

There are a surprising number of potentially positive environmental bills working through the state legislature. The one which will receive the most attention is the [“State Park Preservation Act”](#) which would restrict many forms of development within the state park system, developments like those the governor and his cabinet attempted to sneak through late last year.

LINK: <https://jaxtoday.org/2024/12/05/state-park-preservation-act/>

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[An enormous great white shark](#) has been cruising the waters of the north and central Florida Atlantic coast.

LINK: <https://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/2025/02/11/great-white-sharks-florida-canaveral-ocearch-jacksonville/78416498007/>

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Greenspace of Jacksonville is seeking volunteers for its [Tree Keepers Maintenance Program](#).

LINK: <https://greenscapeofjax.org/treekeepers/>

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It has been illegal for noncommercial entities, including individual people, to share native plant seeds with each other in Ohio. [Not anymore](#).

LINK: <https://environmentamerica.org/updates/new-law-supports-native-plants-in-ohio/>

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A Miami company has developed and is testing a [“greener” alternative to traditional seawalls](#), which do protect property and shorelines, but at a dreadful cost to ecosystems.

LINK: [https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/environment/climate-change/article298269808.html?utm\\_source=substack&utm\\_medium=email](https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/environment/climate-change/article298269808.html?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email)

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[Fossil gas lobbyists in Florida](#) want even tighter controls over how municipalities are allowed to regulate their product.

LINK: [https://jasongarcia.substack.com/p/gas-lobbyists-want-tighter-handcuffs?utm\\_source=post-email-title&publication\\_id=687064&post\\_id=156309161&utm\\_campaign=email-post-title&isFreemail=false&r=g2ims&triedRedirect=true&utm\\_medium=email](https://jasongarcia.substack.com/p/gas-lobbyists-want-tighter-handcuffs?utm_source=post-email-title&publication_id=687064&post_id=156309161&utm_campaign=email-post-title&isFreemail=false&r=g2ims&triedRedirect=true&utm_medium=email)

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Interestingly, for all the talk about Florida increasing solar power generation, the state continues to rely extensively on fossil fuels, with [70% of the state’s total power generated by fossil gas](#).

Remember, fossil gas, previously called natural gas, is not clean energy. It’s cleaner than oil or coal, but not clean.

LINK: <https://www.theinvadingsea.com/2025/01/24/energy-efficiency-southeast-florida-utilities-inflation-reduction-act-tax-credits-rebates/>

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Conversely, a new [study](#) in the journal “Renewable Energy” that looked at California’s deployment of renewable power highlights how reliable the future of energy might be. It found that last year, from late winter to early summer, renewables fulfilled 100% of the state’s electricity demand for up to 10 hours on 98 of 116 days, a record for California.

[https://grist.org/energy/california-just-debunked-a-big-myth-about-renewable-energy/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=daily](https://grist.org/energy/california-just-debunked-a-big-myth-about-renewable-energy/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=daily)

In addition to using clean energy, improving energy efficiency can make a big difference when it comes to emissions. A variety of [household energy efficiency measures](#) could be supported by state funding in Florida. However, we are [one of the worst-performing states in terms of efficiency programs](#) funded by our utility companies.

LINK: <https://www.theinvadingsea.com/2025/01/28/energy-efficiency-florida-electricity-bills-heat-pumps-wilton-simpson-homes-hear-rebates/>

LINK: <https://www.theinvadingsea.com/2025/01/24/energy-efficiency-southeast-florida-utilities-inflation-reduction-act-tax-credits-rebates/>

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How the United States uses Mexico as [a dump for toxic waste](#).

LINK: [https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2025/jan/14/monterrey-mexico-steel-us-toxic-waste?lid=jl755cfrlc3&utm\\_source=EMAIL&utm\\_medium=email\\_marketing&utm\\_campaign=MK\\_SU\\_SOINL\\_US\\_160125&utm\\_term=Email\\_SP\\_US&utm\\_content=Email\\_SP\\_US](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/ng-interactive/2025/jan/14/monterrey-mexico-steel-us-toxic-waste?lid=jl755cfrlc3&utm_source=EMAIL&utm_medium=email_marketing&utm_campaign=MK_SU_SOINL_US_160125&utm_term=Email_SP_US&utm_content=Email_SP_US)

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Now, if you dare, on to the horror show that is the federal government. I'll spare you an onslaught of adjectives to accompany each story; all of these actions are catastrophic, devastating, end of days type stuff for the environment.

In at least two executive orders since taking office, Donald Trump has invoked a panel with a telling nickname: [the God Squad](#).

The committee is made up of high-level officials who can override the landmark Endangered Species Act so that development or other projects can proceed even if they might result in an extinction. It's called the God Squad because its members "literally have the authority over the life and death of the species," said Patrick Parenteau, an emeritus professor at the Vermont Law and Graduate School who, in the late 1970s, had a hand in writing the legislative language that created the God Squad provision.

"They can cause the species to go extinct from the face of the earth," he said.

The power to convene the committee comes from an amendment to the act itself, but it has rarely been used. Trump has cleverly found a way to potential unleash the God Squad by intentionally declaring a "national energy emergency."

"National emergency" powers for the president stem from the Cold War when the possibility of obliteration by Soviet nuclear missiles at a moment's notice and communication systems antiquated by today's technology made it reasonable to give the president the ability to make drastic unilateral decisions when faced with the gravest of situations.

The United States is producing more energy than ever before, so Trump's "national energy emergency" is a complete fabrication, but by declaring it a national emergency, he can direct the Environmental Protection Agency, among other governmental regulators, to bypass law in order to

help fossil fuel companies drill more, drill faster, drill where they've been excluded previously, and potentially doom species to extinction.

LINK: <https://www.rsn.org/001/could-trump-use-the-god-squad-to-override-environmental-law.html>

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On January 23, the falsely named "Fix Our Forests Act" (H.R. 471) passed the U.S. House on a vote of 279-141. Plenty of Democrats voted along with Republicans on this one.

The "Fix Our Forests Act" will dramatically change how America's national forests will be managed, and wilderness won't be spared. The bill would override bedrock environmental laws and curtail public participation to mandate landscape-scale logging on federal lands, including industrial logging on up to 10,000 acres—or 15 square miles—of federal public lands categorical excluded from the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act under the rationale that cutting down trees across 15 square miles of forests has no significant impacts on the environment or wildlife.

For wilderness areas, the bill would promote increased cattle and sheep grazing and widespread use of manager-ignited fire that will transform these places from wild landscapes "untrammled by man" to human-dominated ones.

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Republican officials also want to [gut the Antiquities Act](#). The Antiquities Act authorizes the president to designate national monuments on federal lands that contain historic landmarks, prehistoric structures, or other objects of historical, natural, or scientific significance.

Over the decades, the Act has been used to protect millions of acres of federal land from development.

LINK: <https://nevadacurrent.com/2025/02/13/amodeis-bill-to-gut-antiquities-act-proves-hes-not-interested-in-representing-our-best-interests/>

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A Trump executive order reversed a Biden era policy phasing out single use plastics in the federal government, a small thing that at the scale of the federal government is a huge thing. Trump loves plastic straws so he's outlawing paper straws from being purchased by the federal government as we all continued to be buried under mountains of plastic.

Yes, this is real.

LINK: <https://apnews.com/article/trump-plastic-straws-pollution-oceans-packaging-e64e2671bbf7f8a8abaec0d5a491f7de>

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Then there's this story of Trump directing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to empty reservoirs in California, [wasting billions of gallons of stored water for political theater](#). When crops in California wither on the vine and die this summer and food prices skyrocket, remember this one.

This action exemplifies one of the reasons why I hate the USACE. As military people, they follow orders, even if those orders are maniacal.

LINK: [https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/feb/11/california-water-trump?utm\\_term=67ab3f497e315926da7590f537e4cf0a&utm\\_campaign=USMorningBriefing&utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&CMP=usbriefing\\_email](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/feb/11/california-water-trump?utm_term=67ab3f497e315926da7590f537e4cf0a&utm_campaign=USMorningBriefing&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=usbriefing_email)

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Trump pulls [promised federal funding for electric vehicle charging stations](#). Doing so appears to be illegal.

LINK: [https://grist.org/transportation/trump-moves-to-halt-5b-ev-charging-program/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=daily](https://grist.org/transportation/trump-moves-to-halt-5b-ev-charging-program/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=daily)

This is one of countless infrastructure and climate-related projects funded by Congress and the previous president that Trump is targeting for cancellation. Illegally. This money was already allocated by the Congress and Biden and now Trump wants to go back in time to cancel it.

Trump's administration intends to hold back hundreds of billions of dollars from the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law meant to fund community solar projects, address drought issues, and clean up polluted neighborhoods. Trump's executive actions appear to violate several federal laws and centuries of legal precedent, as well as multiple active restraining orders from federal courts.

[https://grist.org/politics/trump-climate-funding-freeze-ira-bil-biden/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=daily](https://grist.org/politics/trump-climate-funding-freeze-ira-bil-biden/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=daily)

\$700 billion in funding for infrastructure and climate-related projects, that's what the Biden Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Laws promised. Some of these projects have received their funding. Some have been completed. But in light of the Trump administration's freeze on many forms of federal funding, the future of as-yet-undistributed money is unclear.

What kinds of climate and infrastructure projects have been announced in your community and across the country? Which ones may now be at risk? Use this FASCINATING map and your ZIP code to find out.

<https://go.grist.org/e/399522/-newsletter-utm-campaign-daily/2b8667p/1810229465/h/MNRl6yifLijggioFwk7nOSFyQtuCOvq52YLwiRNpmGo>

When Trump [issued a series of orders](#) that froze billions of dollars in federal climate funding late last month, he also slammed the brakes on the most ambitious tree replanting initiative in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina wiping out more than [200,000 trees](#) across the city.

Trump, the pro-plastic straws, anti-endangered species, anti-trees president.

[https://grist.org/cities/trump-stops-tree-replacement-new-orleans/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=daily](https://grist.org/cities/trump-stops-tree-replacement-new-orleans/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=daily)

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Lastly, a look at the Apalachicola River from my "Welcome to Florida" podcast and the threats it faces from potential oil exploration... and how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers screwed it up, too.

<https://welcometoflorida.buzzsprout.com/1169570/episodes/16460618-episode-240-apalachicola-river>