

Half of America to Be Turned into "Eco-Park"

Absurd, anti-human environmental laws are part of a much larger Green Gestapo agenda for your future. Their blueprint is the UN's 1,140-page UN Environmental Programme's *Global Bio-diversity Assessment* (GBA), which Clinton has urged the Senate to ratify.

Called the "Wildlands Project," this scheme would convert at least half of the continental US into an "eco-park" devoid of industry and private property. **John Davis**, editor of the Wildlands Project journal, *Wild Earth*, writes:

Wilderness recovery must start now but continue indefinitely – expanding wilderness until the matrix, not just the nexus, is wild . . . Does [this] mean that *Wild Earth* and the Wildlands Project advocate the end of industrial civilization? Most assuredly. Everything civilized must go.

Although the Biodiversity Treaty has not been ratified, implementation has already begun in several states. In Chicago, a coalition of 34 federal agencies, cultural organizations, and environmental groups has created the Chicago Region Biodiversity Council, which the *Chicago Tribune* calls,

[A]n ambitious and unprecedented effort to restore what nature created, not piece-by-piece, but on a regional scale . . . The idea is to create a network of native natural areas not just in [Illinois] forest preserves but in city and suburban neighborhoods and on corporate campuses. Lawns and parkways could be replaced by fields of prairies, wildflowers and boring detention ponds could be replaced by living wetlands.

Property Owners are Fighting Back

Long before America is re-wilded, we will all be impoverished and enslaved. Where will our food come from if more and more farms are shut down? Where will our building materials come from if the EPA continues to ban mining and logging? What freedom will we have left if bureaucrats micro-manage every home, pond, farm, forest, and field?

Fortunately, the extreme, anti-human agenda of the Green Gestapo is creating a growing backlash:

- ◆ Nearly 100 bills curtailing environmental over-regulation have been introduced in 40 states.
- ◆ In the last five years, 23 states have passed laws strengthening private property rights.
- ◆ The US Supreme Court has ruled that if environmental regulations destroy the value of a person's property, it is a "taking" under the Fifth Amendment,

and the property owner must be compensated. [*Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council*, 505 U.S.C. 111 S. Ct. 2886, 1992.]

- ◆ Pending before Congress, the Property Rights Act would compensate property owners who lose 35% or more of the value of their property because of government regulations.

We can have *both* a safe, livable environment *and* a free society in which private property rights are respected. The Green Gestapo is environmentalism gone insane. By working together, we can stop this insanity and restore our right to manage and enjoy our own property.

Jarret B. Wollstein is a member of ISIL's Board of Directors and a founder of the original Society for Individual Liberty.

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THE GREEN GESTAPO



Environmentalism Gone Insane

by Jarret B. Wollstein

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John Posgai – a self-employed truck mechanic from Morrisville, Pennsylvania – thought he was improving his land when he removed 7,000 used tires and rusting car parts left by a previous owner. Unfortunately, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) didn't agree.

For the "crime" of cleaning up his own property without a federal permit, the EPA charged him with 41 violations of the Clean Water Act. According to the EPA, water retained in decaying tires and rusty ditches made Posgai's land a federally-protected "wetland." Posgai was sentenced to three years in a federal prison and fined \$202,000.

In 1956, Posgai had fled tyrannical bureaucrats in Hungary. Forty years later, tyrannical bureaucrats in the United States put him in prison.

Environmentalism Out of Control

John Posgai is just one of thousands of victims of America's "Green Gestapo" – environmental zealots in the EPA, Army Corps of Engineers, OSHA and other agencies – who enforce often absurd rules, at the point of a gun.

Our environmental laws were supposed to protect the land, air and water by stopping big polluters. But that's not how it turned out. Large corporations have staffs of attorneys and deep pockets. They pay the fines as just another cost of doing business, or pay off politicians. But small business owners and average citizens don't have the resources to fight or bribe city hall, so they end up as the primary victims of bad laws.

Rationally, environmentalism is a balance between competing interests. Since all human activity effects the earth, only extinction would make the human race non-intrusive upon nature. The standard is: Is *human life* and society benefited or harmed by changes in the environment. But to the Green Gestapo, the *only* interest is "protecting" every rat and bug – with little concern for human consequences.

Dozens of Homes Allowed to Burn – to "Protect" Rats

In Riverside, California, 76,000 acres – much of it privately owned and occupied, was declared a preserve for the kangaroo rat. Kangaroo rats are common throughout California, and for centuries have been regarded as destructive vermin. However, homeowners were repeatedly threatened with prison sentences and fines of up to \$100,000 if they cleared overgrown brush from their own property.

On October 26, 1993, wildfires swept through the area. Fire quickly leapt from brush to homes. As homeowner Yshmael Garcia explains:

"My home was destroyed by a bunch of bureaucrats in

suits and so-called environmentalists who say animals are more important than people."

In fact, the ban on clearing brush also killed the kangaroo rats, who burned along with the homes.

Businessman Fined \$20 Million After Employee Spills Barrel of Oil

In San Rafael, California, an employee of a construction company owned by businessman Fred Grange accidentally spilled a single barrel of oil on a vacant lot. As required by law, Mr. Grange reported the spill to the EPA and local environmental agencies.

Over a dozen government agencies – including the EPA, California Highway Patrol, and local police – conducted investigations. Grange admitted he got very angry when literally hundreds of government investigators swooped down upon him. So, according to Grange, the Green Gestapo decided to make an example out of him. Fines totaling over \$20 million were imposed on his business, forcing it to close.

EPA Orders Destruction of Home

Throughout much of America, construction of new homes has slowed to a crawl – driving up costs and pricing most young families out of the market. One major reason is the Green Gestapo.

Louise and Frederic Williams of Little Compton, Rhode Island, bought five acres for a new home. When their home was already partially constructed they received a letter from state environmental officials ordering them to tear it down. Although there was little water on the property, eco-bureaucrats had declared their property to be a wetland. The EPA also ordered them to plant trees and tend them for a full *year* at their own expense. The value of the Williams' property plummeted from \$260,000 to less than \$30,000.

How could a dry homesite be classified as a wetland? Robert J. Pierce, who helped write the 1989 EPA wetlands standard, bluntly states,

Ecologically speaking, the term "wet-land" has no meaning For regulatory purposes, a wetland is whatever we decide it is. [*National Wetlands Newsletter*, Nov/Dec 1991, pp. 12.]

Don't Think You're Safe Just Because You Live in a City

In October, 1995, new OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) regulations went into effect that require property owners to eliminate lead-based paint and

asbestos – substances commonly found in older property. If you sell or rent residential property built prior to 1978, you are now required to give new occupants a notice which reads in part: "[This] property may place young children at risk of developing lead poisoning."

In this case the environmental "cure" appears to be far worse than the disease.

Government agencies calculate "dangerous doses" of lead and other substances by feeding rats and mice enormous *daily* doses, just below the level it would take to kill them immediately. These are levels hundreds or thousands of times higher than you and I are exposed to in our entire lifetimes. If this procedure were followed for *all* chemicals, virtually everything we touch would be banned. As a National Center for Policy Analysis study concludes,

At these high levels of exposure, one out of every two chemicals ever tested (both natural and man-made) eventually causes cancer in at least one species of rodent. [*Progressive Environmentalism*, April 1991, p. 43.]

Implementing new lead and asbestos regulations could force millions of people out of their homes – in many cases permanently: The cost of retrofitting old buildings is often greater than their value.

Nationwide Assaults on Property . . . and Human Life

Crazy environmental laws are destroying homes, mines, factories, and people throughout America:

- ♦ On January 12, 1995, a federal judge halted all mining, ranching, and logging on 14 *million* acres in Idaho. Angry Idaho citizens protested, "Our lives are about to be destroyed and disappear."
- ♦ In Colton, California, a fly brought economic development to a screeching halt. This town of 45,000 slipped into economic depression when a local military base closed. Unfortunately for its human residents, Colton is also home to the Delhi Sand fly, which is listed as endangered. To protect the fly, state authorities have blocked construction of a new hospital and industrial park that would have brought over \$171 million in new capital and thousands of jobs. Any major development in Colton is now impossible because of the fly. [Source: *Contra Costa Times*, 6/16/97, pp. A-10.]
- ♦ According to the Mountain States Legal Foundation, over 1,300 species – including a number of flies and rats – are now listed as "endangered" and hence protected. Kill one, and you risk a \$300,000 fine and two years in prison.