Opinion
Editorial

Smoke from the American Electric Power's coal-fired Mountaineer Power Plant along the bank

A file photo shows smoke from the American Electric Power's coal-fired Mountaineer Power Plant along the banks of the Ohio River in New Haven, W.Va. (OSV News/Jim West)

by NCR Editorial Staff

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In no uncertain terms, God calls humans to care for the planet. Precisely when Earth urgently requires that care, President Donald Trump's promotion of fossil fuels and his dismantling of essential environmental safeguards represent perhaps the gravest and most consequential failure of his time in office. Trump supports coal, oil and gas, prioritizing short-term profit over the long-term health of our shared home and all who rely on it for life. In doing so, the president is accelerating Earth's warming and increasing the disparity among those who suffer its impacts at a rate that defies comprehension.

The administration's actions appear to be mindlessly self-destructive and suggest that the commander-in-chief exists in a world entirely disconnected from reality — a delusional landscape where facts, science and the well-being of humanity take a backseat to short-term political gains and profits. Trump's heartless detachment from the lived experiences of billions of people worldwide reveals his troubling inability to perceive or acknowledge the shared vulnerabilities of humanity and the planet we inhabit.

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opposed to life itself. Trump's legacy is the intentional sacrifice of today's marginalized communities and future generations for temporary economic gain.

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Since 1980, Earth's average temperature has climbed by 0.8°C — a rise of roughly 0.18°C each decade. But in the past, scientists say, it took thousands of years — not a few decades — for the Earth to warm at a similar pace.

Imagine a gentle stream, naturally carving its path through stone over thousands of years. Its slow and patient flow gradually shapes the land, allowing plants and animals along its banks ample time to adapt. Now imagine that same stream suddenly transforming into a torrential flood, roaring downstream, eroding the soil, uprooting trees, and sweeping away entire ecosystems instantly. This is the harsh metaphor for our present reality — climate change accelerated beyond nature's ability to cope.

The Trump administration has taken many destructive actions, including withdrawing from the Paris climate agreement, rejecting accepted climate science, and aiming to dismantle climate regulations. The Environmental Protection Agency is reevaluating 31 significant actions, such as the Clean Air Act's finding that greenhouse gases are a threat to public health. The EPA has rewritten the Clean Water Act definitions of waterways to ease pollution protections. Funding for clean energy projects has been halted while fossil fuel development has been turbocharged. The EPA is preparing to ease methane emissions and mercury standards.

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To pave the way for the rollout of dangerous polluting policies, the EPA is considering firing more than 1,000 scientists, The New York Times reported on March 17. Industry lobbyists want to be rid of the pesky government chemists,

biologists, toxicologists, meteorologists and other experts who make sure that easing of pollution rules for public health, clean air and water are backed by independent research and data.

Overall, these actions represent a significant shift away from conservation and toward an increased reliance on planet-destroying fuels.

We are urgently called to restore what has been recklessly damaged. We must reclaim a vision of Earth as our home, to act swiftly and compassionately, recognizing the deep interconnectedness and sacredness of all life. Only by embracing this truth can we begin the necessary healing — dedicated, humbly, to preserving this planet for ourselves and countless generations to come.

Given this reality, we must oppose Trump's environmental agenda firmly and persistently. Our resistance must be grounded in moral clarity and ecological responsibility, rooted in community action and personal choices. The urgency we face requires indefatigable advocacy for policies that restore and protect the environment and frontline communities. We must demand accountability, reaffirming our commitment to a future that respects science, honors nature and prioritizes life over profit. Only then can we reclaim the role God assigned to us as responsible caretakers, safeguarding the sacred community of Earth.

This story appears in the **Trump's Second Term** feature series. View the full series.