

# NOWHERE MAN



## GEORGE W. BUSH: AMERICA'S WORST ENVIRONMENTAL PRESIDENT

Under President George W. Bush, the United States is experiencing the most significant dismantling of environmental laws in our history. Simultaneously, Americans are experiencing an unprecedented restriction in their ability to participate in public land management decisions. The Bush administration has manipulated policy, regulation, legislative initiatives, budgets and day-to-day decision making to weaken or diminish the standard of conservation management of America's federal public lands. The administration has adopted a philosophy for federal land management that places the highest priority on resource extraction and development. It supports rapid expansion of oil and gas leasing, expedites approval of mining claims, relaxes air,

water and wetland protection standards and blatantly ignores public comments against resource extraction. The administration has opposed the creation of new national parks, cut the National Park Service's management budget, and fired Park Service employees who spoke to the press about budget cuts.<sup>73</sup> It has opposed the designation of new wildlife refuges, new endangered species listings and critical habitat conservation plans. It has opposed new wilderness designation or other special conservation designations within other public lands.

During the 2000-2002 election cycle, the timber industry alone gave more than \$3.3 million combined to the Bush/Cheney ticket and the Republican National Committee.<sup>74</sup> In return, the

president appointed veteran industry lobbyists to oversee key government positions. The administration has also quietly settled multiple lawsuits with the logging industry, undermining negotiated agreements and court-approved decisions. Further subverting the legal system, the administration has exempted government agencies from following specific legal requirements in cases where the courts have ruled against logging plans. The administration is also pushing some of the largest logging projects in history. Controversial decisions, such as changes to the National Forest Management Act or exempting the Tongass and Chugach National Forests from the Roadless Rule, are made on the eve of national holidays when the media and public are least attentive.



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President George W. Bush on his ranch in Crawford, Texas.