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EnviroHealth



About

EnviroHealth is concerned with issues that affect the lives of ordinary people and their communities; from air and water pollution, food safety and climate change to toxics, transportation and sustainable energy. Our goal is to inform and inspire by providing up-to-date reporting, opinion and analysis, and tips and tools for creating change.

Background

SoyJoy

Thinking of becoming a vegetarian? This witty blog on all things vegetarian (and many things carnivorous) provides lots of food-supply and nutrition information with links to articles spanning the globe.

What Would Jesus Drive?

It's difficult to know for certain, but this network of eco-evangelicals brings a fact-filled and meaningful perspective to the SUV debate.

George W. Buy?

Why preserve the nation's forests for future generations when trees can be chopped down and turned into profits today? The Bush administration auctions off the nation's forests on eBay.

Recommended Sites

SustainableReview.com

An interactive online magazine that promotes sustainable living. Features articles on sustainable development, eco-fashion and eco-design, as well as a readers forum.

Natural Resources Defense Council

Featuring two of the most dynamic Roberts in the world of environmentalism, Redford and Kennedy Jr., the NRDC has been one of the most successful groups

Grazing Decision Cover-Up

By [Joe Feller](#), [Center for American Progress](#). Posted **August 18, 2004**.

The Bush administration's proposal to ease environmental controls on livestock grazing on public lands marks the latest example of politics and secrecy trumping professional judgment and transparency.

The Bush administration has proposed easing environmental controls on cattle and sheep grazing on public lands, marking the latest example of politics and secrecy trumping professional judgment and transparency. An internal analysis, written by experts at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and later leaked to me and others, warned that this action would damage watersheds and wildlife, but political appointees suppressed and overrode it.

Last December, Interior Secretary Gale Norton unveiled this proposal, which would change current regulations governing livestock grazing on more than 160 million acres of western public lands administered by BLM. The administration described its decision as an effort to "improve working relationships" between the BLM and ranchers, and to "protect the health of rangelands."

But in fact the proposal would repeal a number of environmental standards, delay implementing others, and through bureaucratic manipulation render most of the remaining environmental standards unenforceable.

All in all, the regulations would remove opportunities for the public (other than ranchers) to provide input into management decisions, slant environmental analyses and appeals procedures to favor ranchers over environmentalists, and make it easier for ranchers convicted of environmental crimes to obtain grazing permits. The proposal would also allow ranchers to obtain ownership of water rights, fences, wells, and pipelines on public land, thus crippling the BLM's ability to manage the land in the greater public interest.

Career BLM staffers, who know how the agency works, understand very well the ways in which the proposed amendments are designed to exclude non-ranchers from management decisions and stall implementation of environmental standards. Just three weeks before the amendments were published in the Federal Register, an "administrative review copy" of a draft environmental impact statement was circulated for comment to BLM offices around the country. Written by resource management professionals within

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Bluewater Network

Bluewater Network promotes policy changes in government and industry to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and eradicate other root causes of air and water pollution, global warming and habitat destruction.

Pesticide Action Network

The Pesticide Action Network takes on everything from corporate power to sustainable living and environmental justice. Visit their site and join the fight!

BushGreenWatch

Sign up for a daily digest 'tracking the Bush Administration's misdeeds.'

Earthworks

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Grist Magazine

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biological diversity in general.

- "[It will] will further delay the grazing decision process . . . thus adversely impacting wildlife resources and biological resources in the long-term."
"[D]eletion of the requirements to consult, cooperate and coordinate with or seek review and comment from the 'interested public' . . . will further reduce the ability of environmental groups and organizations to participate in weigh in and support [sic] wildlife and special status species with regard to public land grazing issues. This should result in long-term adverse impacts to wildlife and special status species on public lands."

Such environmental impact statements are supposed to be public documents. But the agency apparently found this one far too candid and damning for taxpayers to see. So instead, the administration assembled a replacement team to produce a hurried rewrite. Following instructions, this team generated a sanitized draft environmental impact statement that the agency dutifully released for public comment on January 2, more than three weeks after the publication of the proposed regulatory amendments.

By discarding its professional staff's analysis and substituting an after-the-fact statement plainly designed to rationalize the proposed amendments, the administration flouted the National Environmental Policy Act, which mandates a "hard look" at the environmental consequences of such proposed actions.

Such tactics make for miserable policy. The purpose of an environmental impact statement is to force an honest assessment of what a particular initiative will likely do to the environment. The administration's whitewashed assessment is worse than no assessment at all.

Americans deserve and expect their public officials to tell them the truth, and then let the chips fall where they may. Anything less is an insult to the democratic process. In this case, the insult is twice as severe because the administration's sanitized environmental impact statement was created in service of a proposal that will severely hobble the public's ability to play a role in protecting public lands.

Joe Feller is a member scholar of the Center for Progressive Regulation and a law professor at the Arizona State University College of Law.

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EnviroHealth: Could a western wildfire be the country's next Katrina? By Jeff Nachtigal, Grist Magazine. February 21, 2006.

Can Kweisi Make It in Maryland?

Stalwart progressive and former NAACP chair Kweisi Mfume faces a tough challenge in the Democratic primary for the U.S. Senate seat from Maryland, but don't count him out. By Joshua Holland, AlterNet. February 21, 2006.

Paint the World Green

EnviroHealth: What chance is there that the environmental revolution will reach the bottom of the wealth pyramid? By John Elkington, Mark Lee, Grist Magazine. February 21, 2006.

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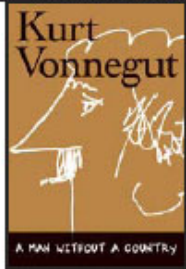
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