

THE POWER LIST

Anti-Enviros Have the Clout. And They're Winning.

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DEAD IN THE WATER?

It's not unusual for hostile outsiders to bash the environmental movement, but lately mainstream enviros have faced a far more painful sort of attack: the kind that comes from within. ¶ Leading the charge are Michael Shellenberger, 33, and Ted Nordhaus, 39, two political strategists who caused a firestorm last October when they released a 36-page manifesto called "The Death of Environmentalism." Their thesis: that the movement, "with all of its unexamined assumptions, outdated concepts and exhausted strategies," is facing a crisis of irrelevance. In their view, environmentalists haven't seriously updated their thinking in 30 years and are failing to effectively address the most pressing challenge of the day, global warming. ¶ Considered scandalous by many old-guard greens, their work drew fire from Sierra Club executive director Carl Pope, who denounced it as "unfair, unclear, and divisive." But Shellenberger and Nordhaus aren't backing down. "Let's face it: Right now, the GOP is trouncing the environmental movement," says Nordhaus, an Oakland, California-based pollster. "It hasn't helped that our leaders are mostly literal-minded wonks." ¶ Shellenberger, the executive director of an El Cerrito, California-based political organization called the Breakthrough Institute, says his group hopes to reenergize the environmental movement—partly by leaving the old mistakes of environmentalism behind, and partly by learning from strategies used by conservatives. He and Nordhaus have signed a deal with Houghton Mifflin to write a book detailing their political values and vision. ¶ Also sounding the alarm: Adam Werbach, 32, the wunderkind who at 23 became president of the Sierra Club and who pronounced environmentalism DOA at a December 2004 speech in San Francisco. Over the past few years, Werbach says, he's felt like "a hospice worker trying to make the last days of environmentalism as painless as possible." Today he runs Act Now Productions, a company that creates media campaigns for progressive clients. Werbach hopes to inspire a movement that focuses on progress, not just problems. "Americans are aspirational: They dream of making things better," he says. Environmentalism will be meaningful again, he argues, when it does more than just paint nightmares.

—S. S. AND A. G. L.

John D. Graham

ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS

GRAHAM, 48, runs a powerful department within the Office of Management and Budget that acts as a gatekeeper for the Bush administration. Its goal: to ensure that regulations and scientific analyses proposed by federal agencies—from the EPA to the Department of Transportation—are in tune with the president's agenda. A strict believer in weighing the costs of regulations against their benefits to society, Graham can demand changes to any proposed rule. If the changes aren't made, chances are, it won't go into effect.

Graham has used his clout to weaken such rules as a 2002 EPA proposal that would have toughened emission standards for snowmobiles and other off-road vehicles. And after meeting with steel-industry representatives in 2001, his office convinced the EPA to remove manganese—a steel-production ingredient that's toxic at high levels—from its list of hazardous substances. Every fall, Graham also publishes what critics call "the hit list": a report focusing on regulations—hundreds of which concern the environment—that industries and other parties want to see reformed or eliminated.

Graham's prowess in these matters is long-standing. From 1989 to 2001, the Pittsburgh native was the founding director of the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis, an academic research center that has received support from some of the nation's largest corporations, including Dow Chemical and Monsanto.

SOUND BITE: "Graham's work has . . . demonstrated a remarkable congruency with the interests of regulated industries," read a statement by 53 academics who opposed Graham's 2001 nomination to head the OIRA. His research, the signers added, shows a "willingness to override health, safety, environmental, civil rights, and other social goals in applying crude cost-benefit tools far past the point at which they can be justified."

NEXT UP: Graham plans to impose a uniform "peer review" analysis on all major federal scientific studies. Critics claim this could gum up the system and increase the sway of industry-funded scientists over regulations.

—JASON STEVENSON

Frank Luntz

POLLSTER

A LONGTIME public-opinion specialist who helped frame the GOP's "Contract with America" in 1994, Luntz doesn't make policy, but he's a master at packaging it. The 43-year-old founder of the Virginia-based Luntz Research Companies was the author of "Straight Talk," a confidential memo—leaked to the media in 2003—that coached Bush administration officials and GOP supporters on marketing a wide range of policies. "The environment is probably the single issue on which Republicans in general—and President Bush in particular—are most vulnerable," Luntz warned. "Any discussion . . . has to be grounded in an effort to reassure a skeptical public that you care about the environment for its own sake—that your intentions are strictly honorable."

To that end, Luntz suggested new White House phrasing on subjects like global warming (though "the scientific debate is closing against us," he wrote, minds could be eased by making "the lack of scientific certainty a primary issue"). He also laid out specific language designed to soothe voters. Some of it, such as the phrase "Safer, cleaner, and healthier," soon showed up verbatim in speeches by GOP policymakers.

SOUND BITE: "Climate change is less frightening than 'global warming,'" Luntz wrote in "Straight Talk." "Global warming has catastrophic connotations attached to it, climate change suggests a more controllable and less emotional challenge."

NEXT UP: In February, Luntz released a 160-page strategy memo, titled "The New American Lexicon," to help the GOP open up ANWR for oil drilling, emerge victorious in the 2006 midterm elections, and pursue

other key goals. "Never say: 'drilling for oil,'" the document advises. "Instead say: 'exploring for energy.' . . . When you talk about energy," it adds, "use words like 'responsible' and 'balanced,' and always address your concern for the environment."

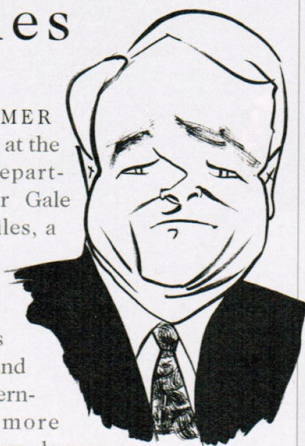
—J.S.

J. Steven Griles

LOBBYIST

THE FORMER number two at the Interior Department under Gale Norton, Griles, a 57-year-old from Halifax County, Virginia, has moved in and out of government for more than 20 years, becoming a prime example of Washington's revolving-door syndrome. On February 1, just days after leaving his post as deputy secretary of Interior, Griles took a job as a principal at Lundquist, Nethercutt and Griles, a powerful Washington, D.C.-based lobbying firm that represents major energy corporations such as BP and Exelon.

Griles first came to the department in 1981 under Interior Secretary James Watt, during the Reagan administration, serving as deputy director for the Office of Surface Mining. In the 1990s,



Steven Griles streamlined EPA regulations to speed approval for mountaintop-removal coal mining—a controversial practice that can leave behind tons of toxic rubble and sludge.

he worked for the D.C.-based energy lobbying firm National Environmental Strategies. In 2001, as deputy secretary, Griles became instrumental in streamlining regulations to speed the approval process for mountaintop-removal coal mining. The practice, which environmentalists and Appalachia residents refer to as "an environmental apocalypse," involves blasting away mountaintops, leaving behind tons of potentially toxic rubble and sludge. Griles also supported a new rule allowing mining companies to dump the debris in nearby waterways; some 1,200 miles of Appalachian streambeds have already been buried by the procedure.

SOUND BITE: "Griles allowed the coal industry to rape the people and the environment of Appalachia," says Judy Bonds, director of the Whitesville, West Virginia-based environmental group

Coal River Mountain Watch. "He either thinks we're second-class citizens or he doesn't even know we exist."

NEXT UP: Expect this regulator-turned-industry-power-broker to continue lobbying for the energy business. —J.S.

Clark Collins

FOUNDER, BLUE RIBBON COALITION

COLLINS, 63, is the force behind an increasingly savvy no-new-wilderness movement fueled by grassroots enthusiasm for off-road vehicles (ORVs). His Pocatello, Idaho-based group represents an assertive constituency composed mostly of dirt bikers, ATVers, and snowmobilers who use lawsuits and lobbying to fight for the same access to wilderness study areas and other protected public lands that hikers and backpackers have.

Though the BRC claims only 11,100 members and an annual budget of roughly \$1 million, it's become a loud and credible voice. Collins has achieved this, in part, by borrowing a litigation-heavy strategy from the environmental groups he opposes. Boise-based attorney Paul Turcke has represented the BRC in some three dozen lawsuits, many of which challenge ORV restrictions in wilderness study areas across the West.

