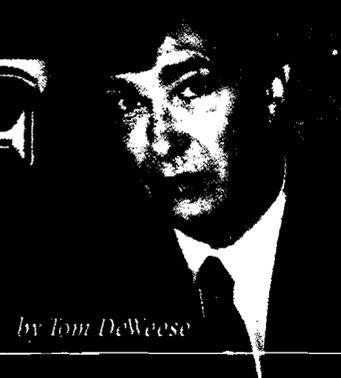


DEWEESE



<http://www.deweeseonline.com>

by Tom DeWeese

Green Agenda is Devouring America's Private Property

by Tom DeWeese

Quietly, with little public notice, private property has been disappearing across America at an alarming rate for more than a decade.

Like dinosaurs from another era, property owners are falling under the assault from an almost unintelligible maze of federal, state, county and local environmental laws, regulations, programs and taxes. That government assault is combined with a concerted effort by highly-funded and politically-powerful environmental groups.

Using regulations and programs like: Sustainable Development; the Endangered Species Act; wet lands regulations; government land acquisition programs; Clean Air Act; biological diversity; forest regulations; land trusts; water-

shed protection; heritage corridors; green ways and eco-regions, the federal government is rapidly carving up the nation and tucking away productive land and resources. In its wake, industries, farms and American dreams are being destroyed.

The main enforcers of these policies are the National Park Service, the Army Corp of Engineers, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Forest Service, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and 800,000 lawyers. These are aided by the advance troops of environmental radicals who infest every local community by scouting out possible targets, and by creating controversy and legal attacks on businesses, property owners and developers. No stone is left unturned and no scare tactic is too outrageous for these highly funded, politically sophisticated, fanatical, societal misfits.

Groups like the Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, the Nature Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, the Wilderness Society, National Resources Defense Council and the Environmental Defense Council provide the legal research and courtroom advocacy to force property owners into submission. These groups have become so powerful and feared that most major businesses will pay them "green mail" and capitulate to their demands without putting up a fight. Smaller property owners, farmers, ranchers and family businesses have little chance to hang on to their property once the attack begins.

This "ecoligarchy" is funded through federal tax dollars as well as private foundations like the Rockefeller Foundation, the Mellon Foundations, Ford Foundation, Pew Charitable Trust, W. Alton Jones Foundation, University grants

and the Environmental Grant Makers Association. More dollars fill their pockets through the selling of "taken" land as the booty of their legal assault.

As this violence grows against America's most fundamental right, the ownership of private property, the average American remains unaware of rapidly diminishing rights. That's partly because of a massive news blackout of anything "green." The news media manages to either ignore the latest government taking, or describe it in glowing terms as a boon for the environment. Children in classrooms are taught that protecting the environment must take precedence over most human activities. Such propaganda is backed up by a constant flow of unfounded or unsupported "scientific" reports declaring environmental Armageddon through ozone holes, global warming and human consumption.

As a result America's most precious freedom is in steady retreat. Even with the passing of the Clinton Administration, more property owners continue to become victims of a cause they don't understand. But the worst may be yet to come. The environmental movement has many plans in the works. If completely implemented, more than fifty percent of all the land in the entire United States may be shut off from human activity, leaving little choice for future Americans but to be herded into specified human habitat areas to live and raise their families under a central organizing plan call Sustainable Development. Gone will be private property, free enterprise, personal choices and dreams.

If all of that sounds too incredible to even be
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considered in a serious debate, then the reality of what has already been accomplished toward those ends will truly astound you.

Dismantling American Society

To sustain the highest standard of living the world has ever known, America needs its farms to grow our life-giving crops; ranches to provide beef; mines to provide minerals; timber to provide the materials to build homes; and paper to print text books. Without these basic human needs civilization is impossible. It is no coincidence that these vital commodities are the targets of environmental radicals and the federal regulations they've created.

But banning these industries outright would meet too much resistance. Instead, powerful government regulations, guidelines and punitive taxes are used to slowly diminish and then drive out businesses. As an industry disappears from a region, the land it formerly occupied ultimately is removed from any further such production. It will then join millions of other newly non-productive acres under control of the National Park Service or the U.S. Forest Service. Once accomplished, no human use will be permitted.

Because of federal environmental regulations, very little timber is now permitted to be taken from federal lands, and the numbers shrink every year. This ban even includes the removal of dead trees or those downed by storms. As a direct result of enforcement of these regulations by the Clinton Administration, between 1992 and 2000 more than 300 timber mills were closed in the northwestern states alone, at a cost of at least 130,000 jobs. The economic impact resulted in the destruction of entire towns which had depended on the industry's revenue. Since 1990, timber harvest on federal land has declined from 12 billion board feet a year to barely 2.5 billion board feet in 2000.

We're told that the ban on timber in public forests is for the protection of the environment. But while the sawmills stand empty and jobs disappear, the dead trees attract insects and disease, affecting the remaining healthy trees, and endangering the forest more severely than any possible threat from competent logging practices. Those unhealthy forests are the number one reason why millions of forest acres now burn every year, destroying trees that could have been used for productive purposes.

As the number of logging acres diminish, prices increase. It now costs more to harvest fewer available trees. In upstate New York, in just one year, the cost of raw hardwood jumped 60 percent.

Such a jump in production costs drastically affects paper costs, thus increasing prices in all segments of American society. Housing costs are skyrocketing as well, taking affordable housing out of the reach of lower income families. That result is just fine with environmentalists since their stated goal is to stop as much development as possible.

Meanwhile, as the timber industry reels under the regulations, and more and more forests become untouchable to human hands, the land holdings of the federal government grow in proportion.

In Washington State, heart of the Northwest timber industry, almost 50 percent of the state is now owned by either the federal, state or county governments. Only half of the land remains in private hands. The total acreage of public land in Washington is 42,606,080. Of this, 2,599,250 acres are controlled by the U.S. Forest Service, 25,492 acres are in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Natural Area Preserves and 46,892 acres are in DNR Natural Reserve Conservation Areas. Citizen access to these federal areas is severely restricted or prohibited.

Now, under a green-driven 1990 program called the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) the state government is in an all-out drive to buy or take more and more land.

On the Great Plains the battles for water rights and grazing rights (the bedrock of the ranching industry) is little understood but potentially devastating to America's ability to feed itself.

Water and grazing rights are supposed to be guaranteed to those ranchers who operate on public lands. Those agreements go back over one hundred years to the days when the western territories became states. Under those agreements negotiated in good faith with state and federal authorities, they were not to be subject to question. Water and grazing rights are considered by ranchers to be just as sacred as any homeowner's deed of private property.

Yet today, the Department of the Interior is pushing to raise grazing and water fees to levels that would destroy ranching and farming in the areas. If the battle is lost it will mark the end of

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America's cattle and sheep industry and the destruction of family farms. The land where those ranches and farms now stand will become unproductive, barren wilderness controlled by the federal government.

Without them, can America continue to feed itself, let alone the rest of the world? Meanwhile, in tandem with this federal assault on cattle ranching, animal rights activists like People for the ethical Treatment of Animals (PeTA) advocate the elimination of meat consumption. This too is no coincidence.

The devastation created by the Clinton Administration to private property owners and industry is undeniable. In Clinton's first term more than 141 million acres were taken by the federal government. In 1999 Clinton removed more than 2.3 million acres from access to mineral exploration. While this once-productive land was turned into wilderness, many roads, bridges and even some dams were closed or eliminated. Tax bases were destroyed, resulting in the strangulation of whole communities.

Piece by piece each of these moves by the federal government, aided by the environmentalists, dismantles American infrastructure. The plan to re-wild 50 percent of the nation and move Americans into specific government-approved human habitat areas is taking shape and becoming ever clearer for the naked eye to see. Federal programs provide many more tools to speed the process along. Here are only a few.

Rails To Trails

During the 1800's, as the nation sought to create a national railroad system, farmers and other property owners leased portions of their land to the new enterprise. It was the only way to ensure enough right of way for the railroads, and it provided extra income to the land owners. The land was still privately owned and was to revert back to the owner's use if ever the railroads ceased to need it.

But as railroads began to disappear and old tracks rusted in the countryside, much of the land didn't revert back to the owners. Instead federal legislation, promoted by environmentalists, overstepped the property owners in favor of the popular Rails-to-Trails program.

The hiking and cycling crowds which flock to the trails, care little about the history of the property rights that have been violated to provide for their pleasure. The greens, on the other hand, have found a bonanza in free land to add to the growing behemoth of federal control. The land, which has been literally stolen from the property owners, has been effectively eliminated from productive use and development.

Moreover the trails have become "blood vessels" feeding more land-control efforts. The tiny path of the trail winding through yet more private property is a foot in the door for the demand that more of the adjacent land be used for "public" need. In this way, millions of acres are connected by Rails to Trails and eventually taken by government edict.

More than 36,000 miles of such trails now crisscross the nation under the direct control of the National Park Service. Long forgotten are the land owners who actually paid for it.

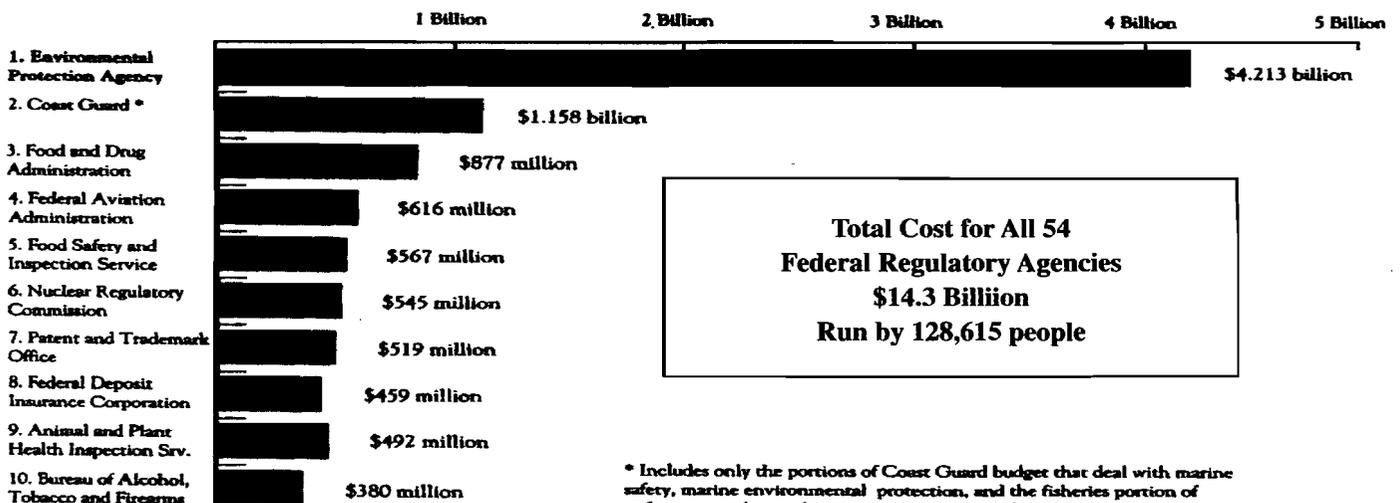
Heritage Corridors

Picture a national park 2,500 miles long and two counties wide, passing through ten states from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico. Inside that area there can be no commercial development, no housing and no communities. Now picture that area as the mighty Mississippi River, the vital waterway that divides our entire nation and provides crucial commercial traffic, hauling goods and services to keep the nation moving.

Can't happen, you say? In fact, Congress has already designated the entire 2,500 miles as a single "Mississippi River Corridor" for a monumental study to create a unified federal program designed to control development in the ten-state area. First victims of the process were houseboat dwellers who have lived on the river for fifty years were being removed from this "public" reserve. Now property owners along the banks are feeling the impact.

Worse, there are at least 68 designated Heritage Areas and Corridors across the country ranging through nearly every state in the Union. All of them come under the control of the National Park Service. Heritage Corridors represent the worst examples of the poison from
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THE EXPLOSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION COST TO RUN ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY TOWERS OVER EVERY OTHER FEDERAL REGULATORY AGENCY 1994 REGULATORY BUDGETS 10 LARGEST FEDERAL REGULATORY AGENCIES



From report by Melinda Warren, Center for the Study of American Business (12)

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environmental regulations that is seeping into American culture. Landowners are driven from their homes, businesses are shut down and whole communities are turned into ghost towns.

How do they do it? One small step at a time. In the Mississippi River area, for example, historical studies are being conducted to determine the farthest recorded distance to which the river has flooded outside its banks. That distance then becomes designated as "river" and represents the new floodplain boundary inside of which no development may take place. Rather than having the ugly scene of federal law moving residents from their homes, environmentalists are, instead, encouraging insurance companies to deny flood insurance to those who live in the newly designated flood plain areas. Without flood insurance homeowners and businesses and even entire towns can't survive. They move. Their homes become federally controlled property. The land becomes wilderness.

Biosphere Reserves

The granddaddy of all federal land grabs is the Biosphere Reserve. The purpose of a Biosphere Reserve is to control land use and promote "biological diversity" concepts agreed to at the 1992 Rio United Nations "Earth Summit." Biosphere Reserves are UNESCO land designations defined

as "multi-purpose areas...to serve as demonstration areas of cooperation in building harmonious relationships between human activities and the conservation of ecosystems and biodiversity." In other words, they represent total control of property by the federal government, backed up by a huge steel-toed boot from the UN.

According to environmentalist theory, if even an insect in the biosphere is damaged then the entire ecosystem is endangered, causing immeasurable environmental harm and leading to possible environmental Armageddon. Of course, so their theory goes, all human activity is damaging to the biosphere. In order to protect such vital and delicate global balance, human activity must be heavily regulated or removed. That makes Biosphere Reserves a very convenient tool for the land-grabbing business, leaving little room for human development.

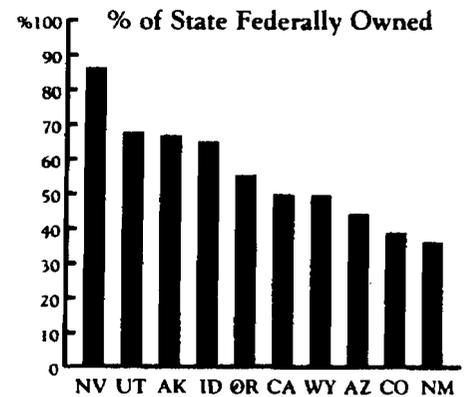
A Biosphere Reserve works like this: A core area is chosen, usually a current wilderness area, perhaps in the middle of a national park. In that core area, no human activity is allowed.

Around the core is placed a buffer zone. The buffer area may contain some development, some housing and some other human activity. However, no new development will be permitted. Eventually, it is planned that the existing activity will be strangled and eliminated. Once accomplished, the core area will be expanded, swallowing up the buffer zone. Humans simply will not be allowed in that area.

Surrounding the buffer zone is a "transition

area" where some human activity like tourism, even certain types of limited human settlements may be permitted. But here again, the boundaries of the transition area are not stable. They can be constantly expanded.

Like a deadly cancer or a science fiction monster movie, the transition area grows, and the buffer area grows accordingly, and consequently, so grows the core area. The horrible result is the elimination of human beings, pri-

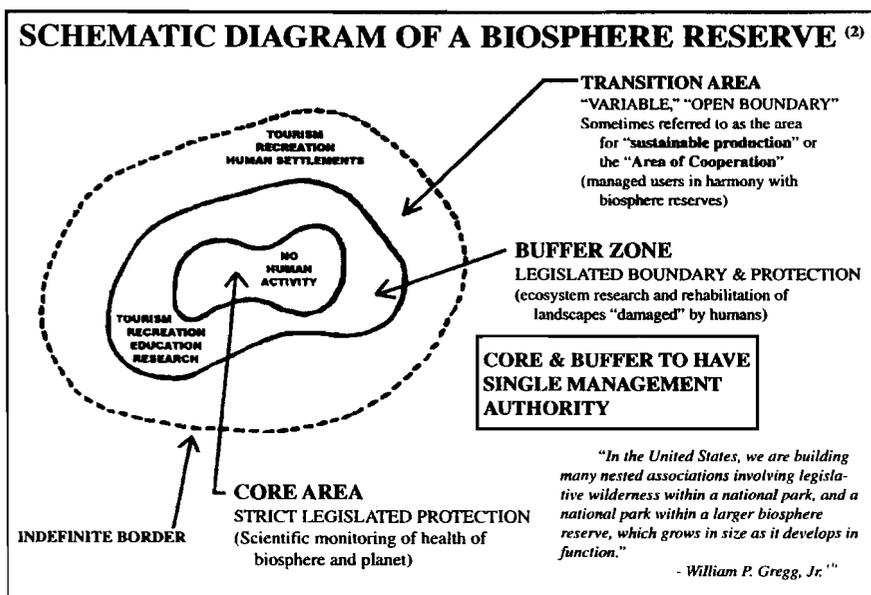


vate property or even communities. In such a way, once-free man is slowly herded to his designated habitat area.

Biosphere Reserves are not, however, just some environmental pipe dream or part of a wish list. They are being implemented in legislation and policy right now. Both the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity and the President's Council on Sustainable Development mandate that government be organized into bio-regions. The bio-region plan is the basis for the government's drive to control larger and larger blocks of land. Already, almost unnoticed, people are being moved and development cut off in direct preparation for the biosphere programs - in every region of the nation.

In upstate New York, for example, a major fight is being waged to stop the implementation of a biosphere reserve called the Northern Forest Lands. This massive project would create a wilderness that stretches from Maine - through New Hampshire - through Vermont - and into upstate New York. More than two-thirds of the state of Maine would be made off-limits to human activity, along with one third each of Vermont, New Hampshire and New York.

The Sierra Club announced in its national magazine in 1995, that it was devoting its entire



effort toward the implementation of the biosphere agenda. The magazine contained the Sierra Club's new map of America, broken down into eighteen bio-regions nationwide.

Sustainable Development

Imagine an America in which a specific "ruling principle" was created to decide proper societal conduct for every citizen. That principle would be used to consider everything you eat, what you wear, the kind of home you live in, the way you get to work, the way you dispose of waste, the number of children you have, even your education and employment decisions.

And imagine that all of these decisions were called "voluntary," but also imagine that the administration ruling over the vast apparatus of federal government would use its full power to induce what it deems "correct behavior."

On June 29, 1993, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12852 to create the President's Council on Sustainable Development. Sustainable Development is that "ruling principle" for the implementation of what Al Gore calls the "wrenching

structure of the nation, away from private ownership and control of property to nothing short of national zoning. It drives us away from personal vehicles and highways – to light rail train systems and bike paths. Using the guidelines of Sustainable Development, suburban housing, air conditioning, high meat consumption, frozen and convenience foods, use of fossil foods and kitchen appliances are not sustainable.

Sustainable Development programs are even used in the creation of national education standards and high school graduation criteria. It establishes partnerships among federal, regional, state, local and tribal levels of government – and with business. These programs oversee development of private property, housing design, transportation patterns and the establishment of government data banks. When fully implemented, Sustainable Development will result in the complete transformation of the American way of life.

Will President Bush Stop the Transformation?

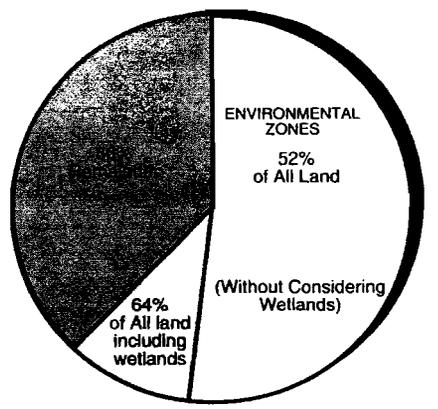
There was hope that the election of George W. Bush would at least provide some relief from Bill Clinton's massive drive to implement the radical environmental agenda. Even though it is still too early in the new administration to make a judgement call, several items have given property rights advocates reason for concern.

First, new Interior Secretary Gale Norton caused alarm bells to sound when she told the Senate Energy Committee that she agreed with the proposition that cattle and sheep grazing on public lands was a privilege, not a right. Her position on this one key issue will tell whether she will defend and help restore the property rights of ranchers – or not. Understanding the fundamental difference of this issue is a major clue as to how she will develop and implement policy. So far she has failed.

Second, President Bush is considering John Turner to serve as Deputy Secretary of the Interior to Norton. Turner is the

man responsible for listing the Northern Spotted Owl on the Endangered Species

The Diminished Potential of Private Property
NEW YORK STATE ENVIRONMENTAL ZONES



Proportion of land in New York State where state & federal environmental preservation agencies are currently gaining control or already have major land acquisitions and controls over private land.

The Ruling Principle of Sustainable Development



transformation" we must all suffer through in order to purify our nation from the horrors of the Twentieth Century's industrial revolution.

Consequently, Sustainable Development calls for changing the very infras-

list, helping to devastate the timber industry.

Third, contrary to indications made before the election, the Bush Administration now says it won't overturn the flurry of last minute Clinton executive orders that locked up several million more acres of private lands.

These are not good omens for things to come. To begin to unravel the Clinton-made environmental noose, Bush should be appointing cabinet members who understand and sympathize with property rights as the basis for all environmental policy. In addition he must roll back those executive orders now – before they are imbedded in official policy.

Most importantly, Bush must immediately close down the White House offices of the Council for Environmental Quality (CEQ) and the President's Council on Sustainable Development. Even then, those efforts would be only a start in the massive job of returning the United States to a nation of private property and free individuals. 