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# Analysis of U.S. EPA Region 7's Clean Water Act Enforcement: Environmental Law & Policy Center Report

11/06/2020

The Environmental Law & Policy Center ("ELPC") issued on October 12th a report titled:

*Analysis of U.S. EPA Region 7's Clean Water Enforcement ("Report")*

The *Report* addresses Clean Water Act enforcement issues in the United States Environmental Protection Agency's ("EPA") Region 7 Office. This EPA Region covers the following states:

- Iowa
- Kansas
- Missouri
- Nebraska

Region 7 also encompasses nine Native American Tribes.

The *Report* argues that the Region has "stepped back from its responsibility, leaving our lakes, rivers, and streams vulnerable."

ELPC states that it developed the *Report* after reviewing publicly available enforcement data. It concludes that Clean Water Act enforcement in Region 7 has been declining. This trend is stated to coincide with:

- Shrinking resources
- Shrinking staff
- The current Administration's shifting political priorities

The *Report* argues that the alleged enforcement decline is demonstrated by:

- Less case initiations
- Lower civil penalties
- Higher rates of significant noncompliance with the Clean Water Act among major facilities
- Declining resources
- Lower staffing levels

The *Report* also references declining resources for state pollution control agencies. This is stated to be due to reliance on federal pass-through funds or hostile state administrations and legislatures.

The *Report* contains charts and information addressing topics such as:

- Civil Penalties and Compliance Costs for Clean Water Act Violations
- Budget Cuts and Less Resources
- Trends in Staffing Levels
- Enforcement and Compliance Budget and Spending
- State Resources (Budgets and Staff Levels)
- Federal Funding for State Clean Water Programs
- Example Facilities

The *Report* concludes that:

- EPA must improve environmental law enforcement and compliance activities by hiring and retaining adequate staff and deploying the full amount of funds appropriated by Congress
- The public should contact both Congress and state officials requesting adequate resources
- Congress should increase funding for EPA's enforcement and compliance

A copy of the *Report* can be downloaded [here](#).