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Green groups threaten to sue Biden over Trump-era waterway permits

By [Rebecca Beitsch](#) - 02/08/21 12:18 PM EST

A coalition of environmental groups warned the Biden administration Monday it would sue if the Army Corps of Engineers fails to reconsider Trump-era permits for industry activity they fear will pollute waterways.

The notice of intent to sue from the Center for Biological Diversity, Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council and others targets 16 so-called nationwide permits that allow discharges from oil and gas development, pipeline and transmission-line construction, and coal mining into waterways.

“The Trump administration flagrantly violated bedrock environmental laws when it reissued the Nationwide Permits, without regard for the people, places or wildlife that are affected by this deeply flawed program,” Jared Margolis, a senior attorney at the Center for Biological Diversity, said in a release.

“I’m hoping President Biden will prevent the Corps from continuing to use the permits to rubber-stamp major projects like oil pipelines that leak and spill, degrading the clean water that people and wildlife need.”

The groups are particularly concerned with whether the permits meet requirements under the Endangered Species Act to protect critical habitat.

The Army Corps of Engineers did not immediately respond to request for comment.

A Day 1 executive order from President Biden called for a review of the 16 permits, along with numerous other environmental decisions by the Trump administration.

“While the groups are hopeful that this process will result in important changes to the program, if the Corps continues to ignore its duty to properly account for the harm nationwide permit activities pose to species, then litigation may be necessary,” the coalition said in its release.