

BIDEN'S REVERSAL OF TRUMP'S ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

By Gary Antonides



The Washington Post is tracking the environmental actions that the Trump administration took while in office and those that the Biden administration has reversed or hopes to reverse as well as new environmental protections. As of 26 March, of the 216 Trump environmental rollbacks being tracked, 22 have already been overturned, 71 more are “targeted” and 128 are “not yet targeted.” Also, as of March 26, 19 new protections have been added.

(<https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2021/climate-environment/biden-climate-environment-actions/>, By [Juliet Eilperin](#), [Brady Dennis](#) and [John Muyskens](#)).

The purpose of this article is not to discuss the specifics of the issues involved, but just to indicate the magnitude of the task as well as the magnitude of the environmental damage that is at stake. This can be appreciated just by looking at the different categories of Trump’s rollbacks:

- Air Pollution and Greenhouse Gases
- Chemical Safety
- Drilling and Extraction
- Infrastructure and Permitting
- Accountability
- Water Pollution
- Wildlife

Under just one of those categories, the one most relevant to the Bay, Water Pollution, there were rollbacks in the following areas:

- Coal Ash
- PFAS substances
- Perchlorate
- Cleanup Requirements for Industry
- Groundwater Pollution from Uranium Mines
- Power Plant Wastewater
- Clean Water Rule on Federal Projects
- Protection for Streams and Wetlands
- Mining Pollution of Streams

Some of Trump’s actions will be fairly easy to change, but others will be difficult. The Post categorizes the changes as:

Easy to overturn – Can be reversed by a single act, such as signing an executive order or new directive.

Medium – Can be reversed only through a more extensive action, such as rewriting a regulation or a court ruling.

Difficult – Can only be reversed through a lengthy legislative process, act of Congress or court ruling.

Anyone interested in details of any of these issues is encouraged to check the Post website given above.