



Sources

Dirty Water, Dirty Government

Document A: *2 Last States to Be Urged to Join Ohio River Sanitation Compact.*
2 Last States to Be Urged to Join Ohio River Sanitation Compact. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.newspapers.com/clip/28985606/1944-2-more-states-to-join-ohio-river/>

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Document B: Excerpt from: *Dirty Water: Federal Deregulation and the Re-Polluting of America.* (2020, March). Retrieved from <http://origins.osu.edu/article/dirty-water-federal-deregulation-trump-pollution>

At first, localities used nuisance laws to force problematic polluters to change their behavior. By the early 1900s, some states had begun to lightly regulate certain pollutants, and many municipalities had begun to treat human waste. Most cities, however, still operated—and expanded—sewer systems that drained waste directly into waterways without treatment.

By the 1920s and 1930s, this ad hoc approach had become too cumbersome and ineffective to bring much relief. Even large water bodies such as the Ohio River obviously were polluted. Working through the Cincinnati Chamber of Commerce in the 1930s, Cincinnati Street Railway employee Hudson Biery raised awareness about the water quality in the Ohio, starting a campaign for regional co-operation to control it.

In a memorable phrase, Biery noted that “citizens of Cincinnati don’t want to be reminded every time asparagus is served for supper in Pittsburgh or some other upstream community.” He and other Cincinnati businessmen formed the Stream Pollution Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, an influential group that included Robert A. Taft, the future U.S. senator and GOP leader known as “Mr. Republican.”

The group pressed state governments in the eight states from which waters drained into the Ohio—from New York to Illinois—to develop solutions for the entire watershed.

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Document C: Cuyahoga River Pollution Political Cartoon

Rotman, M. (n.d.). "Waterfoul," 1964. Retrieved from

<https://clevelandhistorical.org/files/show/915>



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Document D: *Cuyahoga River Fire*

Photo from: *Dirty Water: Federal Deregulation and the Re-Polluting of America*. (2020, March). Retrieved from <http://origins.osu.edu/sites/origins.osu.edu/files/article18-19/Cuyahoga%20River%20Fire.jpg>



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Document E: Excerpt from: *Dirty Water: Federal Deregulation and the Re-Polluting of America*. (2020, March). Retrieved from <http://origins.osu.edu/article/dirty-water-federal-deregulation-trump-pollution>

That revision, passed in 1972 and known as the Clean Water Act, empowered the relatively new Environmental Protection Agency to set water quality standards and force states to create plans for improvement.

The federal government had finally moved beyond research spending and matching grants for infrastructure. The era of federal regulation had begun, and henceforth individual polluters needed to acquire federal permits and meet federal guidelines. Communities too were compelled to upgrade and maintain sewage treatment plants to ensure compliance.



The EPA gradually diminished pollution from point sources—individual, identifiable sources of liquid wastes. The ecological health of water bodies improved, recreational opportunities expanded, and threats to drinking water sources declined.

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Document F: Excerpt from: *Dirty Water: Federal Deregulation and the Re-Polluting of America*. (2020, March). Retrieved from <http://origins.osu.edu/article/dirty-water-federal-deregulation-trump-pollution>

More broadly, many people wondered why progress under the Clean Water Act had apparently stalled, and how even a large, critical waterbody such as Lake Erie could experience such degradation.

Five years later, the summer of 2019, the now-annual bloom covered 620 square miles of the lake. Everyone knew that phosphorus pollution fueled the extraordinary algal growth, but the problem was complex, with many causes including climate change.

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Document G: Excerpt from: *Dirty Water: Federal Deregulation and the Re-Polluting of America*. (2020, March). Retrieved from <http://origins.osu.edu/article/dirty-water-federal-deregulation-trump-pollution>

First, his administration has eased natural resource extraction and delivery, especially regarding energy resources: natural gas, oil, and coal.

Second, he has eased or eliminated regulations that impinge on rural property rights, which is to say, he has made it easier for farmers to use their land as they see fit.

Environmental deregulation has thus pleased two important Trump constituencies: the energy sector with its deep pockets and the agricultural sector with its electoral-college votes.

Although the regulatory rollbacks have affected all types of environmental protections, one of the most significant reversed the 2015 Waters of the United States rule, which clarified the meaning of “waters” as pertains to the Clean Water Act of 1972 (and its 1977 and 1987 amendments.)

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Document H: Excerpt from: Friedman, L., & Davenport, C. (2019, September 12). *Trump Administration Rolls Back Clean Water Protections*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/12/climate/trump-administration-rolls-back-clean-water-protections.html>

A wide range of environmental protections are similarly being eliminated. The administration is rushing to clear the way for oil exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, for instance, and weakening protections for endangered species in an effort to help drillers. And, in December 2017, Mr. Trump embarked on the biggest land protection rollback in United States history when he reduced two national monuments in Utah by some two million acres.

The Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers, which worked together to write the original Obama water rule, are expected to issue a new, looser replacement regulation by the end of this year. It is expected that the new measure, still being



developed, will retain federal protections for larger bodies of water, the rivers that drain into them and wetlands that are directly adjacent to those bodies of water.

But it will quite likely strip away protections for streams that run only during or after rainfalls, and for wetlands that are not adjacent to major bodies of water or connected to them by a surface channel. Those changes would represent a victory for farmers and rural landowners who aggressively lobbied the Trump administration.

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Document I: Sculpture of Donald Trump at G20 Summit

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Grossplastik_Trump_Baby_G20_Summit.jpg



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