

# FACTS AND FIGURES: CLIMATE CHANGE IN IOWA

Iowa is already experiencing the impacts of climate change -- severe springtime flooding followed by summer heat that depletes soil moisture -- and will likely see more and more severe impacts in the future. It's not all bad news, however. Iowa is already a leader in wind energy and according to a just-released UN report, its farmers could help draw carbon out of the atmosphere while also improving crop production.

## IOWA VOTERS WANT CLIMATE ACTION

- Nearly three-quarters of Iowa voters (74%) agree that climate change is affecting Iowa agriculture. [[Climate Nexus Polling](#), 8/19]
- More than three-quarters of Iowa voters (76%) support requiring Iowa utilities to generate 100% of their electricity from renewable sources by 2050; 76% believe doing so would have a positive or neutral impact on Iowa's economy and 69% believe doing so would have a positive or neutral impact on rural farming communities. [[Climate Nexus Polling](#), 8/19]
- Three-quarters (75%) of Iowa Democrats say climate change is a very important issue for them in the 2020 election, second only to health care. [[CBS News/YouGov](#), 7/19]
- More than three-in-five Iowa Democrats (63%) say they need to hear a candidate's plan to reduce global warming in order to vote for them. [[CBS News/YouGov](#), 6/19]

## IOWA IS A WIND ENERGY LEADER BUT HAS ROOM TO GROW

- In 1983, Iowa passed the nation's first renewable energy standard and in 2018 one-third of its electricity generation came from wind power (the second-highest share in the country). [[Energy Information Agency](#)]
- Despite solid solar energy potential, just 2% of Iowa's electricity generation came from solar energy, and almost all of that was from distributed installations. [[Energy Information Agency](#)]

## CLIMATE CHANGE DRAINS IOWA'S ECONOMY

- Climate change will increase the frequency of springtime extreme precipitation events that cause flooding; rainfall during the four wettest days of the year has increased 35%. [[U.S. EPA](#)]
- Hotter summertime temperatures will increase evaporation and cause insufficient soil moisture levels. [[2018 NCA](#)]
- In Iowa's Cedar River Basin, what was considered a 100-year flood (1% chance of occurring in a given year) in the 20th century will now be a 25-year flood (4% chance per year) in the 21st century, with associated increased frequency of flooding of agricultural land. [[Iowa State University](#)]
- Climate change will increase soil runoff and make it easier for unwanted pests and pathogens to survive and spread. [[Iowa DNR](#), [2018 NCA](#)]

## CLEAR OPPORTUNITIES WHERE POLICY CAN HELP

- Iowa can strengthen its support for solar energy by maintaining its current net metering regime, maintaining and enhancing the state solar tax credit, and decoupling the state solar tax credit from the federal ITC.
- About half of Iowa's 99 counties still have little or no wind development. [[Iowa Environmental Council](#), [U.S. Wind Turbine Database](#)]
- Iowa can expand its support for all renewable energy, including wind, by expanding its renewable energy standard.
- Iowa farmers can draw carbon out of the atmosphere using sustainable agricultural practices, especially with the correct incentives. [[IPCC](#)]