

14. Charles O. Jones, "Congress and the Making of Energy Policy," in *New Dimensions to Energy Policy*, ed. Robert Lawrence (Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1979), 173; Bob Rankin, "Senate Continues Dismantling Energy Plan," *Congressional Quarterly*, October 8, 1977, 174.

15. For information about the meeting at Camp David, see "Agenda for Monday's Camp David Meetings," March 19, 1979, Box 123, Staff Secretary Files, JCL; "DOE Energy Briefing Book, Camp David Meeting," March 19, 1979, Box 123, Staff Secretary File, JCL; Carter aide quoted in "Next: Challenges at Home," *Time*, April 2, 1979, 14.

16. Eizenstat to Carter, March 26, 29, 1979, Box 124, Staff Secretary File, JCL; James T. McIntyre to Carter, March 26, 1979, Box 124, Staff Secretary File, JCL; Mondale to Carter, March 26, 1979, Box 124, Staff Secretary File, JCL.

17. *Public Papers of Jimmy Carter, 1979*; "The Energy Tangle," *Newsweek*, April 16, 1979, 21.

18. Carter had not attempted decontrol in the NEP for two reasons. First, the 1975 Energy Policy and Conservation Act gave the president discretionary power on oil control only after June 1, 1979. (The act also stipulated that price control authority would expire on September 30, 1981.) Second, even had he had the power to do so, Carter most likely would not have exercised this option. The president viewed the oil industry as a monopoly that required government regulation. Because of the fight waged over natural gas decontrol and the crude oil equalization tax in 1977 and 1978, however, Carter believed that another attempt to find an alternate means of raising prices would not receive congressional approval in the near future. His commitment to U.S. allies and his own belief about the need to raise prices to encourage conservation required swift action, so he reluctantly decided to authorize phased-in decontrol of prices. See Carter's Handwritten Notes for News Conference, October 13, 1977, Box 54, Staff Secretary File, JCL.

19. J. P. Smith and Mary Russell, "Gas Prices Seen Rising," *Washington Post*, April 7, 1979, 1; Merrill Sheiks, "What Decontrol Will Mean," *Newsweek*, April 16, 1979, 24-26; "Carter's Energy Plan," *U.S. News and World Report*, April 16, 1979, 19-20.

20. "Carter's Energy Plan," 19-20.

21. Ann Pelham, "Carter Pledges Oil Decontrol, Wants Windfall Profits Tax," *Congressional Quarterly*, April 7, 1979, 619-20; "Carter's Energy Plan," 19-20.

22. Economic data cited in Eizenstat to Carter, June 28, 1979, Staff Secretary File, JCL; Daniel Yergin, *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money and Power* (New York: Touchstone, 1992), 694.

23. *Public Papers of Jimmy Carter, 1979*, 1239-41.

24. Thomas C. Hayes, "Business Praises Carter Concept," *New York Times*, July 17, 1979, A1; Ann Pelham, "Congress Ahead of the Game on Energy," *Congressional Quarterly*, July 21, 1979, 1436; "Meany Backs Energy Program," *New York Times*, July 2, 1979, A12; Adain Clymer, "Speech Lifts Carter to 37%; Public Agrees on Crisis of Confidence," *New York Times*, July 18, 1979, A1.

25. For a description of the politics of disjunction, see Stephen Skowronek, *The Politics Presidents Make: Leadership from John Adams to George Bush* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993), 39-41. For Skowronek's overview of the Carter presidency, see pp. 361-406.

9

Environmental Policy during
the Carter Presidency

Jeffrey K. Stine

Many people concerned about environmental quality in the United States rank Jimmy Carter with Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt as the nation's most conservation-minded presidents. In many ways, Carter benefited from a political climate that made such a stand more popular. As the environmental movement gained broader appeal during the 1960s and 1970s, its values began to infuse politics at all levels, including presidential. Lyndon B. Johnson, for example, had been an active conservation advocate early in his administration, before the Vietnam War redirected his priorities; and Richard M. Nixon, while tepid in his personal sympathy toward ecological objectives, saw political advantages in tapping the growing popularity of environmentalism, and he followed Congress's lead by signing into law some of the nation's most significant environmental legislation. Carter, however, recognized the real political potential of the environmental movement and became the first U.S. presidential candidate to campaign successfully on environmental issues, and his administration openly pursued a broad environmental policy agenda.¹

As a presidential candidate, Carter generated unprecedented enthusiasm among environmentalists, and he carried this hopefulness into the White House, where he made conservation a priority item early in his administration, appointing seasoned specialists into second-tier administrative posts, attempting a major reform of water resources development policy, and outlining a bold and sweeping environmental agenda in his May 1977 message to Congress. Intense resistance, however, often greeted Carter's environmental policy package. Frustrated in his efforts to reorient federal water policy, forced into numerous compromises because of internal contradictions among his own domestic policies, especially his energy and economic policies, as well as his campaign for regulatory reform, and unable to solve the tenacious problems of runaway inflation and a stagnant economy, Carter inevitably fell well short of meeting the environmental community's unrealistically high expectations.

Despite these shortcomings, the Carter administration left a substantial record of action on environmental issues. Carter signed clean air and water acts and strip-mining legislation that had been rebuffed by previous administrations; he revitalized the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by sharpening its focus on the protection of human health; he used his presidential authority to issue executive orders to protect wetlands, floodplains, and desert environments; and he lobbied successfully for the passage of two monumental pieces of legislation—the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act that created “Superfund” and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act that set aside nearly 105 million acres of Alaskan wilderness under federal protection.

In their discussion of the spectrum of concerns confronted by the Carter administration, some authors in this volume argue that Carter reacted more in the tradition of liberal, Democratic New Dealers, while others contend that he represented the first wave of a conservative period in American politics. Environmental policy fails to fit neatly into either camp, however, for Carter pushed more forcefully in this area than any of his predecessors since World War II, while his successor, Ronald Reagan, tried—with only modest success—to unravel the environmental programs and regulations that Carter had put in place or strengthened. Since the 1970s, the environmental movement has helped to sustain federal regulatory apparatus in the face of persistent challenges, and that political strength explains in part the elevated status of environmental policy during the Carter presidency. The effort was aided by Carter’s own predisposition toward the goals of environmentalism, despite countervailing forces within American society and even within the Executive Office of the President itself.²

COURTING THE ENVIRONMENTAL VOTE

As a presidential hopeful seeking to establish winning political coalitions, Carter looked for campaign issues that had broad, cross-cutting appeal. Environmentalism emerged as just such an issue in the 1970s, and Carter and his campaign staff pursued these concerns vigorously. Indeed, even Carter’s campaign colors—green and white—suggested his environmental orientation.

Carter was no newcomer to the environmental movement in 1976, and his decision to target conservation-minded individuals and groups in his presidential campaign was spurred by two things: his recognition that environmental issues were drawing increasingly large and faithful voting blocks, especially in states such as California, Oregon, and Florida; and his personal experiences in Georgia, where the state’s environmental community rallied behind his actions as governor from 1971 to 1975. The early 1970s were formative years in the United States with regard to environmental legislation, and Carter established himself as one of the country’s leading governors in this movement, boosting the state’s expendi-

tures on natural resources, moving aggressively to enforce air, water, and surface mining regulations, advocating land-use planning, restoring the Chattahoochee River for recreation, and taking steps to protect the state’s coastal zone, floodplains, and cultural resources. Building on this reputation in his campaign autobiography, Carter claimed that, as governor, “with the exception of reorganization itself, I spent more time preserving our natural resources than on any other one issue.”³

Unlike some other areas of domestic policy, the political pragmatism of Carter’s environmental stance was matched by his deep personal concern for those issues. This was perhaps most widely apparent in his long-standing and passionate enthusiasm for outdoor activities. “On one-day or two-day weekend trips, Rosalynn and I visited the naturally beautiful areas of our state,” he recalled of his governorship. “We rode the wild rivers in rafts, canoes and kayaks. . . . We studied the wildlife programs on our isolated game preserves, and inspected the virgin cypress groves on Lewis Island in the mouth of the Altamaha River.”⁴

In Carter’s most acclaimed conservationist accomplishment as governor, he stopped the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ planned Spewrell Bluff dam on the Flint River, at a place where it snaked through the scenic hill country of Georgia’s fall line about fifty miles southeast of Atlanta. Carter initially endorsed the project, as had his predecessor and most other elected state officials. However, environmental and conservation groups, led by the Georgia Conservancy and the Flint River Preservation Society, spoke out strongly against the dam because it would have flooded a twenty-eight-mile stretch of the river that was popular with anglers, canoeists, and hikers. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service voiced reservations, and more than a thousand individual citizens sent letters opposing the dam to the governor’s office. Carter took these criticisms seriously and conducted a lengthy personal study of the proposed \$133-million project and its likely impact on the state. After traversing the Flint twice by canoe and twice by helicopter, consulting scores of interested parties, reading all the petitions, resolutions, and transcripts of oral testimony, and evaluating the corps’s engineering and economic reports, Carter issued a statement in October 1973 blocking construction of the dam.⁵

By vetoing a corps dam project that had already been authorized, studied, and scheduled for construction, Carter had taken a highly unusual step as a governor, one that drew national media coverage and gained him near-celebrity status among environmentalists critical of large-scale federal water projects. With the aid of environmental lobbyists, he subsequently defeated the efforts of the Georgia state legislature to override his opposition. Because Carter believed the problem transcended his state, he challenged the U.S. Congress to reassess similar projects around the country, asserting that “the construction of unwarranted dams and other projects at public expense should be prevented.”⁶

As a Washington, D.C., “outsider” and presidential candidate with modest nationwide name recognition, Carter knew he had to build on his strengths. Dis-

tinguishing himself as a conservationist-oriented reformer fitted squarely into this plan. Seeking to cultivate his relations with environmental organizations across the nation, Carter began in his home state, asking Georgia-based environmentalists just prior to announcing his candidacy in December 1974 if they would assist him in his bid for the White House. This request attracted several volunteers to the campaign, including two full-timers: Jane Hurt Yarn and Carlton F. Neville, who formed the group Conservationists for Carter (CFC). Yarn—who had wide experience serving with the Nature Conservancy, Georgia Conservancy, and U.S. Forest Service Advisory Council—chaired the CFC, working out of its Atlanta headquarters to develop a national Conservationists for Carter Committee, made up of leaders of major environmental organizations who were willing to lend their support to Carter. Neville served as the CFC's director, focusing on state-based and grassroots environmental organizations, and organizing CFC branch organizations in key primary and caucus states known to have active environmental movements.⁷

One segment of the environmental movement that Carter vigorously sought to attract were those favoring the protection and restoration of America's rivers, especially the scores of grassroots organizations throughout the country fighting the damming, channelization, or other structural alterations of their favorite rivers and streams. This branch of the environmental movement had gained considerable momentum during the 1970s, spurred in part by their numerous successes in stopping federal water projects, often in the federal courts using the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act.⁸ As early as July 1975, for example, Carter's campaign office issued a press release stating his position that "the Army Corps of Engineers ought to get out of the dam building business." Attempting to resonate with certain segments of the environmental movement and to reinforce his image as an anti-Washington, outsider candidate, Carter declared, "I personally believe that we have built enough dams in this country and will be extremely reluctant as president to build any more." Moreover, he emphasized his larger commitment to preserving the environment, asserting that "the federal government can and must play a significant role in the preservation of natural areas and resources."⁹

During the 1976 primary elections, Carter competed against two other Democratic candidates with strong environmental credentials—Representative Morris Udall of Arizona and Senator Henry Jackson of Washington. When Carter emerged as the most electable of the three candidates, most environmental organizations threw their support to the former Georgia governor. Carter was helped in this by the League of Conservation Voters, who gave Carter and vice presidential candidate Walter Mondale high ratings for their records on environmental issues, as well as their positions on current environmental problems. The league gave low ratings on both accounts to President Gerald Ford and his running mate, Senator Robert Dole. Carter's campaign staff, however, refused to take the support of environmentalists for granted. In the weeks leading up to the Democratic National

Convention in New York City, the CFC "contacted each of the Udall delegates and alternates in key states," as well as delegates for other environmentally oriented candidates, to convert them to their candidate by stressing Carter's environmental positions and record.¹⁰ These efforts paid off, and with Carter's victory in November, environmental activists became extremely hopeful that their concerns would be faithfully represented in the White House.¹¹

The Carter-Mondale transition team addressed environmental policy within several cluster groups, each of which fell under the larger policy analysis unit, headed by Stuart E. (Stu) Eizenstat. Carlton Neville, for example, directed the energy group. Katherine P. Schirmer—who had joined Carter's election campaign in July 1976 after accumulating five years of experience dealing with policies for pesticides, toxic substances, and water development as a special assistant at the EPA and a legislative assistant to Senator Philip A. Hart—led the natural resources cluster, which developed briefing materials for the soon-to-be-appointed agency heads and explored the array of environmental laws requiring reauthorization in 1977.¹² Rather than putting forward a single, high-priority program, Schirmer recommended that the incoming administration focus on six initiatives in the natural resources area: energy reorganization, water resources development reform, president's energy message, energy conservation, president's environmental message, and National Parks/Refuge/Civilian Conservation Corps programs.¹³

The transition team consulted frequently with environmental leaders, and the president-elect met personally with a select group of them in Plains, Georgia, in December.¹⁴ The feeling of inclusion among members of the environmental community was heightened still further during the early weeks of the administration, when Carter and his agency heads appointed a number of environmental professionals to subcabinet positions. The White House tapped public interest environmental organizations for several of these appointments, an action that had mixed results for the environmental community: on the one hand, it brought environmental leaders into government, where they could help shape the agenda; on the other, it robbed the organizations of many of their finest leaders.¹⁵

ARTICULATING AN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AGENDA

Carter's domestic policy advisers knew that the president-elect's "environmental leanings" had attracted significant political support and that much was now expected from the new administration. Toward that end, Schirmer urged Carter to deliver a high-profile environmental message soon after taking office to articulate the administration's environmental goals and assert his leadership. "There is a fear that while the new Administration will have better environmental policies than the previous Administration," she said, "a low priority would not provide the needed leadership to cope with the increasingly complex and controversial issues of energy development conflicts with environmental quality, harmful pub-

lic works water development projects, toxic substances and growing delays in meeting our air and water quality goals." Moreover, a firm statement from the commander in chief would help counteract the "inertia and low morale in the agencies charged with environmental responsibilities," which had developed during the Ford presidency.¹⁶

Although energy and water resources development policy captured center stage during the first months of the administration, Carter sent Congress a major environmental message in May 1977. His agenda was breathtakingly broad and ambitious, advocating legislation and policies that would address pollution and public health, energy and the environment, the urban environment, natural resources, the "national heritage" (national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, cultural sites, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers), wildlife, the global environment, and the streamlining of government implementation of environmental laws. Carter praised Congress for its previous work on environmental legislation. He then positioned his presidency by stating that "the primary need today is not for new comprehensive statutes but for sensitive administration and energetic enforcement of the ones we have."¹⁷ While granting a need for some new legislation, Carter would shift the action in the area of environmental protection to the executive branch, where he promised "firm and unsparing support."¹⁸

Speaking to fiscal conservatives within the House and Senate, Carter presented an economic framework for his environmental policy. "I believe environmental protection is consistent with a sound economy," he argued. "Previous pollution control laws have generated many more jobs than they have lost." Moreover, he concluded, "if we ignore the care of our environment, the day will eventually come when our economy suffers for that neglect."¹⁹ In articulating the specifics of his environmental agenda, Carter began with the protection of human health, which he described as "our most important resource."²⁰ Consequently, because he viewed the widespread presence of toxic chemicals as "one of the grimmest discoveries of the industrial era," he called for government actions that would prevent those substances from entering the environment in the first place.²¹ To accomplish this goal, he instructed the Council on Environmental Quality to generate a plan for eliminating duplication of efforts among federal agencies dealing with toxic wastes and for ensuring there were no gaps in the monitoring and collection of data on toxic chemicals. He also substantially increased the EPA's funding in his fiscal year 1978 budget for the implementation of the Toxic Substance Control Act.²² Carter closed his message to Congress by saying that "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."²³

Carter's determination to back this ambitious environmental agenda was made tangible by his support of a trio of environmental bills that had been vetoed during previous congressional sessions: the reauthorization of the clean air and clean

water acts, and the enactment of surface mining control legislation. Opposition to them by the Ford administration had proved extremely frustrating to environmental activists. Carter's aggressive support, and his subsequent signing of the acts later in 1977, gave credibility to his tough rhetoric.²⁴

REFORMING WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Within the broad constellation of environmental policy concerns, Carter began his presidency confidently by tackling what many considered to be one of the country's most ecologically damaging and economically wasteful federal programs, large-scale water resources development. These water projects, which were built, operated, and maintained by the Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Reclamation, and Tennessee Valley Authority, also happened to be among the most highly prized (and carefully protected) activities in the federal government, at least from the standpoint of those congressional members who used them to channel federal expenditures into their districts and states. Carter was not opposed to all water projects, just those whose environmental and economic costs far outweighed their benefits. His bold (some would say naive or reckless) effort to reform federal water resources development policy met stiff resistance from several key legislators, who resented both Carter's proposals and the unilateral manner in which he pursued them. The resulting confrontation quickly escalated and ended up costing Carter far more political capital and congressional goodwill than he and most of his senior staff had imagined. Upon reflection, Carter's director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Bert Lance, called the president's decision to challenge federal water projects "the worst political mistake he made, and its effects lasted the rest of his term and doomed any hopes we ever had of developing a good, effective working relationship with Congress."²⁵

Carter had repeatedly pledged to end pork-barrel water projects, and his transition team grappled with this campaign promise from the start. Katherine Schirmer was particularly concerned with how the president-elect approached the fiscal year 1978 budget, which he inherited from the Ford administration. As she told Eizenstat, by withholding funds from major water projects deemed to have "severe adverse environmental and social impacts," the new administration could save nearly \$500 million out of the \$2 billion allocated in fiscal year 1978 for some 320 water projects. Such an action would demonstrate the president's commitment to both sound fiscal policy and environmental quality. Schirmer stressed the need to act early to revise Ford's budget, otherwise "many major projects will progress close to or past the point where re-evaluation is impractical." "Congress may be more receptive to a reform package," she argued, "if it is clearly spelled out at the beginning of the Administration rather than after one or more years of continued funding of these projects." Acknowl-

edging that there were several congressional members, including “some powerful committee chairmen,” who were staunch defenders of public works, she agreed that “halting or slowing down controversial projects will enact a price and something must be given back in return.”²⁶

Following the lead of the transition team, the president’s Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) identified some twenty-two water projects unworthy of continued funding.²⁷ Carter’s secretary of the interior, Cecil D. Andrus, agreed that the projects warranted careful review. “Many of these projects are of dubious merit and should be stopped or curtailed at this point—if political problems can be overcome,” he told the president in February 1977. As a former governor of Idaho and as the current cabinet secretary responsible for the Bureau of Reclamation, Andrus was sensitive to the political pitfalls inherent in water policy reform. “An Administration strategy should not be confined to individual projects or groups of projects,” he advised, “but to develop a more rational water development system involving improved planning, current discount rates, and more equitable cost-sharing responsibilities.” He cautioned, however, that the congressional delegations from the seventeen western states covered by the bureau placed extreme importance on water projects. “If we attempt to alter any of these projects for whatever reason, our action will act as a catalyst to create political coalitions in the Congress,” Andrus said. “I am not arguing against eliminating some of these projects—some definitely merit action—but, I want you to know that there will be political retaliation from the Congress when we do.”²⁸

Worried that Andrus had thrown cold water on the reform package the Domestic Policy Staff (DPS) had so carefully crafted, Eizenstat urged Carter to press ahead with the water projects review, primarily as a quick and effective means to institute “comprehensive water resources reforms.” He urged the president to delete funds for all the projects then listed, rather than to pick and choose among them, which would leave the administration vulnerable to charges of political favoritism. He recommended that Carter “personally advise Congressional leaders prior to sending up the Budget” and, in line with Andrus’s comments, “back up any decision to delete funds with a commitment to veto an appropriations bill which deviates significantly from your Budget.”²⁹

Despite the warnings of a congressional backlash, Carter remained confident in the correctness of his position. He believed he was elected to do what was right, not what was politically expedient, and this was a campaign promise he intended to keep. Nevertheless, on the practical side, he had every reason to believe that environmental organizations and fiscal conservatives would prove to be tireless and effective lobbyists on his behalf, as these two forces had found significant common ground in their opposition to controversial water projects. Moreover, seventy-four congressional members had already gone on record as supporting the president’s “efforts to reform the water resources programs of the Army Corps and the Bureau of Reclamation.”³⁰

Carter announced his water resource projects review—which the media immediately dubbed the president’s “hit list”—in late February. Acknowledging the earlier contributions of water projects to the U.S. economy, Carter cautioned that “many of the 320 current projects approved in the past under different economic circumstances and at times of lower interest rates are of doubtful necessity now, in light of new economic conditions and environmental policies.” He recommended that funding for nineteen projects be rescinded for fiscal year 1978. He instructed the secretaries of the interior and the army to review each of these projects, in cooperation with the OMB and the CEQ, and to give him their findings by April 15. In addition to the detailed reevaluation of the nineteen targeted projects, Carter also directed the agencies to review “all other water resource projects,” maintaining that final approval to proceed should occur only if the projects proved sound from an economic, environmental, and safety standpoint.³¹

As the DPS had hoped, Carter’s hit list sent a message to the country that the president was serious about reforming the nation’s federal water policy, that he was not going to waste any time getting started, and that he had the courage and commitment to challenge the most powerful and vested interests. Among environmentalists, expectations of the new president were practically soaring. And, as Carter had predicted, many environmental organizations pooled their resources to lobby Congress on behalf of the White House.³² To reinforce his reform effort, Carter issued two executive orders in May 1977: one on floodplain management (No. 11988) and the other on protection of wetlands (No. 11990). With regard to floodplains, Carter’s policy directed federal agencies to avoid subsidizing floodplain development; to site their own projects outside floodplains, unless there was no practicable alternative; and, whenever they must build in floodplains, to design their projects to minimize harm to those areas. Carter’s executive order on wetlands was similar: federal agencies should not encourage or assist others to develop or harm wetlands, should themselves avoid actions that endanger wetlands unless absolutely necessary, and, if they must build in wetlands, should do so in a manner that minimizes harmful impacts.³³

Just as Cecil Andrus and others had warned, however, Congress fought back furiously. Congressional leaders, determined to raise the stakes over the fate of water projects, threatened the administration’s other, higher-priority domestic initiatives. When Congress presented the president with an appropriations bill stipulating that all previously funded dams continue to be built, his options boiled down to whether or not to veto the bill, which contained key elements of the White House’s economic stimulus package. Knowing that Congress had the votes to override his veto, Carter reluctantly signed the water bill in August 1977. His capitulation caused many in the environmental community to feel betrayed. Environmentalists, elated by Carter’s initial challenge to the water projects, were now disquieted by the realization that the administration’s commitment to this cause was not as resolute as they had believed.³⁴

OVERCOMING INTERNAL DIVISIONS

The controversy over the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) Tellico Dam in eastern Tennessee proved a devilish problem for the Carter administration. The TVA's plan to dam the Little Tennessee River south of Knoxville had drawn heated opposition from many quarters since it was first seriously proposed in the early 1960s. Project proponents nevertheless succeeded in pushing the dam forward, gaining congressional authorization in 1966 and construction funds the following year. Landowners and conservationists sued the TVA in 1971, claiming the authority had not complied with the requirements of the recently enacted National Environmental Policy Act. The federal court agreed and enjoined the project for nearly two years, until the TVA submitted a satisfactory environmental impact statement. This episode proved to be a minor inconvenience to the TVA in comparison to what occurred two years later, when the battle over a small endangered fish—the snail darter—brought the agency's project to its knees.³⁵

Ironically, the three-inch-long, snail-eating perch was discovered in 1973, the same year the Endangered Species Act was enacted. At that time, the Tellico Dam was roughly half complete. When the Department of Interior placed the snail darter on its endangered species list (the fish's only known habitat was the Little Tennessee River) in October 1975, the project had reached about the three-quarters mark. With the snail darter now protected by law, environmentalists filed suit to halt further construction of the Tellico Dam in February 1976. Three months later, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Tennessee denied the request for a permanent injunction. In January 1977, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit reversed the lower court's decision, halting all construction work that harmed the snail darter's critical habitat. The news media could not resist this story (which they portrayed as the little fish versus the big dam), and the controversy over the snail darter became the most widely publicized enforcement of the Endangered Species Act.

The Tellico Dam controversy thus got passed on to the Carter administration, where it festered for several months at the subcabinet level. The contradictory positions already held by the Department of the Interior and the TVA were complicated in May 1977 when the Department of Justice accepted the TVA's request to appeal the case to the Supreme Court without first informing the White House. Under different circumstances, it would have been routine practice for the Department of Justice to follow such a course, given the fact that it had defended the TVA in both the district and circuit courts. But the Carter administration—as represented by the DPS, the CEQ, and the OMB—had adopted a distinct set of environmental priorities that placed it solidly behind the Department of the Interior. How this battle played out within the executive branch revealed much about how such crosscurrents of power influenced the style and development of Carter's environmental policy.³⁶

Both sides of the debate vied for the president's ear. The Department of the Interior and the CEQ not only contended that petitioning the Supreme Court was wrong from a legal standpoint but also argued that it would undermine the Endangered Species Act, and therefore directly contradict the administration's position that the statute was a workable law. The CEQ also feared that a Supreme Court ruling in favor of the TVA would threaten other environmental laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act. The DPS and OMB objected to the Justice Department's argument that Congress's continued (i.e., post-court injunction) appropriations for the project were an "implied exemption" from the Endangered Species Act and an explicit directive to TVA to complete the Tellico Dam. Such reasoning stood to undercut the power of the executive branch by allowing Congress to legislate via the appropriations process.³⁷

It troubled the DPS that the "government's position," as officially represented by the Department of Justice before the Supreme Court, would be set forth as the TVA's position, when in fact the administration sided with the Department of the Interior. With the government's brief due to the Supreme Court by mid-January 1978, senior White House advisers debated the wisdom of asking the Justice Department to withdraw its representation of the TVA, or asking it to submit a "split" brief that would include both the TVA's and the Interior Department's interpretation of the law. "While we are reluctant to suggest intervention in this matter," they told the president, "unfortunately, the position of the TVA as articulated by the Associate Solicitor General is in serious conflict with the policies of this Administration." They presented him with "three realistic choices": "allow the Justice Department to proceed to represent TVA in this case on behalf of the U.S. Government"; "direct the Justice Department to withdraw representation from TVA, with the understanding that TVA would in all probability carry the case forward on its own"; and "direct the Justice Department to withdraw representation from TVA and to file the opposite position (the position of the Administration) in a brief to the Court." Carter agreed to pursue the last option, which was recommended by the majority of his advisers.³⁸

Attorney General Griffin B. Bell recoiled at the White House's request that the Justice Department reverse its position. He asked for a meeting with Carter, in which he underlined the legal merits of the TVA's argument and explained that reversing the government's legal position in the middle of an appeal would erode the respect traditionally accorded the Justice Department and would cast a poor light on the president's leadership, making him appear inconsistent and indecisive. In asking Carter to reconsider his decision, Bell agreed that if the secretary of the Interior and director of the OMB remained strongly opposed to his legal conclusions after reviewing the Justice Department's brief, then "under the unique circumstances of this case I am prepared to include as an appendix to the brief the separate dissenting views of the Secretary and the Director."³⁹

Carter's legal counselor, Robert J. Lipshutz, took the lead in working out a consensus position among the interested parties. With the Supreme Court filing

deadline fast approaching, Lipshutz outlined a procedure to which the Justice and Interior departments agreed: all parties would work to protect the integrity of the Endangered Species Act; no argument would be made that appropriations should supersede established laws; nothing would be done to "encourage the Court to impede or stop the construction of the Tellico Dam because of the snail darter issue" (i.e., mitigation efforts would be pursued to transplant the fish to other streams); and the Justice Department would be allowed to represent the TVA, while at the same time presenting the Supreme Court with Interior's legal arguments and interpretations by way of a separate appendix to the brief. Despite the reservations voiced by the CEQ and the OMB to this procedure, Lipshutz and Eizenstat urged Carter to approve the plan, which he did.⁴⁰

The Supreme Court heard the arguments in April 1978, and in June ruled six to three to uphold the appeals court's injunction. The extensive press coverage fueled a growing backlash against the Endangered Species Act, placing the act's citizen and government advocates on the defensive.⁴¹ As a compromise to congressional members seeking to weaken the act, Congress created a seven-member, cabinet-level Endangered Species Committee (known popularly as the "God Committee") endowed with the power to exempt individual projects from the provisions of the Endangered Species Act. The committee, chaired by Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus, issued its first ruling in January 1979. Not coincidentally, its first case involved the Tellico Dam. To the dismay of the congressional critics of the Endangered Species Act, the committee voted unanimously against completion of the project, not because of threats to the snail darter but, ironically, because it deemed the dam to be economically unjustified, despite the fact that it was 90 percent complete.⁴²

Congressional proponents of the dam, led by Tennessee Senator Howard Baker, were outraged by this ruling and sought a legislative remedy, attaching a rider to the energy and water development appropriations bill which mandated the completion of the Tellico Dam by exempting it from all federal regulations, including the Endangered Species Act.⁴³ Up to this point, Carter had remained firmly on the side of a strong Endangered Species Act and against the economically dubious dam. The Baker amendment forced his hand. If Carter made a stand in defense of the snail darter (which had become the butt of countless jokes and which had little popular appeal as a species worth saving), he would risk losing key elements of his energy package, which were also contained in the appropriations bill.

With an eye cast toward his reelection bid in 1980, Carter bowed to the political pressure and signed the appropriations bill in September 1979. Except for the congressional directive to flood the Little Tennessee River Valley, the president said he was pleased with the bill, which he described as "sound and responsible." Nevertheless, he knew that signing the bill would dishearten advocates of the Endangered Species Act and opponents of the TVA dam. He therefore em-

phasized his regret in accepting this aspect of the bill, which he said expressed "the will of Congress in the Tellico matter," and reaffirmed his personal belief "in the principles of the Endangered Species Act," which he promised to enforce vigorously. "As President I must balance many competing interests," he said, and by signing the bill he avoided a veto battle that would surely have threatened "many important national issues before Congress," such as energy legislation, the second Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, the Panama Canal implementation legislation, and reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act itself.⁴⁴

Environmentalists, however, found little comfort in Carter's words. They viewed the special Tellico Dam exemption as a serious setback to the Endangered Species Act, one that could have been remedied only by a presidential veto. Compromise was not something they accepted easily. In the subsequent months, many environmentalists began to distance themselves from the administration.

REAFFIRMING CARTER'S ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA

Long before the Tellico Dam decision, Carter's advisers had worried about the administration's flagging support among environmentalists. In addition to the president's abandonment of his water projects hit list, his energy policy—which had initially stressed conservation, solar power, and rigorous air-quality standards—appeared increasingly to downplay environmental concerns. The administration's efforts to battle inflation by relaxing certain federal regulations also raised anxieties within the conservation community. As Phil Spector, associate director of the Office of Public Liaison, warned his colleagues in the Executive Office of the President in August 1978, "environmentalists feel 'seduced and abandoned,' with no friends and many enemies in the White House." This problem extended beyond broken campaign promises, he observed, and included the fear that the EPA, the CEQ, and the DPS lacked the clout to combat the president's senior energy and economic advisers, and that, in consequence, "environmental concerns are not being taken into consideration at all." As a result, Spector wrote, environmental organizations "are already beginning to talk about potential 1980 challengers to the President who might be better on environmental issues."⁴⁵

When the energy crisis of 1979 hit, environmentalists found themselves even further dismayed by Carter's proposal to create an Energy Mobilization Board that would have the authority to accelerate the development of new power plants by exempting them from environmental regulations.⁴⁶ As these concerns mounted in 1979, the CEQ urged Carter to deliver a second major environmental message to Congress and the American people. Eizenstat was lukewarm about the suggestion, although he ultimately admitted that "the message could be a vehicle for reaffirming the Administration's environmental commitment" while at the same time allowing the president a high-visibility platform from which to launch new

initiatives on hazardous wastes and coastal protection. Eizenstat told the president that such a message “would come reasonably close to the expectations of the environmental community and would be welcomed by them,” but he warned that it would not “reconcile major differences with the environmental community over energy, timber and regulatory reform.”⁴⁷

Carter recognized the need to reassert his environmental leadership and agreed to deliver a second environmental message to Congress in August 1979. As he framed it, the White House was responding to problems that had emerged or intensified since January 1977. He therefore proposed to increase the percentage of federal transportation funds channeled into improving public transportation, to step up federal efforts to preserve coastal areas and public lands, to reduce losses of farmland, to dispose of toxic wastes in a safer manner, and to strengthen the enforcement of wildlife protection laws. “Certain basic ideas remain the foundation of American environmental policy,” Carter asserted. “Our great natural heritage should be protected for the use and enjoyment of all citizens. The bounty of nature—our farmlands and forests, our water, wildlife and fisheries, our renewable energy sources—are the basis of our present and future material well-being. They must be carefully managed and conserved.” Speaking to the growing international concerns of the environmental movement, he stressed that the United States has “a serious responsibility to help protect the long-term health of the global environment we share with all humanity.”⁴⁸ Indeed, the most farsighted aspects dealt with his global environmental initiatives to curb the loss of the world’s tropical forests (thereby addressing the accelerated extinction of species and averting potentially serious global climate change) and to arrest the growing problem of acid rain.⁴⁹

Whereas Carter emphasized human health at the start of his 1977 environmental message, he began his 1979 message by defending the administration’s energy policy. “Conservation and energy from the sun have been major thrusts of my energy program,” he said, and they would continue to be so. He noted, however, that he was calling for the development of synthetic fuels to help reduce the nation’s oil consumption. “I do not pretend that all new replacement sources of energy will be environmentally innocuous,” he said. “Some of the new technologies we will need to develop pose environmental risks, not all of which are yet fully understood. I will work to ensure that environmental protections are built into the process of developing these technologies, and that when tradeoffs must be made, they will be made fairly, equitably, and in the light of informed public scrutiny.”⁵⁰ Balance between energy needs and environmental considerations was the guiding light of his policy, he argued. “Solving the nation’s energy problem is essential to our economy and our security. We will not lose sight of our other goals but we must not fail in ending the energy crisis. This Administration’s basic commitment to clean air, clean water and the overall protection of the environment remains strong.”⁵¹

ACTIONS AT THE END

Environmentalists may have been disappointed in several of Carter’s actions, and their support of his reelection campaign may have been substantially less than it had been four years earlier, but this weakened support was not caused by Carter’s dropping environmental policy from his list of priorities. Far from it. In his January 1980 State of the Union Address, for example, Carter went on at length about energy conservation and solar power remaining key elements of his administration’s energy policy; nuclear safety forming the administration’s “primary priority in the regulation and management of nuclear power”; and protection of Alaskan federal lands continuing as his “highest environmental priority.” He affirmed his commitment to work with Congress to pass comprehensive legislation to deal with toxic, hazardous, and nuclear wastes; his efforts to expand the nation’s wilderness preserves, his ongoing effort to reform water policy; and a host of initiatives aimed at fisheries and agricultural lands. Moreover, his resolve to pursue these initiatives in 1980 was magnified by the approaching tenth anniversary of the first Earth Day.⁵²

The 1980 presidential primary elections were rough on Carter. Several of his Democratic party opponents (notably Edward Kennedy and Jerry Brown) had attracted substantial support from environmentalists, as did also the third-party candidates John Anderson and Barry Commoner. Robert W. Harris, appointed as one of three CEQ members earlier that year, was aware that the loosely knit environmental voting block that had rallied behind Carter four years earlier was unraveling, yet he remained optimistic that the majority of these voters would back the president in November. “Having been recently active in the environmental community, I can attest to the passion that environmentalists have for achieving 100 percent success on every issue,” he wrote Carter in September 1980. “Although they are clearly disappointed at our having fallen short of this standard, the environmental community realizes full well that you have been the most environmentally minded President in history and . . . they are deeply and sincerely appreciative for your leadership and the accomplishments and policies of your Administration.”⁵³

Although the leaders of the major environmental organizations finally did go on record in support of Carter in early September, the president’s advisers worried that this late endorsement indicated soft support among the environmentally inclined public. Gus Speth, who surveyed the environmental policy landscape at the behest of Jack Watson and Stu Eizenstat, found “a number of pending or imminent Congressional and Executive actions that provide significant opportunities for improving both the quality of our environment and our standing with grass roots environmentalists.” “Similarly,” Speth added, “there are several pending actions which pose pitfalls that should be avoided.” Given California’s large number of electoral college votes and the importance of environmental matters to many

of its residents, Speth urged the administration to move forward quickly on such pending items as the California wilderness bill, designation of a Santa Barbara Channel Islands Marine Sanctuary, and Northern California Wild and Scenic River designations.⁵⁴ Carter's margin of victory had been slim in 1976, however, and his inability to command enthusiastic support within the environmental community in 1980 was mirrored among the other elements of his original political coalition, as he went down in defeat.

Ironically, nothing did more to enhance Carter's standing among environmentalists than his loss to Ronald Reagan, in part because it ushered in an era of stark comparison. The environmental backlash that took place during the Reagan administration was perhaps best symbolized by the appointments and actions of James G. Watt as secretary of the interior and Anne McGill Gorsuch as EPA administrator.⁵⁵

Carter's lame-duck activities included two of his most enduring actions: signing into law the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, which created a "Superfund" to be used to clean up toxic waste sites; and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, which placed an expanse of Alaska wilderness the size of California under permanent federal protection. Both accomplishments were achieved only with significant postelection involvement by the president, and both testified to the depth of his personal commitment to environmental concerns.

The Superfund legislation had been developed in response to the discovery of a highly toxic abandoned chemical waste site in the Love Canal neighborhood of Niagara, New York. The extensive media coverage of the Love Canal crisis helped reorient the nation's environmental agenda, elevating concern over the nation's multitude of toxic dump sites, and the Carter administration lent its support to passage of a broad bill requiring the polluting industries to finance the cleanup of abandoned hazardous waste sites and future oil spills. After the election, Carter intensified his personal involvement in successfully overcoming industry-led opposition to the bill, although he compromised with Congress in accepting a restricted version of the law that excluded oil spills.⁵⁶

While the Superfund legislation originated in response to environmental degradation, the Alaska lands act was intended to prevent it. The lands at stake were associated with the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971, which gave the Congress until 1978 to allocate nearly one-third of Alaska's territory—land that was still controlled by the federal government. Perhaps predictably, every special interest group (oil and gas developers, mining concerns, loggers, wilderness and park advocates, and Alaska natives, among others) had a different proposal for how the land should be used, and political pressure was intense. With time running out in December 1978 and with no agreement in hand, Carter used his presidential authority to create seventeen national monuments in Alaska, setting aside an unprecedented 56 million acres under the auspices of the Antiquities Act until such time as the administration and Congress could resolve the issue. Two years

later, following considerable lobbying by the interested parties, the House and Senate agreed on a bill, which the president signed on December 2.⁵⁷ As Carter reflected in his 1982 memoirs, "There have been few more pleasant occasions in my life than when I signed the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act."⁵⁸

CONCLUSION

In assessing the first years of his presidency, Carter said that "the actions my administration has taken to protect the environment here and abroad, and the successes we have had, are among the most gratifying achievements of my Presidency."⁵⁹ Indeed, throughout his term, Carter and his administration anticipated and grappled with many environmental issues—acid rain, global climate change, loss of stratospheric ozone, biodiversity, and environmental justice—that remain on the political agenda today.

The policy objective of "balance," while not explicitly touted, served as a rudder for the Carter presidency. He and his staff understood that appearing to sacrifice economic growth and development for the sake of environmental quality alone would be unpopular, if not downright unacceptable, to the majority of voters. To avoid such reaction, the Carter administration chose to balance three goals that together contributed to quality of life: environmental regulation, jobs, and economic development. In this respect, as in his attention to global, not just domestic, environmental problems, Carter was ahead of his time.

Despite Carter's own deeply held environmental sympathies, his forceful rhetoric, and his administration's wide-ranging environmental agenda, environmental policy was never the administration's top priority. Although the administration encouraged and at times directed environmental considerations to temper programs, projects, and regulations throughout the federal government, on those occasions where it unavoidably conflicted with domestic policy, environmental protection always took a back seat to such central objectives as economic recovery, inflation and deficit control, and energy initiatives. That said, one must still conclude that the environmentalists' criticisms of Carter were overstated, attributed perhaps to the movement's political immaturity and what was then an absolutist approach to deal making. In later reassessing the Carter presidency, Stuart Eizenstat observed that "the president's environmental record was unimpeachable, except, it seemed, to the organized environmentalists." He went on to criticize the leaders of environmental organizations "who failed to praise his accomplishments and took great pains to point out one supposedly endangered species that he had failed to add to the protected list, thus, ironically, helping to make the most environmentally conscious president in modern times an endangered political species."⁶⁰

In fact, when Carter left the White House, the federal government's environmental regulatory apparatus was far stronger and more active than it had been when

he took office. And while his Republican successor vowed to undermine these programs, widespread public sympathy—played out largely within the legislative and judicial branches of government but reinforced, no doubt, by approval of the Carter choices—ensured that environmental quality remained a concern of the federal government. Carter had embraced the general goals of the environmental movement, and while internal conflicts within his administration and intense legislative battles led to compromises unacceptable to the more dogmatic environmental leaders, Carter nevertheless advanced the cause of environmental policy as has no occupant of the White House since FDR.

NOTES

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1. See Samuel P. Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955–1985* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Martin V. Melosi, “Lyndon Johnson and Environmental Policy,” in *The Johnson Years*, vol. 2, *Vietnam, the Environment, and Science*, ed. Robert A. Devine (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1987), 113–49; John C. Whitaker, *Striking a Balance: Environmental and Natural Resources Policy in the Nixon-Ford Years* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1976); Russell E. Train, “The Environmental Record of the Nixon Administration,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 26 (Winter 1996): 185–96; John Brooks Flippen, “The Nixon Administration, Politics, and the Environment” (Ph.D. diss., University of Maryland at College Park, 1994); and Robert A. Shanley, *Presidential Influence and Environmental Policy* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1992).

2. For assessments of the enduring political potency of environmentalism, see Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence*; Michael J. Lacey, ed., *Government and Environmental Politics: Essays on Historical Developments since World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Wilson Center Press, 1989); Riley E. Dunlap and Angela G. Mertig, eds., *American Environmentalism: The U.S. Environmental Movement, 1970–1990* (Philadelphia: Taylor and Francis, 1992); Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Green Revolution: The American Environmental Movement, 1962–1992* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993); Phillip Shabecoff, *A Fierce Green Fire: The American Environmental Movement* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993); and Mark Dowie, *Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1995).

3. Jimmy Carter, *Why Not the Best?* (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1975), 117. For insights into Carter’s environmental activities while governor, see Frank Daniel, comp., *Addresses of Jimmy Carter: Governor of Georgia, 1971–1975* (Atlanta: Georgia Department of History and Archives, 1975), passim; Furman Smith, Jr., “Environmental Law—The Carter Years,” *Georgia State Bar Journal* 13 (February 1977): 110–11; Betty Glad,

Jimmy Carter: In Search of the Great White House (New York: Norton, 1980), 180–81; and Kenneth E. Morris, *Jimmy Carter, American Moralist* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 198–99.

4. Carter, *Why Not the Best?* 120. For his recollections of leisure time spent in nature and his general attitudes on the subject, see Jimmy Carter, *An Outdoor Journal: Adventures and Reflections* (New York: Bantam Books, 1988).

5. See “Statement on Spewrell Bluff Dam, October 1, 1973,” in *Addresses of Jimmy Carter*, 17; Glad, *Jimmy Carter*, 197–98; and Tim Palmer, *Endangered Rivers and the Conservation Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 100–102.

6. “Statement on Spewrell Bluff Dam,” 18. See also Carter, *Why Not the Best?* 120; Eugene H. Methvin, “The Fight to Save the Flint,” *Reader’s Digest*, August 1974, 17–22, 26; and Brent Blackwelder, “Successes and Failures in Dam Fighting in Washington and in the Field,” in *In Defense of Rivers: A Citizens’ Workbook on Impacts of Dam and Canal Projects*, ed. Barry Allen and Mina Hamilton Haefele (Stillwater, N.J.: Delaware Valley Conservation Association, 1976), 13–14.

7. For background on Conservationists for Carter, see memo, Jane Yarn and Carlton Neville to Jimmy Carter Presidential Campaign National Office Staff, n.d. [probably July 1976], Box 18, Carlton Neville Collection, Jimmy Carter Library (JCL).

8. See, for example, Palmer, *Endangered Rivers and the Conservation Movement*; Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence*; Lettie M. Wenner, *The Environmental Decade in Court* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982); and Jeffrey K. Stine, *Mixing the Waters: Environment, Politics, and the Building of the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway* (Akron, Ohio: University of Akron Press, 1993).

9. Jimmy Carter Presidential Campaign, News Release, July 25, 1975, Box 18, Carlton Neville Collection, JCL. See also Jimmy Carter, *The Presidential Campaign, 1976*, vol. 1, pt. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1978), 660–81.

10. Yarn and Neville to Jimmy Carter Presidential Campaign National Office Staff, n.d.

11. Lewis Regenstien, “The Candidates and the Environment: An Analysis,” *Washington Post*, October 19, 1976; and Gladwin Hill, “Conservationists Expecting Carter to Open New Era for Environment,” *New York Times*, November 5, 1976.

12. Within the EPA alone, five acts were up for reauthorization in 1977, giving the Carter administration multiple opportunities to shape the debate. They included the Environmental Research, Development, and Demonstration Authorization Act; the Noise Control Act; the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act; the Safe Drinking Water Act; and the Solid Waste Disposal Act.

13. Katherine Schirmer to Stuart Eizenstat, December 4, 1976, Box 5, Domestic Policy Staff (DPS)–Al Stern’s Files, JCL.

14. For a summary of that meeting, see Margaret Costanza, Schedule Proposal, September 12, 1977, Box 103, Office of Public Liaison (OPL)–Costanza, JCL.

15. For a partial list (and a partisan critique) of the environmental appointees within the Carter administration, see Ron Arnold, *At the Eye of the Storm: James Watt and the Environmentalists* (Chicago: Regnery Gateway, 1982), 40–45. The Carter-appointed leadership within the EPA is discussed in Marc K. Landy, Marc J. Roberts, and Stephen R. Thomas, *The Environmental Protection Agency: Asking the Wrong Questions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 39–40.

16. Schirmer to Eizenstat, 4 December 1976, DPS–Al Stern’s Files, JCL.
17. “The Environment: Message to the Congress, May 23, 1977,” in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Jimmy Carter, 1977* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1978), 967.
18. *Ibid.*, 968.
19. *Ibid.*, 967. Carter’s attempt to break down the belief that economic growth and environmental protection were mutually exclusive placed him ahead of his time, as this argument did not gain currency until the 1980s and 1990s, when it was largely couched as “sustainable development.” Carter had been developing this position—which merged fiscal conservatism with environmental values—long before he entered the White House, as evidenced by similar statements he made early in his campaign. In July 1975, for example, he proclaimed that “there is no incompatibility between careful planning and economic progress on the one hand, and environmental quality on the other.” Quoted in Jimmy Carter Presidential Campaign, news release, July 25, 1975, Box 18, Carlton Neville Collection, JCL. See also Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (New York: Bantam Books, 1982), 74.
20. “The Environment: Message to the Congress, May 23, 1977,” 969.
21. *Ibid.*
22. *Ibid.*, 970. Carter’s fiscal year 1978 budget tripled the EPA’s allocation for gathering information on chemical substances to \$29 million. By shifting the EPA’s principal goal to the protection of public health, Carter and EPA administrator Douglas M. Costle succeeded in increasing the agency’s budget during a general climate of fiscal austerity. See Daniel J. Fiorino, *Making Environmental Policy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 39; Joel A. Mintz, *Enforcement at EPA: High Stakes and Hard Choices* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995), passim; and Edmund P. Russell III, “Lost among the Parts Per Billion: Ecological Protection at the United States Environmental Protection Agency, 1970–1993,” *Environmental History* 2 (January 1997): 35–36.
23. “The Environment: Message to the Congress, May 23, 1977,” 984.
24. The circumstances surrounding the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–87), the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 (Public Law 95–95), and the Clean Water Act of 1977 (Public Law 95–217) are discussed in Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence*, passim. See also Richard H. K. Vietor, *Environmental Politics and the Coal Coalition* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1980), 123–24.
25. Bert Lance, *The Truth of the Matter: My Life In and Out of Politics* (New York: Summit Books, 1991), 114. For an early assessment of the administration’s water policy reform effort, see Paul E. Scheele, “President Carter and the Water Projects: A Case Study in Presidential and Congressional Decision-Making,” *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 8 (Fall 1978): 348–64. See also Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 78–79.
26. Schirmer to Eizenstat, December 4, 1976, Box 5, DPS–Al Stern’s Files, JCL. See also Katherine Schirmer to Stu Eizenstat, December 3, 1976, in Box 5, DPS–Al Stern’s Files, JCL.
27. Steven D. Jellinek to Thomas B. Lance, February 2, 1977, Box NR-14, White House Central Files (WHCF)–Natural Resources, JCL; and Lance, *The Truth of the Matter*, 117.
28. Cecil D. Andrus to Carter, February 14, 1977, Box NR-14, WHCF–Natural Resources, JCL.
29. Eizenstat to Carter, February 15, 1977, Box 315, DPS–Eizenstat, JCL.
30. William Proxmire et al. to Carter, February 14, 1977, Box 315, DPS–Eizenstat, JCL. See also, Charles O. Jones, *The Trusteeship Presidency: Jimmy Carter and the United States Congress* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), 129, 143–44; and Robert Shogan, *Promises to Keep: Carter’s First Hundred Days* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1977), 212–15. For Carter’s long-standing penchant for projecting moral leadership, see Morris, *Jimmy Carter, American Moralizer*, passim; and Peter G. Bourne, *Jimmy Carter: A Comprehensive Biography from Plains to Postpresidency* (New York: Scribner, 1997), passim.
31. “Water Resource Projects: Message to the Congress, February 21, 1977,” in *Public Papers of Jimmy Carter, 1977*, 207.
32. The Environmental Policy Center, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, and Natural Resources Defense Council were among the most vocal advocates for the president’s hit list. See Jim Free, Presidential Scheduling Proposal, August 10, 1977, Box 103, OPL–Costanza, JCL.
33. For background discussions on Carter’s wetlands policy, see Charles Warren to Carter, March 30, 1977; Eizenstat to Carter, April 2, 1977; Peter R. Taft to Eizenstat, April 15, 1977; and Gus Speth to Eizenstat, April 18, 1977, Box 203, DPS–Eizenstat, JCL.
34. See Martin Reuss, *Reshaping National Water Politics: The Emergence of the Water Resources Development Act of 1986* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1991), 48–52; and Eizenstat and Kathy Fletcher to Fran Voorde, August 2, 1977, Box 315, DPS–Eizenstat, JCL.
35. The most thorough history of this controversy is William Bruce Wheeler and Michael J. McDonald, *TVA and the Tellico Dam, 1936–1979: A Bureaucratic Crisis in Post-Industrial America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1986).
36. Kathy Fletcher to Eizenstat, June 17, 1977; and John M. Harmon to Eizenstat and Margaret McKenna, October 5, 1977, Box 144, White House Office of Counsel to the President–McKenna (hereafter Counsel to the President–McKenna), JCL. For the attorney general’s views of the internal debate over Tellico Dam, see Griffin B. Bell, *Taking Care of the Law* (New York: William Morrow, 1982), 42–45.
37. Harmon to Eizenstat and McKenna, October 5, 1977; and Kathy Fletcher to Eizenstat, December 22, 1977, Box 144, Counsel to the President–McKenna, JCL.
38. Eizenstat, Lipshutz, McIntyre, Andrus, and Warren to Carter, January 9, 1978, Box 47, Counsel to the President–Lipshutz, JCL. Eizenstat had recommended the second option; all the rest favored option three.
39. Bell to Carter, January 13, 1978, Box 144, Counsel to the President–McKenna, JCL. Bell’s earlier reactions and arguments are spelled out in memos, Bell to Carter, January 9, 1978, and January 10, 1978, Box 47, Counsel to the President–Lipshutz, JCL.
40. Lipshutz to Carter, January 18, 1978, Box 144, Counsel to the President–McKenna, JCL. The positions of the CEQ and the OMB are presented in McIntyre and Warren to Carter, January 18, 1978, Box 47, Counsel to the President–Lipshutz, JCL.
41. See, for example, “Endangered Species Act Is Endangered,” *Los Angeles Times*, September 11, 1978; and Bill Vogt, “Now, the List-Makers Are Endangered,” *National Wildlife* 18 (December–January 1980): 17.
42. See Robert Cahn, “The God Committee,” *Audubon* 81 (May 1979): 10, 13.

43. For editorial reactions to this legislative ploy, see "Pork-Barrel Victory," *Atlanta Journal*, September 12, 1979; and "Snail Darter on the Stump," *Washington Star*, September 12, 1979.

44. "Energy and Water Development Appropriation Act, 1980: Statement on Signing H.R. 4388 into Law, September 25, 1979," in *Public Papers of Jimmy Carter, 1979*, book 2, 1760. See also Marc Mowrey and Tim Redmond, *Not in Our Backyard: The People and Events That Shaped America's Modern Environmental Movement* (New York: William Morrow, 1993), 237–43.

45. Phil Spector to Anne Wexler and Mike Chanin, August 17, 1978, Box WE-2, WHCF-Welfare, JCL. For a discussion of the bitterness many environmentalists felt toward President Carter, see Lewis Regenstein, "The Carter Administration and the Environment," *USA Today* 107 (November 1978): 31–36; and Michael Frome, *Regreening the National Parks* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992), 34–39, 216–17.

46. See Burton I. Kaufman, *The Presidency of James Earl Carter, Jr.* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993), 148; and Shanley, *Presidential Influence and Environmental Policy*, 20.

47. Eizenstat, Fletcher, and R. D. Folsom to Carter, May 2, 1979, Box 77, WHCF, Federal Government–Organizations, JCL.

48. "Environmental Priorities and Programs: Message to the Congress, August 2, 1979," in *Public Papers of Jimmy Carter, 1979*, 1353–54.

49. The global environmental initiatives flowed from the joint CEQ–Department of State work in progress, which was released the following year as Gerald O. Barney, ed., *The Global 2000 Report to the President: Entering the Twenty-First Century*, 3 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980).

50. "Environmental Priorities and Programs: Message to the Congress, August 2, 1979," 1355.

51. *Ibid.*, 1356.

52. Jimmy Carter, "The State of the Union: Annual Message to the Congress, January 21, 1980," in *Public Papers of Jimmy Carter, 1980–1981*, 130–32, 157–60.

53. Robert H. Harris to Carter, September 10, 1980, Box 78, WHCF–Federal Government–Organizations, JCL. See also Philip Shabecoff, "Major Environment Leaders Back Carter Re-election Bid," *New York Times*, September 28, 1980; and Elizabeth Drew, *Portrait of an Election: The 1980 Presidential Campaign* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1981).

54. Gus Speth to Watson, Eizenstat, Moore, and Wexler, September 19, 1980, Box NR-1, WHCF–Natural Resources, JCL.

55. For a discussion of the changes wrought by the Reagan administration, see Arnold, *At the Eye of the Storm*; Jonathan Lash, Katherine Gillman, and David Sheridan, *A Season of Spoils: The Reagan Administration's Attack on the Environment* (New York: Pantheon, 1984); Norman J. Vig and Michael E. Kraft, eds., *Environmental Policy in the 1980s: Reagan's New Agenda* (Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, 1984); and V. Kerry Smith, ed., *Environmental Policy under Reagan's Executive Order: The Role of Benefit-Cost Analysis* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

56. For a general discussion of the Superfund, see Daniel Mazmanian and David Morrell, *Beyond Superfailure: America's Toxics Policy for the 1990s* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1989); and Harold C. Barnett, *Toxic Debts and the Superfund Dilemma* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994).

57. For a detailed history of the act, see G. Frank Williss, "*Do Things Right the First Time*": *The National Park Service and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1985). The debate over protecting Alaska lands is discussed in Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 3d ed. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982), 272–315; and Donald Worster, *Under Western Skies: Nature and History in the American West* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 154–224.

58. Carter, *Keeping Faith*, 582. See also Kaufman, *Presidency of James Earl Carter*, 208–10.

59. Jimmy Carter, "The President's Message," in *Environmental Quality—1979*, Tenth Annual Report of the Council on Environmental Quality (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980), iv.

60. Stuart E. Eizenstat, "President Carter, the Democratic Party, and the Making of Domestic Policy," in *The Presidency and Domestic Policies of Jimmy Carter*, ed. Herbert Rosenbaum and Alexej Ugrinsky (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), 10.