

PRESS RELEASE | MARCH 4, 2025

U.S. Supreme Court further erodes Clean Water Act protections

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Supreme Court eliminated a key component of Clean Water Act permits that states and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have used for many years to keep us safe and protect our clean water in rivers, lakes, and streams. The ruling affects permits that control water pollution across the country and that protect communities from industrial, construction, stormwater, and other types of harmful pollution.

The case, *San Francisco v. EPA*, asked the Court to strike down agencies' Clean Water Act authority to require polluters to comply with water quality standards as a condition of their permits. SELC, along with other environmental organizations, filed a friend of the court brief in the case, explaining why the permit provisions at issue in this case are crucial for protecting communities nationwide.

But the Court ruled that EPA lacks the authority to use permit provisions that broadly prohibit violations of water quality standards in the rivers and lakes that we fish, swim, play in, and use for drinking water. The decision follows the Supreme Court's 2023 *Sackett* ruling, which severely cut back the types of waterways protected by the Clean Water Act.

We will need to learn how Illinois lawmakers will protect our waters when the Clean Water Act is no longer the law of the land. For more information on this issue go to:

<https://www.msn.com/en-ie/news/politics/trump-and-conservatives-lead-attack-on-clean-water/ar-AA1CojvK>