency would threaten Colorado’s health, families, jobs and economy

Support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is essential to protecting Colorado’s air, water and land. From reducing water pollution to cleaning up toxic waste sites, EPA grants provided the state with more than \$295 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 Coloradans who depend on the agency to protect their health and the state’s tourism and business climate.

Summary

The Trump Administration’s road map: Eliminating and slashing EPA programs that protect Colorado’s environment

Programs, Grants, and Initiatives	Purpose	Trump Budget	2012-2016 Grants
Science to Achieve Results	University research related to human health and safety	Eliminate	\$16.0 million
Leaking Underground Storage Tanks grants	Protects water and soil from tanks leaking chemicals	Eliminate	\$7.1 million
Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Program (section 319 grants)	Fights runoff pollution from roads, parking lots and excessive fertilizer	Eliminate	\$6.5 million
Superfund Site-specific Grants	Supports toxic and radioactive waste cleanup of most polluted sites	Cut 30%	\$44.9 million
Brownfield Grants	Supports cleanup and redevelopment of polluted sites	Cut 30%	\$9.2 million
Performance Partnership Grants	Helps states with their priority pollution problems	Cut 18%	\$58.2 million

More than 5.5 million Coloradans, nearly a third of them Latino, depend on a safe and healthy environment to live a good life. Over the last five years, Colorado has received more than \$295 million in grants from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to protect the state’s environment and economy. Millions more have gone to support state and local environmental and public health efforts, including assistance in the form of science and technology, legal expertise and enforcement.

But the Trump Administration and many Members of Congress are working to cut the EPA’s budget by 30 percent. These historic cuts would reverse decades of progress in cleaning up the toxic substances that foul drinking water, air and soil, posing grave threats to health and safety. They would strip the EPA of decades of scientific and technical

expertise that Colorado has turned to time and again to support state and local efforts to cleanups of dangerous pollution, as well as the legal support to go after polluters.

The threats are serious. Cleanup of hazardous Superfund sites could be delayed, and corroding underground storage tanks could leak more harmful chemicals into both soil and water. Colorado’s drinking water and recreational rivers and streams could be more vulnerable to harmful runoff of pesticides and industrial chemicals. There would be fewer tools to address polluted air.

For every family, especially their vulnerable children and seniors, these cuts would move Colorado’s environment backward to a dirtier and more dangerous era: More poisons in the soil and toxic substances in the water, and more of the cancers that follow. More asthma attacks and smog, and more “Code Red” bad-air days where kids and seniors should stay indoors. More mercury, arsenic, lead and other toxic substances that have no place in anyone’s lungs or drinking water. More pesticides in food, water, and the environment. More unaddressed waste sites that threaten community health and sap economic development. And fewer investigations to make polluters pay for the costs of cleaning up their waste.

For Colorado’s Latino, Native American and African-American populations, these cuts would do extra damage, in part because minorities are more likely to live near hazardous waste sites. Tribal communities would have a harder time cleaning up hazardous waste sites. The Trump Administration is even trying to shut down a modest program, EPA’s Office of Environmental Justice, which has enjoyed bipartisan support for its efforts to ensure that everyone gets equal protection from environmental and health hazards.

As the Congress moves towards adopting a new budget this fall, cuts have already been proposed by both the Administration and by Appropriations Committee members in Congress. Many vital spending decisions will be made behind closed doors as members horse-trade and make deals with an Administration that is eager to jettison pollution prevention and cleanup programs. Why is it so important to understand which anti-pollution programs are being targeted for deep cuts or outright elimination? So that Coloradans can weigh in with their Members of Congress to ensure that EPA funding is fully preserved.

The Threat to Colorado’s Land

The Trump administration’s proposed EPA budget would endanger programs that protect Coloradans from the health and safety risks of contaminated soil and help clean up pollution so that properties can be returned to productive economic use. The positive effects of clean soil multiply through the environment, since contaminated soil can also pollute groundwater.

Fewer cleanups of toxic chemicals, less accountability for polluters

Program at Risk: Superfund program, including emergency response and enforcement funds

EPA provides grants to states, tribes and local communities to deal with Superfund sites. Colorado had 20 hazardous waste sites on the EPA Superfund National Priorities List in mid-2017.¹ The state received \$44.9 million in Superfund grants from 2012 to 2016, including cleanup of the California Gulch site in Lake County and a water treatment facility that eliminates toxic pollution from water near a Superfund site in Clear Creek County, between Denver and ski resorts along the I-70 corridor. EPA’s expertise is vital in assessing the chemical contents of waste sites and the risks they present, designing and putting measures in place to protect health and safety, and holding polluters accountable.

The Trump Administration’s budget would slash funding designed to deal with these hazardous sites. Hazardous substance cleanup spending through Superfund would be cut by 30 percent, including an 18 percent cut to emergency response funds, which help clean up the most urgent threats. And the Administration’s cuts would shift more cleanup costs from polluters to taxpayers, by instituting 37 percent cuts in enforcement funds that help efforts track

EPA Funding to Colorado	
FY12-FY16	
Superfund Grants	\$44.9 Million

down polluters and to make them pay to clean up sites for which they are responsible.



By cleaning up vast amounts of toxic waste, the EPA’s Superfund program has reduced severe threats to Coloradans’ health and returned contaminated properties to job-creating productivity (or restored them as vital natural habitats). Without Superfund cleanups, harmful industrial toxins like lead, mercury, arsenic, and dioxin are left to render entire locations dangerous or uninhabitable, and leak into water and soil.

Fewer clean-ups and economic development at polluted properties

Program at Risk: Brownfield grants

Brownfield sites are properties where contamination prevents economic development and threatens public health and safety. Research has shown that residential property values near restored brownfields 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 brownfields 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 brownfields.²

EPA Funding to Colorado FY12-FY16	
Brownfield Grants	\$9.2 Million

Before cleanup and redevelopment can happen safely and be permitted to go forward, brownfield sites 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.

The Trump administration’s proposed budget would cut brownfield restoration programs by 30 percent.

These cuts could hamper cleanups at more than 450 brownfield sites in Colorado.³ From 2012-16, Colorado received \$9.2 million in EPA grants programs from 2012 to 2016 for assessment and cleanup of brownfield sites that have helped local counties and communities clean up polluted properties to protect people’s lives and spark job-creating economic redevelopment.

The enemy underground: leaking underground storage tank grants

Program at Risk: Leaking underground storage tank grants and trust fund

Across the country, thousands of underground storage tanks and accompanying pipes—many of them made from older corrosive steel—hold and carry a variety of fuels and chemicals.⁴ When tanks are at risk of leaking harmful chemicals such as oil, gas, benzene and toluene into soil and ground water, drinking water is fouled, backyards and businesses become dangerous, community health is jeopardized, and economic development is crippled.

EPA Funding to Colorado FY12-FY16	
Leaking Underground Storage Tanks	\$7.1 Million

Colorado has a backlog of more than 500 underground storage tanks (or LUSTs).⁵ EPA has supported essential programs in Colorado to monitor these tanks, detect leaks of petroleum products, address the causes of leaks, repair damage to soil or groundwater, hold parties responsible for cleanup

costs, and contribute funds for cleanup if the responsible party can't be found. Leaking underground storage tanks received \$7.1 million in U.S. EPA grant funding in Colorado from 2012 to 2016.

The Trump Administration's proposed budget would curtail leaking tank assistance to states. Colorado's \$7.1 million receives federal LUST grants from two sources. The first, prevention and detection grants, would be eliminated entirely. The second, a trust fund paid for by a one-cent federal fuel tax, to support monitoring and cleanup assistance, would be cut in half.

The Threat to Colorado's Air

Coloradans have reason to be concerned about the air they breathe. According to the American Lung Association, two of Colorado's major population centers are in the top 15 most polluted cities for ozone: Denver and Aurora are 11th and Ft. Collins ranks 15th. Ten of Colorado's 23 counties got an "F" for high ozone days in 2012-2015. In addition, Denver received an "F" for particle pollution.⁶

More code red days

Program at Risk: Clean Air Act grants

For decades, the Clean Air Act and U.S. EPA grants have helped states and communities make historic progress in reducing air pollution. Nationwide, U.S. EPA funds almost one-third of state and local programs to monitor air quality and alert residents when air quality is potentially harmful. Cleaner air means more productive workers, fewer Code Red days when parents must keep kids indoors, and fewer attacks for the more than 338,000 adults and 96,000 children in Colorado already diagnosed with asthma.⁷

EPA Funding to Colorado FY12-FY16	
Air Pollution Programs	\$960,416

Colorado received more than \$960,000 in these grants from 2012 to 2016. Recipients included the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe.

The Trump Administration budget would cut nearly one-third from programs that help states, local and tribal communities monitor air quality.

The Threat to Colorado's water

Colorado has more than 105,344 river miles and more than 249,787 lake acres. The state depends heavily on its rivers. According to a recent U.S Geological Survey study, more than half the flow of rivers in the upper part of the Colorado River Basin is sustained by groundwater.⁸ This highlights the need to better protect a resource threatened by overuse and climate change.

More dangerous runoff in the water

Program at Risk: Nonpoint source pollution implementation grants

Polluted runoff, sometimes called "nonpoint source pollution," is the number one source of water pollution in the United States today.⁹ In contrast to "point-source" pollution, which can be traced to a single location such as a factory waste pipe, "nonpoint source" pollution seeps off broad areas such as parking lots and roads, construction sites, agricultural lands, etc. Storm water can threaten water supplies with animal waste laden with harmful pathogens, sewage, industrial waste, pesticides, mine waste, and oil and gas from roadways.

EPA Funding to Colorado FY12-FY16	
Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants	\$18.2 Million

The Trump Administration’s proposed budget would eliminate an EPA program that has provided more than \$6.5 million to Colorado from 2012 to 2016 to control pollutants carried by rainfall runoff into its drinking water, rivers and lakes.

Other Challenges

Less money for environmental research

Program at Risk: Science to achieve results

EPA’s Science to Achieve Results Program, or STAR, provides funding for research projects and graduate fellowships that help address pressing scientific challenges and build the workforce of future environmental scientists. Colorado received \$16 million in STAR grants from 2012 to 2016, including \$7 million to the University of Colorado, \$5 million to Colorado State University and \$1.1 million to the National Jewish Medical & Research Center in Denver. The Trump Administration’s proposed budget would eliminate the program.

EPA Funding to Colorado FY12-FY16	
Science to Achieve Results	\$16.0 Million

Less flexibility to pursue emerging problems

Program at Risk: Performance partnership grants

The Trump Administration has proposed an 18 percent reduction in EPA Performance Partnership Grants, which allow Colorado to apply EPA grant money toward its most pressing air, water and land issues. These grants allow states to use EPA awards with greater flexibility for addressing priority environmental problems or program needs, streamline paperwork and accounting procedures to reduce administrative costs, and try cross-program initiatives and approaches that were difficult to fund under traditional category grants. Colorado received \$58.2 million in Performance Partnership Grants from 2012 to 2016.

EPA Funding to Colorado FY12-FY16	
Performance Partnership Grants	\$58.2 Million

Colorado EPA Grants, FY2012-2016

(with information on the purpose of grants of \$500,000 or more)

Recipient	Grants	Purpose
CO Water Resources & Power Development Author	\$131,323,000	Capitalization Grants for Clean Water State Revolving Funds Capitalization Grants for Drinking Water State Revolving Funds Capitalization Grants for State Revolving Fund Safe Drinking Water State Revolving Fund
CO Department of Public Health and Environment	\$105,989,076	Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program and Related Assistance Multi-Media Capacity Building Grants for States and Tribes National Clean Diesel Emissions Reduction Program National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program (B) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants Performance Partnership Grants Source Reduction Assistance State and Tribal Response Program Grants

		<p>State Clean Diesel Grant Program State Clean Diesel Grant Program (B) Superfund State, Political Subdivision, and Indian Tribe Site-Specific Cooperative Agreements Surveys, Studies, Research, Investigations, Demonstrations, and Special Purpose Activities Relating to the Clean Air Act Water Pollution Control State, Interstate, and Tribal Program Support Water Quality Management Planning WPC State and Interstate Program Support</p>
Southern Ute Indian Tribe	\$7,813,943	<p>Air Pollution Control Program Support Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program and Related Assistance State and Tribal Response Program Grants Superfund State Political Subdivision and Indian Tribe Site Specific Coope Training, Investigations, and Special Purpose Activities of Federally-Recognized Indian Tribes Consistent With the Clean Air Act (CAA), Tribal Sovereignty and the Protection and Management of Air Quality Underground Storage Tank Prevention, Detection and Compliance Program Water Pollution Control State, Interstate, and Tribal Program Support WPC State and Interstate Program Support</p>
Regents of the University of Colorado	\$7,314,116	<p>Office of Research and Development Consolidated Research/Training/Fellowships Science To Achieve Results (STAR) Research Program</p>
CO Department of Labor & Employment	\$6,470,968	<p>Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Corrective Action Program Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund Program State Underground Storage Tanks Program Underground Storage Tank Prevention, Detection and Compliance Program</p>
Colorado State University	\$6,165,026	<p>Consolidated Pesticide Compliance Monitoring Regional Agricultural IPM Grants Regional Wetlands Program Development Grants Research, Development, Monitoring, Public Education, Training, Demonstrations, and Studies Science To Achieve Results (STAR) Research Program</p>
Ute Mountain Ute Tribe	\$5,118,293	<p>Air Pollution Control Program Support Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements Environmental Information Exchange Network Grant Program and Related Assistance Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants Performance Partnership Grants State and Tribal Response Program Grants State Underground Storage Tanks Program Training, Investigations, and Special Purpose Activities of Federally-Recognized Indian Tribes Consistent With the Clean Air Act (CAA), Tribal Sovereignty and the Protection and Management of Air Quality Underground Storage Tank Prevention, Detection and Compliance Program Water Pollution Control State, Interstate, and Tribal Program Support WPC State and Interstate Program Support</p>
Multiple Recipients	\$2,847,977	

CO Department of Public Health & Environment	\$2,754,298	Superfund State, Political Subdivision, and Indian Tribe Site-Specific Cooperative Agreements
Colorado Department of Agriculture	\$2,444,816	Performance Partnership Grants
Colorado School of Mines	\$1,949,462	Consolidated Research-Office of Research and Development Regional Applied Research Efforts (RARE) Science To Achieve Results (STAR) Research Program
National Jewish Medical & Research Center	\$1,116,744	Science To Achieve Results (STAR) Research Program
Water Research Foundation	\$1,000,000	Consolidated Research-Office of Research and Development Science To Achieve Results (STAR) Research Program
Denver Urban Renewal Authority	\$900,000	Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements
Grand Mesa Metro District #2	\$825,000	Congressionally Mandated Projects
Leonardo Academy Inc.	\$735,781	National Clean Diesel Funding Assistance Program (B)
CO State University	\$626,029	Regional Wetlands Program Development Grants
National Environmental Health Association	\$620,863	Surveys, Studies, Research, Investigations, Demonstrations, and Special Purpose Activities Relating to the Clean Air Act
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment	\$529,200	Underground Storage Tank Prevention, Detection and Compliance Program
CO Oil and Gas Conservation Commission	\$508,402	State Underground Water Source Protection
City of Fort Collins	\$500,000	Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements
City of Trinidad	\$500,000	Brownfields Assessment and Cleanup Cooperative Agreements
Pueblo City County Health Department	\$499,953	
City and County of Denver	\$485,000	
CO Department of Natural Resources	\$449,951	
National Conference of State Legislatures	\$426,253	
City of Montrose	\$400,000	
City of Northglenn	\$400,000	
City of Wheat Ridge	\$400,000	
Lake County	\$400,000	
Colorado Department of Health	\$382,148	
Groundwork Denver Incorporated	\$325,000	
City of Monte Vista	\$291,000	
Conejos CCWI - Conejos County Clean Water In	\$265,000	
Earth Force Inc.	\$210,000	
Colorado Department of Local Affairs	\$206,400	

San Juan County	\$203,898
Adams County	\$200,000
Alamosa County Economic Development	\$200,000
Kiowa County	\$200,000
Lakewood HA - Lakewood Housing Authority	\$200,000
Laramie Rivers Conservation District	\$200,000
Lower Willow Creek Restoration Company	\$200,000
La Plata County	\$179,475
University of Colorado Denver	\$170,000
Western Governors' Association	\$152,484
National Jewish Health	\$150,000
City & County of Denver	\$135,000
Cloud City Conservation Center	\$120,984
Mountain Studies Institute	\$100,000
The Keystone Center	\$99,857
Eco-Cycle Incorporated	\$91,000
Greenway Foundation	\$90,000
San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council	\$83,400
Yampatika Educational Partnership	\$80,273
American Lung Association of the Southwest	\$80,000
Southwest Energy Efficiency Project	\$80,000
Citizens for Lowry Landfill Environment	\$75,000
Barr Lake and Milton Reservoir Watershed Association	\$60,000
Clear Creek County	\$60,000
Four Corners Office for Resource Efficiency	\$60,000
City of Durango	\$55,403
Environmental Learning for Kids	\$53,002
Manomet Inc.	\$52,140
Standard Mine Technical Advisory Group	\$50,000

Trees, Water & People	\$48,000
High Country Conservation Center	\$29,985
Citizens for Clean Air in Pueblo for Edu.	\$25,000
Denver C&CHA - Housing Authority of the City	\$25,000
Urban Drainage & Flood Control District	\$12,500
San Juan Basin Health Department	\$5,560
Denver Indian Center Inc.	\$1,744

Notes

Unless otherwise indicated, all data in this report are current as of July 2017 and figures for government spending and grants are drawn from www.usaspending.gov, and from official federal government budget documents. Additional information is drawn from state budget sources.

¹ <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/cursites/srchsites.cfm>

² <https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/epa-brownfields-funding-announced-roseville-newark-norwalk-painesville-piqua-port>

³ <https://www.epa.gov/cleanups/cleanups-my-community>

⁴ <https://www.epa.gov/ust/learn-about-underground-storage-tanks-usts>

⁵ <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-11/documents/ca-16-34.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.lung.org/assets/documents/healthy-air/state-of-the-air/state-of-the-air-2017.pdf>, pp. 15, 17.

⁷ Ibid., p. 68.

⁸ <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2015WR017963/abstract>

⁹ http://www.iisgcp.org/catalog/downloads_09/id_256.pdf