



Feds: Acid Rain Isn't A Big Deal After All

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The negative effects of acid rain have started to reverse, according to new research by the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

“Acid rain has been on the decline since the 1970s. Soils are starting to turn around.” said Dr. Gregory Lawrence, the USGS soil and water chemist and lead author of the study, in a phone interview with The Daily Caller News Foundation.

Acid rain is caused by emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide and can, in excessive amounts, have negative effects on plants and animals. Scientists and government agencies contend that the damages and risks of acid rain were actually exaggerated.

Previous studies of the effects of acid rain relied on data that only went up to 2004, whereas the data in this study was extended up to 2014, allowing scientists to study a broader range of samples. Despite the alleged threat of acid rain, forest land in the United States has been expanding rapidly and without interruption according to data collected by Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Even the Environmental Protection Agency isn't seriously concerned about acid rain these days. The agency has defied environmental groups like the Center for Biological Diversity by refusing to expand regulations targeting acid rain. Such a lack of regulatory zeal is rare for the EPA.

The early 1980s was acid rain's heyday, with scientists and media outlets predicting massive devastation which never materialized.

In 1987, the EPA predicted that, over the next 50 years, acid rain would destroy most lakes in the Northeastern United States and called for substantial controls on power plants to fight the problem.

However the widespread fear of acid rain by environmental groups proved to be largely unfounded. The Acid Precipitation Assessment Program, a 10-year long government-sponsored study involving some 700 scientists and costing about \$500 million reported in 1990 that “there is no evidence of a general or unusual decline of forests in the United States and Canada due to acid rain.”