WINTER 2027

NATURE'S VOICE

For the 3 million Members and online activists of the Natural Resources Defense Council



PHOTO: LISA HUPP/USFWS

Bohemian waxwing

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NRDC works to safeguard the earth—its people, its plants and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends.

Victory

TRUMP COAL-PLANT ORDER NIXED

Siding with NRDC and our allies, a federal appeals court unanimously overturned an order by the Energy Department under the Trump administration for the J.H. Campbell coal-fired power plant in Michigan to keep operating past its long-planned retirement date. The win is the first against such "emergency" orders issued by the administration to force some of the country's oldest and dirtiest coal-fired plants to remain online, at a cost of nearly $600 million and thousands more tons of health-harming pollution.

BOUNDARY WATERS GET REPRIEVE

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz signed an executive order to protect the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness from new sulfide-ore copper mining. The move comes in response to a resolution pro-industry forces narrowly pushed through Congress aimed at opening the headwaters of the beloved wilderness to dangerous mining. "When the federal government strips away protections for America's most iconic wild places, states have both the responsibility and the power to step in," says Andrew Wetzler, NRDC senior vice president for nature. "This executive order shows what that looks like."

Victory

COURT SAYS "NO" TO NEW PIPELINE

New Jersey violated federal law when it approved a certification for construction of a controversial natural gas pipeline without first ensuring it would comply with the state's water quality standards. The decision by a federal appeals court comes in response to a lawsuit filed by NRDC and our New Jersey allies, which charged that construction of the pipeline would destroy sensitive marine habitats, imperil wetlands that support endangered species, and dredge up harmful materials such as mercury, PCBs, and copper.

NRDC: "THIS LAND IS NOT FOR SALE!"

NRDC and our coalition partners have filed suit to stop President Trump from dismantling two iconic national monuments in Utah, Bears Ears and Grand Staircase–Escalante. Left unchallenged, Trump's unlawful proclamation stripping nearly 3 million acres of protection across both monuments and shrinking each by more than 90 percent would amount to one of the largest rollbacks of public land protections in U.S. history. "You can get no clearer example of this administration's contempt for the 'public' in 'public lands' than this," says Bobby McEnaney, senior land strategist at NRDC. Indeed, recent polling shows that 91 percent of Western voters say existing national monument designations should be kept in place. More than 70 percent of Utah voters support keeping Bears Ears and Grand Staircase–Escalante as national monuments.

Rather than the public interest, it's private corporate interests that the administration is bending over backward to serve, as evidenced by the fact that the mining industry rushed to file more than 70 claims on land in Bears Ears in the weeks following the president's proclamation. "They're champing at the bit," says McEnaney. Keeping with the pattern that has emerged during the second Trump administration, the cuts to both monuments are even more extreme than those Trump attempted during his first term, which were also challenged by NRDC and our allies in court.

As the current lawsuit to defend Bears Ears and Grand Staircase–Escalante heats up, NRDC is galvanizing intense public opposition to the administration's efforts to hand over even more of our priceless natural heritage to the highest bidder and tracking developments with an eye toward additional legal action. That includes sounding the alarm over the administration's plans to open more than 200,000 acres near the Grand Canyon in Arizona to oil and gas drilling, as well as its push to give over land *inside* Yosemite National Park to a private developer. "These are places that don't just belong to us; they belong to our children and grandchildren," says McEnaney. "We're fighting to keep that sacred trust."



The mining industry is "champing at the bit" to get its hands on Bears Ears National Monument.

The environmental campaigns and victories featured in *Nature's Voice* are all made possible through your generous support.

You can help NRDC defend the environment by making a special contribution:

NRDC.ORG/GIVE

Public Sounds Off to Save Roadless Rule

More than 165,000 NRDC supporters have delivered a resounding message to the Trump administration: Don't mess with our forests! At stake is the Roadless Rule, the landmark protections that NRDC played a pivotal role in securing in 2001 that safeguard nearly 60 million acres of our national forests from roadbuilding, commercial logging, and other destructive development. Despite massive public opposition, the Trump administration appears ready to torpedo the rule, setting up an all-but-certain legal fight.



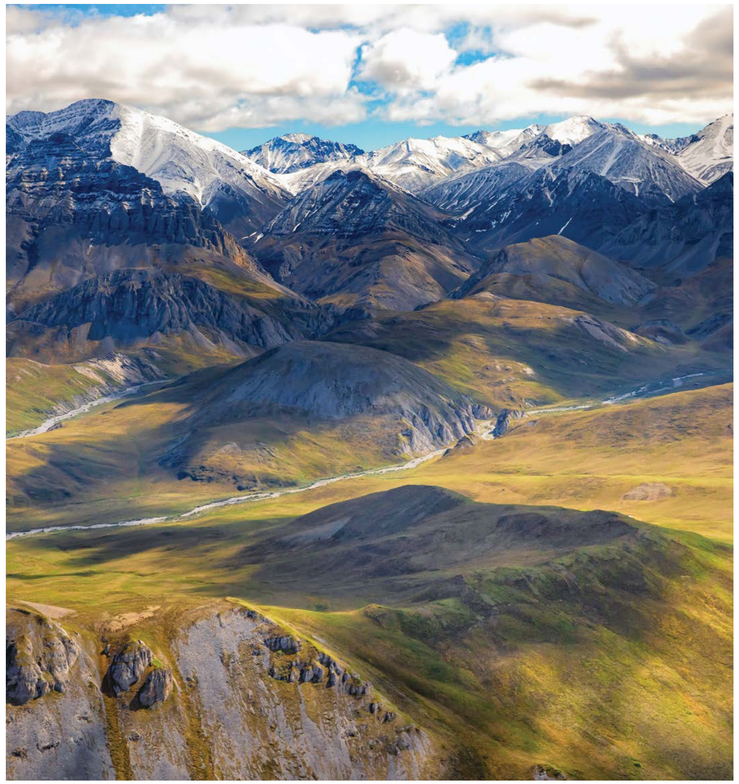
Publicly the administration is trying to sell its rollback as a wildfire solution—a rationale that flies in the face of science. "The [U.S.] Forest Service's own data shows wildfires are roughly four times more likely to start near a road," says NRDC Senior Attorney Garett Rose. What the science *does* show is that the intact and often old-growth forests the Roadless Rule protects provide habitat for scores of endangered animals, help ensure clean drinking water for over 25 million Americans, and store vast amounts of climate-warming carbon. "Forest champions take heart," says Rose. "We've fought tooth and nail to defend the Roadless Rule for decades, and we're not going to stop now."

PHOTOS FROM TOP: GETTY IMAGES; KEITH R. CROWLEY/ZUMA PRESS VIA ALAMY

ONE EVERY 10 DAYS: LAWSUITS MOUNT AGAINST TRUMP ATTACKS

"You can choose to be exhausted or exhilarated—we're choosing exhilarated," says NRDC Chief Counsel Mitch Bernard. As anyone with a newsfeed can guess, he's talking about the sheer volume of anti-environment attacks launched by the second Trump administration, a near-daily assault on—well, pretty much everything NRDC supporters hold dear: our climate, clean air, clean water, public lands, oceans, wildlife. A mere two days after the administration announced it was repealing rules to curb carbon pollution from power plants last fall, for example, it declared that it would no longer hold companies responsible for killing or harming endangered species so long as the harm was "unintentional." The following week, the administration said it was scrapping fuel-economy standards for cars and trucks that would have cut climate pollution and saved the average driver hundreds of dollars in fuel costs. In between, President Trump once again asserted at the United Nations that climate change is a hoax.

The rat-tat-tat pace of the attacks is enough to leave anyone feeling demoralized. But for Bernard, there's hope in action. "We knew what was coming, and we made a promise to our Members: We won't hesitate to haul this administration to court again and again to defend our bedrock environmental laws. And I'm proud to say, we've delivered." As *Nature's Voice* goes to press, NRDC has filed more than 60 lawsuits against the Trump administration—an average of one every 10 days—and expanded our team of litigators, including eight former Justice Department attorneys. "The attacks are more extreme, the fights tougher," says Bernard. "But we're also seeing courts increasingly skeptical of this administration's arguments." Here are highlights from a year of nonstop legal action:







Clockwise from top left: Lawsuit #30 against the Trump administration seeks to save the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Trump-invigorated "God Squad" poses dire risks for endangered species such as polar bears. A number of NRDC's Trump-related lawsuits are expected to reach the Supreme Court.

LAWSUIT #37

FIGHTING THE "CLIMATE HOAX" HOAX

As his U.N. remarks attest, another year of supercharged natural disasters and record-breaking heat did nothing to sway the nation's climate-denier-in-chief. Yet even as Trump's administration tried to barrel ahead with its fossil-fuels-forever agenda, it faced swift legal resistance at every major turn. First, Trump's EPA announced it was repealing the "endangerment finding"—the determination that climate change is a threat to human health and welfare—which forms a core basis for federal climate protections. Less than a week later, NRDC filed suit. And when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said it was scrapping rules to limit carbon pollution from power plants, NRDC filed lawsuit #62 against the administration just two days later.

LAWSUIT #42

TAKING ON THE "GOD SQUAD"

NRDC likewise filed suit less than 48 hours after a committee stacked with allies of the fossil fuel industry voted to fast-track oil and gas development by stripping federal protections from endangered species in the Gulf of Mexico, including sea turtles, manatees, and the critically endangered Rice's whale. Known as the "God Squad" for its ability to override the Endangered Species Act, the little-known committee was only intended by Congress to be used as a last resort—it hadn't been convened in more than 30 years. Now the Trump administration has directed the "God Squad" to meet regularly. "If we don't stop them now, they'll use the same playbook anywhere endangered species stand in the way of drilling, mining, logging, or other industrial development," says Marine Mammals Director Michael Jasny.

LAWSUIT #30

DEFENDING THE WILD ARCTIC

For more than 40 years, Big Oil has had its sights set on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other magnificent wildlands in Alaska, among the largest intact ecosystems left on earth—and NRDC has gone to court repeatedly to defend these wild gems. Our most recent lawsuit aims to stop the Trump administration from throwing open the very heart of the Arctic Refuge—its wildlife-rich Coastal Plain—where an onslaught of new drilling would imperil polar bears, caribou, shaggy musk oxen, and other animals already struggling in a melting Arctic. The lawsuit is but part of NRDC's broader legal campaign to stop the administration from handing over our cherished public lands to industry, including two stunning national monuments in Utah's red rock wilderness *(see related article, front page)*.

LAWSUIT #45

SAVING AN OCEAN EDEN

NRDC's litigation team has been kept no less busy fighting back against the Trump administration's

[*Continued on next page.*] ▶

PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: LISA HUPP/USFWS; PATRICK J. ENDRES/GETTY IMAGES; J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP PHOTO

▸ [*Continued from previous page.*]

sweeping assault on our oceans as well. Indeed, the very first lawsuits we filed against the current administration targeted the unlawful executive orders issued by Trump immediately after his inauguration revoking permanent protections for 625 million acres across the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic Oceans and the Gulf of Mexico. More recently, NRDC sued after Trump illegally opened Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument to commercial fishing. The only such monument in the Atlantic, it encompasses three expansive underwater canyons and four underwater mountains, and serves as a refuge for an incredible array of marine wildlife, including 13 whale species, 10 dolphin species, and some of the oldest cold-water corals on earth.

LAWSUIT #7

CRASHING THE POLLUTERS' PARTY

Early on under the second Trump administration, the EPA made a brazen invitation: scores of the country's biggest polluters were encouraged simply to email the White House asking for exemptions from safeguards that protect us from some of the most harmful air pollutants. Since then, Trump has doled out these rubber-stamp exemptions to hundreds of facilities that spew carcinogens and other hazardous chemicals, ranging from coal-fired power plants (the target of the lawsuit here) to chemical manufacturers to coke ovens—all also the targets of no fewer than five additional NRDC lawsuits. Says Senior Attorney Sarah Buckley, "When I was at the Justice Department, I went to court to defend EPA rules to protect our air and water. Now I'm in court again, but I'm challenging an administration bent on dismantling the rules and institutions I once defended."

For a complete rundown of NRDC legal action against the second Trump administration and to keep up to date on the latest lawsuits, visit nrdc.org/trumplegal.

Your Membership Support of NRDC Made a World of Difference in 2026!

Thanks to your generous donations, here are some of the landmark environmental victories we won during the past year:



SOOT SAFEGUARDS UPHELD

Siding with NRDC and our allies, a federal appeals court rejected the Trump administration's attempt to roll back tougher limits on deadly soot pollution.



CA MOVES TO PROTECT COAST

State lawmakers passed tough restrictions to defend California's iconic coastline from the Trump administration's aggressive push to reopen it to dangerous offshore drilling.



YES, PFAS ARE HAZARDOUS

A federal appeals court unanimously agreed that two PFAS "forever chemicals" are hazardous under the federal Superfund law, setting the stage to hold polluters accountable.



BUMBLEBEE GETS SAFE HAVENS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finalized its designation of critical habitat for the rusty-patched bumblebee, among the country's most endangered pollinators.



STATES ACT ON DATA CENTERS

New Jersey, Virginia, and Pennsylvania are among the states leading the way toward smarter management of data center growth that protects consumers and our environment.



LNG TERMINAL CANCELED

Energy giant Sempra abandoned plans to build an export terminal for liquefied natural gas on the Gulf of California, strengthening opposition to two other proposed terminals there.



TISSUE MAKER MAKES GOOD

Kimberly-Clark, the maker of Kleenex and Cottonelle, announced it has cut its use of natural forest fiber in half, a boon for intact forests and their wildlife.



EJ COMMUNITIES WIN IN IL

Landmark legislation in Illinois now requires the state to weigh the health of overburdened environmental justice communities before greenlighting new polluting facilities.



FEDERAL EV FUNDS RESTORED

A federal court ruled that the Trump administration illegally tried to freeze billions of dollars in funds to build a nationwide network of high-speed EV charging stations.



COURT CANS IRS RULE

In another legal win against the Trump administration, a federal court has thrown out a rule that unlawfully restricts tax credits for wind and solar projects.

Please help us win even more victories in 2027—both in and out of court—by making a special tax-deductible gift. You can scan here to give, or go online. Thank you!

NRDC.ORG/VICTORIES

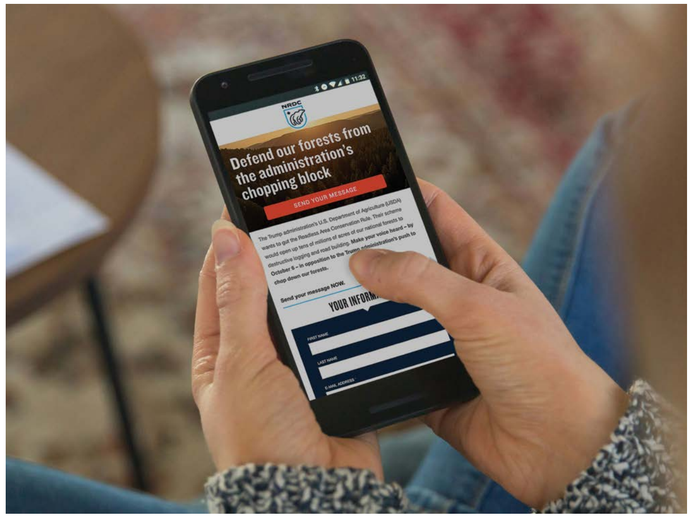
PHOTOS FROM TOP LEFT TO RIGHT: HOWARD C/GETTY IMAGES; ABHISHEK NAVLAKHA; BRIAN MARANAN PINEDA FOR NRDC; DAWN MARSH/USFWS; CAROLYN VAN HOUTEN FOR NRDC; WATERFRAME/ALAMY; DAVE WELLING; CURT ROCHON; NATALIE KEYSSAR FOR NRDC; SHUTTERSTOCK

Loud and Clear: NRDC Supporters Channel Anger into Action

There's strength in numbers, they say, and this year NRDC supporters proved the old saw is still true in a very 21st-century way. As this issue of *Nature's Voice* goes to press (well before the end of 2026), our Members and online activists had already inundated the Trump administration with more than a half million messages in response to NRDC digital action alerts on the latest anti-environment attacks coming out of the White House. Nearly 110,000 public comments were submitted in protest of the administration's assault on our climate protection and its giveaways to some of the country's biggest polluters. An additional 110,000 comments poured in opposing the administration's attempts to throw open the wild Arctic to oil and gas drilling. And an eye-popping 165,000-plus comments sounded off against the administration's proposal to rescind the forest-saving Roadless Rule *(see related story, front page)*.

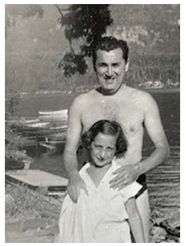
Still, in the face of the most extreme assault on our environment and health unleashed by any White House in U.S. history, it's fair to ask: Why bother? This administration has proved that it is determined to steamroll ahead with its destructive agenda. Does giving them a piece of your mind even matter? "Yes!" says Claire Morgenstern, director of digital advocacy at NRDC. Morgenstern understands the skepticism, but she points out that the comments generated by our action alerts are often in response to an official, legally mandated process federal agencies must go through when they are trying to change a regulation. "So if an overwhelming number of public comments come in opposed, and the agency makes the change anyway, the fact that they effectively ignored that opposition can be used by our litigators to build an even stronger case in court," says Morgenstern. Taking action digitally may seem easy—maybe a little too easy—but it has become even more important during this administration. "They're trying to shut out the public in so many ways—limiting public hearings, shortening public comment periods," says Morgenstern. "Text and email alerts allow us to respond in real time."

Your voice matters. To join NRDC's rapid-response Activist Network, text NRDC to 61636 or visit nrdc.org/join-us.





Why I Joined the President's Circle


Lois and her father in Vermont

When is an environmentalist not an environmentalist? When she's a middle schooler jumping off the bus after a camping trip and leaping into the lake—"With our clothes on!" says Lois Segel. Like so many NRDC supporters, it was a love of nature—the irrepressible exuberance that comes from being immersed in natural splendor—that long preceded any label. For Lois, that love was born at summer camp in Vermont, as well as during family trips as a teen to such iconic national parks as Yellowstone. "These places were always sources of wonder to me," she says.

As early as age 8, Lois connected how excited she felt learning new sports at camp with the beauty of the Green Mountains that surrounded her. That holistic sense of healthfulness would one day connect as well to her involvement in the various movements that emerged during the 1960s—for the environment, civil rights, and women's rights. "It was the perfect time to be inspired to make the world a better place," she recalls.


Lois Segel

After Lois's father died unexpectedly in 1972, David Sive became her mother's attorney. Early on, he shared his commitment to the environment and how he put his legal knowledge to work to litigate and protect wild places and clean water, and he became a founder of NRDC.

That said, when Lois undertook a tax review of her retirement accounts and decided to increase her charitable giving, her prior connection with Sive didn't make NRDC a shoo-in. She began to attend NRDC webinars and read op-ed pieces by NRDC experts to learn more. Impressed by NRDC's effectiveness and our consistent four-star Charity Navigator rating, Lois decided to make a bigger financial commitment, and she joined our President's Circle in 2024.

To learn more about the President's Circle or other ways to elevate your support of NRDC at this critical time for our planet, contact Melody Irby at mirby@nrdc.org or (212) 727-4686.

PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: COURTESY OF LOIS SEGEL (2); LISA HUPP/ULSFWS; ADEL BEKEF/GETTY IMAGES; MAGNET ME VIA UNSPLASH (WOMAN PHONE); NRDC (PHONE SCREEN)

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