



Sportsmen Urge Action on Air Pollution

New Report Shows Dangers to Wildlife, Support for Expected Pollution Rules Due This Week

March 16, 2011 (Washington, DC) – In several events around the country today, hunter and angler groups seized upon a new report from National Wildlife Federation highlighting a number of wildlife species important to hunters and anglers that are harmed by toxic air pollution and climate change. The report comes on the same day the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is expected to announce long-awaited proposed rules to reduce mercury, arsenic, and dioxin emissions from power plants. Mercury is one of the most common and toxic power plant emissions and causes a variety of health disorders for fish, mammals, birds, and other species.

The report says invisible villains to wildlife in the U.S. are mercury, carbon pollution, acid rain, and increased ground level ozone - all of which negatively impact the health and habitat of wildlife. The NWF report, *Game Changers: Air Pollution, a Warming Climate, and the Troubled Future for America's Hunting and Fishing Heritage*, is available [here](#).

Local groups releasing the report today are calling for members of Congress to support EPA's efforts to update air pollution limits under the Clean Air Act and rein in the ongoing damage to our nation's wildlife and natural heritage. Congress is currently considering several proposals that would severely weaken the [Clean Air Act](#) by preventing EPA from updating air pollution standards. One could come to a vote in the Senate today, while yesterday, the House Energy & Commerce committee passed a bill that would prevent EPA from moving forward with standards to reduce carbon pollution. Earlier this month, the House passed a "continuing resolution" budget bill that included riders that would also kill the EPA's first standards to reduce carbon pollution and eliminate new standards limiting mercury and air toxics from some sources.

"Our children, our wildlife, and future generations are being sacrificed to satisfy polluter special interests who want free rein over our air and water," said [Catherine Bowes](#), NWF senior policy representative. "We need a strong Clean Air Act to protect our lakes from toxic mercury, our streams from acid rain, and our forests from tree-killing smog and carbon pollution. History has shown time and again that cutting air pollution benefits our health and the economy, and it is time to update our air standards to reduce toxic emissions."

NWF welcomes today's expected announcement from EPA. Mercury is a highly potent neurotoxin that adversely affects the function and development of the central nervous system in both people and wildlife. Children and pregnant women are especially vulnerable to mercury exposure.

Coal fired power plants are the single largest source of mercury contamination in the U.S, amounting to about 50 percent of emissions affecting humans and wildlife. The pollution settles on lakes, rivers, and forests where it exposes fish and other wildlife. In many places, mercury warnings are increasingly common. Every state in the U.S. will have at least one fish consumption warning this year, and some will have hundreds.

“We need to make sure Congress keeps its hands off the Clean Air Act and lets the EPA do its job of protecting people and the environment from air pollution,” said NWF global warming policy director [Joe Mendelson](#). “This week's effort from EPA is a great start. For the sake of our children and environment, the strong mercury and air toxic limits proposed today must be allowed to go forward.”

Celebrating 75 years of inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.

Contact:

Tony Iallonardo, 202-797-6612, iallonardot@nwf.org

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