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# CACC NEWS

WINTER 2021  
[www.caccmi.org](http://www.caccmi.org)

Volume 43, Issue 1

## **Inventory of Environmental Damage from Trump Administration**

The Alt National Park Service (ANPS), a group of 2.1 million federal, state and local employees who have used social media during the past four years to track environmental and conservation harms, issued an inventory of the environmental regulations attacked, destroyed, or altered by the Trump Administration. The 10-page inventory can be found online at

<https://www.facebook.com/AltUSNationalParkService/posts/2818724535122267>. Listed below is a sample of the items sorted by area and status:

*Air Pollution and Emissions* (Status - 27 completed, 2 in progress):

Weakened Obama-era fuel economy and greenhouse gas standards for passenger cars and light trucks; replaced the Obama-era Clean Power Plan, which would have set strict limits on carbon emissions from coal- and gas-fired power plants, with a new version that would let states set their own rules; and cancelled a requirement for oil and gas companies to report methane emissions.

*Drilling and Extraction* (Status – 12 completed, 8 in progress):

Made significant cuts to the borders of two national monuments in Utah and recommended border and resource-management changes to several more; finalized a plan to open up part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska for oil and gas development, a move that overturns six decades of protections for the largest remaining stretch of wilderness in the US; and rescinded water pollution regulations for fracking on federal and Indian lands.

*Infrastructure and Planning* (Status – 11 completed, 1 in progress):

Relaxed the environmental review process for federal infrastructure projects; weakened the National Environmental Policy Act, one of the country's most significant environmental laws, in order to expedite the approval of public infrastructure projects such as roads, pipelines, and telecommunications networks; and restricted most Interior Department environmental studies to one year in length and a maximum of 150 pages, citing a need to reduce paperwork.

*Pollution* (Status – 7 completed, 1 in progress):

Revoked a rule that prevented coal companies from dumping mining debris in local streams; extended the lifespan of unlined holding ponds for coal ash waste from power plants, which can more easily spill their contents because they lack a protective underlay; and withdrew a proposed rule requiring groundwater protections for certain uranium mines.

*Toxic Substances and Safety* (7 completed, 1 in progress):

Narrowed pesticide application buffer zones that are intended to protect farmworkers and bystanders from accidental exposure; changed safety rules to allow for rail transport of highly flammable liquefied natural gas; and rejected a proposed ban on chlorpyrifos, a pesticide linked to developmental disabilities in children.

In addition, there were twelve other rules initially reversed by the Trump Administration but later reinstated, often following lawsuits and other challenges.

## Letter from the Chair

Hard to believe we have reached 2021 and I'm sure happy that it has arrived! Hoping that this finds you and your family healthy and in good spirits.

The CACC Board wants to give you a big thank you for your membership renewals and generous donations of support in 2020. You helped us offset some of the operating costs during the year. If you donated in 2020, remember there is an up to \$300 charitable deduction credit for your taxes.

If the timing wasn't right before, and you have yet to contribute, please consider renewing your membership now or possibly contributing a portion of your stimulus check to CACC. Any help is appreciated as part of the funds last year were used to put on a roof, to repair drywall and paint the office. I also want to acknowledge that a small team of board members cleaned up and painted the CACC office, getting it ready for winter. Thank you very much for your donation of time.

Here's to a great start in 2021!

Chance Hunt, Chairperson

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## Victory Over Proposal to Dispose/Recycle Nuclear Waste

*By Diane D'Arrigo, NIRS*

CACC played an important role in a BIG VICTORY in 2020 – stopping nuclear waste from going into regular trash and commercial recycling to make everyday household items! “Major thanks to Kay Cumbow and CACC for flagging this threat at first notice in March 2020 and actively organizing to stop it with a critical analysis, public outreach/media work, a webinar, educating local officials, getting a local resolution against the very bad proposal by the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC),” said Diane D'Arrigo, Radioactive Waste Director for the Nuclear Information and Resource Service (NIRS). If approved, the misleadingly named very low level waste (VLLW) proposal would have allowed massive amounts of very hot nuclear waste to be disposed of in municipal landfills and other facilities not licensed nor ever intended for these very dangerous materials. We renamed VLLW as Very Large Lies about Very Long Lasting nuclear Waste.

In the 2018 Scoping Study for VLLW, the NRC said that this new category of waste was needed due to the large volumes of waste anticipated with decommissioning of reactors and material sites, a radiological event, or alternative waste streams from reprocessing. (Note that the former highly contaminated reprocessing site at West Valley, NY is undergoing decommissioning and its wastes continue to threaten the health of the Seneca Nation and Lake Erie.) The 2020 Federal Regulation Notice also posed a question regarding issues associated with transfer of transboundary wastes – a term that was never defined, but is used almost exclusively for foreign nuclear wastes, which are currently banned from placement in US landfills. Certainly, Great Lakes communities have concerns with cross-border traffic of any nuclear wastes – especially wastes that could end up in our landfills.

It's a win for now, but NRC said in its notice withdrawing the proposal that they will continue to pursue the idea through other legal methods like a rule change or redefining the waste out of regulatory control. “VLLW” is the latest attempt by the nuclear industry and its regulators to deregulate dangerous nuclear wastes and pass hefty health and monetary costs to the US public. Learn more at these websites: Nuclear Information and Resource Service, [www.nirs.org](http://www.nirs.org), and Committee to Bridge the Gap, <https://www.committeetobridgethegap.org>. Kudos to all who helped expose and oppose deregulation of these dangerous wastes.

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CACC is a proud member of Earth Share  
of Michigan, Michigan Environmental  
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## Water Watch

*Line 5 news* – In November, 2020, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer revoked the 1953 easement allowing Enbridge's twin pipelines, known as Line 5, to run under the Straits of Mackinac and gave its owner 180 days to shut them down. On January 12, Enbridge announced that it would defy the shutdown order, claiming that the governor had overstepped her authority. Enbridge claims that the US government, not Michigan, has regulatory authority over pipeline safety. Concerns have spiked over the years as Enbridge worked to correct coating issues on the line, assessed an accidental strike of the line in 2018 by a 12,000 pound anchor, dropped boring equipment near the line in 2019, failed to provide adequate supports to sections of the span, and narrowed the cause of 2020 damage to the line to a pool of five boats, four of which were contracted by Enbridge. Despite alarm about global climate change, the Michigan Legislature-approved tunnel would grant Enbridge a 99-year lease to continue operations. Although the permit to construct the tunnel has been granted in January, other permits will be considered later in 2021. [https://www.drillednews.com/post/michigan-oil-gas-pipeline-fight-climate-energy?fbclid=IwAROWk-4bgYOvBe7jgBpJ64AFZFx\\_](https://www.drillednews.com/post/michigan-oil-gas-pipeline-fight-climate-energy?fbclid=IwAROWk-4bgYOvBe7jgBpJ64AFZFx_) and [Enbridge says it won't comply with easement revocation, will continue Line 5 operation \(detroitnews.com\)](#)

*Former mine site in UP repurposed for alternative energy* – Groveland, a Dickinson County mine near the town of Felch, closed since 1981 and now owned by the State of Michigan, is being developed as a 300-acre solar energy project. The solar array will be designed and managed by Circle Power in partnership with the state, and will benefit 4,000 homes in the vicinity of the old mine. If permitting and development are approved, the project could be generating power by 2023. [Former mine sites in Michigan to be repurposed as large-scale solar power operations \(clickondetroit.com\)](#)

*Controversial water withdrawal decision contested* – Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation (MCWC) has filed a Petition for Judicial Review of the Final Decision and Order issued by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) in which EGLE dismissed a contested case challenging the highly controversial permit granted to Nestle Waters of North America in 2018. MCWC requests that the Court reverse Director Lisl Clark's determination that the Department didn't actually have legal authority to hold a contested case related to the Nestle permit to withdraw up to 400 gallons per minute (210 million gallons per year) of groundwater from Osceola County aquifers. The petition seeks to compel the Department to comply with the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, and Michigan's long-standing principles of water law. <https://www.facebook.com/SaveMIWater/posts/3953538244665182>

### Eco Calendar

Friday Capitol Connections are Zoom webinars sponsored by the Michigan Environmental Council on a variety of topics. To register, go to <https://www.environmentalcouncil.org/events>

**March 5** – Capitol Connection/Bettering Our Bottle Return System  
[https://www.environmentalcouncil.org/capitol\\_connection\\_030521](https://www.environmentalcouncil.org/capitol_connection_030521)

**March 12** – Capitol Connection/After Nestle: Recs from Michigan’s Water Use Council  
[https://www.environmentalcouncil.org/capitol\\_connection\\_010821](https://www.environmentalcouncil.org/capitol_connection_010821)

**Feb 4-March 11** - Virtual Advocate Academy, Thursdays 5:30 to 7 pm, Groundwork Center sponsored training to better your neighborhood.  
[www.groundworkcenter.org](http://www.groundworkcenter.org)

**March 24** – Virtual Shoreline Conference “A New Wave of Thinking,” sponsored by the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership and the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership. Contact the Partnership at  
<https://www.mishorelinepartnership.org>

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