



Damaging Maine:

The Impacts of Proposed Cuts to the EPA Budget



Natural Resources
Council of Maine



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The Impacts of Proposed Cuts to the EPA Budget

The proposed federal budget cuts would shatter the EPA-State partnership that is the foundation for environmental protection in America.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Trump Administration is proposing to slash Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) programs that reduce pollution, save lives, strengthen our economy, and protect our communities and quality of life. The Administration's Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Blueprint singles out EPA for the deepest cuts of any domestic agency, cutting its budget by \$2.6 billion (31%) and its workforce by 3,200 (21%), and completely eliminating more than 50 EPA programs.¹ These cuts would cause serious harm nationwide and would be particularly damaging for states like Maine where our environment and economy are tightly intertwined.

EPA's proposed FY18 budget, adjusted for inflation, would be cut to levels not seen since the 1970s. The radical staffing cuts would be unprecedented in the 47-year history of the agency. Because much of EPA's budget supports initiatives carried out at the state level, the severity of these cuts would cripple the ability of Maine and other states to protect our air, water, and health. In fact, the cuts would set the states up for failure. And failure within individual states would mean more cross-border pollution to neighboring states—a serious concern for Maine.



The Trump Administration has singled out the EPA for the most radical budget cuts of any domestic agency, terminating and slashing scores of programs important for Maine.

¹ The EPA budget is about two-tenths of one percent of overall federal spending. The Administration's budget would cut EPA by nearly one-third, shifting these funds to the Department of Defense, where they would increase defense spending by 0.25%. A massive EPA budget cut would provide an inconsequential DoD increase.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) depends greatly on EPA funding. In 2016, DEP received \$11.4 million in dedicated grants from EPA, which amounted to more than 20% of the Department's budget and paid for nearly 100 personnel. This money supports nearly every aspect of DEP's work: licensing, permitting, enforcement, resource assessment, mitigation, and compliance with the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and hazardous waste and other environmental laws.

Over the past decade, EPA funding has played an increasingly important role in protecting Maine's environment. As the State has cut DEP's budget and staffing, a larger proportion of the Department's personnel has been funded by EPA. As a result, the proposed EPA cuts would decimate DEP staff in some program areas, making it virtually impossible for them to perform their responsibilities. These cuts would harm Maine's economy, particularly our efforts to redevelop sites with contaminated soils and buildings, would impede the permitting process for new developments, and increase conflict about the protection of Maine's natural resources.

Without question, these cuts would cause widespread damage. They would make it extremely hard for DEP to ensure that our water is clean, our air is breathable, and our communities and Maine people are protected from toxic hazards.



The proposed EPA cuts would make it extremely difficult for Maine to ensure that our water is clean, our air is breathable, and our people are safe from toxic hazards.

These cuts would cause serious harm nationwide and would be particularly damaging for states like Maine where our environment and economy are tightly intertwined.

FINDINGS

The proposed EPA budget cuts would damage virtually all aspects of environmental protection in Maine, and would be especially harmful in the following areas:

Putting Maine's Clean Water at Risk The budget proposes deep cuts in EPA funding that is vital for the protection of Maine's rivers, lakes, streams, and coastal waters. Of particular concern, the budget calls for elimination of the Non-Point Source (NPS) pollution program, which protects lakes and other waters by reducing runoff of pesticides, nutrients, fertilizer, and other contaminants, which are a major source of water pollution. These funding cuts would jeopardize the water quality of Maine's 6,000 lakes, which provide \$3.5 billion a year to Maine's economy and support 52,000 jobs.

Increasing Air Pollution and Health Threats The EPA proposal includes a 30% cut to funding that helps DEP protect Maine people from dangerous air pollution from upwind states. Because Maine has some of the highest asthma rates in the country, increased air pollution would result in more emergency room visits, hospitalization, and premature deaths. The EPA budget, combined with Trump Administration policies that roll back pollution standards for cars and power plants, would send more air pollution to Maine from these upwind states. The budget also eliminates the Diesel Emission Reduction Program, which has helped convert school buses to cleaner engines—protecting the health of Maine school children—and has helped commercial fishermen, primarily those with lobster boats, convert to cleaner-burning marine engines.

Making Maine Homes Less Safe The budget would eliminate funding for a program that helps address radon pollution, and also a program that reduces risks to children from lead-based paint. Radon is the leading cause of



Maine's shellfish industry depends on clean water, so the EPA budget cuts represent a major new threat. The sector employs more than 1,500 people, contributing more than \$56 million annually to Maine's economy.

lung cancer in non-smokers nationwide. Here in Maine, scientists believe that one in three homes has dangerous levels of radon. Maine also has a high percentage of older homes that contain lead-based paint. Nearly 300 Maine children under age six tested positive for lead poisoning in 2015. Elimination of EPA's lead program would put more Maine children at risk of learning disabilities, lower IQ, speech delay, hyperactivity, aggressive behavior, and other problems caused by lead poisoning.

Slowing Redevelopment of Brownfields and

Waste Sites The EPA Brownfields Program would face deep cuts. This program has been highly successful in cleaning up contaminated properties for redevelopment, including Eastern Fine Paper (Brewer), American Tissue (Augusta), Maine Street Station (Brunswick), and Old Howland Tannery (Howland). With the closure of five paper mills in the past few years, including the Bucksport and Millinocket mills, Maine needs Brownfields grants to help prepare these sites for redevelopment. The Administration's budget also cuts funding for the Superfund program, threatening to slow down the cleanup of highly contaminated sites such as the former Callahan mine in Brooksville and the Lincoln Pulp and Tissue Mill in Lincoln, which is being considered for Superfund designation.

Increasing Risks to Drinking Water The budget eliminates funding for the Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) program. These funds help DEP protect groundwater, drinking water, and human health by ensuring that underground petroleum storage is done responsibly. Currently, there are more than 5,000 registered underground tanks at approximately 3,000

oil storage facilities in Maine. Several Maine towns have faced massive, multi-year cleanup challenges when leaking underground tanks have contaminated both private wells and public water supplies. Cuts in this program will lead to more leaks from tanks, and increased contamination of drinking water.

Terminating the Maine Healthy Beach Program The Trump Budget Blueprint eliminates funding for beach water quality testing. Maine has used these funds to monitor whether beach water quality is safe, notify the public if health risks are detected, and educate residents and visitors on how to keep Maine's beaches healthy. Eliminating the program puts Maine residents and visitors at risk. Maine beaches receive an estimated 12 million visitors each year, and these visitors contribute more than \$1.6 billion annually to Maine's economy.

Stopping Efforts to Address Climate Change The budget eliminates most EPA climate programs, including funding for the Clean Power Plan, international climate programs, and climate research. Maine faces serious risks from climate change. The Gulf of Maine is one of the fastest warming water bodies in the world. By eliminating its climate prevention, preparation, and research programs, EPA would be abandoning important work that can help reduce the threats from sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and extreme weather events. Eliminating climate research will reduce the ability of Maine people to understand and prepare for changes already underway that affect property, businesses, and Maine's economy.

Halting Important Scientific Research The Budget Blueprint slashes EPA research by nearly 50%, which would cripple its ability to provide the facts and analysis that policymakers, including Maine lawmakers, need to make sound policy decisions about health and environmental protection. These cuts would delay assessments needed to clean up hazardous waste sites, reduce EPA's ability to learn how people are affected by a broad range of pollutants, and disrupt efforts to understand the health and environmental impacts of thousands of chemicals currently in the marketplace or under development. The cuts in scientific research would jeopardize EPA's ability to implement the nation's environmental laws, including the bipartisan chemical safety reforms of the Toxic Substances Control Act, which Congress adopted in 2016.

OVERVIEW

The Trump Administration is proposing to slash U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) programs that reduce pollution, save lives, strengthen our economy, and improve our communities and quality of life. The Administration's Fiscal Year 2018 Budget Blueprint singles out EPA for the deepest cuts of any domestic agency, cutting its budget by \$2.6 billion (31%), its workforce by 3,200 (21%), and completely eliminating more than 50 EPA programs.² These cuts would cause serious harm nationwide and would be particularly damaging for states like Maine where our environment and economy are tightly intertwined.

EPA's proposed FY18 budget, adjusted for inflation, would be cut to levels not seen since the 1970s. The radical staffing cuts would be unprecedented in the 47-year history of the agency. The Administration claims the cuts are part of a strategy to shift environmental protection responsibilities to the states, but the severity of the cuts would cripple the ability of Maine and other states to protect clean air, clean water, and public health. As states fail within their own borders, those failures would be experienced through increased cross-border pollution—a serious concern for Maine.

The Maine Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) depends greatly on EPA funding. In 2016, DEP received \$11.4 million in grants from EPA, which amounted to more than 20% of the Department's budget and paid for nearly 100 personnel. These funds support nearly every aspect of DEP's work: licensing, permitting, enforcement, mitigation, and compliance with the Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and hazardous waste and other laws.

DEP receives dedicated EPA grants to help protect Maine's rivers, lakes, streams, and coastal waters from non-point source "runoff" pollution; prepare Brownfields sites for economic redevelopment; clean up superfund sites and leaking underground fuel oil tanks; and reduce human exposure to diesel pollution, radon, lead, and toxic pollution. These grant programs are slated for deep cuts or elimination in the President's budget.

Over the past decade, EPA funding has played an increasingly important role in protecting Maine's



Crippling environmental protection programs will diminish the Maine we pass on to future generations.

environment. DEP's budget has been reduced and staff has been cut by nearly 20% since 2004, from 460 Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) in FY 2004 to 373 FTEs in FY 2016. As a result of these cuts, a larger proportion of the Department's personnel have been paid for with EPA funds. With deep cuts in EPA grants to the states, however, it would be virtually impossible for DEP to perform many of its responsibilities.

The Trump Administration Budget Blueprint proposes small increases for two revolving funds that help states replace aging wastewater infrastructure and upgrade drinking water facilities. Taking these increases into account, the proposed 31% cut in EPA's overall budget actually amounts to a 43% cut to the rest of EPA's budget, including grants to states.³ This means that EPA grants to Maine, in general, would be cut nearly in half, and some would be eliminated entirely.

The proposed federal budget cuts would shatter the EPA-State partnership that is the foundation for environmental protection in America. EPA is responsible for establishing national standards so that Americans nationwide have clean air, water, and land; states are prevented from sacrificing the health and welfare of others through cross-border pollution; and businesses have a level playing field from state to state and are required to comply with the law. State environmental agencies implement many of EPA's national standards with the help of EPA grants that are dedicated to specific purposes. But the proposed cuts would slash funding to DEP, jeopardizing its ability to ensure that our water is clean, our air is breathable, and our communities are protected from toxic hazards. These cuts set the states up for failure.

² This analysis is based on information in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) passback to EPA, and an internal EPA memo from David Bloom, Acting EPA Chief Financial Officer, to senior staff, which was reported on in the Washington Post, March 31, 2017. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/03/31/new-epa-documents-reveal-even-deeper-proposed-cuts-to-staff-and-programs/?utm_term=.da466349fb30 This NRCM Report will be updated when additional Trump Administration budget information is released in May 2017.

³ The Environmental Protection Network: Analysis of Trump Administration Proposals for FY2018 Budget for the Environmental Protection Agency, March 22, 2017. http://www.4cleanair.org/sites/default/files/Documents/EPA_Budget_Analysis_EPN_3-22-2017.pdf

1. Putting Maine's Clean Waters at Risk

At Stake: Maine has some of the most scenic and valued rivers, lakes, streams, and coastal waters in the nation. People travel from far and wide to enjoy these waters. Clean water adds immeasurably to the quality of life of Mainers, and waterfront property values are vital to town budgets. Maine lakes provide safe drinking water for more than 400,000 Mainers, and our lakes bring more than \$3.5 billion into Maine's economy annually and sustain 52,000 jobs.

Cuts in Water Quality Protection

The Budget Blueprint proposes deep cuts in EPA funding that is vital for protecting Maine's rivers, lakes, streams, and coastal waters. Of particular concern are proposed cuts in the following two areas:

State grants to control pollution from non-point sources. ELIMINATED. These grants are used to reduce polluted runoff that includes pesticides, fertilizer, and nutrients, which represent the largest pollution threat to Maine's lakes. In 2016, the DEP received \$1.5 million in grants to address Non-Point Source (NPS) pollution (also referred to as "Section 319" grants, based on the relevant section of the 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act). The Budget Blueprint terminates EPA's NPS grants to the states.

Impacts on Maine: Essentially all DEP personnel working to address Non-Point Source pollution would be terminated, since they are funded through Section 319 NPS grants, and work to address these sources



Maine has more brook trout habitat than the rest of the Eastern U.S. states combined. Eliminating EPA's non-point source pollution program puts this habitat at risk.



Maine's 6,000 lakes generate \$3.5 billion to Maine's economy annually and sustain 52,000 jobs. EPA budget cuts will make it more difficult for Maine to protect lake water quality.

of pollution would grind to a halt. This could have dire consequences for water quality in Maine. NPS funding enables DEP, working with towns and non-profit partners, to develop management plans for lakes, streams, and marine waters that are "impaired" due to polluted runoff, and those that are "threatened."⁴

EPA funding supports DEP's work with local communities and organizations to assess the threats to water quality and take action to reduce or stop sources of NPS pollution. Section 319 funds provide grants to help communities adopt "best management practices" to curb NPS pollution. DEP currently receives far less NPS funding than is needed to address the broad range of significant water quality protection and restoration challenges facing Maine. The funds are being used well, though. In 2015 alone, DEP provided \$763,810 in NPS watershed grants for community-based projects to evaluate, prevent, or reduce NPS pollution problems.⁵

⁴ Maine Nonpoint Source Management Program Plan 2015-2018, September 15, 2015, lists 21 Priority Impaired Lakes; 147 Priority Threatened Lakes; 71 Priority Impaired Streams; 77 Priority Threatened Streams; and 11 Priority Impaired Marine Waters, and 16 Priority Threatened Marine Waters. These designations affect priority for use of Section 319 grant funds. <http://www.maine.gov/dep/land/watershed/nps-management-plan-2015-2019.pdf>

⁵ Nonpoint Source Management Program 2015 Annual Report, Maine Department of Environmental Protection, June 2016.

Maine lakes and other surface waters face significant pressure from development and runoff pollution. Without strong NPS programs, Maine will see a steady decline in water quality, which potentially could result in massive algal blooms that reduce property values on those lakes, which, in turn, damages municipal budgets.

Terminating EPA grant funding to address NPS pollution is a direct threat to all Maine lakes, rivers, streams, and marine waters—and the economic activities that depend on those waters remaining clean and healthy.

Our 6,000 lakes bring more than \$3.5 billion into Maine's economy annually and sustain 52,000 jobs.

State grants for water monitoring, assessment, and management. DEEP CUTS. These grants support vital research, analysis, monitoring, and modeling that helps DEP understand and respond to risks facing Maine lakes and other surface waters. In 2016, DEP received more than \$2.4 million from EPA in these grants (known as “Section 106” in the Clean Water Act) to establish and maintain effective programs to ensure the health of Maine’s water bodies. The Budget Blueprint cuts these state grants by 30%.

Impacts on Maine: The proposed cuts could force DEP to lay-off many of its top technical staff who address water quality. These individuals are at the heart of Maine’s efforts to provide a science-based, comprehensive approach to protecting our rivers, lakes, streams, and marine waters. The cuts would halt important ongoing research, analysis, data collection, management, and compliance work.

As an example: DEP staff currently is studying the risk of toxic algal blooms occurring in Maine lakes. Currently,

about 30 Maine lakes experience significant algae blooms every year, and another 12-20 lakes suffer blooms occasionally. Such blooms cause floating green slime that disrupts recreational uses, affects water quality, harms aquatic life, and can cause human health risks. Some algae produce cyanotoxins that can pose significant public health risks, such as neurological disorders, through drinking the water or recreating in it.

Since 2008, DEP has collected data on toxins in Maine lakes, sharing it with the Maine Center for Disease Control and Maine drinking water program. The Department currently is evaluating the lakes at risk, level of risk, and whether advisories may be warranted in the future to alert the public of the risks identified.



Increased runoff pollution will result in more algae blooms in Maine lakes, like this one at Sabbattus Pond, and increased risks of cyanotoxins in the water that can cause neurological disorders.

The proposed cuts would undermine our ability to monitor changing conditions in our surface waters, and develop responses. The result would be a decline in fisheries, particularly brook trout and other cold water fish; increased concern about the safety of our waters for swimming and drinking; and negative economic impacts that occur when lakes and waters are polluted.

2. Increasing Air Pollution and Threats to Public Health

At Stake: More than 146,000 Mainers have asthma, which is one of the highest rates in the country. One reason for this high asthma rate is that Maine is geographically located in the “tailpipe” of the nation, with prevailing winds bringing pollution to Maine from upwind states. Increased air pollution causes more emergency room visits, hospitalization, and premature deaths for those with asthma, other respiratory difficulties, and our seniors.

Cuts in Air Quality Programs

The EPA sets limits on dangerous air pollutants from factories, power plants, vehicles, and other sources. These limits protect public health by helping prevent asthma attacks, birth defects, cancer, and respiratory and cardiovascular disease. EPA and Maine rely on DEP to implement and enforce the Clean Air Act here, reducing pollution generated within Maine, and to work regionally to curb pollution from upwind sources. The Budget Blueprint could reverse progress achieved in recent years to reduce air pollution problems that damage the health of Mainers, including through the following cuts.

The Budget Blueprint could reverse progress achieved in recent years to reduce air pollution problems that damage the health of Mainers.

Grants to support state and local air quality programs. DEEP CUTS. In 2016, DEP received more than \$1.5 million in EPA grants to fund its work to implement the Clean Air Act in Maine. These funds support DEP’s heavy workload of air quality planning, permitting, inspection, and enforcement. This work has become more complex in recent years as more pollution sources are controlled and new science-based air quality standards have been adopted to protect human health. The EPA proposal cuts these state grants by 30%.

Grants to reduce emissions from diesel engines. ELIMINATED. Grants from the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) program have been used to help convert old school buses to cleaner engines, protecting the health of



Mainers with asthma will suffer from EPA budget cuts that lead to increased air pollution from upwind states. Maine already has one of the highest rates of asthma in the nation.

Maine school children. More than 600 school buses have been retrofitted or replaced to reduce diesel pollution. DERA grants also have helped commercial fishermen, primarily lobster fishermen, convert their boats to cleaner-burning engines. DEP’s Marine Engine Repower grants (awarded with DERA funding) also have reduced air pollution from ferries, commercial fishing vessels, and research ships. The DEP has received awards for its accomplishments through the DERA program.

Impacts on Maine: Cuts in air pollution grant programs will slow DEP’s ability to reduce air pollution in Maine. Termination of DERA grants would prevent DEP from continuing to reduce diesel exhaust, which can cause immediate harm to the health of school children, fishermen, and passengers of marine vessels.

3. Making Maine Homes Less Safe

At Stake: Within our homes, Mainers face risks from radon pollution and lead paint. One in three Maine homes has unsafe levels of radon, the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers. And many children living in older homes test positive for lead poisoning, caused by ingesting lead-based paint. Lead poisoning causes serious learning disabilities. These risks are preventable, and EPA funding helps address these threats.

Cuts in Programs to Address Threats in Maine Homes

Although not regulated under the Clean Air Act, indoor air pollutants—including radon—pose significant public health threats. People spend nearly 90% of their time indoors, so reducing radon is an important priority. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the nation. Equally important is the task of reducing risks posed by lead paint to children. The Budget Blueprint proposes to eliminate EPA funding for these programs:

Grants to help reduce radon gas indoors.

ELIMINATED. Living in a home with high radon levels puts people at major risk for lung cancer. Radon occurs naturally in Maine soil and water, and can enter a house from the ground. The radon is then trapped in the air inside. One in three homes has radon concentrations higher than the level considered safe by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services. The DEP program slated for elimination has helped homeowners and apartment dwellers learn the risks of radon and how best to address those risks. Program staff handles about 2,500 inquiries from Mainers annually. If program funding were eliminated, this assistance to help Mainers avoid the risk of cancer from radon would cease.



The Trump Administration's budget would terminate EPA funding that helps protect Maine children from getting lead poisoning from consuming lead-based paint present in old homes. Maine has one of the highest percentage of older homes in the country.

In 2015, nearly 300 Maine children under age six tested positive for lead poisoning. Every single one of these 300 cases of lead poisoning is preventable and should have been prevented.

Grants to help reduce child exposure to lead-based paint. ELIMINATED. Although lead-based paint was banned in 1978, older homes still have paint containing lead on their walls, windows, and door frames. Since Maine has one of the highest percentages of old homes of any state in the country, lead paint remains a significant indoor health risk. When children ingest chips and dust containing lead paint, they can suffer from lead poisoning. In 2015, nearly 300 Maine children under age six tested positive for lead poisoning. Every single one of these 300 cases of lead poisoning is preventable and should have been prevented. Even low levels of lead poisoning may cause learning disabilities, lower IQ, speech delay, hyperactivity, aggressive behavior, and other developmental difficulties. These problems can have devastating human and financial costs later in life. EPA grants to Maine help inform the public of the risks and help ensure that lead removal is done properly. Termination of these funds will bring this work to an end.

Impacts on Maine: If these programs are eliminated, then more Mainers will contract cancer from radon gas in their homes. Also, more Maine children will suffer the broad range of developmental and learning disabilities caused by lead poisoning. Prevention of these health risks would save far more money and hardship nationwide than would be saved through terminating these programs.

4. Slowing Redevelopment of Brownfields and Waste Sites

At Stake: Maine has many former industrial and business sites that contain hazardous pollutants that must be cleaned up before those properties can be reused for economic purposes. Communities with shuttered paper mills and factories are eager to redevelop those sites so that they can once again be a source of employment, business activity, and property taxes. EPA funding plays a vital role in this redevelopment effort.

Cuts in Programs to Clean Up Toxic Waste Sites

The Budget Blueprint includes deep cuts in programs that can help Maine communities bring economic vitality back to industrial sites that have been contaminated with hazardous materials. Specifically, the EPA budget includes cuts to these programs:

Grants for redeveloping Brownfields sites.

DEEP CUTS. A “Brownfields” is defined by EPA as a property where expansion, reuse, or redevelopment is hindered by the presence of hazardous substances or pollution. The purpose of the Brownfields Program is to speed up economic redevelopment of sites where the contamination is not nearly as serious as those that require cleanup under the Superfund Program. The Brownfields Program has been highly successful in cleaning up contaminated properties in Maine, including Eastern Fine Paper (Brewer), American Tissue (Augusta), Maine Street Station (Brunswick), and the Old Howland Tannery (Howland). Between 1994 and 2016, Maine received \$72 million in Brownfields Program grants, more than any other state in New England. In 2016, Maine received more than \$723,000 in Brownfields funding. The proposed EPA budget would cut Brownfields Program state grants by 40%.

By slowing down Superfund cleanup activities, the budget cuts extend the period of time that Mainers and our environment will be exposed to pollutants from these sites, and postpone the day when these sites may be reused for other purposes.



Redevelopment of the Lincoln Paper and Tissue Mill, and other recently shuttered paper mills, could be at risk if Congress cuts the EPA Brownfields Program, as proposed.

Impacts on Maine: With the closure of five paper mills in the past few years, Maine needs the Brownfields Program to prepare these sites for redevelopment. Three of the former mills (in Lincoln, Millinocket, and East Millinocket) are considering pursuing an area-wide Brownfields grant that would help all three communities secure economic redevelopment of the abandoned sites. Maine also has hundreds of smaller contaminated sites, including former gas stations and auto repair facilities, where Brownfields funding could enable the remediation necessary before the site can be reused. All of these cleanups could be slowed down, or may not ever happen, if EPA’s Brownfields Program funding is deeply cut.

Grants for Superfund hazardous waste site cleanups. DEEP CUTS. EPA’s Superfund Program is responsible for protecting communities by cleaning up hazardous and contaminated sites that have particularly complex cleanup challenges. Maine currently has 13 hazardous waste sites on EPA’s National Priority List for the Superfund Program. In Fiscal Year 2016, DEP received about \$1 million to support its Superfund cleanup activities. The EPA budget would cut the Superfund program by more than 30%.

Impacts on Maine: Superfund cleanups are notoriously complex, challenging, slow, and expensive. The proposed budget cuts would slow cleanup work at Maine's 13 Superfund sites even more. This would affect cleanups at the former Brunswick Naval Air Station and Loring Air Force Base, Callahan mine in Brooksville, and Eastland Woolen Mill in Meddybemps. The budget cuts could also complicate efforts to secure Superfund designation for parts of the former Lincoln Paper and Tissue Mill in Lincoln. In March 2017, the Lincoln Town Council voted unanimously to explore whether 262 acres with serious contamination issues, on the 387-acre mill property, could qualify for Superfund designation and funding for a cleanup expected to cost at least \$20 million.⁶ By slowing down Superfund cleanup activities, the budget cuts extend the period of time that Mainers and our environment will be exposed to pollutants from these sites, and postpone the day when these sites may be reused for other purposes.



Cuts to EPA's Superfund budget could delay cleanup at Maine's 13 Superfund sites, including the Callahan Mine in Brooksville, Brunswick Naval Air Station, and Loring Air Force Base.

⁶ <http://bangordailynews.com/2017/03/17/news/penobscot/lincoln-pursuing-superfund-designation-for-former-mills-20-million-cleanup/>

5. Increasing Risks to Drinking Water

At Stake: More than half of the homes in Maine get drinking water from private, residential wells. Ensuring that Maine's drinking water remains safe is a high priority. In the past, drinking water in several parts of Maine has been seriously contaminated from leaking underground oil storage tanks. When this happens, cleanup and development of new sources of clean drinking water can take years and cost millions of dollars.

Grants to protect drinking water from underground storage tanks. DEEP CUTS. Grants from EPA's Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) program have been used to respond to leaking petroleum tanks, such as those at gas stations, which can contaminate drinking water supplies. DEP also receives grants from the Leaking Underground Storage Tank Prevention (LUST Prevention) program. Together, these funds have enabled DEP to respond to significant emerging threats to drinking water supplies from aging and abandoned underground storage tanks. There are more than 5,000 registered underground storage tanks in Maine, at approximately 3,000 underground storage facilities. Replacement costs for these tanks are generally the responsibility of the owner, but DEP plays a vital inspection, oversight, and enforcement role. In 2016, DEP received more than \$800,000 in EPA grants for underground storage tank prevention, detection, compliance, and corrective action activities. The Budget Blueprint eliminates funding for the LUST corrective action program, eliminates the LUST prevention fund program, and deeply cuts other underground storage tank funding.



The Trump Administration proposes terminating an EPA program that helps ensure that leaking underground storage tanks don't threaten Maine's drinking water.

Impacts on Maine: The Budget Blueprint would terminate the work of many DEP staff members who work to protect Maine's drinking water supplies from leaking underground storage tanks. As a result, the DEP would not be able to provide the inspection, enforcement, and cleanup oversight needed at facilities with underground tanks. The proposed cuts would also drastically reduce DEP's involvement in prevention activities. Although many aging tanks have been replaced in the past 20 years, the threat of petroleum pollution leaking into Maine's drinking water supplies remains a serious problem. More than 1,700 underground tanks will need replacement over the next 10 years, as their warranties expire. Over time, the proposed budget cuts would result in more oil leaks, and more leaks going unreported. The result would be increased health risks from human exposure to polluted water and cleanups that could cost millions of dollars.

Two experiences of Maine communities help show the potential impacts of these budget cuts to Maine people. One example involves the town of New Gloucester. Leaking underground oil storage tanks in that community caused major contamination of the municipal drinking water supply. DEP first became involved with the leaking tanks at a gasoline sales and auto repair shop in 1986. Fully addressing the problem took 27 years of technical assistance, collaboration among parties, and more than \$600,000 in funding before a new safe drinking water system became available.

Similarly, a leaking underground tank at a local general store that sells gasoline in the town of Tenant's Harbor caused significant drinking water contamination. DEP worked extensively on this cleanup effort, which in the end cost \$13 million to bring clean drinking water to about 130 homes.

6. Terminating Maine's Healthy Beach Program

At Stake: Maine's prized beaches are visited by more than 12 million people each year. These visitors contribute more than \$1.6 billion annually to Maine's economy. Maine has a big stake in making sure the water quality at our beaches is safe in order to protect visitors and our tourism economy.



Water quality at Maine beaches sometimes fails health standards. In 2012, DEP issued 194 beach closings or advisories to alert swimmers to unhealthy conditions. These advisories would end with termination of the program.

State grants for healthy beaches. ELIMINATED.

The Trump Budget Blueprint eliminates funding for beach water quality testing. Maine has used these funds to monitor whether beach water quality is safe, warning people when health risks are detected, and educating residents and visitors on how to keep Maine's beaches healthy. In 2016, the DEP received \$242,000 in grants for Maine's Healthy Beaches Program. Termination of EPA's beach protection program would end Maine's Healthy Beaches Program.

Impacts on Maine: Beaches are a major destination for Mainers and visitors alike, yet the water quality at Maine beaches is not consistently safe. A 2013 water quality report placed Maine in 27th place, on a list of 30 coastal states, in terms of how healthy the water is for swimming.⁷ The data showed that many Maine beaches, on some days of the year, failed health standards for daily maximum bacterial levels. Beaches with the most

Beaches are a major destination for Mainers and visitors alike, yet the water quality at Maine beaches is not consistently safe.

water samples that have failed health standards include Crescent Beach in Kittery, Ferry Beach in Scarborough, Short Sands Beach in York, and Goodies and Laite beaches in Knox County.

Beach water pollution can cause a range of illnesses, including skin rashes, infections, stomach flu, and neurological disorders. In 2012, the DEP issued 194 beach closings or advisory days alerting swimmers to unhealthy conditions. Most of these closings were due to elevated bacterial levels.

If EPA's beach protection program is terminated, then visitors to Maine beaches will no longer be notified if the water is unsafe for swimming and human contact.



Twelve million people visit Maine beaches annually, contributing more than \$1.6 billion to Maine's economy. Terminating Maine's Healthy Beach Program puts these visitors and our economy at increased risk.

⁷ <http://www.pressherald.com/2013/06/27/maine-beaches-water-quality-pollution/>

7. Stopping EPA Efforts to Address Climate Change

At Stake: Climate change is occurring, is caused largely by the burning of fossil fuels, and poses serious risks to society and nature. This is the consensus scientific finding globally and among Maine’s experts in climate science. Climate change is expected to inflict widespread damage to human health, property, and businesses, on a global scale. Maine’s nature-based economy is at high risk of experiencing dangerous and costly disruptions from climate change.

EPA programs to understand and reduce the risks of climate change. ELIMINATED. Current EPA climate programs target the largest sources of climate-changing carbon pollution, promote voluntary reduction strategies, support research and data gathering, provide technical assistance and public education, and promote international activities to reduce climate-changing pollution around the world. The DEP receives only a small amount of EPA funding for climate work, but Maine has a large stake in efforts by the US government to address the threat of climate change. The budget eliminates most EPA climate programs, including funding for the Clean Power Plan, international climate programs, and climate research.

Impacts on Maine: Maine is already experiencing significant impacts of climate change. The Gulf of Maine is one of the fastest warming water bodies in the world. Maine lobstermen, commercial fishermen, and clambers are concerned about the impact that warming waters, ocean acidification, and the arrival of non-native, invasive species have on their businesses and livelihood. Coastal communities and property owners are concerned about



Maine’s 6,000 lobster fishermen face an uncertain future due to ocean acidification and warming ocean waters, caused by climate-disrupting pollution. Termination of EPA climate program is not welcome news for Maine lobstermen who landed \$550 million in lobsters in 2016.

“Human influence on the global climate system is emerging as the defining environmental, economic, and social issue of the twenty-first century.”

- University of Maine Climate Institute

the potential for costly damages caused by sea-level rise. Warming temperatures have been linked to the exponential increase in Lyme disease cases in Maine. Warmer weather increases the number of “bad air” days that necessitate ozone smog warnings here in Maine. And extreme precipitation events and climate variability have become a growing concern because of their impacts on Maine agriculture, lake water quality, the winter sports industry, and infrastructure, such as blown-out culverts and roadways.

As stated in *Maine’s Climate Future*, a report by the University of Maine Climate Institute, based on input from 70 scientists from across Maine: “Human influence on the global climate system is emerging as the defining environmental, economic, and social issue of the twenty-first century.”⁸ The scientific consensus is that more needs to be done to address the climate problem, not less. But the Budget Blueprint proposes that the EPA does much less. And in many cases, the proposal amounts to stopping work altogether. In so doing, the Trump Administration is demonstrating its extreme, anti-science position of denying the reality of human-caused climate change and is abdicating its responsibility to help address the issue with leadership across government—including at the EPA. Everyone worldwide will suffer the impacts of this Administration’s flagrant disengagement from activities aimed at addressing the threat of climate change.

8 http://cci.siteturbine.com/uploaded_files/climatechange.umaine.edu/files/

8. Halting Important Scientific Research

At Stake: Like all states, Maine expects environmental regulations to be based on the best scientific data available. Lawmakers, businesses, and citizens need to know that policy decisions have been made based on science and not on politics or guesswork. Otherwise, people will lose faith in our system of environmental safeguards and not be appropriately protected.

Conducting vital scientific research. DEEP CUTS.

The Budget Blueprint slashes EPA's overall research activities by nearly 50%, and it eliminates some specific areas of research, such as climate research. EPA's Office of Research and Development (ORD) conducts or funds most of the agency's research. ORD provides grants and operates laboratories across the nation to conduct the high quality scientific and technical research that is at the heart of all EPA decision-making about public health and environmental protection. DEP does not receive much of this money, but depends on the information emerging from this research. The Budget Blueprint's deep cuts in EPA research mean DEP and the nation will receive less information to serve as the basis for decision-making and environmental management.

Impacts on Maine: The proposed cuts in EPA's science and research programs would have many impacts for Maine and the nation. These cuts would cripple EPA's ability to provide the facts and analysis needed by policymakers as they seek to make sound decisions about public health and environmental protections. These cuts would delay site-specific assessments needed for cleaning up hazardous waste sites, including Brownfields and Superfund sites in Maine. The cuts would reduce EPA's ability to understand how humans are affected by a broad range of pollutants, such as Brominated Flame Retardants (BFRs), which have been the subject of policy deliberations in the Maine Legislature. These

These cuts would cripple EPA's ability to provide the facts and analysis needed by policymakers as they seek to make sound decisions about public health and environmental protection.



The EPA budget would slash science and research programs important to protecting Maine, including water testing and other important programs supported by the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership.

cuts also would disrupt efforts by EPA to understand the potential impacts on human health and the environment of thousands of chemicals currently in the marketplace or under development. In that regard, the cuts could jeopardize EPA's ability to implement the bipartisan chemical safety reforms of the Toxic Substances Control Act, which Congress adopted in 2016.

State environmental agencies would have essentially no ability to replace the scientific research performed at EPA laboratories and by university scientists supported by EPA grants.

CONCLUSION:

Proposed EPA Cuts Would Cause Lasting Damage to Maine

The Trump Administration is proposing radical cuts in EPA's budget and personnel that are so far-reaching they would diminish essentially every aspect of the agency's mission: protection of air and water; cleaning up Superfund and Brownfields sites; addressing the threats of climate change; protecting human health from chemicals and toxic pollution; and more.

These deep cuts, the most extreme proposed for any federal agency, send a strong message that this Administration does not understand that Americans want a clean environment and a healthy economy. These two goals are not in conflict; they go hand-in-hand, especially here in Maine.

Voters in the 2016 Presidential election did not vote for increased air and water pollution, reduced efforts to clean up hazardous waste sites, greater health risks from contaminated drinking water and toxic chemicals, and abandonment of efforts to address climate change.

The Administration has suggested that these unprecedented cuts in EPA funding and personnel will help the states do their environmental protection work better, but the opposite is true. These cuts will destroy the ability of states, including Maine, to provide clean air and clean water, and protect the environment and public health. Indeed, these cuts are setting the states up for costly failure. And as states fail in protecting their environment, both their own residents and those of neighboring states will suffer from the increased pollution.

The Maine DEP depends heavily on EPA funding, as do all state environmental protection agencies. This is how the system was designed to work, involving a partnership between EPA and the states. With federal funding, states do much of the work to protect our environment as set out by our nation's environmental laws. The Budget Blueprint represents a flagrant and irresponsible breach of that partnership.

If these budget cuts are enacted, DEP will be forced to terminate critical staff across all program areas. But the real consequences will take place across the Maine



EPA budget cuts would cause harm that would last for decades. This is not the legacy we should be handing to Maine's generations.

landscape. Maine's lakes and other surface waters will be more polluted; communities with Brownfields and Superfund sites, including paper mill towns, may never see those sites cleaned up; Maine people will get sick from air and water pollution; and businesses that depend on clean air and water, and on our current climate, will face growing challenges and possible closures.

The impact of these cuts would extend far beyond the DEP and its work. EPA funding to Maine serves as a catalyst that supports countless efforts by towns, nonprofit organizations, businesses, colleges, and citizens who participate in collective efforts to protect Maine's precious environmental resources. DEP pass-through grants to such entities often leverage large infusions of additional public and private funding that would not occur otherwise. The EPA budget cuts would reverberate across Maine by putting these partnerships, cooperative agreements, matching funds, and informal collaborations in jeopardy.

If the intent of the Administration is to dismantle efforts to protect the environment, then this budget represents an unprecedented and radically irresponsible step toward achieving that goal. It would move Maine backward many decades in our efforts to protect the environment, causing harm that would last generations.

APPENDIX – EPA PROGRAMS SLATED FOR ELIMINATION

This report describes many, but not all of the proposed EPA budget cuts that raise concerns for Maine. The Administration proposes eliminating more than 50 programs. Among these is the National Estuary Program, which provides essential funding in Maine that helps protect water quality in Casco Bay. EPA's National Estuary Program funds the Casco Bay Estuary Partnership, which

involves a broad range of communities, organizations, businesses, scientists, and residents working together to protect Casco Bay. The Casco Bay Estuary Partnership likely would end if the National Estuary Program is terminated. Elimination of the programs below would have crippling impacts on environmental protection efforts across the nation.

Alternative Dispute Resolution	San Francisco Bay	Science Policy and Biotechnology
Beach Programs	South Florida	Small Minority Business Assistance
Beach Protection	Great Lakes Restoration	Stratospheric Ozone
Lead Multipurpose Grants	Homeland Security Infrastructure Protection	Targeted Airshed Grants
Nonpoint Source	Radon Program	Lead Risk Reduction Program
Pollution Prevention	Alaska Native Villages	Trade and Governance
Radon	Infrastructure Assistance: Mexico Border	Water Quality Research and Support Grants
Underground Storage Tanks	Integrated Environmental Strategies	Air Climate and Energy Research
Climate Protection Program	LUST Prevention	Chemical Safety Research
Endocrine Disruptors	Marine Pollution	Sustainable Water Resources Research
Environmental Education	National Estuary Program	Sustainable and Healthy Communities Research
Environmental Justice	Radiation Protection	Global Change Research
Chesapeake Bay	Waste Minimization & Recycling	Surface Water Protection
Gulf of Mexico	Reduce Risks from Indoor Air	
Lake Champlain	Regional Science and Technology	
Long Island Sound		
Puget Sound		

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Natural Resources Council of Maine

The Natural Resources Council of Maine is a nonprofit membership organization working statewide for clean air, healthy waters, safeguards for our people and wildlife, forest protections, and clean, renewable energy solutions. We harness the power of science, the law, and the voices of more than 20,000 supporters across Maine and beyond.



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