

Nov. 20, 2019

Climate change jeopardizes hazardous waste Superfund sites

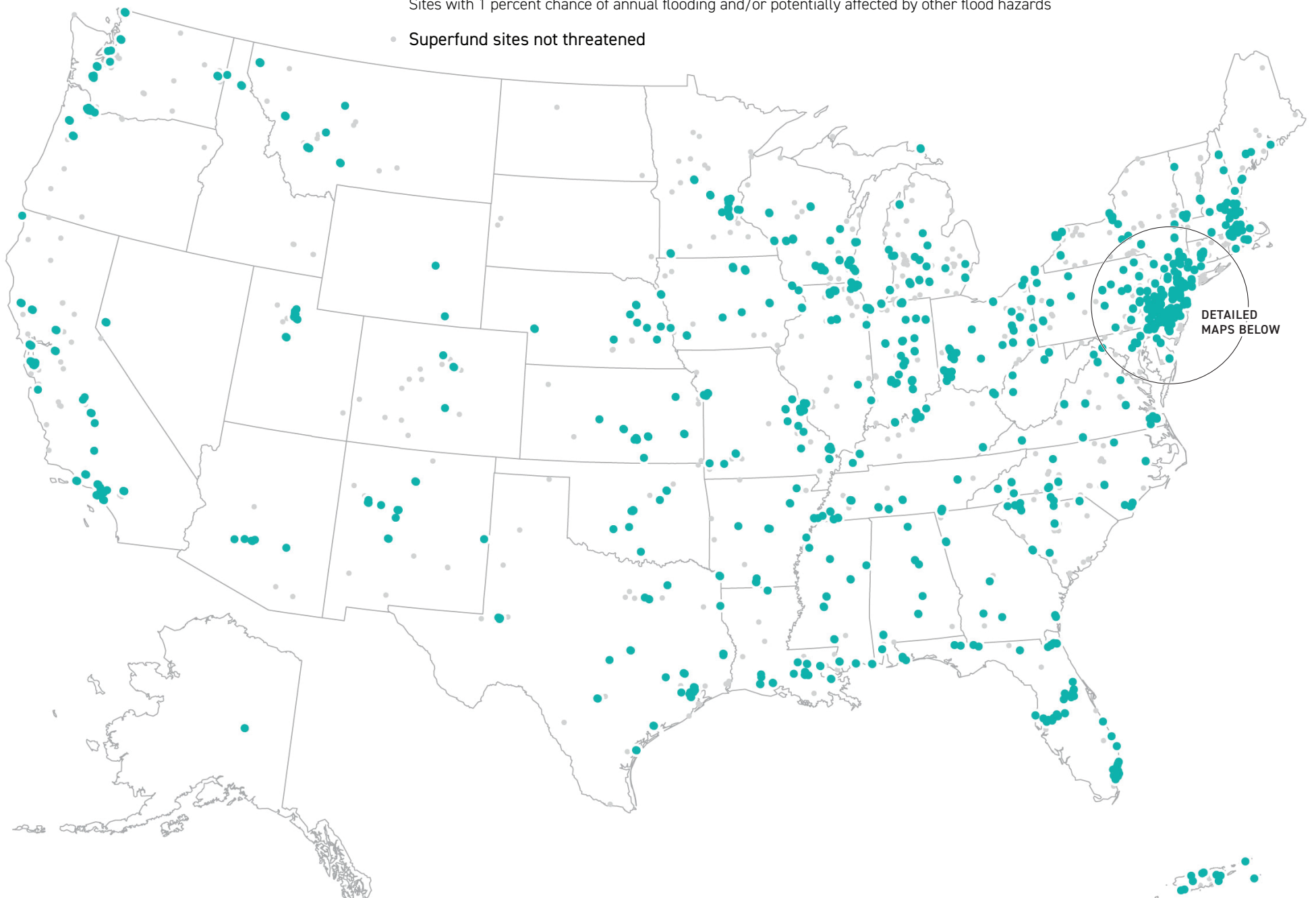
BY PATTERSON CLARK, POLITICO PRO DATAPOINT

A GAO report concludes that 60 percent of the nation's 1,571 Superfund sites — the most contaminated hazardous waste sites in the U.S. — are in danger of disturbance by natural disasters linked to global warming, such as sea level rise, flooding, storm surge and wildfire. The report notes that the EPA, which oversees the sites, has taken some actions to manage risks, but GAO recommends the agency "provide direction on integrating climate information into site-level decision making to ensure long-term protection of human health and the environment."

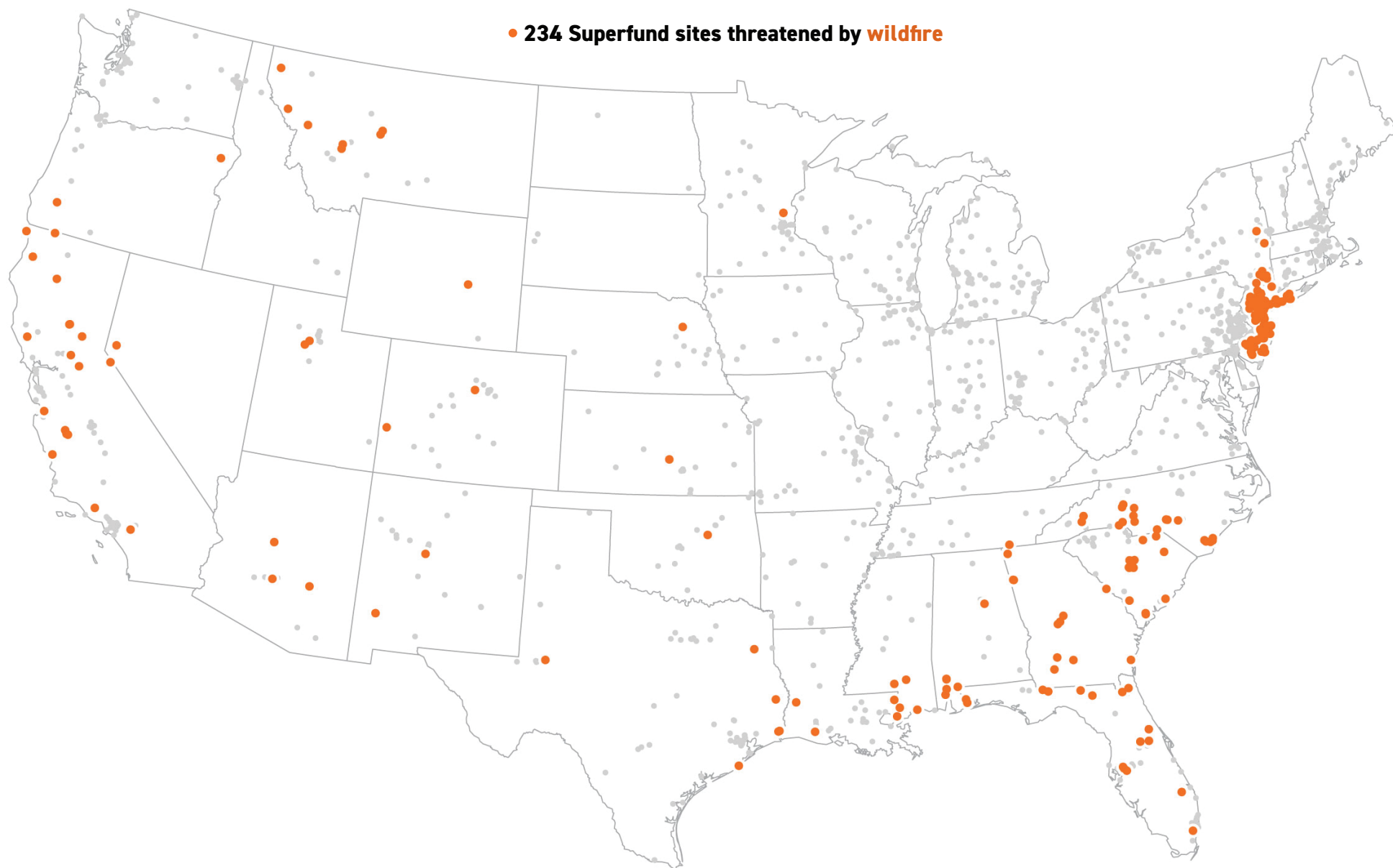
- **783 Superfund sites threatened by flooding**

Sites with 1 percent chance of annual flooding and/or potentially affected by other flood hazards

- Superfund sites not threatened



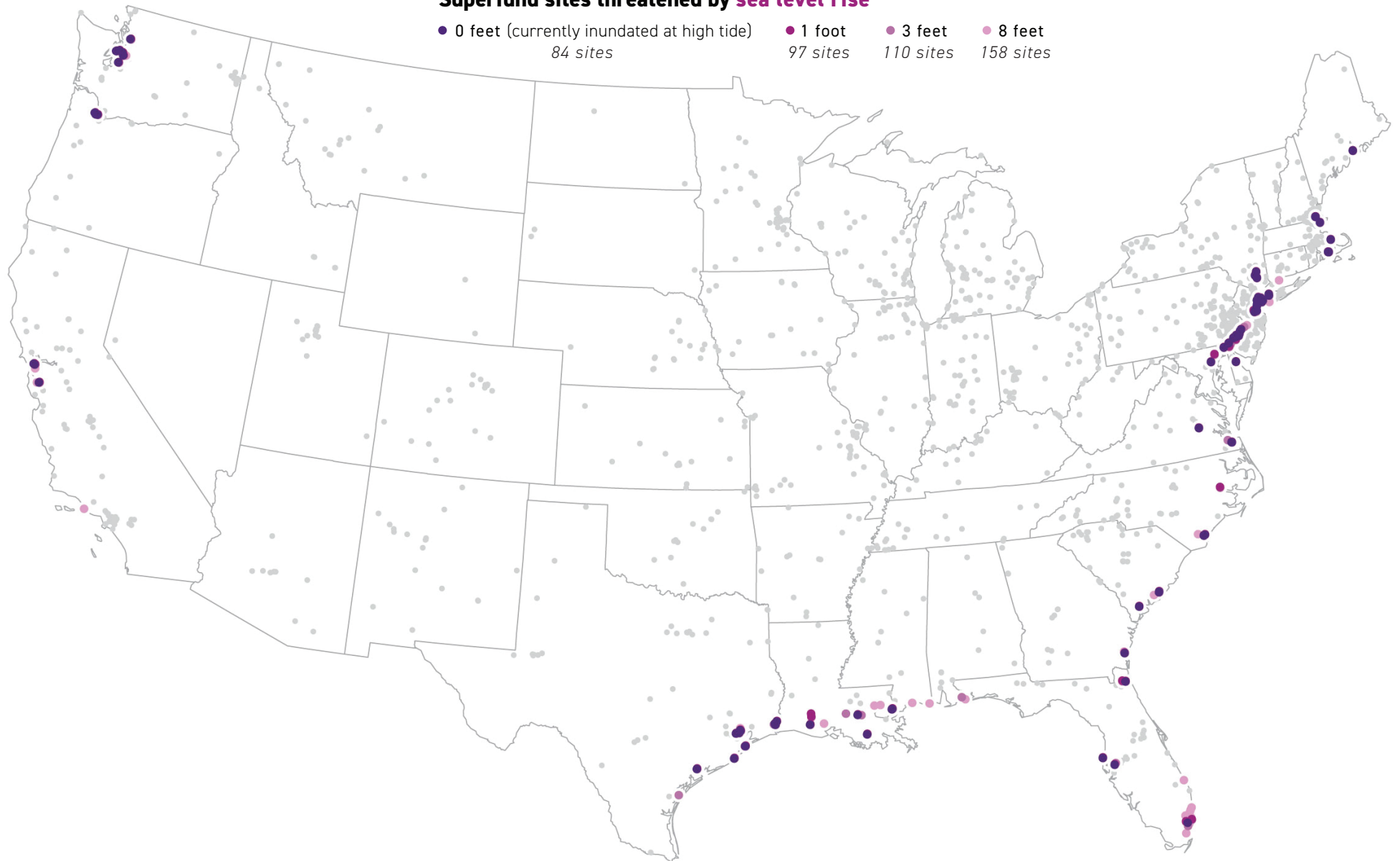
● 234 Superfund sites threatened by wildfire



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Superfund sites threatened by sea level rise

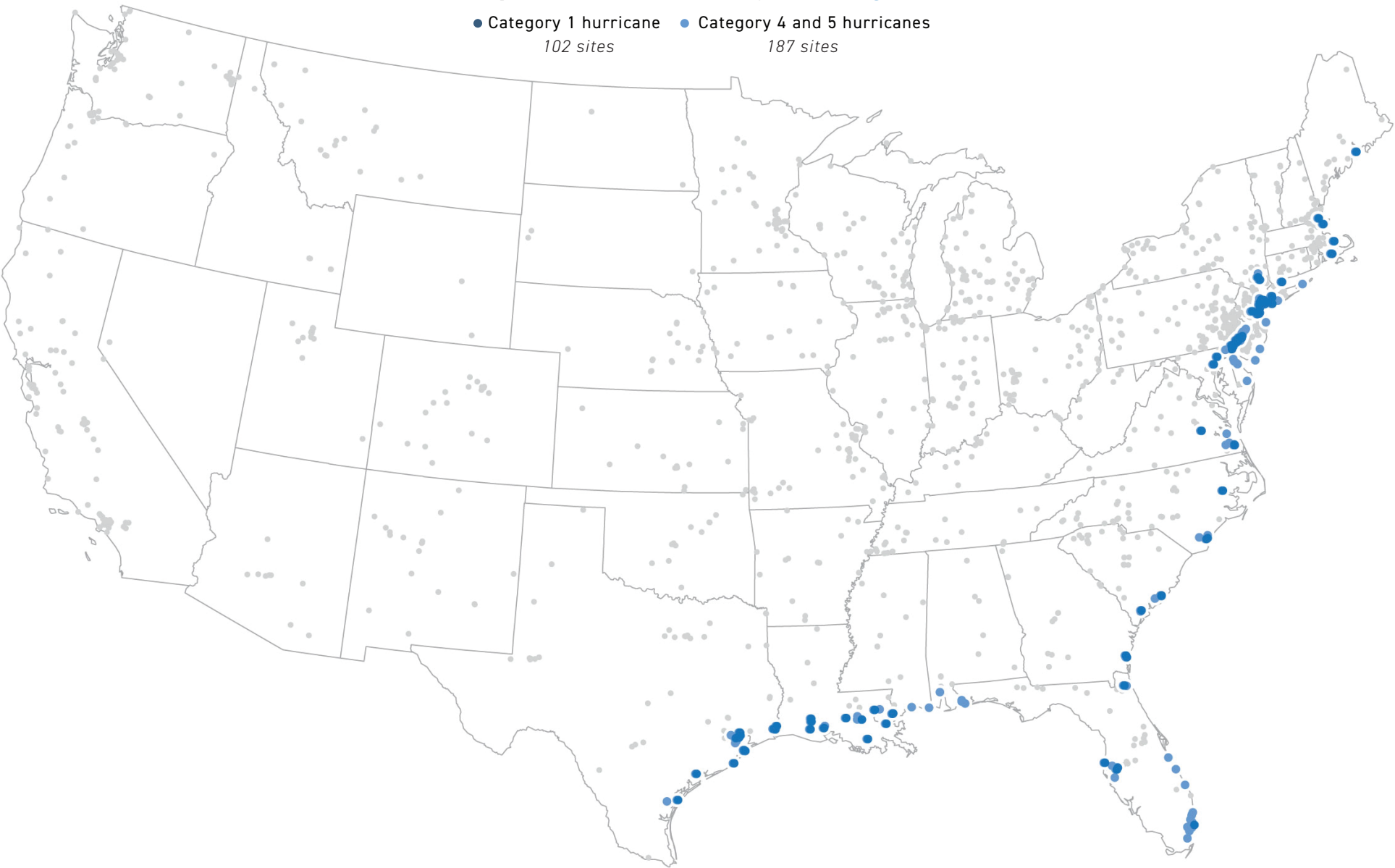
● 0 feet (currently inundated at high tide) 84 sites
● 1 foot 97 sites
● 3 feet 110 sites
● 8 feet 158 sites



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Superfund sites threatened by **storm surge**

- Category 1 hurricane 102 sites
- Category 4 and 5 hurricanes 187 sites



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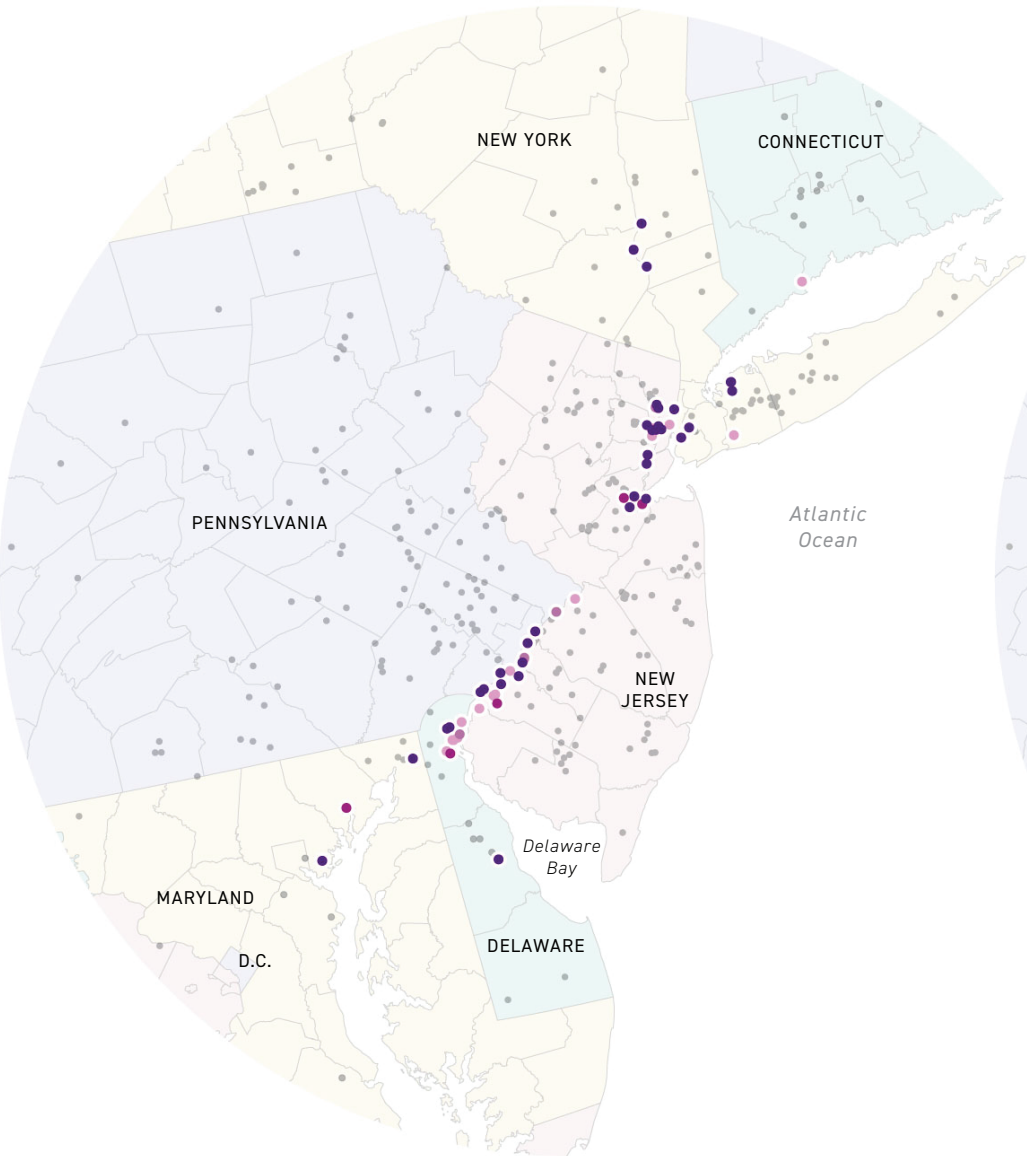
Superfund sites are especially concentrated in the Mid-Atlantic

New Jersey (141 sites), Pennsylvania (119 sites) and New York (114 sites) are home to nearly a quarter (374 sites) of the country's Superfund sites. Of all states, New Jersey has the most Superfund sites vulnerable to wildfire (80 sites), sea level rise (29 sites), hurricane storm surges (42 sites) and potential flooding (86 sites).

SITE RISKS

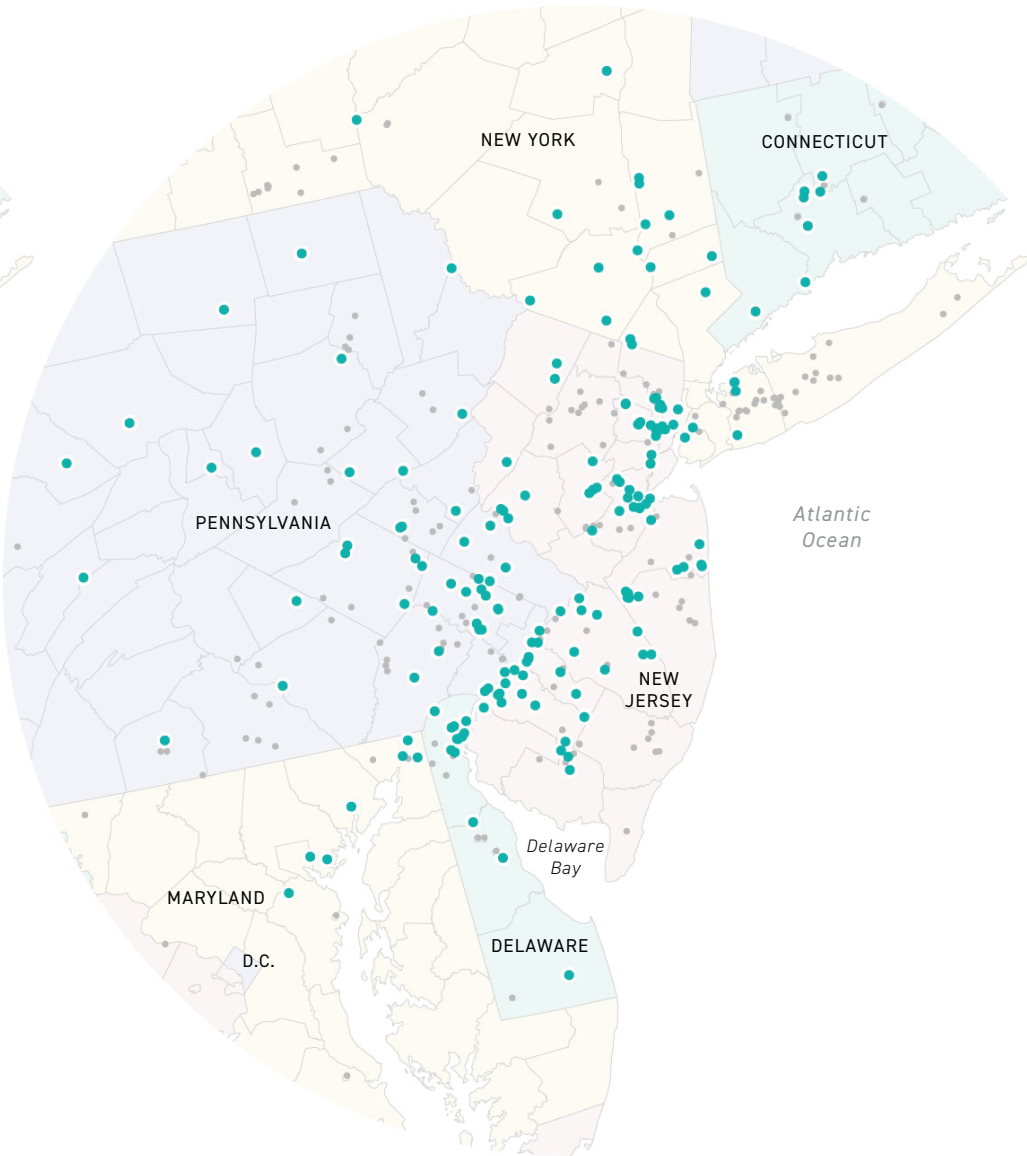
Sea level rise

● 0 feet (currently inundated at high tide) ● 1 foot ● 3 feet ● 8 feet



Flooding

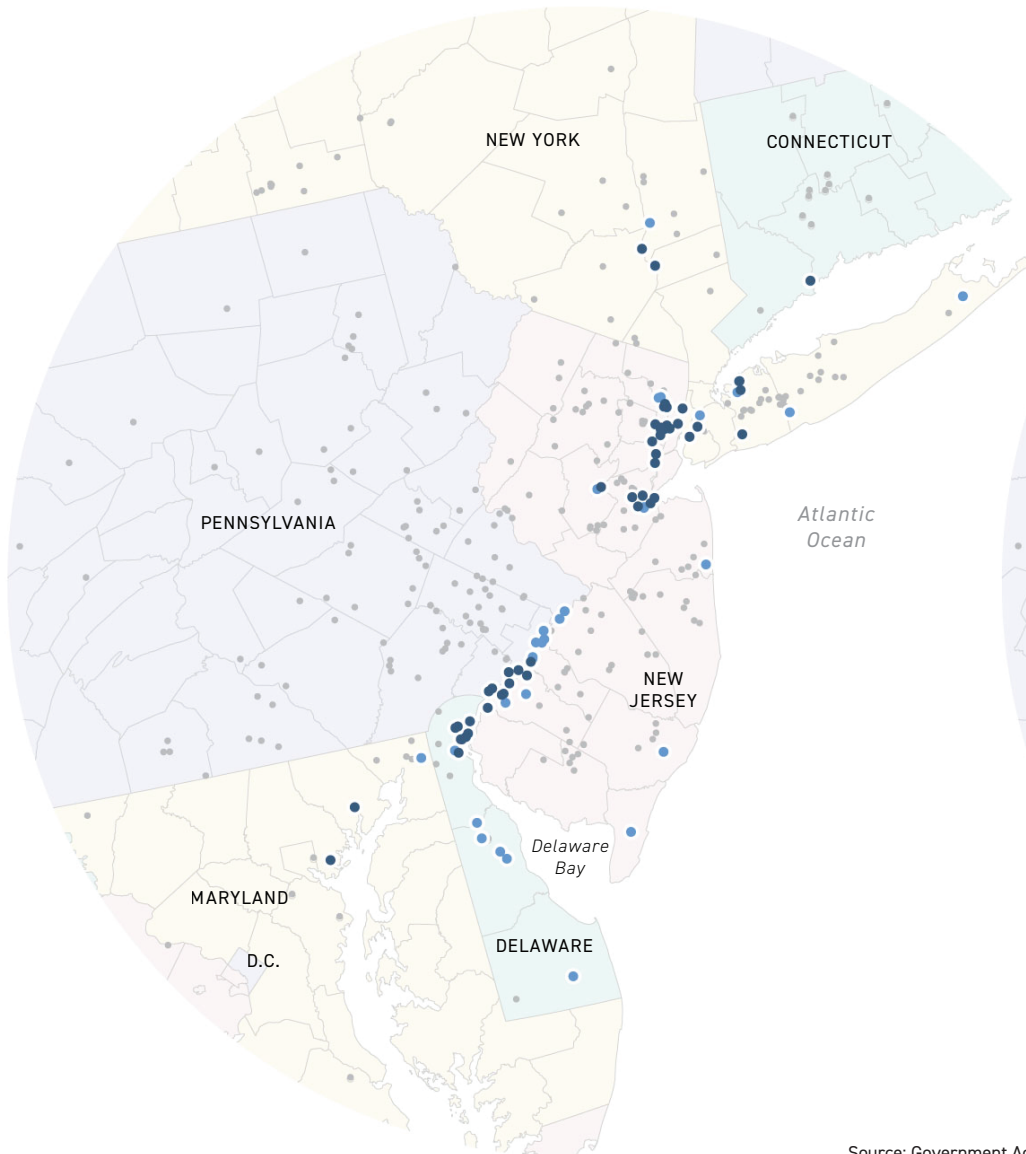
● 1 percent chance of annual flooding and/or potentially affected by other flood hazards



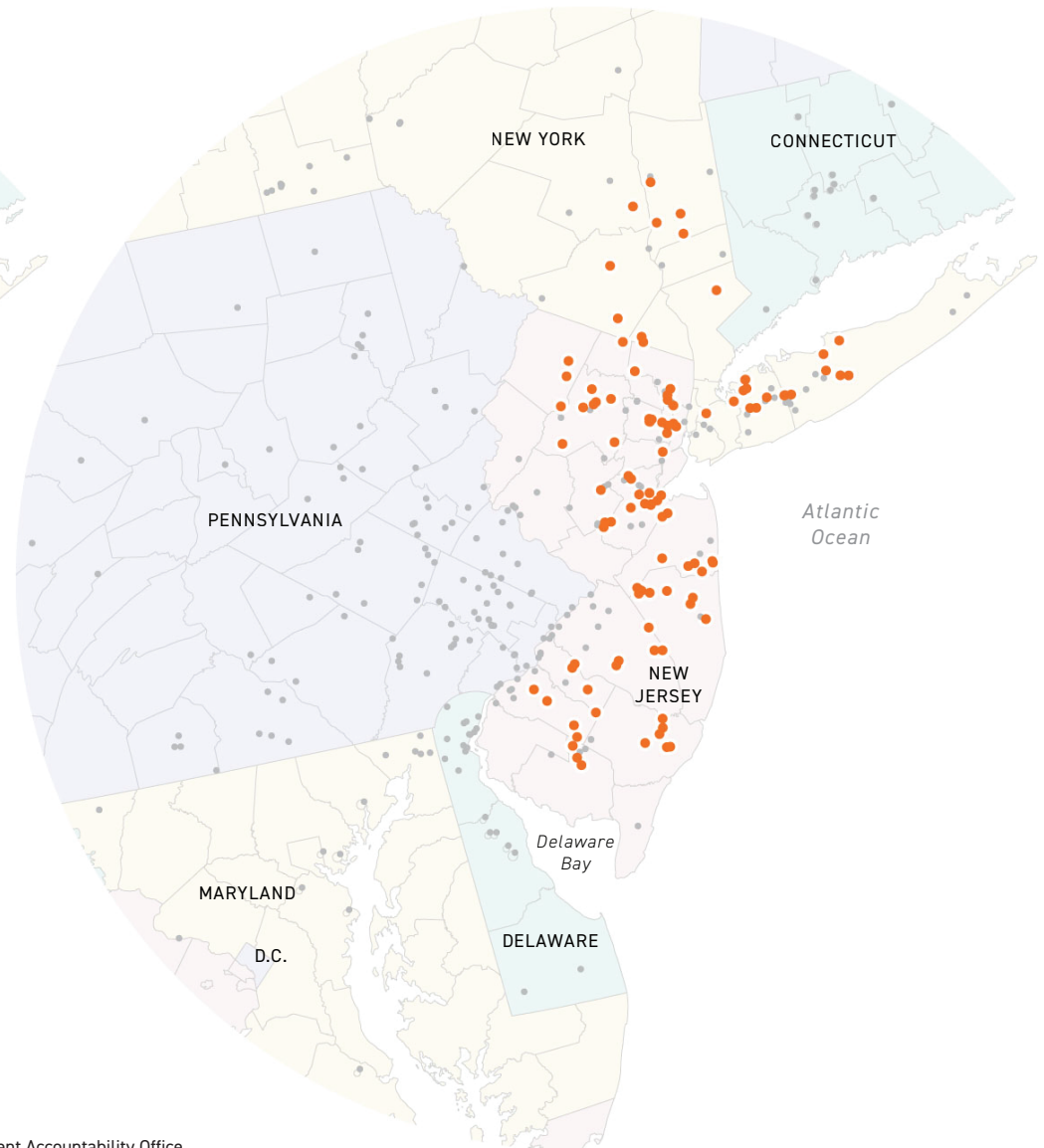
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Storm surge

- Category 1 hurricanes
- Category 4 and 5 hurricanes



Wildfire



Source: Government Accountability Office