

BUSH AND THE ENVIRONMENT A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO THE FIRST 100 DAYS

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*More information and updates on the Bush administration's environmental actions is available at www.lcv.org.

Overview

The opening months of the Bush administration have amounted to an environmental tug-of-war between aggressive special interests seeking to influence environmental policy and America's interest in long-term public health and environmental protections. "Bush and the Environment: A Citizen's Guide to the First 100 Days" is designed to give the public an objective tool by which to measure the Bush administration's environmental commitment and approach. This "Citizen's Guide" documents the many environmental rollbacks, postponements and backward looking policy positions of the Bush administration and gives credit for the specific advances that have been made.

One significant question to consider when analyzing Bush's environmental record to date is, "Who stands to gain from his policies?" Unfortunately, the economic concerns of a narrow set of special interests (i.e., coal, oil and timber industries) too often take precedence over the interests of the American public, and these interests often end up benefiting from Bush's appointments and policies.

On balance, the Bush administration has taken an unfortunate and aggressive anti-environmental approach to public policy. While upholding some positive environmental and public health protections developed under the last administration, for every one environmental step forward, this administration has taken multiple steps backward. From threats to open public lands to oil, mining and timber interests to renegeing on a campaign promise to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, this administration has allowed short-term political concerns to outweigh America's long term interest in environmental protection. When analyzed in its totality, President Bush's environmental record represents a backward step in American public policy and a cynical reminder of the powerful influence of big money and special interests in the process. After investing more than \$1.5 million in his campaign, extractive industries are being handsomely rewarded through Bush's policies - from the budget and energy policy approach, to appointments and public land decisions.

Bush's largely polluter-driven approach is squarely at odds with public sentiment on environmental issues. More than in any other issue area, Bush's environmental approach is notably out of step with the pro-environment concerns of the vast majority of Americans. In an attempt to redirect mounting public doubts about his environmental commitment, President Bush spent the week preceding Earth Day trying to buoy his environmental credentials. The administration worked to generate credit for allowing pro-environmental rules produced during the Clinton administration to stand. While Bush deserves some credit for not standing in the way of progress, his administration did not have a hand in putting the efforts in motion. Bush's Earth Week strategy was to recycle the environmental policy advancements of the past administration in order to claim the credit.

To truly succeed in "greening" his image, President Bush will have to make environmental and public health protection as high a priority for this administration as it is for the American public.

Environmental Issues: Protections at Risk

Ignoring the American public's concerns, President Bush within hours of taking office moved to block numerous executive orders and regulations that dealt with clean air, clean water and protection of the nation's natural treasures. Acting on orders from Bush, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card Jr. issued a memo putting a 60-day hold on the publication in the *Federal Register* of any new rules implemented during the final days of the Clinton administration. These included new regulations to curb diesel exhaust emissions, reduce the health risks of arsenic in drinking water and protect the nation's wetlands and streams from development.

In March, EPA Administrator Christie Whitman announced that new rules requiring dramatic reductions in **diesel emissions** over the next 10 years would be allowed to move forward. Under the regulations, large, diesel-powered vehicles must reduce their emissions by 95 percent and oil companies must reduce the sulfur content in diesel fuel by 97 percent. The new regulations, which were opposed by the oil industry, will help reduce lung cancer and alleviate suffering for millions of Americans with asthma and other respiratory problems. The administration also let stand a pesticide reduction plan reached in a consent decree between the EPA and the Natural Resources Defense Council. Under the plan, the EPA will take comprehensive actions to limit pesticides in food.

The administration on March 20 delayed for another 60 days Clinton administration regulations revising the allowable amount of **arsenic in drinking water** from 50 parts per billion (ppb) to 10 ppb. EPA Administrator Whitman said they would seek further scientific study of the health impacts of arsenic before setting a final standard. A 1999 National Academy of Sciences report determined that arsenic in water causes bladder, lung and skin cancer, and may cause kidney and liver cancer, birth defects and reproductive problems. The arsenic revision represents a compromise between environmental groups, which wanted an even stronger standard, and municipal water utilities. It would provide additional protection for 13 million Americans against long-term effects of arsenic. The World Health Organization and the European Union have already adopted the new 10 ppb standard. Following a storm of public criticism about the delay, the administration on April 18 announced it was requesting the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to perform an expedited review of new arsenic standards for drinking water. Specifically, the administration requested the NAS to recommend a standard between three to 20 parts per billion.

The Bush administration also delayed a rule issued by the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers in January to help protect wetlands and streams from ditching, mining and draining. Wetlands help to reduce flooding, purify drinking water and serve as critical fish and wildlife habitat. The rule, which was initiated in 1999 and published for notice and comment in August 2000, aims to close a loophole in the Clean Water Act that has led to the degradation of thousands of acres of valuable wetlands and hundreds of miles of streams throughout the country. The so-called Tulloch loophole has been used by developers to avoid obtaining permits when draining or excavating wetlands, ponds or streams. The new rule would clarify the Army Corps' authority to regulate certain activities resulting in discharges to U.S. wetlands and streams and help determine whether a particular project needs a permit to proceed. On April 16, EPA Administrator Whitman announced that the administration would move forward on the rule "to ensure greater protection of wetlands." While environmentalists appreciated that the Bush administration allowed the new rule to stand, they expressed concern that current industry court challenges might weaken the rule if the administration chooses not to vigorously defend it.

The Card memo also delayed new **energy efficiency standards** for residential air conditioners, heat pumps, water heaters and commercial cooling and heating equipment. The energy efficiency rules, which are supported by energy officials, manufacturers, environmental groups and consumers, would improve the energy efficiency of gas water heaters by 8 percent and electric water heaters by 4 percent by 2004. They would also require washing machines manufactured after 2004 would be at least 22 percent more energy efficient than today's models and central air conditioners would use one-third less energy than under current minimum efficiency standards. The White House on April 12 announced it would uphold the new energy efficiency standards for washing machines and water heaters. However, on April 13 the Energy Department announced new weaker standards for air conditioners that required only a 20 percent improvement in energy efficiency, down from the 30 percent requirement under the Clinton administration rules. The additional 10 percent improvement in energy efficiency rules would have saved the energy equivalent of approximately 50 medium power plants.

The Bush administration on April 17 announced it will no longer delay new rules requiring industries using at least 100 pounds of lead to report their air pollution emission levels to the Toxics Release Inventory. Currently, industries using at least 10,000 pounds of lead must report their emissions. The new rule will significantly strengthen the amount of information available to the public about **lead emissions** in their communities by expanding the reporting requirement to an estimated 3,600 more businesses. In a statement announcing the decision, President Bush acknowledged that, "Lead is a persistent and highly toxic substance that can cause a range of environmental and health problems." The environmental and public health communities supported the administration's decision to let the rules stand.

Public Lands: Paving the Way for Development

Roadbuilding in National Forests

In one of its first acts, the Bush administration turned its back on public sentiment by suspending popular and sweeping protections for national forests. Pressured by anti-environment members of Congress and the timber and logging industries, the Bush administration delayed the enactment of the Roadless Area Conservation Policy, which would ban new roadbuilding on 58.5 million acres of national forests in 38 states. The new policy, which environmentalists called a major breakthrough in wilderness preservation, is the most broadly supported rule in the history of federal rulemaking. Over a two-year period, more than 600 public hearings were held nationwide on the rule, and the public provided over 1.6 million comments that were overwhelmingly in support of the ban.

While campaigning for president in June 2000, Bush called the roadless proposal a "land grab" and promised to reverse it if possible. Upon taking office, the Bush administration delayed the roadless ban for 60 days, pending review. In March, the Bush administration - through the Justice Department - asked a District Court in Idaho to delay a March 30 hearing on a federal court case in Idaho challenging the roadless ban. In exchange for this delay, Justice Department lawyers proposed suspending the ban until the hearing could be held. A federal judge on March 20 rejected the Justice Department's request. On April 5, the same judge delayed the state of Idaho's request for a preliminary injunction on the roadless rule, saying he would wait for the Bush administration to explain its position on the plan before moving forward. The administration is expected to issue its opinion on May 4.

More than 380,000 miles of roads built for the logging industry and paid for by taxpayers run through the nation's national forests. Construction of these logging and timber roads often leads to the degradation of important fish

and wildlife habitat and the pollution of nearby rivers, lakes and streams. The roadless ban, which would affect less than a third of national forest lands, would provide important, long-term protection for the few remaining wild forests.

Hard-Rock Mining Rules

Bowing to pressure from the mining industry, the Bush administration on March 23 published a proposal in the Federal Register to suspend current hard-rock mining rules that strengthened environmental protections on publicly owned lands.

In late January, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) adopted stronger environmental rules governing hard-rock mining on public lands. The current rules replaced rules written 20 years ago, before the mining industry widely adopted destructive new technologies such as cyanide leaching. Under the current rules, the BLM can deny permits for mines that would irreparably harm environmental or cultural resources. The rules also establish environmental performance standards that better protect rivers and groundwater. Under the old rules, EPA estimated that 40 percent of the headwaters of all western watersheds were polluted by mining. The current rules also include measures to force mining companies to post adequate bonds to pay for environmental cleanups after the mine is depleted. Under the old rules, taxpayers were left with a potential cleanup liability exceeding \$1 billion at currently operating mines.

The Bush administration has asked for a 45-day public comment period on whether to adopt the new rules or return to the older, weaker standards. The current rules will remain in affect during the comment period.

National Monuments and Other Public Lands

Since taking office, President Bush and his administration have initiated an attack on the new national monument designations made during the Clinton administration. While the administration has backed away from talk of fully rescinding any of the new national monuments, its plans to review monument boundaries and possibly alter land-use rules to allow oil and gas development, mining and/or grazing, off-road vehicle use or other activities, place these unique national treasures at risk.

Passed by Congress in 1906, the Antiquities Act allows the president to create new national monuments on existing federal lands that possess significant historical, scenic and/or scientific values without permission from Congress. National monument status strengthens protections for public lands already owned or controlled by the federal government. Mining, logging, oil and gas drilling and livestock grazing are activities that may be limited under national monument proclamations. Between 1996 and 2000, President Clinton used the Antiquities Act to create or expand 21 national monuments, primarily in the West.

During his campaign for president, Bush opposed Clinton's use of the Antiquities Act to create national monuments, saying that while he was unsure whether he could "unscramble the egg" on the new designations, he would "work closely with the Senate and Congress and local authorities" on land-use management decisions. In addition, Bush running-mate Dick Cheney told supporters that the new monument designations could be reviewed and possibly rescinded under a Bush administration.

The administration has since said it will not fight any of the new monument designations. However, Interior Secretary Gale Norton has said boundaries and land-use rules could be altered to allow existing mining operations to continue, or to open a monument to oil and gas development. In a March letter to governors, members of Congress,

state legislators, county commissioners and tribal leaders, Norton asked for their “views on vehicle use, access to private inholdings, rights-of-way, grazing and water rights, as well as the wide spectrum of other traditional multiple uses that might be appropriately applied” to national monument lands.

In an interview with the *Denver Post* in March 2001, Bush said national monument lands would be considered along with all other public lands as potential sources for oil, gas or coal. According to Wilderness Society President William Meadows in an interview with the *Associated Press*, Bush would essentially be “turning the oil industry loose on all the lands in our national forests, national wildlife refuges and other public systems.”

Based on a recent U.S. Geological Survey appraisal, five of the monuments created in the last eight years have “moderate to high probability for the occurrence of oil and gas resources.” The Grand Staircase-Escalante monument in Utah, home to a vast amount of geological, archeological, biological, natural and historical resources, is the only monument with a high probability of coal and coal-bed methane. Advocates of the new monuments oppose opening them to new oil, gas and coal development, arguing that the monuments provide economic benefits of increased tourism and recreation, while also ensuring that the national treasures contained within these new monuments are protected for future generations.

Meanwhile, the Department of Interior in March testified before the House subcommittee on national parks that the Bush administration will seek a moratorium on new studies of potential national parks. According to the National Parks Conservation Association, a moratorium would run contrary to existing law, which requires the Interior Department to submit annual recommendations for potential national park areas.

International Issues: A Mixed Review

Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

President Bush has decided to sign an international treaty, negotiated under the Clinton administration, calling for the worldwide phaseout of 12 persistent organic pollutants (POPs), which include PCBs, dioxins and furans, DDT and the pesticides aldrin, chlordane, dieldrin, endrin, heptachlor, mirex, toxaphene and hexachlorobenzene. The 12 pollutants, which break down slowly and are known to travel long distances in the environment, have been linked to cancer and birth defects. The treaty, which needs to be ratified by 50 countries, would significantly reduce or eliminate the use and manufacture of all 12 of the toxic chemicals. Approximately 24 countries would have permission to use DDT to help combat malaria. The treaty would establish an international fund to help countries develop alternatives to the banned substances. According to the World Wildlife Fund, the POPs treaty will, for the first time in history, eliminate or severely restrict the use and production of a pernicious group of chemicals that are directly toxic to wildlife, ecosystems and people. Environmentalists supported President Bush’s decision to sign the treaty, which must now be ratified by the Senate.

Population and the Environment

On his first working day in office President Bush reissued a policy restricting U.S. funding for international population programs, further impeding global efforts to protect natural resources threatened by rapid population growth. The so-called “Mexico City Policy or “Global Gag Rule,” first established under President Reagan and continued under the first Bush administration, denies funding to any foreign non-governmental organization (NGOs) that provides abortion services, counseling or referrals with their own private funds. It also prohibits NGOs from participating in

political debates on abortion in their own country. Current law already prohibits U.S. foreign assistance monies from funding abortions, but this takes it a step further and muzzles family planning education and assistance efforts.

Rapid population growth is one of the most serious threats to a healthy and sustainable environment, leading to depletion of natural resources and contributing to pollution. Voluntary international family planning services help reduce these threats to the environment and public health by providing families with much-needed education and health care services. Men and women in communities where family planning services are available tend to have smaller, healthier families, thus decreasing the demands on the world's natural resources and improving the prospects for a cleaner, healthier environment.

Energy & Climate Change: An Unbalanced Approach

On energy more than any other issue, the Bush administration's policy approach reflects its strong ties to energy industries. It also signifies a hefty political payback for the millions in campaign contributions that helped fund the Bush campaign. The energy plan proposed by Bush during his presidential campaign — although promoted as a way to increase the nation's fuel sources, protect the environment and reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil — overly emphasizes oil production and consumption at the expense of conservation and alternative and renewable fuels. Since taking office, statements and actions by both President Bush and key administration officials suggest that this narrow focus on conventional energy supply will continue to be the cornerstone of any administration energy policy. To adequately and sustainably reduce dependence on foreign oil, the U.S. must reduce dependence on oil across the board — an approach this administration is not encouraging.

The Bush administration's 63-member energy advisory team, which is charged with helping chart the new administration's energy policies, has 62 members with ties to oil, nuclear, coal or other polluting interests. Between 1999 and 2000, 58 of these members gave approximately \$8 million in campaign contributions to Republicans. Companies and associations affiliated with these members — including the National Mining Association, American Petroleum Association, Edison Electric Institute, Southern Company, American Gas Association and Enron Corp. — would benefit in various ways from Bush administration proposals to invest billions of dollars in coal research and drill for oil and gas in Alaska's National Wildlife Refuge and other public lands. Most would also benefit from the Bush administration's decision not to regulate carbon dioxide emissions from power plants and to back out of the international Kyoto climate change treaty.

Meanwhile, the Bush administration's energy proposal put forth during the campaign is noticeably lacking in serious conservation and renewable energy provisions. While the administration's proposed 2002 budget includes plans to extend the wind power credit and supports tax credits for electricity produced from solar and biomass, the overall budget for renewable energy programs is 37 percent less than current year funding. In addition, long-term funding for renewable energy research is provided for at the expense of opening the Arctic Refuge and other public lands to oil and gas development.

A Bush administration task force, headed by Vice President Cheney, is currently developing a national energy policy that is expected to be released in early May. In a small departure from Bush's campaign proposal, the energy plan is expected to place greater emphasis on nuclear power, increased drilling and pipeline construction for natural gas and

opening more land for the construction of new power plants. However, domestic oil and gas development will continue to play a key role in the administration's energy policy. Interior Department recommendations obtained by *USA Today*, suggest modifying Forest Service land-use plans that restrict energy development; opening several large tracts in the Colorado Rocky Mountains that are currently off-limits to oil and gas development; and pushing Congress to open some of the 17 million acres of federal land currently under temporary protection from energy development.

Oil Drilling

Falsely suggesting that development of the **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge** will help solve the nation's current energy supply problems, President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Energy Secretary Abraham, Interior Secretary Norton and Attorney General Ashcroft all support opening the area to oil and gas drilling.

President Bush and his administration inaccurately argue that opening the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas exploration will help lower gas prices, reduce U.S. reliance on foreign oil and help correct electricity problems in California and other states. However, according to the U.S. Geological Survey, the average estimate of economically recoverable oil from the Arctic Refuge is only about six months of U.S. supply. It would take nearly ten years to bring to market any oil found in the refuge, doing nothing to affect oil prices in the immediate future. According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, only three percent of U.S. electricity—and only one percent of California's electricity—is generated from the burning of oil. As a result, opening the Arctic Refuge to drilling would have virtually no impact on electricity prices. Politicizing California's energy problems as a rallying call to drill on public lands is an attempt to generate support for oil and gas industry interests.

The Arctic Refuge is located on Alaska's North Slope. Currently, nearly 95 percent of the North Slope is available to the oil industry for current and future exploration or development, with the Arctic Refuge being the only area where oil drilling is prohibited by law. The Arctic Refuge's coastal plain—the proposed oil drilling site—serves as home to large concentrations of wildlife, including polar bears, caribou and migratory birds. Habitat destruction associated with oil development, not to mention air and water pollution and oil spills, could irreversibly compromise this globally important wilderness area.

Faced with strong opposition in Congress to drilling in the Arctic Refuge, Bush on March 29 said he was prepared to extract oil and gas from other resources, both in the U.S. and in Mexico or Canada. "It doesn't matter to me where the gas comes from, in the long run, just so long as we get gas moving into the country," he said. This marked Bush's first recognition that plans to allow oil and gas drilling in this globally important Arctic ecosystem might fail. However, Bush's FY '02 budget proposal does tie increased funding for renewable energy research to drilling in the Arctic Refuge and anticipates planning and studies of potential drilling at the site.

Global Climate Change

Following on the heels of President Bush's reversal of his pledge to curb CO₂ emissions, EPA Administrator Whitman told reporters on March 27 that the administration had "no interest in implementing" the Kyoto climate change treaty and would move forward on developing alternative proposals. However, showing a complete lack of global leadership on the issue, the Bush administration continues to promote energy policies that will exacerbate global climate

change — not work to reduce it. The Kyoto treaty, negotiated in Japan in 1997, calls for 38 industrialized countries to make cuts in greenhouse gas emissions.

Mounting scientific evidence links carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases to the warming of the Earth over the last 50 years. Worldwide, the United States is the biggest single contributor to global climate change, producing about 25 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions. While campaigning for president, Bush admitted that global warming was occurring, however, he reiterated his opposition to the Kyoto climate treaty under negotiation for the last six years.

In choosing to reject the Kyoto treaty, the Bush administration chose to ignore the pleas of European Union leaders and Whitman. Following a meeting with European environmental ministers in Italy, Whitman warned President Bush in a March 6 memo that failure to demonstrate a commitment to curbing greenhouse gas emissions would risk undermining U.S. standing around the globe. In the letter to Bush, Whitman stated, “I would strongly recommend that you continue to recognize that global warming is a real and serious issue.” EU Environment Commissioner Margot Wallstroem said, “If one of the biggest countries withdraws ... that is a big backlash for the whole [negotiation] process and that is very disappointing.” In addition, British Environment Minister Michael Meacher said, “For the USA not to be part of the agreement is almost unthinkable.”

Defending his decision to abandon the Kyoto climate change treaty, Bush allowed short-term concerns to outweigh long-term environmental protection, saying it made “no economic sense” to implement the treaty when the U.S. is facing an energy crisis. However, Frank Loy, the lead climate change negotiator during the Clinton administration, called Bush’s decision a “total, unmitigated disaster.” “He pulled out without any alternative, no international back-up plan,” Loy said. A coalition of U.S. religious groups in a letter to Bush urged him to reconsider the Kyoto treaty saying, “If credible evidence exists to indicate our present course could threaten the quality of life for God’s creation and God’s children, this becomes an issue of paramount moral concern.”

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Facing pressure from industry and anti-environment leaders in Congress, President Bush reneged on a campaign pledge to regulate carbon dioxide emissions (CO₂) from power plants. While campaigning for president in September 2000, Bush proposed developing legislation to establish mandatory reduction targets for emissions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, mercury and carbon dioxide. The environmental community supports reductions of these four pollutants because such caps would further reduce smog and acid rain and, in the case of CO₂ emissions, help slow the effects of global climate change. Caps on all these pollutants would also help the energy industry in planning for long-term investments in clean-up technology and new power generating plants. However, many major industries oppose a mandate specifically regulating CO₂ emissions, citing costs and questioning whether human activities are actually contributing to global climate change.

In late February and early March, EPA Administrator Christie Whitman publicly indicated that the Bush administration was considering imposing limits on CO₂ emissions, as well as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and mercury. In an interview on CNN’s “Crossfire” in February, Whitman said, “George Bush was very clear during the course of the campaign that he believed in a multipollutant strategy, and that includes CO₂.” However, heavy lobbying on behalf of coal companies and power plant owners followed Whitman’s statements. Shortly after, Bush backed down on his campaign pledge to include CO₂ emissions in his multipollutant strategy, citing current U.S. energy problems.

In a *Los Angeles Times* article addressing Bush's about-face on CO₂ emissions, LCV President Deb Callahan said, "It's pretty clear that Bush is knuckling under to industry pressure." In a news release, Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope said, "When coal companies banged on the White House door, President Bush made a policy u-turn that will haunt our children." A *Boston Globe* editorial said Bush's reversal did "more than make some of his larger campaign contributors happy ... Any hope of reining in coal use is clearly contingent on demonstrating American willingness to develop long-term programs to replace it. In backing away from such a commitment, Bush has performed a global disservice."

The Bush Budget: Slashing Environmental Funding

While the Bush administration's budget proposal would increase overall discretionary spending by 4 percent across the board, funding for environmental programs would take a major hit. Choosing to ignore the desire of the majority of Americans for stronger, better enforced, environmental and public health protections, the Bush administration has proposed slashing over \$2.2 billion in funding for critical environmental programs in 2002. While the administration appears to be honoring campaign pledges to encourage redevelopment of contaminated industrial sites, fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund and eliminate the \$4.9 billion maintenance backlog at national parks, it also significantly limits monies for key federal agencies responsible for enforcing environmental laws and overseeing important programs that protect public health and the nation's air, water and natural treasures. The budget proposal finances a significant portion of Bush's \$1.6 trillion tax cut at the expense of environmental programs and long-term solutions to America's energy problems.

Department of Energy

After repeatedly warning the American public of an "energy crisis," the Bush administration proposed a \$600 million cut in the fiscal year 2002 budget for the Department of Energy (DOE) — outlining a strategy that benefits big oil and coal interests at the expense of long-term environmental protections. The agency's funding priorities primarily focus on increasing the use of fossil fuels and other conventional energy supplies, while de-emphasizing or eliminating renewable energy and energy-efficiency programs that would help reduce U.S. energy demand. According to Ron Sundergill of the Union of Concerned Scientists, "The administration is turning away from a balanced approach to the nation's energy policy in favor of a risky strategy that prolongs our dependence on fossil fuels."

Funding for the DOE's **renewable energy programs** would be cut 37 percent under the Bush administration's budget proposal. Funding for solar, hydrogen, biomass, geothermal and wind energy research face considerable cuts from their current levels. Solar research funding would take the biggest hit, with a cut of nearly 54 percent from \$92.7 million to \$42.9 million. Geothermal, hydrogen and wind research programs all face funding cuts of 48 percent.

Funding to build energy-efficient homes and offices and to reduce energy use at steel, glass, pulp and paper and refining companies would also be reduced under the budget proposal. In addition, increased funding for solar and renewable energy research and development would be linked to opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil drilling — a contradictory provision that would use money from environmentally destructive oil drilling in one of the nation's last-remaining wild places to promote less-polluting fuel sources.

The coal industry would reap huge benefits from Bush administration's budget proposal, which includes \$150 million in federal matching funds for so-called "clean coal" research. The administration has proposed spending nearly \$2 billion over the next decade on coal research. The environmental community opposes federal funding of "clean coal" technologies because it encourages the continued use of an extremely polluting energy source. The burning of coal, even so-called "clean coal," significantly contributes to acid rain, mercury pollution and global warming, while coal mining poses serious threats to the environment, ranging from water pollution to habitat destruction. Environmentalists also oppose federal "clean coal" funding because it uses taxpayer dollars to subsidize an industry that is capable of supporting its own research costs and diverts efforts away from development of cleaner, alternative energy technologies.

Also under the Bush administration's budget proposal, funding for **nuclear waste disposal** would increase 14 percent to \$445 million. According to Energy Secretary Spencer Abraham, the increase reflects the administration's commitment to finding a permanent storage site for high-level nuclear waste. Currently a site near Yucca Mountain, Nevada, is the leading candidate to serve as a permanent nuclear waste repository, but environmentalists and concerned citizens have expressed serious reservations about the safety of transporting nuclear waste and the safety of the site itself. The proposed budget also includes a 3.6 percent cut in funding for the cleanup of former DOE defense sites. The administration has said it wants to review environmental cleanup procedures at DOE facilities in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Hawaii, New Mexico and South Carolina and ensure federal dollars are being used effectively.

Department of Interior

Like the DOE, the Interior Department also faces \$500 million in funding cuts under the Bush administration's budget proposal — with environmental programs taking a direct hit.

Bush's proposal calls for "full" funding of the **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** at \$900 million starting in 2002. Under a deal struck between the Clinton administration and appropriators in 1999 — and supported by environmentalists — full LWCF funding would require that half of the \$900 million be used for state and local land acquisition and half be used for federal land acquisition. However, Bush's proposal violates this agreement by diverting some of the \$450 million allocated for federal land acquisition to establish two new grant programs that provide conservation incentives for private landowners. These programs, while good concepts, take money away from pressing federal land acquisition needs for national parks, forests, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands and national wildlife refuges.

In keeping with his campaign pledge to eliminate the \$4.9 billion maintenance backlog at the nation's national parks over the next five years, the Bush administration's budget proposal increases funding for the **National Park Service (NPS)** by \$334 million to \$2.49 billion. However, most of the NPS funding would go towards structural maintenance in the parks, rather than resource and wildlife protections and visitor education. In addition, the budget leaves little money to keep up with new repair needs as they arise. According a National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) news release, the proposal actually "makes little progress for the parks," with the majority of money going towards "roads and roofs instead of wildlife and antiquities." According to Phil Voorhees, NPCA senior director of park funding and management, "The budget does not show leadership on park protection ... It is hard to see how the president is working to restore the parks and fund park protection in the short term."

The **BLM** would receive \$1.77 billion in funding under the budget proposal, a decrease of \$374 million from 2001. Of the BLM funding, \$15 million would go to increase the number of oil and gas leases on BLM land from 2,900

to 3,400, as well as increase the number of processed applications for drilling permits from 3,600 to 4,400. This means energy and mineral activities would be increased and expanded on the 264 million acres managed by BLM, possibly impacting some of the newly designated national monuments under the agency's oversight.

The **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** budget request includes a 25 percent cut in endangered species programs. It also includes a proposal to limit the ability of citizens and environmental groups to use the courts to add species to the endangered and threatened lists. If passed by Congress, the proposal would require the Fish and Wildlife Service to devote its available money to listing the endangered species cases it deems to be top priorities, while specifically prohibiting the agency from spending any money to carry out new court orders or settlements involving other plants or animals.

Meanwhile, the **Bureau of Reclamation**, which oversees the nation's dams, canals and irrigation systems, would see an increase in funding to \$783.5 million, including \$11 million to help with salmon recovery along the Columbia and Snake rivers in the Pacific Northwest. The Interior budget proposal also anticipates planning and studies of potential oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, despite the lack of support for the measure in Congress. The **U.S. Geological Survey** faces funding cuts of 7.9 percent. As a result, the USGS Gap Analysis Program, which has so far mapped the biological resources of 79 percent of states, would be frozen; the National Water Quality Assessment program would be eliminated; and the Toxic Substances Hydrology Research Program, which studies the behavior of toxic substances in waterways, would be cut.

Environmental Protection Agency

Bush has requested \$7.3 billion in funding for the EPA, a nearly 7 percent cut from the \$7.8 billion appropriated by Congress for 2001. The budget proposes taking money from federal environmental protection and enforcement programs and giving it directly to states for protection and enforcement activities. The Bush administration budget proposal also significantly cuts spending on clean water and clean air programs. On balance, the proposed EPA budget places priority on shifting money to states while underfunding the specific clean air and water programs that are needed to meet national public health goals.

Bush's budget proposal would provide more than \$1 billion in grants for states and tribes to administer environmental programs. It would also cut the EPA's enforcement staff in Washington, DC, and in regional offices by 9 percent. In addition, it would divert \$25 million in **federal environmental enforcement** funds to states to conduct their own enforcement programs. The environmental community has expressed concern about removing too much power from the federal government because not only do states have mixed environmental enforcement records, but a strong federal presence is also needed to handle complicated civil and criminal cases that exceed the states' capabilities. In a *Wall Street Journal* article, Frank O'Donnell of the Clean Air Trust noted that there are numerous situations, such as the regulation of interstate pollution from large trucks, "where only the federal government can take effective action."

In keeping with his campaign promises, Bush's proposed EPA budget includes tax incentives to speed the cleanup of contaminated industrial sites, known as **brownfields**. While campaigning for president, Bush proposed hastening the cleanup of brownfields by easing certain federal regulations, protecting redevelopers from federal liability and giving states more discretion over federal funds. While the environmental community strongly supports the cleanup and revitalization of brownfield sites, there is concern that aspects of Bush's proposal would weaken oversight of brownfield cleanups and limit public participation in the cleanup process. For example, the EPA already provides redevelopers with

some protection from federal liability. However, some fundamental liability provisions are necessary to help bring “polluters” to the table and protect the public from having to bear any cleanup costs should environmental problems arise later. In addition, Bush’s plan to reform the Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund by cutting red tape and providing block grants to states, could limit oversight as to how money is distributed for cleanups. This could result in politically or economically convenient brownfield sites being favored over sites in low income communities that have less political clout, thus perpetuating concerns about the inequalities in federal cleanup priorities.

Bush’s EPA budget proposal requests \$450 million for new sewage overflow control grants, \$823 million for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund and \$850 million for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. While funding for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund would remain the same, funding for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund is significantly less than the \$1.35 billion enacted during this fiscal year. Both of the state revolving funds are available to help states and local communities upgrade their water systems and infrastructure to meet water quality and public health standards.

Programs to meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards would be cut by \$19.5 million to \$436.5 million under the Bush administration’s budget proposal. Programs to reduce air toxics and acid rain would both be cut by \$3 million, while funding for air toxics research would drop \$3.3 million from \$22.2 million to \$18.9 million. The cuts in acid rain and air toxics programs follow on the heels of a new study released in late March by the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation that found many parts of the U.S. continue to suffer the harmful effects of acid rain. Spending for Chesapeake Bay cleanup programs would also be cut by the Bush administration’s proposal. The 10 percent reduction comes only months after Congress reauthorized the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Act, which authorizes the federal government to spend up to \$40 million a year on bay cleanup programs.

Department of Agriculture

The Bush administration budget proposal would eliminate approximately \$1.1 billion from the USDA budget. It would discontinue the **Wetlands Reserve Program** (WRP), a popular program that has been credited with restoring valuable wetlands, taking relatively unproductive and flood-prone land out of production and providing necessary funds to family farms. It would also eliminate the **Farmland Protection Program** and the **Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program** (WHIP), both of which have been credited for encouraging farmers to conserve valuable acres of open space and wildlife habitat. According to Ralph Grossi, president of the American Farmland Trust, “These cuts will hamstring local, state and federal agencies working with landowners to protect critical farm and ranch lands from development.” Ken Cook of the Environmental Working Group called the administration’s decision to eliminate the programs “completely bewildering ... from a president who professes to want voluntary, incentive-oriented approaches to environmental problems.”

However, Bush’s budget proposal does include a \$32 million increase for the **Conservation Reserve Program**, which provides farmers with rental payments to retire environmentally sensitive lands for 10 to 15 years. Under the proposal, the CRP would receive \$1.8 billion.

Other Agencies

Bush's budget proposal "reallocates" funding within the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** (NOAA), which is responsible for helping protect the nation's threatened or endangered marine species, such as sea turtles, whales and species of salmon; working to ensure sustainable fisheries; and protecting the nation's coasts and coastal waters. The budget proposal for NOAA includes increased funding for national marine sanctuaries and for coastal zone management grants. However, the proposal eliminates the Coastal Impact Assistance Fund, which provides money to seven coastal states affected by offshore drilling. Under the existing program, Alabama, Alaska, California, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas are eligible for funding to help protect endangered species, implement regional restoration plans and reduce non-point source pollution.

Under Bush's budget proposal, the **Army Corps of Engineers** will face a 14 percent cut in funding, compared to FY '01 — a move the environmental community supports. The Corps has come under scrutiny over the last year for several environmentally destructive projects that critics argue have had little economic benefit. The Army Corps budget proposal gives priority to "projects and programs that provide significant national benefits, such as flood damage reduction and environmental restoration and enhancement." The budget includes funding for "priority ongoing projects" such as restoration of the Everglades. (The overall budget for Everglades restoration is spread between the Army Corps, DOI and EPA. The total proposed Everglades budget for 2002 of \$220 million represents a \$50 million decrease from 2001. According to the Florida Audubon Society, this is the lowest Everglades budget since 1997.) No new Corps projects or studies would be funded.

Administration Appointments: Representing Industry Interests First

Through his appointments, President Bush has put environmental policy in the hands of industry interests. The backgrounds of the majority of Bush administration environmental appointments to date clearly indicate that energy, extractive and corporate interests will have significant influence in the oversight of the nation's public lands, natural resources, air and water quality and the enforcement of environmental laws.

While numerous federal agency positions and senior advisor positions in the Bush administration have yet to be filled, many of the proposed and already appointed officials have strong ties to industries and associations whose positions on environmental and public health issues generally run counter to those of the environmental and conservation community.

Environmental Protection Agency

President Bush appeared ready to move in a moderate direction on the environment when he nominated New Jersey Governor **Christine Whitman** to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Whitman, who served as New Jersey governor from 1993 until her EPA appointment, has a mixed record on environmental and public health protection. As governor, she was a strong advocate of smart growth in her state. Her administration created a nationally recognized sustainable development program that aimed to protect open space, redevelop urban areas, discourage new, sprawling development, and encourage environmentally sustainable business practices such as recycling, energy conservation and pollution reduction. However, Whitman came under fire from state environmentalists for making staff cuts at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection — a move that critics say limited the ability of the state environmental

agency to monitor and enforce pollution controls. She was also criticized for removing 1,000 chemicals from the state right-to-know list of toxic substances, thereby eliminating the requirement for businesses to report them.

Since her confirmation as EPA administrator, Whitman has let stand new regulations designed to curb the harmful effects of diesel emissions. She initially supported a Bush administration campaign pledge to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from power plants — a promise on which Bush has since reneged. In addition, Whitman urged President Bush in a March 6 memo to demonstrate a commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and slowing global climate change. However, she has also delayed new regulations that would reduce the allowable level of arsenic in drinking water and protect against arsenic-related health risks.

In other EPA appointments, former Monsanto Vice President of Government Affairs **Linda Fisher** has been nominated as deputy EPA administrator. No stranger to the EPA, Fisher served in a variety of EPA positions between 1983 and 1993, including assistant administrator of the Office of Pollution, Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances.

Department of Interior

In nominating **Gale Norton** to head the Interior Department, President Bush placed the agency in the hands of someone who has spent a career working to undermine strong federal environmental and public health protections. During her first few months as Interior secretary, Norton has been a vocal proponent of opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and parts of the Colorado Rocky Mountains to oil and gas drilling. She has also supported a rollback of new hard-rock mining regulations that would strengthen environmental protections for public lands, and is currently seeking input on revising the boundaries and land-use rules for the new national monuments designated during the Clinton administration. Revised land-use rules could result in oil and gas drilling or other activities at national monument sites.

Considering Norton's background, these initial environmental attacks are not surprising. She was a protégé of James Watt, President Reagan's controversial Interior secretary from 1981 to 1983. She worked for Watt while he was president of the Mountain States Legal Foundation (MSLF), a conservative organization that strongly supports "takings" legislation and logging and mining on the nation's public lands. MSLF has also litigated against the Endangered Species Act and other federal environmental statutes that Norton is now responsible for implementing. As Colorado's Attorney General, Norton cut her department's environmental enforcement budget by one-third and fought for less stringent accountability laws for corporations that break environmental standards.

Norton's proposed deputy secretary, **J. Steven Griles**, is a mining industry lobbyist who worked with her at the Interior Department during the Reagan administration. While at the Reagan Interior Department, Griles played a key role in an effort to cover up the risks of environmental hazards associated with proposed oil drilling and development off the coast of California. Griles has also worked for United Company, a Bristol, Va.-based natural resources company involved in coal, oil and gas development and gold mining.

Griles most recently served as vice president of National Environmental Strategies, a lobbying firm with clients ranging from the Edison Electric Institute to the National Mining Association (for a complete listing visit <http://www.opensecrets.org/lobbyists/98profiles/9929.htm>). Through his own firm, J. Steven Griles and Associates, he lobbied on behalf of such energy companies as Dominion Resources and ANR Coal. When asked to comment on Griles' nomination for deputy secretary of the Interior Department, National Mining Association spokesman John Grasser

called him “an ally of the industry.” According to David Alberswerth of The Wilderness Society, Griles “will be a key ally for the oil, gas, and coal industries in their pursuit of more access and less protection for public lands.”

Patricia Lynn Scarlett, assistant secretary for policy, management and budget, was formerly the executive director of the Reason Public Policy Institute — an organization that has downplayed the risks of global warming and opposes tougher standards for particulate air pollution. Scarlett was also a senior fellow at the Foundation for Research on Economics and the Environment (FREE). FREE, a Montana-based group, was exposed last year by the *Washington Post* for paying to bring federal judges to resort locations in Montana to hear lectures on property rights and the environment, while also funding a wave of litigation on property rights issues in the federal courts.

Denver lawyer **Bennett William Raley** has been tapped to be assistant secretary for water and science. Raley, former chief counsel of the Senate Judiciary subcommittee on the Constitution, federalism and property rights and former staff counsel to Senator Hank Brown (R-Colo.), will oversee the U.S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of Reclamation. While working for Brown, Raley worked with Democrats to reach a compromise on the Colorado Wilderness Bill. However, he also advocated repealing the Endangered Species Act in a 1999 congressional hearing and represented the state of New Mexico in its legal battle with environmentalists over the Rio Grande and the endangered silvery minnow. Environmentalists expressed some concern about Raley’s appointment. In a *Denver Post* article, Jim Martin of Environmental Defense said, “If his policies would become law, federal land managers would have few if any tools to protect water resources on public land.”

Bush has not yet announced the nominees to head either the National Park Service or the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Department of Energy

By appointing former Michigan Senator **Spencer Abraham** as energy secretary, President Bush sent a clear signal that environmental protection will not be a priority in developing a comprehensive national energy policy. As senator, Abraham compiled a career environmental voting average with the League of Conservation Voters of five percent — the worst record in the Great Lakes region. LCV named Abraham to its “Dirty Dozen” list of anti-environment candidates in 2000. Abraham was one of four senators to sponsor a bill (S.896) in 1999 to abolish the Energy Department and spread its functions among other federal agencies. Also in 1999, he voted against stronger fuel-efficiency standards for cars and trucks and to cut funding for renewable energy programs. In addition, Abraham sponsored the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1997 (S.104), and voted for subsequent legislation that aimed to establish an above-ground interim storage site for high-level nuclear waste near Yucca Mountain, Nevada, and would have weakened environmental standards for nuclear waste disposal, relaxed allowable radiation exposure standards at the site and placed dangerous radioactive waste on the nation’s roads and railways without adequate safety standards. Abraham is also a strong proponent of opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas development.

Other Energy Department nominations include **Francis Blake** to be deputy secretary of energy and **Dave Garman** to be deputy assistant secretary for renewables and efficiency. Blake was formerly the general counsel at the Environmental Protection Agency under the first Bush administration and has served as senior vice president of General Electric for the past 10 years. Garman has served as chief of staff for Senator Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) and been praised by some in the environmental community as a strong supporter of renewable energy technologies.

Department of Transportation

In nominating former Clinton administration Commerce Secretary **Norman Mineta** as transportation secretary, President Bush chose a candidate with a strong environmental record. Mineta, a former congressman who represented California's Silicon Valley from 1975 to 1995, was a champion of mass transit projects, stronger auto emissions standards and energy conservation research. He served as chairman of the House Public Works and Transportation Committee and consistently took the pro-environment stance on transportation issues. Among his greater achievements, Mineta was the main author of the landmark Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, an innovative measure that gave local communities the freedom to spend federal transportation dollars on mass transit systems as well as highways. During his 20-year tenure as a U.S. Representative from California, Mineta compiled a lifetime environmental rating of 75 percent on LCV's *National Environmental Scorecard*.

Since his confirmation, Mineta has asked Congress to return oversight authority on auto fuel efficiency standards to the Transportation Department. The Republican-led Congress has blocked the department from even considering whether to raise standards for the past six years. Speaking to the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on April 3, Mineta said he favored some kind of government-imposed fuel-efficiency minimum. He also told committee members that new fuel-efficient technologies should be encouraged.

Department of Agriculture

Ann Veneman, who served as secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture under Governor Pete Wilson and as deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture under the first Bush administration, will head the USDA. Veneman will have significant jurisdiction over key environmental policies pertaining to such hot-button environmental issues as genetically modified food, food safety, pesticides regulation, Forest Service policies and Farm Bill conservation programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program.

While some environmentalists have raised concerns about Veneman's positions on National Forest issues — her private law practice represented the Sierra Nevada Access and Multiple Use Stewardship Coalition that fought against the proposed ban on roadbuilding in national forests. Leon Panetta, former Clinton chief of staff, said Veneman is a “problem solver” and “understands the issues ... [and] doesn't come from an ideological point of view.”

Veneman has tapped **Dale Bosworth**, a 35-year U.S. Forest Service veteran, to succeed Michael Dombeck as U.S. Forest Service chief. Dombeck resigned in March after Bush administration officials announced plans to take forest policy in a “different direction” from that of the Clinton administration. Bosworth will take over the Forest Service at a time when the Bush administration is poised to announce key forest policy decisions, including whether to let stand a ban on new roadbuilding in national forests. Bosworth's nomination drew tentative praise from the environmental and conservation community, which recognized him as being accessible and sensitive to forest and environment issues. “We feel he has a conservationist ethic,” Michael Francis of the Wilderness Society told the New York Times. “It's a question of whether he's going to be allowed to implement the new policy or will ... the Bush administration undermine the direction the Forest Service has taken in the last four years.”

Other Cabinet Level Appointments

Attorney General **John Ashcroft**, a former U.S. Senator from Missouri, earned a lifetime LCV environmental rating of five percent for his votes on key environmental legislation from 1995 to 2000. He repeatedly voted against funding for clean air and water and against increased funding for the cleanup of toxic waste sites. Since Ashcroft's confirmation, the Justice Department has attempted to delay implementation of the Clinton administration's roadless policy.

Commerce Secretary **Donald Evans** served as Bush campaign chairman and served most recently as the chairman of Tom Brown Inc., a Texas-based oil company. The commerce secretary is responsible for trade and environment policies and oversees marine and coastal protections. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration falls under the Commerce Department's jurisdiction.

Treasury Secretary **Paul O'Neill** most recently served as chairman of aluminum giant Alcoa Inc. O'Neill will be responsible for shepherding Bush's proposed \$1.6 trillion tax cut and will serve as the Bush administration liaison to the Federal Reserve. O'Neill earned praise from the environmental community in March when he supported EPA Administrator Christie Whitman's stance on regulating carbon dioxide emissions from power plants, a position Bush has since abandoned.

Lower Level Environmental Appointments

Nominated to be undersecretary of state for global affairs, **Paula Dobriansky** was most recently the head of the Washington office of the Council on Foreign Relations. Previously, Dobriansky served as senior international affairs and trade advisor at the law firm of Hunton & Williams. She was also associate director for policy and programs at the United States Information Agency and deputy assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs in the Bush and Reagan administrations. As undersecretary for global affairs, Dobriansky will help to coordinate U.S. foreign relations on a variety of global environmental issues, including biodiversity, global climate change, oceans policy, fisheries and marine conservation. She will also oversee efforts to implement population assistance programs.

John D. Graham, founding director of the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis at the Harvard School of Public Health, has been nominated to be OMB administrator of the office of information and regulatory affairs. Graham is a strong supporter of cost-benefit analysis, a position the environmental community generally opposes because many environmental costs – such as learning impairment in children due to lead poisoning – are difficult, if not impossible, to quantify. A greater focus on monetary costs could very easily be used by the Bush administration or Congress to justify inaction on — or weakening of — health, safety, and environmental measures that are opposed by industry. Instead of focusing on the costs of environmental safeguards, the environmental community believes greater emphasis should be placed on the benefits of environment and public health protection.

Thomas Sansonetti, the nominee to head the environment and natural resources division of the Justice Department, fits the profile of the majority of Bush administration environmental appointments to date — he worked at the Department of Interior during the Bush and Reagan administrations and has ties to mining, coal and other energy interests. Sansonetti served as associate solicitor for energy and resources at the Interior Department during the last two years of the Reagan administration. He served as solicitor of the Interior Department under the Bush administration

from 1990 to 1993. He most recently was a partner at the law firm of Holland and Hart, where he worked on cases involving the federal surface mining law, public lands, endangered species and Western water issues. Sansonetti has testified on behalf of mining and interests such as the National Mining Association, Arch Coal Inc., Peabody Coal and Kennecott Energy Company.

Looking Forward

In its first 100 days the Bush administration has too often proven to be dramatically out of step with the American public on environmental protection issues. Even after a public relations flurry during Earth Week to recast the administration in a green light, the Bush administration is predicted to stay on course and pursue a primarily anti-environmental agenda.

In the coming year, the Bush administration will decide how much political capital to invest in turning back a ban on roadbuilding in national forests and drilling for oil and gas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and on other public lands. After shunning the Kyoto climate change treaty, the administration reports it is developing an alternative strategy to curb greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, the administration is expected to release a national energy policy in May. This plan is expected to focus almost exclusively on increased fossil fuel and nuclear energy production at the near exclusion of significant energy conservation or renewable energy measures. The administration's proposal will be an unbalanced package that tries to increase supply of fossil fuels without decreasing demand.

The policies anticipated over the next year are largely expected to pit environmental protections against economic concerns and to appease the special interests at the expense of public health safeguards. This approach runs counter to the desires of the majority of Americans who value clean air and water and reject the notion that a clean environment must be sacrificed to have a strong, healthy economy. Consequently, the political implications for both the administration and the Congress could be significant.

The administration's environmental agenda faces an uncertain fate as action shifts to Capitol Hill. Should the Bush administration continue to respond to an agenda set by the anti-environment special interests, Congress will be the last line of defense against the administration's unprecedented environmental assaults. Appropriations for critical environmental and public health programs, whether to drill for oil and gas on public lands and the means by which to address global climate change will all require congressional approval. Given the closely divided House and 50/50 Senate, anti-environmental efforts will face serious bipartisan opposition in both chambers. Already a core group of moderate Republicans and pro-environment Democrats in the House and Senate have successfully fended off attempts to include budget revenue earned from opening the Arctic Refuge to oil and gas development and proactively sponsored legislation to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Bipartisan efforts in the Senate also added funds to the budget for conservation, renewable energy and global climate change research.

The stage is set for some of the biggest political fights of the year to play out along environmental, not partisan lines. Members of Congress will be forced to choose between the pro-environment priorities of their constituents, or the competing agenda of the administration. Either way, the 2002 elections are shaping up to be a referendum on environmental protection. How members of Congress vote on public health and conservation issues may determine more than American's environmental future, it may dictate their own political future as well.