



THE DISMANTLING OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS IN NORTH CAROLINA

After decades of protecting North Carolina's natural resources as well as its economy, the North Carolina General Assembly has now begun to systematically dismantle the longstanding, sensible policies that make North Carolina a great place to visit, live, and do business. Since 2011, the new majority in the General Assembly has attacked protections of clean air, clean water, and quality of life in North Carolina with the following actions:

- Cut the budget of the agency responsible for protecting clean air and water by 40%
- Cut park and conservation land acquisition funding by 95%
- Prohibited state environmental protections that are more stringent than federal laws
- Repealed prohibition of hardened structures on beaches to allow "terminal groins," long sea walls that extend perpendicular to the coastline
- Repealed prohibition on horizontal drilling to allow fracking
- Repealed protections for trout waters
- Repealed state health-based limits on the emission of toxic air pollution
- Required state to promote proposed water reservoirs regardless of the availability of cheaper, less harmful alternatives to resolve future water shortages
- Attempted to outlaw sea level rise
- Terminated Natural Heritage Trust Fund that protected important natural areas
- Terminated Mountain Resources Commission that focused on economic development while preserving natural resources, open spaces, and farmland protection in Western NC
- Reduced scientific, health, and nonprofit seats on state environmental boards and replaced all members, increasing industry and political seats
- Prohibited local governments from adopting more stringent environmental protections than state law without unanimous vote until October 2014
- Mandated automatic expiration of all environmental protections not reviewed and reenacted by the General Assembly
- Allowed groundwater contamination from industrial sites to progress further before clean-up measures must be taken
- Encouraged offshore drilling in NC
- Delayed cleanup of polluted drinking water source for Triangle area
- Eliminated some water quality inspections of industrial hog farms
- Tripled political vs. professional positions in state environmental agency
- Compromised water quality protection by reorganizing and reducing staff of water division of state environmental agency
- Halved the time for a third-party to appeal a state permit of air or water pollution

Go to allthree4NC.org to contact your legislator or to learn more.