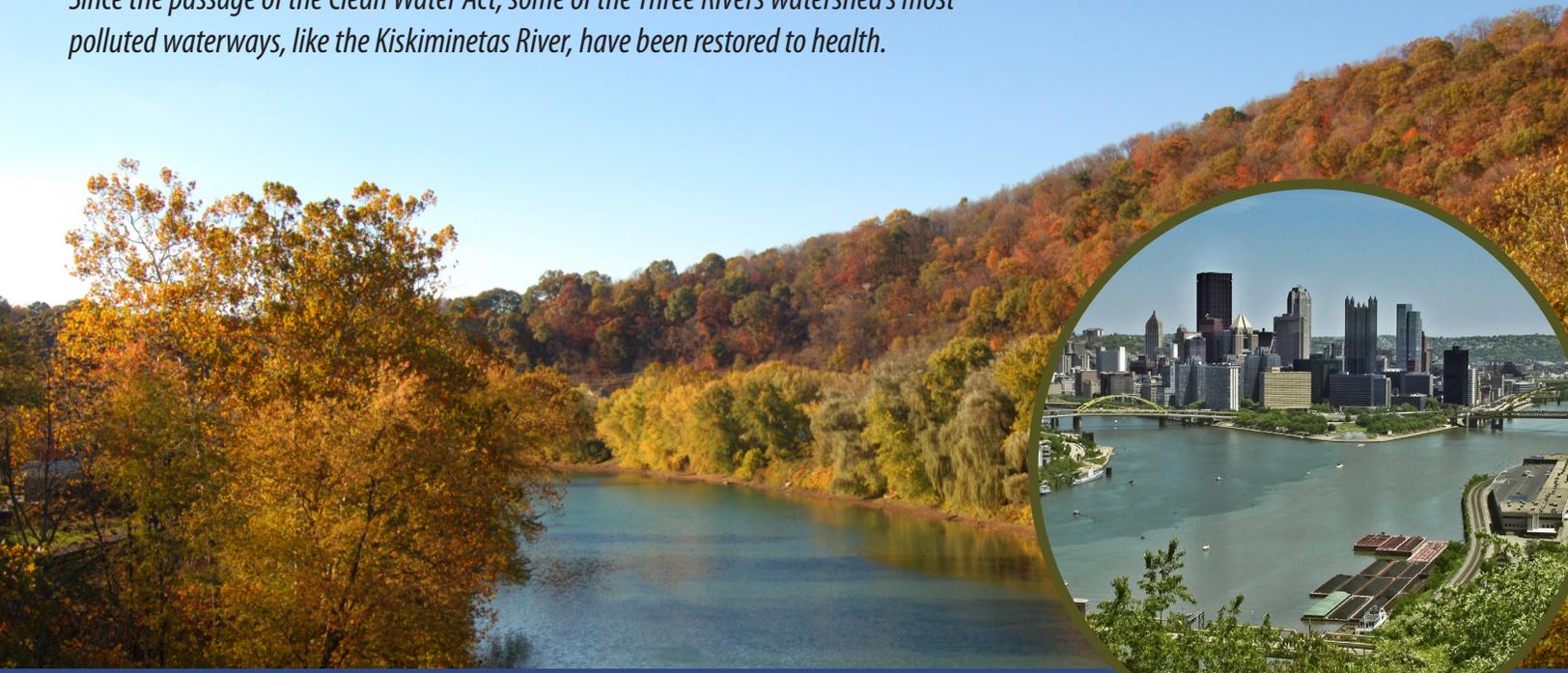


Since the passage of the Clean Water Act, some of the Three Rivers watershed's most polluted waterways, like the Kiskiminetas River, have been restored to health.



Rough Waters Ahead

The Impact of the Trump Administration's EPA Budget Cuts on the Three Rivers Basin

Western Pennsylvania's Three Rivers – the Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio – supply drinking water and recreation opportunities to millions, but mining, industry and other human activity has polluted the basin's rivers and lakes. The Environmental Protection Agency has been vital to restoring the Three Rivers to health, holding polluters accountable and supporting research for stronger protections. The Trump administration, however, has proposed cutting the EPA's budget by 31 percent, putting the future of the Three Rivers basin in jeopardy.

Clean Water in Western Pennsylvania Requires a Strong EPA

The Three Rivers basin is being protected and restored to health with funding and effort from the EPA. For example, the EPA has worked to:

- **Implement upstream protections:** The EPA provided technical assistance to the City of Pittsburgh and its partners to develop “green stormwater infrastructure” to address the city’s flash flooding and sewer overflow problems, giving rise to installations like a rain garden at the Crescent Early Childhood Center in the East End neighborhood of Pittsburgh.
- **Hold polluters accountable:** Consol Energy illegally dumped mining wastewater from the Bailey mine complex to Ohio River tributaries in Greene and Washington counties from 2005 to 2012. In a 2016 settlement with the EPA and its co-plaintiffs, Consol Energy agreed to pay \$3 million in penalties and implement \$5.3 million in improvements to cut discharges of dissolved coal mining pollutants by more than 2.5 million pounds per year.

- **Keep pollution out of our waterways:** The EPA worked with the state to set limits on bacterial pollution to the Pine Creek watershed, including North Park Lake, in Allegheny County in March 2013. Thanks to the cleanup plan, the Pine Creek watershed, currently so polluted that they cannot be considered safe for recreation, should achieve water quality standards.
- **Restore waterways to health:** An abandoned mine located near St. Michael in Cambria County discharged 3,000 gallons of mine drainage each minute to the Little Conemaugh River from the 1960s until recently. The EPA developed an innovative permit with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection that eliminated aluminum contamination and cut iron loads to the creek by 98 percent and manganese loads by more than half.
- **Conduct research and educate the public:** After state officials detected bromide in the Allegheny River in 2010, EPA researchers investigated potential sources of the contamination, which can react to form a dangerous cancer-causing chemical in drinking water, and found that wastewater treatment facilities that accepted fracking wastewater and coal-fired power plants contributed most of the contamination.

More Restoration Work Needed

Water quality in the Three Rivers has greatly improved in recent years, but the job is not done. Thousands of miles of the basin's rivers and streams are still too polluted for fishing, swimming or drinking. Now is not the time to hobble the EPA's essential work or to cut the funding it provides for state and local efforts to protect the Three Rivers.



Acid mine drainage is the single-largest cause of impairment in the Three Rivers basin, discharging highly acidic wastewater charged with heavy metals that can be lethal to aquatic life.



The EPA funded a program that provides students and teachers with equipment, training and assistance to study local water chemistry in Western Pennsylvania.

The Proposed Budget Cuts Target EPA Grant Programs that Help Pennsylvania to Ensure Clean Water

Program (most recent year of funding for which data are available)	Funding in most recent year	Estimated lost funding due to proposed Trump admin. cuts
Water Pollution Control Grants (FY16)	\$5,984,000	\$1,795,200
Nonpoint Pollution Control Grants (FY16)	\$4,653,006	\$4,653,006
Drinking Water Protection and Enforcement Grants (FY17)	\$4,087,000	\$1,226,100
TOTAL	\$14,724,006	\$7,674,306

Note: Estimates are calculated assuming EPA budget cuts affect all states by the same percentage. Reductions are based on grants from most recent fiscal year.

A Strong EPA Requires Full Funding

To build on the progress of recent decades and ensure that our waterways are safe for swimming, fishing and other uses, funding for the EPA and the state and local efforts it supports should be increased, not cut. Aging drinking water and sewage infrastructure across the nation are in need of replacement, at a cost of \$600 billion over the next 20 years. The EPA needs resources to establish pollution limits that protect human health, and to make sure that polluters abide by those pollution standards. The EPA also needs funding to continue its critical role in supporting cleanup of past pollution and restoring damaged rivers and streams so that they can provide clean water. Ensuring that people who live, work and play in the Three Rivers basin have continued access to clean water requires full funding for the EPA.

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