



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on March 3, 2017

Trump Orders EPA Review of “Horrible” Obama Water Decree

President Donald Trump signed [an executive order](#)  on Tuesday ordering the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to review and reconsider the “Waters of the United States” (WOTUS) regulation, a [radical decree issued by the Obama administration purporting to](#) regulate virtually all water and much of the land across America. While stopping short of quashing the controversial rule altogether, analysts described Trump’s executive order as a first step in that process. One prominent activist, Tom Fitton of Judicial Watch, called the decision “the most pro-property rights move out of D.C. in two decades.” But there may be more to come; the latest order came amid reports that Trump is readying another executive order to dismantle Obama’s “climate” regulations purporting to limit emissions of the “gas of life” carbon dioxide.

Speaking at a signing ceremony flanked by other top executive and legislative branch officials, Trump used strong language to describe the previous administration’s lawless power grab. “It’s a horrible, horrible rule,” Trump [said at a White House signing ceremony](#) surrounded by farmers, ranchers, lawmakers, and officials at all levels of government. “Has sort of a nice name, but everything else is bad.” The EPA’s “so-called Waters of the United States rule,” Trump continued, “is one of the worst examples of federal regulation, and it has truly run amok, and is one of the rules most strongly opposed by farmers, ranchers and agricultural workers all across our land. It’s prohibiting them from being allowed to do what they’re supposed to be doing. It’s been a disaster.”

Indeed, some analyses showed that the rule was so expansive and intrusive that it purported to give the EPA authority to regulate 99 percent or more of the land in states like Montana and Missouri. The regulation drew furious outrage from Americans across the country and all along the political spectrum. Even a Democrat lawmaker who attended the signing ceremony declared that the EPA rule was “unworkable” and that Trump’s actions had shown that concerns among ranchers and farmers were being heard “loud and clear.” Indeed, from Democrats and establishment-minded Republicans to conservative and constitutionalist members of the GOP, Trump’s action won applause from all but the most extreme “environmentalist” fringe groups hoping to regulate Americans and the U.S. economy into oblivion.

While paying homage to the environment, Trump also reiterated his campaign pledges to free Americans from the crushing burden of lawless regulation — particularly when it harms jobs. “We’re



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going to free up our country and it's going to be done in a very environmental and positive environmental way, I will tell you that," Trump said Tuesday. "[We will] create millions of jobs, so many jobs are delayed for so many years that it's unfair to everybody." Trump gave special thanks to Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.), the leading climate realist in Congress, as well as Senator John Barroso, a Republican from Wyoming. Vice President Mike Pence, first lady Melania Trump, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, Representative Bob Gibbs (R-Ohio), and Senator Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.) were all present as well, alongside everyday working-class Americans harmed by the Obama-EPA decree.

The new president also dismantled the supposed legal rationale underpinning the whole scheme, setting the stage for it to be formally quashed. "The Clean Water Act says that the EPA can regulate navigable waters — meaning waters that truly affect interstate commerce," he said. "But a few years ago, the EPA decided that navigable waters can mean nearly every puddle or every ditch on a farmer's land, or anyplace else that they decide — right? It was a massive power grab. The EPA's regulators were putting people out of jobs by the hundreds of thousands, and regulations and permits started treating our wonderful small farmers and small businesses as if they were a major industrial polluter. They treated them horribly. Horribly."

In fact, when Trump was first made aware of the bullying being perpetrated against Americans under the rule, he could not believe it was even real, he continued. "When it was first shown to me, I said, no, you're kidding aren't you? But they weren't kidding," Trump said, adding that his executive order would be "paving the way for the elimination of this very destructive and horrible" Obama rule. "In one case in a Wyoming, a rancher was fined \$37,000 a day by the EPA for digging a small watering hole for his cattle. His land. These abuses were, and are, why such incredible opposition to this rule from the hundreds of organizations took place in all 50 states. It's a horrible, horrible rule.... I've been hearing about it for years and years. I didn't know I'd necessarily be in this position to do something about it, but we've been hearing about it for years."

The executive order does not formally repeal the regulation, which involves a process including public comments before it can be finalized and official. But in the order, Trump outlines the policy he has in mind that will guide future regulation in this area. "It is in the national interest to ensure that the Nation's navigable waters are kept free from pollution, while at the same time promoting economic growth, minimizing regulatory uncertainty, and showing due regard for the roles of the Congress and the States under the Constitution," declared Trump's order, formally titled "[Presidential Executive Order on Restoring the Rule of Law, Federalism, and Economic Growth by Reviewing the Waters of the United States Rule](#)."

As such, it orders the head of the EPA and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Work to review the rule for consistency with the policy Trump outlined. It also ensures that the attorney general will be made aware, so that federal courts considering the Obama-era scheme — already put on hold by a federal court — will know that the rule is being reviewed for likely elimination. And finally, it uses the much more limited definition of "navigable waters" given by Justice Antonin Scalia in a 2006 opinion. That alone all but guarantees that Obama's scheme to label practically everything as "navigable waters" subject to federal jurisdiction will be going down in flames as soon as the whole process is finished.

Trump received widespread praise from congressional Republicans, free market groups, farmers, ranchers, constitutionalists, and more after the action. Even the establishment Republicans most responsible for enabling Obama's lawlessness — perhaps aware of which way the political winds are blowing — issued congratulations to Trump. "I welcome President Trump's review of this rule and hope



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it will be repealed once and for all,” said House Speaker Paul Ryan, who played a key role in funding and advancing Obama’s radical agenda on everything from the EPA to Planned Parenthood and globalism. “The livelihoods of America’s farmers, ranchers, and cattlemen are at stake.” Numerous other GOP lawmakers, and even some Democrats in conservative-leaning or agricultural states, also cheered.

Non-profit organizations working to protect markets, the environment, and freedom celebrated Trump’s order, too. “President Trump broke down a major barrier to economic growth and job creation today with his executive order,” said Craig Richardson, president of the Energy & Environment Legal Institute (E&E Legal). “Trump is bringing much needed common sense back to the EPA. Re-examining this rule means America’s farmers, property owners, and small business owners should not have to worry whether or not the regulation of everything from mud puddles to cattle ponds will stand in the way of conducting their daily business.... The WOTUS rule is a major roadblock to economic growth, and it’s time for it go.”

As a crucial component of the [United Nations-backed globalist “sustainability” agenda](#) to trample freedom, property rights, small farmers, states’ rights, and more, the WOTUS rule was a major target for liberty-minded Americans. So it is no surprise that the decision was met with massive support by all except the most radical pseudo-environmentalists [funded by extremist billionaires, dubbed the “Billionaires Club” in a Senate report](#). However, after eight years of the Obama administration and generations of unconstitutional regulations being dumped on Americans, Trump has a long way to go before the federal government is once again obeying the Constitution and freeing up the economy.

Toward that end, the administration is reportedly set to begin dismantling Obama’s unconstitutional and devastating “Clean Power Plan.” Powerful forces, including individuals around Trump, are already massing to stop him and have him walk back some of his key campaign promises, such as withdrawing from the UN’s “Paris Agreement” pseudo-treaty on “climate change.” But if Trump’s ongoing winning spree is any indication, Americans have reason to remain cautiously optimistic — at least if the public pressure continues to build in favor of restoring freedom, draining the swamp, and quashing once and for all what Trump called the climate “hoax.”

Photo of President Donald Trump signing executive order to review WOTUS regulation: AP Images

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