

US environmental groups sue over wildlife protection rollbacks

August 22 2019



In this file photo taken on October 8, 2012 a grizzly bear mother and her cub walk near Pelican Creek in the Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming

US environmental groups have sued the administration of President Donald Trump over rollbacks that weaken the Endangered Species Act,

a law credited with saving iconic species from the bald eagle to the grizzly bear.

Non-profit Earthjustice filed a lawsuit on behalf of groups such as the Center for Biological Diversity and the Sierra Club in a [federal court](#) in northern California on Wednesday.

"Nothing in these new rules helps wildlife, period," said Kristen Boyles, an Earthjustice attorney. "We're going to court to set things right."

Boyles said the regulatory changes were intended to make protection and recovery of threatened and endangered species "harder and less predictable."

The changes announced August 12 eliminate a rule that automatically extends the same protections to threatened [species](#) as to endangered species.

They also would allow information to be gathered about [economic impacts](#), although ostensibly not used in making listing determinations, which is barred by law.

The lawsuit argues that [administration officials](#) failed to publicly disclose and analyze the harms and impacts of the changes, in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act, and that they inserted new changes that were never made public or subject to public comment.

The third charge was that the administration violated the language and purpose of the act by changing requirements to comply with a section that requires federal agencies to not carry out actions that jeopardize listed species or harm their designated habitats

The group also announced a 60-day notice of intent to sue over the

decision to add the provision on gathering information about the economic impact of listing a species.

In announcing the new rules, Interior Secretary David Bernhardt defended the changes as "improvements" that would ensure resources went to where they were needed most.

Democratic politicians including presidential candidate Joe Biden joined environmental and animal groups in their condemnation.

© 2019 AFP

Citation: US environmental groups sue over wildlife protection rollbacks (2019, August 22)
retrieved 22 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2019-08-environmental-groups-sue-wildlife-rollbacks.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.