NCA4 Overview

The second volume of the Fourth National Climate Assessment (NCA4), prepared by the U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) has been cleared for release on Friday, November 23. Volume I is an assessment of the physical science of climate change and was released in November 2017. Volume II is a technical, scientific assessment of climate impacts, risks, and adaptation that analyzes the effects of the global change on sectors and regions of the United States. It is policy relevant, but not policy prescriptive, and assesses a range of potential impacts, helping decision makers better identify risks that could be avoided or reduced. It places a strong emphasis on regional information and uses case studies to provide additional context and showcase community success stories.

The Global Change Research Act of 1990 requires USGCRP to prepare and submit to Congress and the President a quadrennial assessment of the current effects of and trends in global change over the next 25 and 100 years; NCA4 is the first assessment to be published within the mandated four-year period. The Assessment has 13 chapters that address specific sectors, including energy, water, transportation, coasts, and forests; 10 chapters that cover regional effects across the U.S., and two chapters that discuss responses.

Approximately 340 total authors from the thirteen federal agencies of USGCRP, academic institutions, industry, nongovernmental organizations, and state, local, and tribal agencies volunteered time and expertise to authorship of NCA4. 16 EPA staff (from OAR, ORD, OW, and R8) participated as NCA4 authors on 9 chapters. NCA4 was made available for public comment and was reviewed by a committee of the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine.

The Second State of the Carbon Cycle Report (SOCCR-2), a decadal report on the physical, chemical, and biological processes of the global carbon cycle, and the annual report of USGCRP, Our Changing Planet, will also be released on November 23.