





STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, January 26, 2025

Good News to Spur Active Hope for the Challenges Ahead

“Climate activism is the antidote to climate despair. Hope can help people find the energy to act.” (former Vice President Al Gore) And we must hold our elected government officials accountable.

 A few weeks ago, the former administration “announced protections off the coasts of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, Eastern Gulf of Mexico, and Alaska’s Northern Bering Sea by **withdrawing 625 million acres of offshore waters from future oil and gas leasing**. Preventing the expansion of future oil development off virtually all our country’s coasts will help meet our climate goals and safeguard communities.” (Gene Karpinski, President, *League of Conservation Voters*, 1/17/25) **As stewards of our earth, we must be on the alert to fight for these protections.**


 With the joint advocacy of thousands of supporters, Earthjustice helped us achieve important wins for the environment in 2024, including:

“Phasing out lead pipes: After years of Earthjustice litigation, ... the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) updated an existing rule to require almost all lead pipes in the United States to be replaced within a decade.

Adopting first-ever national PFAS [forever chemicals] in drinking water standards: This year, the EPA finalized national PFAS drinking water standards to reduce people’s exposure to serious health risks and prevent thousands of premature deaths....

Cleaning up toxic coal ash: In April 2024, the EPA finalized a new rule that will force power plants across the country to clean up hundreds of coal ash dumps that have been leaking toxic pollution into groundwater -- a major victory for communities living near coal ash plants....” (*Earthjustice Alerts*, 12/23/24)

 “The EPA released a final rule updating critical Clean Air Act standards that will **reduce toxic emissions from more than 200 of the nation’s most hazardous chemical plants.**” (Zahra Ahmad, *Earthjustice*, 4/9/24)

 “It was [also] a big year for victories **protecting critical ocean habitat and reducing single-use plastic from polluting our oceans....** The United States announced its commitment to phase out single-use plastics across the federal government. Amazon announced it will fully remove plastic air pillows from its delivery packaging globally, replacing them with 100% recycled paper filler. And two states, Florida and California, passed laws to protect our oceans and marine wildlife from plastic pollution.” (*Oceana*, 1/3/25)

Action Step: “The devastating wildfires in Los Angeles demonstrate that the world needs to step up its response to a changing climate that is worsening extreme weather events.... Please urge members of Congress to **prioritize robust climate action** for the good of our climate and for the safety and well-being of communities around the United States.” (*Mercy Justice Team*, 1/13/25)

A simple prayer for our nation: that the Lord may direct the minds of those who govern to promote the common good and assure justice for all. (*Magnificat*, December 2024)

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