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Climate change rally Tuesday in downtown San Diego



Nancy Cassidy, left, and her husband, Derek Cassidy, right, two of the organizers for a climate change rally to be held Tuesday evening at the Edward J. Schwartz Federal Building in downtown San Diego, put signs in the back of their car. (Howard Lipin / San Diego Union-Tribune)



By **Phillip Molnar**

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More than 2,500 people are expected to attend a climate change rally Tuesday in downtown San Diego in response to recent actions by the Trump Administration and what protesters see as a lack of clean energy programs.

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Pruitt has fought for years to undo regulations by the agency as Oklahoma's attorney general and is seen by some as a foe to environmentalists.

"It seems like his mission is to undo all the progress that we've made over the last 50 years," said Diane Takvorian, executive director of the Environmental Health Coalition and a planned speaker at Tuesday's rally.

Thirty-six years ago Takvorian helped found the coalition she now leads. Over her career she served on several environmental federal advisory committees, appointed by presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, and has met past EPA administrators.

The EPA put out a [statement](#) after Pruitt's appointment that said his work as Oklahoma attorney general had led to an agreement to study water quality of the Illinois River and helped reach a water rights agreement between his state, two tribal nations and Oklahoma City.

"Mr. Pruitt's overarching goal is to lead EPA in a way so that our future generations inherit a better and healthier environment," it read.

About 2,500 people said on a [Facebook page](#) Monday afternoon that they were going to the rally. If recent protests and actions are any indication, at least how many people who already said they would attend will be there.

At an immigrant rights protest Saturday, more than [4,000 people showed up](#), despite rain, when just 1,400 said they were going on Facebook [the day before](#). A march in [support of Planned Parenthood](#) two weeks ago, where it also rained, had about the same people come who said they would on Facebook.

Tomorrow's rally is organized by San Diego Climate Mobilization Coalition founders Derek and Nancy Casady.

The La Jolla couple have worked for years toward organizing around the environment and formed the coalition two years ago, a loose partnership of several activist groups.

Derek Casady, 81, is a retired journalist and editor who has worked in state government. He said President Donald Trump's [past statements](#) on climate change being a hoax were incorrect, but the problem is bigger than his office.

"We know that Congress will never decide to put in a renewable energy system in America, because coal, oil and gas have tremendous influence with the Congress, Democrats and Republicans alike," he said.

The Obama Administration got high environmental marks from some groups, like the [Sierra Club](#), for designating 23 national monuments, rejecting the Keystone XL pipeline, signing the Paris climate agreement and other actions.

for each state to get completely off fossil fuels and was highlighted by National Geographic in 2015.

For example, Jacobson calculated California could produce 25 percent of its energy using onshore wind by 2050.

Not everyone in San Diego County thinks fewer EPA regulations are a bad thing, especially housing advocates. Builders often decry the costs that environmental regulations add to new-home construction and, while the majority of that burden comes from the California Environmental Quality Act, federal costs do show up when building mainly in unincorporated parts of the county.

“As a spokesman for an industry that is definitely over-regulated, I welcome somebody that is going to look at EPA regulations,” said Borre Winckel, CEO of the Building Industry Association of San Diego.

He said he doubted fewer regulations for homebuilding would mean a destroyed environment.

“For the life of me, I can’t think that anybody now taking office in Washington (D.C.) would worsen industries’ abilities to pollute either the air or the water,” Winckel said. “I think that’s just impossible.”

Speakers at tomorrow’s rally include Wesley Clark Jr., activist, Army veteran and son of former supreme commander of NATO Wesley Clark; Ruben Arizmendi, chairman of the San Diego Sierra Club; Cody Petterson, vice president of Impact Assessment; and Takvorian.

Unlike other other recent Trump-era actions, the rally will not include a march. Instead, participants will stay outside the Federal Building from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

phillip.molnar@sduniontribune.com (619) 293-1891 Twitter: @phillipmolnar

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