

Presidential Carter's Message to Congress on Protection of the Environment

May 23, 1977

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Following is the text of President Carter's May 23 message to Congress on protection of the environment:

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

This message brings together a great variety of programs. It deals not only with ways to preserve the wilderness, wildlife, and natural and historical resources which are a beautiful and valued part of America's national heritage: it deals also with the effects of pollution, toxic chemicals, and the damage caused by the demand for energy. Each of these concerns, in its own way, affects the environment; and together they underscore the importance of environmental protection in all our lives.

Americans long thought that nature could take care of itself—or that if it did not, the consequences were someone else's problem. As we know now, that assumption was wrong: none of us is a stranger to environmental problems.

Industrial workers, for example, are exposed to disproportionate risks from toxic substances in their surroundings. The urban poor, many of whom have never had the chance to canoe a river or hike a mountain trail, must nevertheless endure each day the hazardous effects of lead and other pollutants in the air.

I believe environmental protection is consistent with a sound economy. Previous pollution control laws have generated many more jobs than they have cost. And other environmental measures whose time has come—measures like energy conservation, reclamation of stripmined lands, and rehabilitation of our cities—will produce still more new jobs, often where they are needed most. In any event, if we ignore the care of our environment, the day will eventually come when our economy suffers for that neglect.

Intelligent stewardship of the environment on behalf of all Americans is a prime responsibility of government. Congress has in the past carried out its share of this duty well—so well, in fact, that the primary need today is not for new comprehensive statutes but for sensitive administration and energetic enforcement of the ones we have. Environmental protection is no longer just a legislative job, but one that requires—and will now receive—firm and unsparing support from the Executive Branch.

In this spirit, I am presenting the following program to build upon Congress' admirable record:

Actions to control pollution and protect health

- A coordinated attack on toxic chemicals in the environment
- Effective implementation of the Toxic Substances Control Act
- Accelerated development of occupational health standards to protect workers
- Strong legislation to improve air quality

- A \$45-billion, 10-year program to build sewage facilities
- Accelerated study of economic incentives to encourage recycling

Actions to assure environmentally sound energy development

- Support for amendments to improve the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act
- Revision of the OCS leasing schedule
- More participation by states in the current OCS program
- Accelerated identification of health and environmental effects of new energy technologies
- A nationwide evaluation of the availability of water for energy development
- Support for strong national stripmining legislation
- Reform of the federal coal leasing program

Actions to improve the urban environment

- Commitment to neighborhood preservation and conservation
- Use of historic buildings for federal offices where appropriate
- An improved and expanded urban homesteading program Actions to protect our natural resources
- A comprehensive review of water resources policy
- Executive Orders to direct federal agencies to refrain from supporting development in floodplains and wetlands
- Support for the program regulating dredge spoil disposal in wetlands
- \$50-million over the next five years to purchase wetlands to protect waterfowl habitat
- Development of legislation to replace the anachronistic Mining Law of 1872 with one that establishes a leasing system for hardrock minerals
- A comprehensive review of the Cooperative Forestry Program
- An Executive Order strengthening protection of public lands from the uncontrolled use of off-road vehicles

Actions to preserve our national heritage

- An accelerated five-year, \$759-million program to develop new and existing parks
- Development of legislation to establish a National Heritage Trust to protect places of cultural, historic and ecological value
- Support for designating major additions to the Park, Forest, Wildlife Refuge, and Wild and Scenic River Systems in Alaska
- Four new wilderness proposals and enlargement of five others submitted by previous administrations
- Accelerated preparation of new wilderness proposals for Alaska and the East and initiation of a vigorous new wilderness program on Bureau of Land Management lands
- Eight new Wild and Scenic Rivers and proposals to study 20 others
- Legislation to deauthorize the Cross Florida Barge Canal and to study adding the Oklawaha River to the Wild and Scenic River System
- Three new National Scenic Trails

Actions to protect wildlife

- A \$295-million five-year program to rehabilitate and improve the Wildlife Refuge System
- Improved protection for nongame wildlife

- An accelerated effort to identify habitat critical to the survival and recovery of endangered species
- An Executive Order restricting the introduction of potentially harmful foreign plants and animals into the United States

Actions which affirm our concern for the global environment

- A major interagency study to assess potential global environmental changes and their impact on the United States
- An offer to assist interested nations in dealing with population problems
- Inclusion of environmental considerations in assistance programs of the Agency for International Development
- Support for a number of international environmental agreements
- A prohibition on commercial whaling in the U.S. 200-mile fisheries zone

Actions to improve implementation of environmental laws

- An Executive Order directing the Council on Environmental Quality to issue regulations reducing paperwork in the environmental impact statement process
- Development of legislation to create one consolidated environmental grant program
- A review of environmental coordination legislation to reduce overlapping and conflicting requirements.

I. Pollution and Health

At the beginning of this decade, the United States embarked on a long overdue program to reduce pollution and make our environment healthier and more livable. My administration fully supports the progressive legislation that has been enacted. We are particularly committed to strong measures to protect our most important resource—human health—from the increasingly apparent problem of hazardous substances in the environment.

- We plan to improve enforcement of our pollution control laws.
- We intend to make increased use of economic incentives to achieve our environmental goals.
- We will seize opportunities to reduce pollution by conserving resources.
- We will work with state and local governments to make sure that the job of controlling pollution is properly planned and does not stop with the promulgation of regulations in Washington.
- We will make every effort to see that regulation of a problem in one medium—such as water—does not create new environmental problems in another medium—such as air.
- And we will squarely face emerging environmental problems so that they can be dealt with effectively without an atmosphere of crisis.

Toxic Chemicals

The presence of toxic chemicals in our environment is one of the grimmest discoveries of the industrial era. Rather than coping with these hazards after they have escaped into our environment, our primary objective must be to prevent them from entering the environment at all.

At least a dozen major federal statutes, implemented by seven different agencies, address this problem in various ways. With the enactment last year of the Toxic Substances Control Act, no further comprehensive federal legislation should be necessary. Now we must inaugurate a coordinated federal effort to exclude these chemicals from our environment.

I am therefore instructing the Council on Environmental Quality to develop an interagency program (1) to eliminate overlaps and fill gaps in the collection of data on toxic chemicals, and (2) to coordinate federal research and regulatory activities affecting them.

The Toxic Substances Control Act enables the federal government, for the first time, to gather the information on chemical substances needed to determine their potential for damaging human health and the environment, and to control them where necessary to protect the public. My FY 1978 budget provides nearly \$29-million—a threefold increase over fiscal 1977—for the Environmental Protection Agency to implement this important act.

I have instructed the Environmental Protection Agency to give its highest priority to developing 1983-best-available-technology industrial effluent standards which will control toxic pollutants under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, and to incorporate these standards into discharge permits. My administration will be seeking amendments to this act, including revision of Section 307(a), to permit the Environmental Protection Agency to move more decisively against the discharge of chemicals potentially injurious to human health.

Finally, I have instructed the Environmental Protection Agency to set standards under the Safe Drinking Water Act which will limit human exposure to toxic substances in drinking water, beginning with potential carcinogens.

The Workplace

Each year, environmental hazards in the workplace cause at least 390,000 new cases of disease and perhaps as many as 100,000 deaths. Regulation of toxic chemicals will reduce this toll, but other steps are also necessary to protect worker health and to assure adequate compensation to those who suffer from occupational diseases.

In the past, implementation of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 has emphasized safety and too often resulted in unnecessary and burdensome regulations. Yet at the same time the federal response to health problems has been unconscionably slow. Under my administration OSHA will develop and enforce effective standards for occupational health without repeating the excesses of the past. We will continue to work with the Congress to strengthen the Coal Mine Health and Safety Act and the Metallic and Nonmetallic Mine Safety Act, and we are now implementing administrative reforms to improve standard-setting procedures, enforcement, and penalty collection.

In addition, my administration will explore and develop proposals to supplement federal occupational health regulations, and will examine the full range of reforms that might be undertaken by the appropriate levels of government to assure adequate compensation for occupationally-induced diseases.

Air Pollution

Clean air is essential to the health and welfare of all Americans. Although we have made considerable progress, much remains to be done before we have fully achieved our ambient air quality goals.

My administration has already submitted to the Congress certain amendments to the Clean Air Act. I support:

- Strong provisions to prevent the deterioration of air quality in already clean areas;
- A program to protect visibility in our national parks and wilderness areas;
- Strong enforcement tools, including economic penalties to eliminate the benefits of delay or noncompliance;
- The use of “best available control” technologies in all new facilities;
- Strict controls on coal-burning plants to insure that they meet air quality standards;
- Emission limitations for automobiles which help meet clean air goals but allow achievement of strict fuel economy standards;
- State implementation of inspection and maintenance programs in seriously polluted areas to ensure that automobiles continue to meet emission control requirements while in use.

In addition, I have instructed the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to review his agency's regulations controlling new industrial growth in areas now violating air quality health standards and to recommend to me and to the Congress a fair and effective policy for meeting these standards in the future. Adoption of new legislative provisions in this area should await the results of this review.

Water Quality

The nation has made considerable progress in cleaning up its waters under the program set forth in the 1972 amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, but much remains to be done in order to achieve the act's goal of fishable and swim-mable waters. Three areas deserve particular attention:

- (1) To help control pollution from municipal sewage systems—an effort that currently involves 10,000 projects in planning or under construction—we need substantial additional funding. I have already asked the Congress to authorize the expenditure of \$4.5-billion in each of the next ten years for municipal waste water treatment facilities and to allow a one-year extension in the September 1977 deadline for the obligation of construction grant funds. But at the same time we need to be sure that sewage projects supported by federal money do not create additional environmental problems, and that they are designed to encourage water conservation as well as water treatment. We also must ensure that the systems are operated properly once they have been built; that there is an effective pre-treatment program to remove harmful industrial wastes from these systems; and that we are carefully considering alternative solutions, particularly in smaller communities, so that we can be sure of building the projects which are economically and environmentally most effective.
- (2) I have already asked the Congress to increase the funds available for the Section 208 Planning Program, which helps place water quality management in the hands of state and local government, where much of the job of prevention and abatement must actually be done. This section of the 1972 Amendments provides a means for addressing the increasingly serious problem of pollution caused by runoff from agriculture, mining, forestry and urban streets. To make it operate effectively, tough state and local plans addressing these problems must be completed and implemented as soon as possible.
- (3) Finally, I will be submitting further water quality amendments for your consideration in the current session. They will include provisions to make pollution unprofitable as well as illegal by imposing penalties on firms that have failed to abate their pollution on schedule; provisions to make law enforcement more stringent; and provisions necessary to ensure that actions are taken in accord with water quality management plans.

Solid Waste

“Solid wastes” are the discarded leftovers of our advanced consumer society. This growing mountain of garbage and trash represents not only an attitude of indifference toward valuable natural resources, but also a serious economic and public health problem.

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, passed in 1976, gave the Environmental Protection Agency the authority it needs to regulate hazardous wastes and to assure the safe disposal of other residues. Now it is important to move beyond the symptoms and address two principal causes of the solid waste problem: excessive packaging and inadequate use of recycled materials.

The act requires the EPA to undertake, through an Interagency Resource Conservation Committee, a two-year study of ways to encourage waste reduction, recycling, and resource recovery with financial incentives like solid waste disposal charges, refundable deposits on containers, federal procurement of recycled materials, and excise taxes for litter clean-up. I am asking the committee to accelerate its study and within six months present to me its first recommendations which are to address the use of solid waste disposal charges (levies on materials and products which reflect the costs associated with their ultimate disposal).

In addition, I am taking several actions to encourage resource conservation within the federal government. In the White House itself, recycled paper will be used wherever practicable as soon as present stocks of paper have been exhausted. I am instructing the administrator of the General Services Administration and the heads of other

appropriate federal agencies to institute a waste paper recycling program wherever practicable by the end of this calendar year. I am also instructing the GSA to revise its paper-product specifications to encourage the purchase of more recycled paper.

Pest Management

For several decades, chemical pesticides have been the foundation of agricultural, public health, and residential pest control. Approximately 1,400 different chemicals are used in pesticide products, and some of these, as we have begun to discover, impose an unacceptable risk to our health and our environment.

To improve the safety and effectiveness of pest management, I am recommending two measures—one a short-term legislative step, and the other a long-term change in the way we approach this problem.

- (1) I am asking the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to work with the Congress in enacting an amendment to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act which would allow the EPA to regulate directly these 1,400 active chemical ingredients, rather than the 40,000 different commercial products which contain them in varying amounts. This change will help speed the registration of safe and desirable pest control compounds, and it will permit swifter revocation of registration for those which pose unwarranted risks.
- (2) I am instructing the Council on Environmental Quality, at the conclusion of its ongoing review of integrated pest management in the United States, to recommend actions which the federal government can take to encourage the development and application of pest management techniques which emphasize the use of natural biological controls like predators, pest-specific diseases, pest-resistant plant varieties, and hormones, relying on chemical agents only as needed.

II. Energy and the Environment

In countless ways, our environment is affected by the production, distribution, and use of energy. Some of these—for example, the need to control oil tanker pollution and the need to restrict plutonium technology—I have already discussed in specific messages to the Congress. Others are implicit in my energy proposals, since the act of reversing our present wasteful energy practices will itself have many beneficial consequences for the environment. The transition to renewable energy sources, particularly solar energy, must be made. But it will take time. Meanwhile we should satisfy our energy needs from existing sources, both fossil and nuclear, in a safe and environmentally acceptable way. In particular, my Energy Plan outlined a number of steps this administration will take to deal with domestic nuclear safety and spent fuel storage: an improved inspection program; mandatory reporting of all mishaps and failures; development of improved siting criteria; a review of the entire licensing process; and a review of the Energy Research and Development Administration's radioactive waste management program. The decisions we make about energy in the next few years will influence the environment of our country for generations.

The Outer Continental Shelf

The oil and gas under federal ownership on the outer continental shelf must be developed in an orderly manner, reconciling the nation's energy needs with the fullest possible protection of the environment.

Amendments to the DCS Lands Act now being considered by the Congress, with provisions proposed by the administration, will provide important new authority to the Secretary of the Interior. I urge expeditious passage of legislation to regulate the outer continental shelf, and in particular I favor provisions which would:

- Permit full evaluation of the effects of oil production, and cancel leases or terminate operations when harm or damage to the environment outweighs the advantage of continued operations;
- Improve consultation with states and communities to assure that they have a real role in decisions which affect them;

- Require industry to use the best available economically achievable safety and pollution control technology in operations on the outer continental shelf.

In addition to new legislation, certain administrative steps should be taken in this area. The first is to assess the size and scheduling of the OCS program. The Secretary of the Interior has already revised this program through 1978 to reflect reasonable production objectives as well as the various environmental considerations in each OCS region.

As the Secretary now proceeds to reevaluate the longer-term OCS program, I have directed him to work closely with the governors of affected coastal states to guarantee that proposals for the timing and sequence of offshore lease sales are reasonable, not only in a technological sense but also in economic, social and environmental respects. Because the Alaskan outer continental shelf is particularly sensitive and controversial, I am directing him to give special emphasis to it. I have also asked him to work closely with the Secretary of Commerce as she identifies potential marine sanctuaries in areas where leasing appears imminent.

To obtain fuller knowledge about the environmental impact of leasing and production, and to increase participation by the states in the process of decision, I have further directed the Secretary of the Interior to:

- Establish an OCS Information Clearinghouse to receive inquiries about federal OCS activity;
- Develop regulations, operating orders, and lease provisions specifying the information required from industry about both the offshore and onshore impacts of prospective development;
- Facilitate cooperative planning among industry, the Interior Department, the Department of Transportation, and the states for lease development, pipeline locations, pipeline standards, and onshore facilities;
- Establish procedures for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act in connection with development plan approvals.

Because OCS activities should be administered in the most orderly way possible, I am directing the Secretary of the Interior to study carefully the prospect of reorganizing his department's management of these valuable resources.

He and the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency should also coordinate their respective regulatory activities to ensure that exploration and development are not delayed by procedural confusion.

Coal

As our nation increasingly turns to coal as a replacement for our dwindling supplies of oil and gas, we must be sure that we will not fall short of the goals we have established to protect human health and the general environment.

Essential to environmentally sound use of coal is the expeditious passage of strong national strip mine legislation. My administration has submitted to the Congress amendments by which alluvial valley floors, prime agricultural lands, and the mountains and valleys of Appalachia can be protected. These improvements, together with the comprehensive reclamation, administrative and enforcement provisions of the bill, will allow increased reliance on coal without sacrificing the environment. I urge final approval of this legislation in its strongest form. The Department of Interior has already begun preparations to implement the bill when it becomes law.

In the near term the switch to coal must be accomplished with currently available technology. In my Energy Plan I recognized that pollution control technology for direct combustion of coal is not fully adequate and directed that federal research be increased in certain key areas.

In the longer term, we must be sure that technological advances, such as conversion of coal to synthetic fuels, do not create undue environmental and health risks.

Accordingly, I am directing the administrators of the Energy Research and Development Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare to establish a joint

program to identify the health and environmental effects of each advanced technology that is the subject of federal research and development.

I am also directing the administrators of the Energy Research and Development Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency jointly to develop procedures for establishing environmental protection standards for all new energy technologies. These procedures should be agreed upon within one year.

Because extensive use of coal requires huge amounts of water, I am directing the Secretary of the Interior to prepare a nationwide evaluation of the water supply needs and availability for development of various energy resources. He should prepare his report in cooperation with the Water Resources Council, the administrator of the Energy Research and Development Administration, and other federal agencies.

The newly enacted Coal Leasing Amendments and the Federal Land Management and Policy Act provide the Secretary of the Interior with the necessary authority to carry out environmentally sound, comprehensive planning for the public lands. His duty now is to implement an affirmative program for managing coal lands and associated resources in a manner that fully protects the public interest and respects the rights of private surface owners.

To accomplish this, I am directing the Secretary of the Interior to manage the coal leasing program to assure that it can respond to reasonable production goals by leasing only those areas where mining is environmentally acceptable and compatible with other land uses. Specifically:

- The Secretary of the Interior, using environmental reviews, coal assessments, and indications of market interest, should determine which lands are appropriate to offer for lease.
- Land use plans should be completed before a decision to offer specific tracts for sale.
- No tract should be leased unless the Secretary is satisfied that the environmental impact of mining would be acceptable and that the federal government will receive a fair market value for the lease.

In response to concern about the large numbers of nonproducing federal coal leases in the Western states, I am directing the Secretary of the Interior to scrutinize the existing leases (and applications for preference right leases) to determine whether they show prospects for timely development in an environmentally acceptable manner. He should take whatever steps are necessary to deal with nonproducing and environmentally unsatisfactory leases and applications. These may include the following:

- Exchange of environmentally unsatisfactory leases or applications for environmentally acceptable coal lands of equivalent value;
- Reassessment of the basis for granting or denying preference right leases;
- Submission of legislation to authorize the condemnation of outstanding rights upon payment of reasonable compensation, if necessary to prevent environmental damage.

III. The Urban Environment

The National Environmental Policy Act speaks of the need to assure every American safe and healthful surroundings in which to live and work. For many of our citizens in urban areas, this goal is still remote.

Many existing environmental protection programs directly benefit the cities, of course, because that is where most of our pollution problems are. For example, controls on the emission of lead from automobile exhaust are of serious concern to inner-city residents. And as water pollution programs make rivers and streams cleaner, there will be more recreational opportunities in urban areas.

City life need not be a discouraging struggle against adversity; it can be an enriching experience. But it will take more than stopping pollution to make our cities the congenial, livable places they ought to be.

To halt the degradation of the urban environment and to conserve and develop its rich historic and physical resources, the place to begin is with the neighborhoods themselves. In the past, wholesale destruction and

rebuilding have led to a spurious “renewal” that destroys the sense of human community on which a city's vigor depends. By redirecting the resources of the federal government into neighborhood preservation and conservation, we can begin the work of intelligently restoring our cities. These proposals are part of that program:

- I am directing all federal agencies to assess their programs to ensure that they take advantage of our rich architectural heritage wherever possible, for example by locating federal offices in historic buildings and by supporting projects that are compatible with and contribute to the local cultural and historic environment.
- I have instructed the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to expand the urban homesteading program by making available more and better-quality houses; by ensuring that adequate rehabilitation assistance is available to participants; and by coordinating the program more closely with other federal, state and community efforts.

IV. Natural Resources

Protection of this country's natural resources depends in large part on the actions, leadership and example of the federal government. Too often our water, wetlands, minerals, timber and other resources have been managed imprudently, in disregard of sound environmental principles. Too often, narrow economic interests have enjoyed undue influence over the use of our public domain. As a result the resources which belong to all our citizens have sometimes been carelessly squandered.

My administration is committed to a policy of effective stewardship of our public lands and natural resources. That policy includes conservation, multiple use of resources, and a reluctance to disrupt natural ecosystems. At a time when it has become apparent that we can no longer afford the waste and misuse of any natural resources, the need for these steps is clear.

Water Resources Policy

One of the pressing domestic issues facing this administration and this Congress is the establishment of a national water resources management policy.

I believe that it is essential to confine the public works efforts of the water development agencies to projects that can meet such defensible criteria as economic efficiency, safety, environmental protection, and fair distribution of project benefits. I have already recommended to the Congress a number of cost-saving adjustments in our water resource programs. Beyond that, we need comprehensive reform of water resources policy, with water conservation as its cornerstone.

I am therefore directing the Office of Management and Budget, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Water Resources Council to conduct, in consultation with the Congress and with the public, a review of the present federal water resource policy. I have requested them to complete this joint study within six months and to present me with concrete recommendations for policy coordination and reform.

In addition, as a first step in redirecting present practices, I am today issuing an Executive Order designed to minimize the potential loss of human life and property from floods. This Order directs all appropriate federal agencies to refrain from supporting, funding, or issuing permits and licenses to new construction projects located in floodplains unless the agency determines that no practicable alternative location exists.

Wetlands

The important ecological function of coastal and inland wetlands is well known to natural scientists. The lasting benefits that society derives from these areas often far exceed the immediate advantage their owners might get from draining or filling them. Their destruction shifts economic and environmental costs to other citizens—often in other states—who have had no voice in the decision to alter them.

We are losing wetlands at the rate of some 300,000 acres per year. While many of the individual developments which have caused this loss may once have been appropriate—and some still may be—we must now protect against the cumulative effects of reducing our total wetlands acreage. For these reasons, I am proposing a concerted federal effort to protect our wetlands. This includes the following steps:

- (1) The federal government will no longer subsidize the destruction of wetlands. I am today issuing an Executive Order directing all appropriate federal agencies to refrain from giving financial support to proposed developments in wetlands unless the agency determines that no practicable alternative sites exist.
- (2) I support implementation of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act program which regulates the filling and disposal of dredged materials in all U.S. waters or associated wetlands. This important program is essential to wetlands protection, but it should be carried out in a way that avoids undue federal regulation. The present program exempts normal farming, ranching, and forestry practices, and it allows for general permits that do not tie up individuals in unnecessary red tape. These provisions have my support. My forthcoming amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act will include proposals to improve wetlands protection and to authorize the states to assume responsibility for carrying out major portions of this program.
- (3) To protect and sustain waterfowl for recreational enjoyment, I am proposing a budget increase of \$50-million over the next five years to purchase wetlands, and I have already included in both the FY 1977 and FY 1978 budgets another \$10-million for this purpose. I also urge the Congress to enact legislation increasing the price of migratory bird conservation and hunting stamps (the so-called “duck” stamp) so that additional revenue will be available for waterfowl habitat acquisition.

Coastal Barrier Islands

Coastal barrier islands are a fragile buffer between the wetlands and the sea. The 189 barrier islands on the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts are an integral part of an ecosystem which helps protect inland areas from flood waves and hurricanes. Many of them are unstable and not suited for development, yet in the past the federal government has subsidized and insured new construction on them. Eventually, we can expect heavy economic losses from this shortsighted policy.

About 68 coastal barrier islands are still unspoiled. Because I believe these remaining natural islands should be protected from unwise development, I am directing the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Commerce, the Council on Environmental Quality, and state and local officials of coastal areas, to develop an effective plan for protecting the islands.

His report should include recommendations for action to achieve this purpose.

Marine Sanctuaries

Existing legislation allows the Secretary of Commerce to protect certain estuarine and ocean resources from the ill effects of development by designating marine sanctuaries. Yet only two sanctuaries have been established since 1972, when the program began.

I am, therefore, instructing the Secretary of Commerce to identify possible sanctuaries in areas where development appears imminent, and to begin collecting the data necessary to designate them as such under the law.

Mining

For more than a century, the development of hardrock minerals on the public lands has been governed by the Mining Law of 1872. This law once served an important purpose: encouraging settlement of the West and rapid development of mineral wealth there. But it is now outdated and inadequate. It fails to set forth clear authority for establishing environmental standards, and in some cases has allowed mining operations to degrade the water, soil and air. It ignores the need for balanced management of resources and it has permitted the public's mineral resources to be developed without any royalty return to the federal treasury.

Therefore I am today instructing the Secretary of the Interior to prepare, for submission to the Congress, legislation to replace the Mining Law of 1872 with one more suited to contemporary needs. Among its provisions should be these: (1) a leasing system for publicly owned hardrock minerals; (2) explicit federal discretionary authority over mineral exploration and development on the public lands; (3) strict standards for environmental protection and for reclamation of mined areas; (4) a requirement for approval of operation and reclamation plans before mining can begin; (5) royalties for use of public lands and mineral resources; and (6) the integration of mining into land use plans being developed for the public lands.

Forest Management

Since the passage in recent years of landmark legislation—the Forest and Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act, and the National Forest Management Act—the greatest challenge remaining to American forestry is to improve the condition and production of small private forest holdings. Various federal programs have, in the past, encouraged better management of these 296 million acres, which account for three-fifths of America's total productive forests. Now it is time to consider whether they are accomplishing their purpose.

Consequently, I am asking the Secretary of Agriculture to undertake a comprehensive study of the Cooperative Forestry Program. This study should consider the need for measures to:

- Assure that forestry programs support national environmental goals;
- Assure that assistance to non-federal forest owners will emphasize interdisciplinary planning and multiple use management;
- Improve the capability of private forest lands to meet the nation's need for wood;
- Prevent and control pollution, fires, and insects and diseases that damage forests, using environmentally sound methods, such as biological pest controls;
- Improve and maintain fish and wildlife habitats, particularly those that are critical for threatened and endangered species;
- Strengthen planning and management capabilities of state and local forestry agencies.

The study should also examine the desirability of providing financial assistance to state forestry agencies on the basis of state forestry plans rather than through the present fragmented approach.

Off-Road Vehicles

While off-road vehicles provide enjoyment and recreation for many, their indiscriminate use poses a threat to our public lands. Uncontrolled, they have ruined fragile soils, harassed wildlife, and damaged unique archaeological sites.

In 1972, federal agencies began to control the use of such vehicles on the public lands under Executive Order 11644. While these regulations have achieved some measure of protection for the soil, vegetation, and other values of the public lands, environmental damage has continued in certain areas. Accordingly, I am today amending this Executive Order to exclude off-road vehicles from certain portions of the public lands where their use has caused (or seems likely to cause) considerable environmental damage.

V. The National Heritage

In its land and its history, a nation finds the things which give it continuity. By preserving places that have special natural, historical, cultural, and scientific value, we can ensure that our children and grandchildren have a chance to know something of the America that we—and our ancestors—simply took for granted.

More than 300 such places have already been set aside in our National Park System. I have already demonstrated my support for the National Park Service by submitting to the Congress an accelerated, five-year, \$759-million program to develop new and existing parklands, and to increase the park staff so that these irreplaceable resources can be better protected and seen by more visitors.

This step, though clearly needed, must be supported by a thorough re-examination of existing federal programs dealing with our natural and historic heritage. These have proliferated in a way that serves neither efficiency nor effectiveness, and they have sometimes impeded the preservationist efforts of states and private citizens. I believe we should establish a comprehensive federal program, to be known as the National Heritage Trust, to identify, acquire, and protect these resources; to provide for rapid acquisition of the most significant and endangered areas and examples of natural ecosystems; to protect areas already within federal jurisdiction; and to coordinate federal programs within states and private citizens more effectively. I have directed the Secretary of the Interior to develop a National Heritage Trust proposal within 120 days.

Alaska

While my National Heritage Trust proposal will focus on small but important areas, the Congress now has an opportunity of historic dimensions to conserve large unspoiled sections of the American wilderness in Alaska. Under the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Act, the Congress is to consider designation of major additions to the National Park, Forest, Wildlife Refuge, and Wild and Scenic River Systems. We can double the size of the Wildlife Refuge and the Park Systems, as well as add to the Forest and Wild and Scenic River Systems, at no acquisition cost. No conservation action the 95th Congress could take would have more lasting value than this. But if Congress fails to act by December 1978, the opportunity will be automatically lost. In the near future, my Administration will submit detailed recommendations for these Alaskan lands.

Wilderness

When the Congress passed the Wilderness Act in 1964, it established a landmark of American conservation policy. The National Wilderness Preservation System created by this Act must be expanded promptly, before the most deserving areas of federal lands are opened to other uses and lost to wilderness forever. I endorse, and in some cases am proposing to expand, all of the more than 24 million acres of wilderness proposals submitted to the Congress by previous Administrations.

Among the proposed areas I will recommend to enlarge are the following:

- Idaho and Salmon River Breaks Wilderness, Idaho;
- Guadalupe Escarpment Wilderness, New Mexico and Texas;
- Beartooth-Absaroka Wilderness, Montana and Wyoming;
- Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona;
- Kenai Moose Range, Alaska.

I am submitting new wilderness proposals for:

- Arches National Park, Utah;
- Canyon Lands National Park, Utah;
- Capitol Reef National Park, Utah;
- Buffalo National River, Arkansas.

I will soon submit a proposal to designate as wilderness portions of Gulf Island National Seashore in Mississippi and Florida, and I will give early attention to other wilderness proposals, including portions of the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, Oregon, and Aravaipa Canyon, Arizona, which would be the first wilderness area on Bureau of Land Management lands. In addition, I support the objectives of the Endangered Wilderness legislation now pending before Congress. Members of my Administration have recently testified in favor of immediate wilderness designation or protective study designation for all areas in this bill.

I recognize the special need to preserve wilderness east of the Rockies and in Alaska, and I am directing that federal agencies expedite the preparation of wilderness proposals for these areas.

Finally, I have directed the Secretary of the Interior to initiate a vigorous wilderness program for the Bureau of Land Management under the new Federal Land Management and Policy Act of 1976.

Wild and Scenic Rivers

To date only 19 free-flowing rivers, totalling 1,655 miles, have been designated as part of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Another 31 rivers have been identified as worthy of study for designation in the future.

We must identify as quickly as possible the best remaining candidates for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System before they are dammed, channelized, or damaged by unwise development along their banks. As a first step, therefore, I am proposing legislation to add segments of eight rivers, totalling 1,303 miles, to the system:

- Bruneau River, Idaho;
- Pere Marquette River, Michigan;
- Dolores River, Colorado;
- Rio Grande River, Texas;
- Salmon River, Idaho;
- Skagit River, Washington;
- Upper Delaware River, Pennsylvania and New York;
- Upper Mississippi River, Minnesota.

I further propose to designate twenty river segments for study as potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System:

- Gila River, New Mexico;
- Green River, Utah;
- Illinois River, Arkansas;
- North Fork of the Kern River, California;
- Shenandoah River, Virginia and West Virginia;
- Sweetwater River, Wyoming;
- Cacapon River, West Virginia;
- Columbia River, Washington;
- Guadalupe River, Texas;
- John Day River, Oregon;
- Loxahatchee River, Florida;
- Niobrara River, Nebraska;
- Tangipahoa River, Louisiana and Mississippi;
- Yellowstone River, Wyoming and Montana;
- Ogeechee River, Georgia;
- Salt River, Arizona;
- Wenatchee River, Washington;
- Gulkana River, Alaska;
- Delta River, Alaska;
- Madison River, Montana.

I am also transmitting to the Congress reports on the Gasconade River in Missouri and the Penobscot River in Maine. After thorough study, both of these rivers have been found to qualify for inclusion in the National

System with the recommendation that they be administered by the states. I am pleased at the number of states taking positive action to protect their natural resources and assure them that any proposals to add State-administered rivers to the National System will be sympathetically considered by the Secretary of the Interior.

I am also submitting legislation to the Congress to withdraw authority for future construction of the Cross-Florida Barge Canal, to extend the boundaries of the Ocala National Forest to protect the Oklawaha River, and to authorize study of the Oklawaha River for possible designation as a Wild and Scenic River. Enactment of this legislation will put an end to the long controversy over this ill-advised project. I am also directing the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of the Army, and other appropriate federal agencies, in cooperation with the State of Florida, to recommend ways to dispose of canal lands and structures, as well as ways to restore the Oklawaha River portion of the project area.

National Trails

In 1968 Congress passed the National Trails System Act, the purpose of which was to designate and preserve a national system of recreational and scenic trails. Nine years later only two have been designated: the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Coast Trail. Other unprotected trails on public lands have in the meantime become unusable. In some areas almost half the once-available trail mileage has been lost.

To restore and broaden the National Trails System, I am submitting legislation to designate three new Scenic Trails:

- a Continental Divide Scenic Trail of 3,100 miles along the Rocky Mountains crest from Canada to Mexico;
- a North Country Scenic Trail of 3,200 miles from eastern New York to North Dakota; and
- a Potomac Heritage Scenic Trail of 847 miles along the Potomac River from Chesapeake Bay to West Virginia and Pennsylvania.

In the near future I will also submit legislation to amend the National Trails System Act by adding a new category—Historic Trails—and I will give early attention to submitting trails in this new category.

Wildlife

When explorers and settlers from Europe first came to America, they were astonished at the richness and variety of wildlife in our lands and waters. Faced with such abundance, for years most Americans have valued only game species of wildlife. Our allocation of federal funds for wildlife research and management still reflects this outdated view. Ninety-seven out of every hundred federal wildlife dollars are devoted to the less than one per cent of vertebrate species that are hunted or fished for commerce or sport. To the rest, little attention has been given, even though they are part of the biological system that sustains us. To correct this imbalance, I am directing the Secretary of the Interior (1) to encourage states to apply existing federal-aid funds to the management of all species of wildlife, and (2) to propose other measures to improve the conservation of nongame wildlife.

Our Nation's public lands and waters support a rich wildlife resource which we hold in trust for all Americans, now and in the future. My Administration will assure that this public trust—for all wildlife—is adequately and effectively executed.

The public's interest in wildlife specifically includes predators, which have in the past sometimes been regarded as competitors for livestock or game, leading to their destruction (and in the case of some large predator species, to their extermination). Because we now realize the importance of the role that predators play in various ecosystems, our goal should be not to destroy them but to reduce the occasion for their conflict with livestock. My Administration will continue to support the existing Executive Order which prohibits the routine use of poisons for killing predators on the public lands. If control is necessary, it should focus on the individual predators causing the problem—not the species as a whole.

Many land and water development projects cause extensive damage to fish and wildlife habitat. My Administration will ensure timely implementation of the mitigation features required by the Fish and Wildlife

Coordination Act to make up for such losses. Furthermore, to hasten the protection of threatened and endangered species, I am directing the Secretaries of Commerce and Interior to coordinate a government-wide effort, as required by the Endangered Species Act of 1973, to identify all habitat under Federal jurisdiction or control that is critical to the survival and recovery of these species. The purpose of this program is to avoid the possibility that such habitats will be identified too late to affect federal project planning. Major projects now underway that are found to pose a serious threat to endangered species should be reassessed on a case-by-case basis.

In the past 150 years, hundreds of foreign wildlife species, both plant and animal, have been introduced into the natural ecosystems of the United States. Many of these have been highly detrimental to public health, agriculture, and native wildlife.

Consequently, I am today issuing an Executive Order restricting the introduction of exotic animals and plants into the United States and prohibiting their establishment on lands and waters managed by the federal government. In addition, I am directing the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to develop further legislation to deal with the importation of exotic species.

The many laws which have recently been enacted to conserve our Nation's wildlife pose the risk of creating a confusing system of overlapping and conflicting requirements. Therefore, I am directing the Council on Environmental Quality to consult with the states and executive agencies and report to me in six months on the steps that should be taken to simplify, coordinate, and codify the body of law affecting wildlife conservation.

Finally, I have asked the Congress to increase the 1978 Fish and Wildlife Service Budget by \$23-million for environmental research, migratory bird protection, and aid to the states for endangered species. Because the maintenance and staffing of our national system of wildlife refuges has been sadly neglected for the past decade, I have also proposed a budget increase of \$295-million for rehabilitation, habitat improvement, and development of this system during the next five years.

Redwood National Park

Congress created Redwood National Park in 1968 to protect a magnificent stand of the world's tallest trees. Subsequently, however, logging and roadbuilding on adjacent private land have created severe erosion problems in the Redwood Creek Watershed. My Administration has proposed to the Congress that 48,000 carefully chosen acres be added to the Park, allowing us to protect existing parklands and to add to the Park additional stands of redwoods. This proposal would also provide for rehabilitation of the Redwood Creek Watershed.

Recognizing that further expansion of the Park might adversely affect the economies of nearby communities, I have directed the Secretaries of Commerce and Labor to develop a joint program to cushion the effects of temporary unemployment in the Redwood National Park area.

VI. The Global Environment

Environmental problems do not stop at national boundaries. In the past decade we and other nations have come to recognize the urgency of international efforts to protect our common environment.

As part of this process, I am directing the Council on Environmental Quality and the Department of State, working in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Science Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and other appropriate agencies, to make a one-year study of the probable changes in the world's population, natural resources, and environment through the end of the century. This study will serve as the foundation of our longer-term planning. I am also asking the Council on Environmental Quality, with the cooperation of the Department of State, to ensure that we achieve the best possible coordination of the international environmental programs within the Executive Branch.

World Population

Rapid population growth is a major environmental problem of world dimensions. World population increased from three to four billion in the last 15 years, substantially cancelling out expansion in world food production and economic growth of the same period.

Without controlling the growth of population, the prospects for enough food, shelter, and other basic needs for all the world's people are dim. Where existence is already poor and precarious, efforts to obtain the necessities of life often degrade the environment for generations to come.

It is, of course, up to each nation to determine its own policies, but we are prepared to respond promptly and fully to all requests for assistance in population and health care programs. At my direction, the Department of State and the Agency for International Development stand ready to cooperate through international organizations, through private voluntary organizations, or through direct contacts with other governments.

Environmental Considerations in Economic Development Assistance

Whether to try to prevent or undo environmental damage is a decision each country must make for itself. But I am convinced that in the long run, development programs that are environmentally sound will yield the most economic benefits. To encourage the adoption of such programs, I have taken these steps:

- (1) I have instructed the Secretary of State, the Administrator of AID, and other concerned federal agencies to ensure full consideration of the environmental soundness of development projects under review for possible assistance.
- (2) I have asked the Administrator of AID to make available to developing countries assistance in environment and natural resources management. Such assistance could help developing countries design environmentally sound projects, regardless of the source of funding for a particular project.

International Environmental Agreements

A number of federal agencies, under the guidance of the Council on Environmental Quality, are engaged in international conservation activity. I am directing my Administration to expand this effort, giving particular attention to the following areas:

- (1) **The Endangered Species Convention** is now in effect. The next step is to implement the treaty effectively. The United States has begun efforts to prohibit trade in endangered species of plants and animals, and will encourage similar steps by other nations.
- (2) Pursuant to the **Antarctic Treaty**, I am today submitting legislation to Congress to provide for special protection of the flora and fauna of Antarctica. Because this remote, unpopulated region greatly influences the stability of the entire earth's oceans and atmosphere, its unique environment must be preserved.
- (3) **The Convention for Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere** was signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1940, but has yet to be carried out fully and systematically. I propose to the countries of the Americas that we now implement this Convention through the offices of the Organization of American States. I urge the development of a Pan-American Migratory Species Treaty, and the convening of an Inter-American Conference on the Management of Western Hemisphere Renewable Natural Resources. The United States has already offered to host the Conference.
- (4) I soon will send to the Senate for ratification the Treaty for the **Conservation of Migratory Birds and Their Environment**, which we signed with the Soviet Union last November. This treaty—and the legislation I will submit to implement it—will establish new authority to conserve the habitat necessary to the survival of these birds.

Saving the Whales

Sharing the worldwide public concern about the condition of marine mammals, especially whales, I have directed the Secretary of Commerce, with the foreign policy guidance of the Secretary of State to:

- Prohibit commercial whaling within our 200-mile fishery zone;
- Pursue negotiations within the International Whaling Commission for a stronger international conservation regime for whales and other cetaceans, affording protection for them throughout their range;
- Maintain firm U.S. support for a ten-year worldwide moratorium on the commercial killing of whales; and
- Report to me within 60 days any actions by other countries that have diminished the effectiveness of the International Whaling Commission's conservation program.

VII. Improving Government

The foregoing proposals, along with others which will follow in the coming years, constitute the most far-reaching environmental program ever put forward by any administration. My support for them is resolute, and it is personal. But belief in these goals does not necessarily mean uncritical belief in the federal government's present methods for achieving them. In the past, our environmental policies have not always used the most practical tools, nor the least costly; they have sometimes imposed burdensome bureaucratic regulations where economic incentives could have done the job as well; and they have occasionally ignored the need for different solutions in different areas of our diverse country. There is room for improvement.

1. Implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act

This Act is best known for requiring federal agencies to prepare environmental impact statements before taking actions having significant environmental effects. In the seven years since its passage, it has had a dramatic—and beneficial—influence on the way new projects are planned. But to be more useful to decision-makers and the public, environmental impact statements must be concise, readable, and based upon competent professional analysis. They must reflect a concern with quality, not quantity. We do not want impact statements that are measured by the inch or weighed by the pound.

Accordingly, I am today issuing an Executive Order directing the Council on Environmental Quality to issue regulations requiring all federal agencies to meet these criteria and the provisions of Section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act in the impact statements they prepare and to establish a procedure for referring to the Council differences among agencies concerning implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act.

2. Coordination within the Federal Government

Various programs within the Environmental Protection Agency provide funds to state and local government for planning, training, monitoring, enforcement, and research in pollution control. They are presently authorized under different pieces of legislation, funded by different offices within the agency, and entail different procedures for allocation of their funds. In the near future I will submit legislation to the Congress designed to bring these programs together into one comprehensive environmental grant program.

The problem of uncoordinated policy is, unfortunately, not confined to any single federal agency. Today, before any federal agency can construct a new project, or grant funds to local or state governments, or issue a permit to a private party, it must comply with more than a score of different environmental review requirements. I have directed the Council on Environmental Quality to examine the present federal environmental review requirements and to recommend specific measures, including legislation, to clarify and integrate them in a way compatible with my broader proposals for governmental reorganization.

I am also directing the Council on Environmental Quality to establish an interagency task force to review present environmental monitoring and data programs, and to recommend improvements that would make these programs more effective.

3. Relations with Local Governments, Industry and the Public

My Administration will, in a variety of ways, move to simplify the delivery of federal programs and encourage a greater degree of local control. There are almost five hundred separate federal programs, most of which have separate planning requirements, providing tens of billions of dollars in assistance to state and local government. My Administration will support measures to bring these programs under a consistent, comprehensive policy, and to give state and local areas more influence over federal actions which affect them.

My Administration will also promote better cooperation between government and industry to solve some of our serious remaining pollution problems. I have directed the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to meet with representatives of major industrial groups and develop a joint government-industry research program for unsolved pollution problems.

Finally, my Administration will support efforts to lower the barriers, financial and otherwise, against active public involvement in decisions that affect the quality of the environment. The surest way to sustain our environmental laws is to encourage citizens to hold the government accountable for enforcing and obeying them.

JIMMY CARTER

The White House, May 23 1977