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States seize initiative on clean air

CALIFORNIA IN DRIVER'S SEAT ON CURBING GLOBAL WARMING

A high-stakes battle now underway in the California legislature could be one of the most important global warming fights yet in the United States. But the auto industry is stubbornly determined to stop the initiative.

The battle began when the state assembly passed a bill requiring the California Air Resources Board to develop "cost-effective" regulations for cutting carbon dioxide emissions from cars and light trucks. Such vehicles cause 40% of the state's greenhouse gas pollution. The state senate passed a similar measure, which now must be returned to the assembly for final approval before going to the governor.

Environmental Defense is working closely with a coalition of groups to win passage of the measure, which originated with the grassroots group Bluewater Network. Our Action Network members sent thousands of messages to lawmakers in support of the bill.

In an effort to derail the initiative, the auto industry has launched a multimillion-dollar ad campaign, claiming the regulations would wreck the economy. Automakers used the same argument on seat belts and catalytic converters. In each case, these improvements made cars cleaner, cheaper and safer.

"With the Bush administration abdi-

cating leadership on global warming, the states need to take action," says our executive director Fred Krupp. California has 24 million cars and the world's fifth largest economy, so its clean-air initiative cannot be ignored.

Momentum for a unified strategy on air pollution is building across the nation. In North Carolina, the House just passed a clean smokestacks bill that would dramatically cut sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. "Dealing with pollutants simultaneously is the most cost-effective way to improve air quality," says our Southeast air quality manager Michael Shore, who helped draft the bill. In April, New Hampshire became the first state to adopt multi-pollutant legislation with a cap on carbon dioxide.

In all, 25 states have enacted or are considering greenhouse gas legislation. "By themselves, the states won't solve global warming," says Krupp, "but they're putting the heat on Washington."



California rules! Once again, the state sets the trend for stricter limits on pollution from vehicles.



*The truth
about
Clear
Skies*

The administration touts its Clear Skies plan as “the most aggressive initiative in American history to cut power plant emissions.” Regrettably, its most promising element is its title.

President Bush rightly suggests using market incentives to cut sulfur pollution. But coupling a smart approach with weak goals will deliver weak results. The proposal should require larger reductions in sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides to bring the nation into compliance with Clean Air Act standards. This can be done cost effectively. The President’s proposal also misses the mark on toxic mercury.

By abandoning the Kyoto negotiations and a campaign

*The U.S. is out of step
with the world.*

pledge for a carbon dioxide (CO₂) cap on utilities, President Bush has set our nation apart from the industrial world. Last month, Japan and the European Union ratified the Kyoto Protocol, which caps CO₂. Several major utilities want rules for CO₂—as well as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and mercury—so they can optimize investments to reduce all four pollutants.

It’s time for the President—and Congress—to show the same forward thinking and pass more ambitious multi-pollutant legislation, including a CO₂ cap. The longer we dally, the more costly the solution.

—Fred Krupp



Our economist Dr. Daniel Dudek briefs China’s Environmental Protection Minister Xie Zhenhua (right) on how our program will reduce pollution.

China sets firm targets for clean air

CAMPAIGN FOR ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE YIELDS RESULTS

Whenever we buy something made in China, we also buy pollution that occasionally blows our way. With one-fifth of the world’s population, China has massive potential for economic growth—and for environmental degradation. A \$5 million gift from the Starr Foundation to The Campaign for Environmental Defense, combined with member support, has enabled us to help China develop its economy while beginning to limit air pollution.

Recently the State Environmental Protection Agency (the Chinese EPA) appointed us co-founder of a bold new antipollution project that will reduce sulfur dioxide emissions 20%—equivalent to shutting down about 150 coal-fired power plants. “These are big commitments,” says our economist Dr. Daniel Dudek, who has 12 years’ experience working in China. “The message from the Chinese government was: ‘Hop to it.’”

Designed to curb China’s chronic acid rain problem, the project spans three cities and four industrial provinces that together account for one-third of China’s sulfur dioxide emissions. China was attracted to

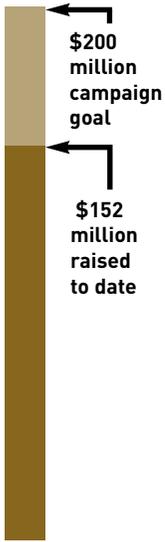
Environmental Defense after our emissions trading success in the U.S. China will allow factories and power plants to decide who will cut emissions by how much, as long as the overall required reduction is achieved. By allowing such emissions trading in the U.S., our program cut acid rain faster than expected at a fraction of the predicted cost.

A TURNING POINT FOR CHINA

“This project is a turning point,” says Lu Xinyuan, the environmental agency’s director of pollution control. “With the help of Environmental Defense, we’re changing our strategy from trying to tell factories what to do to working with them as partners.” If the pilot program succeeds, authorities are considering expanding emissions trading nationally.

“It’s ironic,” says Dudek. “It’s easier today to introduce market-based pollution control methods in China than in the U.S.”

Environmental Defense has been steadily building its profile in China. In Shanghai, for example, we have an agreement to create a sulfur dioxide trading system to cut pollution from



the city's 17 power plants.

For the latest project, Dudek and a team of Chinese experts, led by consultant Jianyu Zhang, expect to finalize trading regulations this month. More than 100 senior environmental officials already have been trained in issuing emissions permits, managing trades and enforcement. The next

step is a series of site visits to help power plants conclude their first partnerships.

Funding Environmental Defense's China work was a natural choice for the Starr Foundation. "We share a responsibility with every other inhabitant of the planet to protect the most valuable resource we have," says foundation chairman Maurice "Hank" Greenberg.

The Campaign for Environmental Defense was launched to combat global warming and other serious threats to the environment. To date, \$152 million has been raised towards a fundraising goal of \$200 million by December 2003. Gifts to the Campaign will help safeguard the oceans, protect wildlife and human health and win environmental gains in Washington.

For more information about The Campaign for Environmental Defense, please call or write Paula Hayes, Director of Development, in our New York office (212-505-2100).



Thousands of monuments in China are deteriorating from acid rain.

Mixed forecast for national parks

COURT RULING SLOWS EPA CLEAN AIR PLAN



Ed Simpson

More clean air days will come to Mt. Rainier and 155 other wilderness areas if the Environmental Protection Agency wins its court battle.

On bad days, a curtain of haze blankets Yellowstone National Park, cutting visibility from 127 miles to 72 miles. At the Grand Canyon, visibility is sometimes reduced by half, obscuring legendary vistas.

This April, a quarter century after Congress first mandated cleaner air for America's most treasured national parks, an EPA plan to reduce haze in the parks finally seemed ready for implementation. But the plan suffered a setback when a federal appeals court ordered EPA to rework part of the program.

The plan had required states to find ways to curb haze pollution in 156 national parks and wilderness areas. In its decision, the court affirmed the goal of restoring natural visibility conditions and preventing further degradation of scenic vistas. The court even insisted that EPA speed up the timetable for the state cleanup plans.

But in a divided ruling, the court found partially unlawful EPA's interpretation of the requirement that power plants and other industrial

sources install "best available retrofit technology." It ruled that EPA must evaluate whether the states need more latitude in determining the best available retrofit technology for polluting sources.

WESTERN PLAN UNAFFECTED

The court's ruling will not prevent EPA from approving a promising clean air plan recommended by Western states, tribes and private businesses and endorsed by EPA administrator Christie Whitman. That plan, which we helped design, includes a declining emissions cap on haze-forming pollutants from power plants and other large pollution sources.

Environmental Defense will press EPA for a prompt and effective response to the court ruling. We also will work with regional interests to move the Western clean air program forward.

Says our attorney Vickie Patton: "We don't want to wait another generation for clear skies over our national parks."

A cleaner ride for DC

The wheels on the bus go round and round . . . and dirty exhaust spews from the tailpipe, adding to the air pollution problems of urban centers such as the nation's capital.

Responding to a campaign by Environmental Defense and others, Maryland, Virginia and Washington officials this spring agreed to replace 250 aging diesel buses with new buses running on compressed natural gas. The new buses will make the DC-area's compressed natural gas fleet one of the largest in the nation.

Diesel exhaust contains nitrogen oxides, a main component of urban smog, and fine, sooty particles that lodge deep in the lungs and cause cancer. Compressed natural gas buses emit virtually no soot and 60% less nitrogen oxides.

Officials also approved measures to make bicycle commuting easier and to promote wise development and employer-paid commuter choice transit benefits. Hundreds of letters from our Action Network helped win the day for smart transportation planning. "Cleaner buses and better transit access will help solve DC's pollution problems," says our transportation director Michael Replogle.

On the national level, Environmental Defense recently helped create a unique alliance of government, industry and environmental organizations aiming to make commuter choice benefits available in every workplace.



Mark Wenzler

Our Action Network helped win the day for cleaner buses in DC.



Steven Norse/Accent Alaska

Each year at Stellwagen, 1.5 million people marvel at whales.

Speaking up for the fish

Stellwagen Bank is an underwater plateau that stretches off the Massachusetts coast between Cape Cod and Cape Ann. Deep ocean currents push against it and power a food web that includes an astonishing variety of fish and 40 species of birds. Among the 19 species of marine mammals that feed at Stellwagen are humpback whales and endangered northern Right whales—of which only 340 remain.

This summer Environmental Defense is mounting a campaign to protect this biological treasure. Despite its designation as a marine sanctuary, Stellwagen is heavily overfished. Trawlers using heavy gear rip up bottom habitats. With few places to hide, juvenile cod are unable to mature.

Bottom dwellers such as sponges, urchins and cold water corals are decimated.

Our campaign will build support for a management plan that sets aside significant portions of the sanctuary as no-fishing zones. Scientifically chosen to protect whole ecosystems, these protected zones would allow fish to grow and thrive. With Stellwagen only 26 miles from Boston, such a plan would be a boon to whale-watching and other tourism. It would also help solve the Gulf of Maine's fishery problems.

"We've gotten used to diminished marine resources," says our campaign manager Danielle Luttenberg. "If you let this area recover, you'll see a marine system that's awe inspiring."

Environmental Defense Newsletter

Editor: Peter Klebnikov
257 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010
Main number: 212-505-2100

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Contact the editor at 800-242-3251, by fax at 212-616-1489, or by email at editor@environmentaldefense.org.

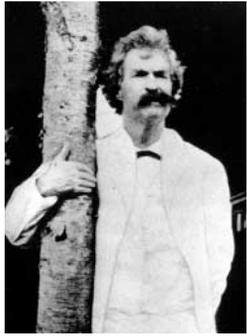
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Online at www.environmentaldefense.org

A leap forward for California's red-legged frog

"Jumping on a dead level is his strong suit," wrote Mark Twain. "I'll risk forty dollars that he can outjump any frog in



AP Photo

Calaveras County." The endangered California red-legged frog, immortalized in Twain's story, is one leap closer to protection thanks to a new Safe Harbor agreement with the Robert Mondavi Winery in California.

The agreement, prepared with the help of Environmental Defense and approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service last month, marks the first Safe

Harbor for a vineyard and the third in California. Safe Harbor, which we pioneered in 1995, helps landowners restore needed habitat voluntarily without adding new federal restrictions on their property.

"These agreements are a highly successful means of forging partnerships for rare species with farmers, ranchers, forest landowners and now vintners as well," says our wildlife attorney Michael Bean. California's red-legged frog is beset by habitat loss and predation by



Bruce Watkins/Animals Animals

non-native bullfrogs. Mondavi will restore riparian habitat along a stream on its property to benefit the frog. Two songbirds, the least Bell's vireo and the Southwestern willow flycatcher, will also benefit from the improved habitat.

Over the years, the natural vegetation at the site was denuded by overgrazing. "Our goal is to create a riparian forest diverse enough to provide nesting opportunities for the birds," says Bean, "and to provide a haven for the frog."

Safe Harbor agreements have been signed with nearly 200 landowners on some two million acres nationwide, aiding such endangered species as the northern aplomado falcon and the San Joaquin kit fox.

Within days of the Mondavi announcement, California's Central Coast Wine and Grape Growers Association asked us to explore other Safe Harbor opportunities for its members. "Two years ago, our hope was that success of these initial projects in California would trigger widespread interest among landowners," says Bean. "That strategy seems to be bearing fruit."

For more information on landowner programs, search for the "Conservation Incentives Library" at www.environmentaldefense.org.

Designating an area as "critical habitat" doesn't preclude the military from training in that area, though it does require closer scrutiny of such activity. "Military preparedness and environmental protection can be reconciled without weakening laws," says our attorney John Bowman.

At press time, the Senate was debating the issue. No matter what law passes, Environmental Defense will be in the trenches making sure endangered wildlife is not unduly harmed.

Rare animals in the line of fire

Do routine military training activities and base operations require sacrificing the environment? Recently the Pentagon sought blanket exemption from the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act and other measures that have protected endangered species and the environment. In May, the U.S. House passed a defense authorization bill that would exempt military exercises from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and from critical habitat requirements of the Endangered Species Act.

"The Department of Defense should be subject to the same environmental laws as other federal agencies," argues our wildlife attorney Michael Bean, a leading authority on the Endangered Species Act. In fact, he notes, the Act already includes a waiver for national security purposes.

"The military has done its job ably in recent wars without resorting to the special provision," he adds. Designating an area as "critical habi-



Gerald D. Tang

Restrictions on military exercises have benefited the endangered loggerhead shrike on San Clemente Island.

Designating an area as "critical habitat" doesn't preclude the military from training in that area, though it does require closer scrutiny of such activity.

"Military preparedness and environmental protection can be reconciled without weakening laws," says our attorney John Bowman.

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Information oasis

To follow up on ideas mentioned in the story, contact any of these resources:

Alliance to Save Energy. 1200 18th Street, NW, Suite 900, Washington, DC 20036; 202-857-0666. Water-saving tips are posted at www.ase.org.

National Drought Mitigation Center. 239 L.W. Chase Hall, P.O. Box 830749, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68583; 402-472-6707. Visit their U.S. drought monitor at www.drought.unl.edu/dm/monitor.html.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. 14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 6013, Washington, DC 20230; 202-482-6090. Their gardener's guide to watering is at www.yota98.noaa.gov/books/clnc_oast/clean12.htm.

In print

Every Drop For Sale by Jeffrey Rothfeder (Tarcher/Putnam, 2001), \$24.95. An excellent overview of water problems worldwide.

Gardening With Prairie Plants by Sally Wasowski (University of Minnesota Press, 2002), \$29.95. Contains a good introduction to xeriscaping.

Handbook of Water Use and Conservation by Amy Vickers (Water Plow Press, 2001), \$99.95. A reference handbook for professionals.



AP Photo/The Daily Journal/Rick Kintzel

You can beat the heat this summer without wasting water.

Cool, cool water

HOW TO USE A PRECIOUS RESOURCE WISELY

Despite welcome spring rains in many locales, the drought of 2002 is far from over. Nearly a quarter of the United States has suffered severe drought conditions. Maine suffered through its driest 12 months in 150 years, and the state of Arizona was declared a drought disaster area.

And water problems don't stop at our borders. Water scarcity and lack of clean water affect three billion people worldwide, and account for 80% of the disease in developing countries. Is there something we can do as individual volunteers in the war against water waste? Definitely. Most of the opportunities for saving water are within easy reach:

- **Slow the flow.** Showers account for 22% of the water we use each day. You can cut that in half by installing low-flow shower heads, which mix in air but don't lower water pressure. To save even more, try your next shower military-style: run the water until you're wet, turn it off while lathering

up, then back on for a quick rinse. On average, you'll save five gallons.

- **Flush with less.** U.S. toilets consume 4.8 billion gallons of water a day, but low-flow models (now mandated) use only 1.6 gallons per flush compared to older models' six. If your toilet is old, save up to 11 gallons per day by replacing it, or putting a half-gallon jug filled with water or pebbles in the tank. Don't procrastinate when toilets leak: one drippy toilet can waste 52,000 gallons of water annually.
- **Clean them green.** Front-loading clothes washing machines are far more energy- and water-efficient than the top loaders that are the rule nationwide. Amazingly, a front loader can reduce water use from 41 gallons per load to only two. You can also save water by operating your older washer only when it's full, and at the minimum water setting. Unless your clothes are particularly dirty, use the

This guest article is one of a series by the editors of E/The Environmental Magazine (for subscription information: 800-967-6572 or www.emagazine.com). Opinions are the author's and not necessarily those of Environmental Defense staff.

shortest operating cycle.

- **In the kitchen.** Limit dishwasher runs to full loads and replace the pre-rinse step with a quick manual scraping. Install tap aerators, which work like low-flow shower heads to reduce water waste. Fix dripping faucets, which—at 30 drops a minute—can leak 54 gallons in a month.
- **Save the spray.** As much as 50% of household water runs through the garden hose. Overly enthusiastic lawn watering is the major culprit. If you water with a sprinkler, space sessions three days apart. Or choose a more efficient alternative such as drip

systems, soaker hoses or efficient pop-up spray heads. If you must wash the car, use soap and water in a bucket, then the hose for a final rinse. Hosing down the driveway not only wastes water, it encourages harmful runoff as well.

- **In the garden.** You'll need less water if you practice xeriscaping, the science of gardening with drought-tolerant and native plants. Layers of organic mulch around plants can reduce wasteful evaporation. Compost from kitchen scraps will provide nutrients and give your garbage disposal a rest.

By **Jim Motavalli**

A different kind of gift



Charitable gift annuities to Environmental Defense perpetuate your commitment so that we can keep the world healthy for all living creatures. With a gift of \$10,000 or more, you earn a fixed annual sum for life and receive an immediate charitable deduction.

To learn how your gift can help, check the box on the form facing page 5, call toll-free 1-877-677-7397 or write: Anne B. Doyle, Environmental Defense, 257 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010.

IN BRIEF

REDUCING POLLUTION IN YOUR HOMETOWN

“Learning about the toxic waste sites in my hometown was like learning a brand new landscape,” said Dr. Sandra Steingraber, a guest expert on Bill Moyers’ recent PBS television special on chemicals and kids. To find out about her community, Dr. Steingraber had typed her zip code into our Scorecard web site, which told her exactly what chemicals were being emitted locally and by whom.

Being mentioned on television caused a huge spike in new visitor traffic to Scorecard, but the site has long been a magnet for community groups.

Recently, a group of North Carolina State engineering students used Scorecard to assess air quality in Moncure, NC. They discovered their county ranks first in the nation

for formaldehyde emissions and that 99% come from a local manufacturer of particle board. They also found that emissions from a nearby power plant make their county among the dirtiest 10% of U.S. counties for sulfur dioxide. The students wrote a report and presented their findings to the local advisory council, which passed it on to Chatham County commissioners. The resulting local publicity caused both plants to promise improvements in their operations.

“Scorecard links eggheaded scientists to communities,” says Dr. Jane Gallagher, a health scientist involved in the issue. “It works.”

Find out what’s polluting your hometown at: www.scorecard.org.



Tim Connor

Anytown USA: What toxic substances are in your community?

ANTIBIOTICS CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Two bills now before Congress would phase out the routine use in healthy farm animals of eight human antibiotics. The bills, sponsored by Representative Sherrrod Brown (D-OH) and Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA) would remove the drugs within two years unless manufacturers can prove they don’t promote the growth of antibiotic-resistant “super-bugs.” Environmental Defense helped draft both bills.

The bills restrict the use of Cipro-like drugs called fluoroquinolones. At our urging, McDonald’s (our long-time partner in cutting packaging waste) announced it no longer buys chickens treated with fluoroquinolones. Other companies and poultry producers have followed suit.

The perils of farmed salmon

Aquaculture, or fish farming, now accounts for one-third of the seafood consumed worldwide. But as the industry has grown, so have concerns about its environmental impacts.

When we published our *Seafood Selector* guide to environmentally responsible fish choices recently, we were deluged with letters questioning our recommendation to choose certain wild salmon over the farmed variety.

“The fact is, serious environmental problems are associated with salmon farming,” says our scientist Dr. Rebecca Goldberg. “Salmon aquaculture pollutes coastal waters and when farmed salmon escape, they can imperil wild salmon. In Maine, for example, numerous escaped farmed salmon are interbreeding with the few remaining wild salmon.”

Alaskan wild salmon—the most common variety available—are plentiful. That’s why they’re a “best choice” on our *Seafood Selector*, while farmed salmon are a “worst choice.” For the complete best/worst list and our *Seafood Selector* guide, visit www.environmentaldefense.org/sustainablefishing.



Yva Momatiuk/John Eastcott/Minden Pictures

Chefs believe wild salmon tastes better than the farmed variety.



Corbis

While cars have become cleaner, diesel trucks have had a free ride. We’re working to change that in Washington, in the courts, and on the assembly line.

A cleaner future for trucks and buses

Environmental Defense took a major step toward our goal of getting dirty trucks off the road when a federal appeals court in May upheld new clean diesel fuel and engine standards. We not only pressed for adoption of the standards but led the environmental community against a concerted legal challenge from engine manufacturers.

This win complements an earlier court ruling upholding tough new national clean air requirements. We helped defend the requirements before the Supreme Court, and we’re now working to ensure they are enforced. The diesel standards, to take effect in 2007, will help states meet the new clean-air standards.

“Mandating cleaner diesel trucks and buses is one of the single most important steps the nation can take to clean the air across the country,” says our attorney Vickie Patton.

Fine, sooty particles in diesel

exhaust lodge deep in the lungs, causing a variety of health problems, including respiratory illness, heart disease and premature death. Diesel trucks also spew nitrogen oxides, the main cause of urban smog, and a soup of other toxic chemicals.

We are also working to jumpstart new technologies. At a recent conference, attorney Janea Scott examined the latest in cleaner trucks. Sanitation workers told her they like New York City’s dozen compressed natural gas trucks because, although the workers encounter other unpleasant smells, they no longer have to breathe the dirty diesel exhaust all day.

We are also working with Federal Express to create a delivery truck that emits 90% less pollution. Three leading truck manufacturers are building prototypes, and the new trucks will be tested this fall, with fleet conversion to begin in 2004.



ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE

finding the ways that work

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Sea turtles safe, thanks to a vigilant biologist

Bad ideas often arise in government when there is no public scrutiny, and this one was no exception. A few Texas shrimpers and buyers hoped to reap summertime profits in Texas waters. There was one problem: The Texas Closure, a law that protects endangered sea turtles, stymied the plan. The law, enacted annually, bans shrimping in the summer within 200 miles of shore. It's been a resounding success: Many fewer Kemp's ridleys drown in fishing nets, the turtles can come ashore to nest, and the shrimp industry profits from harvests of larger shrimp when the closure ends.

Nonetheless, a group of shrimpers and buyers whispered into influential ears on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and the federal government moved to suspend the Texas Closure without analysis or public input and in contradiction of its own findings.

Our fisheries biologist Pam Baker happened to be in the room when the measure was introduced. She quickly alerted other environmentalists, and together, we stopped the stealth move and got the Closure reinstated. Sea turtles and shrimp fisheries are safe for one more year. "We proved this move almost certainly violated the Endangered Species Act," says Baker. "The shrimp industry's concerns should be investigated but in a lawful way."



Raymond Gray

With continued controls on shrimp fishing, hatchlings like this one stand a better chance of reaching maturity.



Scott Berner/Phoiri Inc.

Front line in the battle for water rights: The Rio Grande.

Living waters in Texas

Benjamin Franklin once observed, "When the well's dry, we know the worth of water." With the state's population expected to double by 2050, Texans are discovering its true value.

Water supply decisions over the next few years will have far-reaching consequences. Environmental Defense is part of the Living Waters Project, which is working to ensure the state's natural heritage is included in the planning process as the state grows.

Our coalition helped defeat \$17 billion in new water taxes and fees destined to fund water-supply projects without benefit of economic or environmental scrutiny. Most projects rely on expensive concrete-and-steel approaches to supply-

ing water.

But conservation can yield far more cost-effective returns. "San Antonio reduced its water consumption by one-third," observes our economist Mark MacLeod. "If Dallas adopted similar practices, it wouldn't need a new \$2 billion reservoir."

Reallocation could also bring relief: A study of western states indicates that moving just 5% of agricultural water to municipal use could meet Texas needs for the next 25 years.

"We've already made sound economic principles part of the debate," MacLeod says. "Now we're encouraging planners to consider the environment a legitimate user of water, not a constraint."

Environmental Defense Newsletter

Editor: Peter Klebnikov
257 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010
Main number: 212-505-2100

©2002 Environmental Defense. Published bi-monthly at New York, NY. ASSN 0163-2566

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Restoring a great delta

Each spring, migrating songbirds fly 600 miles nonstop across the Gulf of Mexico. Usually, they continue well inland. But when the weather turns bad, weary migrants put down on the first patch of land they find—the scraggly woodlots of the barrier islands off the Louisiana coast.

Sadly, the Louisiana coastline is eroding at an alarming rate. “Some 30 square miles of the Mississippi Delta disappear each year,” explains Steve Cochran, our director of strategic communications. “At this rate, New Orleans will be a beachfront community by 2050.”

Built over 8,000 years, the Mississippi Delta has lost 1 million acres of wetlands in the last 80. “Levees on the Mississippi have led to the worst coastal erosion and wetland loss in the United States,” says James Tripp, our general counsel. Historically, the river periodically overflowed its banks, spreading sediment that replenished the marshlands.

Together with the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana and government agencies, Environmental Defense is helping frame an ambitious plan to preserve the Mississippi Delta. The \$14 billion project will recreate more natural conditions by diverting sediment back into the marshes. If authorized by Congress, this will ensure that critical stopover habitat continues to greet migrating birds for generations to come.



Wild & Natural/Animals Animals

Why not put the Army Corps to good use? Scarlet tanagers urgently require rebuilding the Louisiana coastline.



Dominique Brand/Animals Animals

Each year, migrating tundra swans find less food on the Mississippi.

A chance for Old Man River

The Mississippi may be mighty, but it's also clogged with polluted runoff from farms and city streets that literally smothers wildlife. Environmental Defense helped score a win for the river this spring, when the U.S. House passed a bill authorizing \$6.25 million annually to monitor water quality in the upper Mississippi River basin. The basin includes Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Missouri.

“The funds will provide scientific data pinpointing the largest pollution sources,” said our water resources specialist Scott Faber. “This will help target conservation spending.” With our allies, we hope to plant tree buffers and preserve wetlands that are natural buffers against pollution.

Working with Ameri-

can Rivers, we secured support for the bill among Midwestern representatives, including Ron Kind (D-WI), the bill's champion. We expect the bill to pass the Senate in the near future.

Sediment runoff into the Mississippi chokes off channels used by wildlife while nutrients from fertilizer trigger algae growth that uses up all the oxygen. Sediments also block off navigation channels, increasing dredging costs.

Barge operators, farmers, conservationists and governors have asked for help cleaning the Mississippi. Currently, a panoply of state and local organizations monitor water quality, but don't focus their efforts on pinpointing the sources of the pollution.

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New Army Corps plan threatens national seashore

For 30 years, the Army Corps of Engineers, backed by North Carolina's powerful Senator Jesse Helms, has lobbied for twin mile-long jetties at Oregon Inlet on North Carolina's Outer Banks. Environmental Defense has opposed the jetties as environmentally destructive and economically wasteful (construction costs would be \$108 million). At the same time we support yearly dredging of the Oregon Inlet channel to ensure safe passage for fishing boats.

Late this summer the federal Council on Environmental Quality will decide whether the jetty project should be scrapped on environmental grounds, potentially setting a powerful precedent for other damaging shoreline projects. In the meantime, the Corps has upped the ante with a new dredging plan.

This year the Corps proposes widening the current channel by 600 feet. Their plan would shave 26 acres off Cape Hatteras National Seashore and dump tons of sand off Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, a vital habitat for endangered piping plovers and sea turtles.

We have filed comments opposing the new dredging plan. "It's ill-conceived," says our marine ecologist Dr. Michelle Duval. "Removal of this volume of sand requires a more thorough evaluation of long-term impacts."



McDonald Wildlife/Animals Animals

A new Army Corps plan would harm nesting beaches used by endangered piping plovers.



McDonald Wildlife/Animals Animals

Walk on the wild side: New habitat means new hope for threatened gopher tortoises.

Investment in tortoises pays off

What do a real estate developer, a golf community and a high school have in common? All have purchased credits at Alabama's first conservation bank. Prior to the transactions, the landowners could not get building permits because gopher tortoises, a threatened species, lived on their property.

Working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and others, Environmental Defense designed the conservation bank to protect the tortoises while also helping property owners. The longleaf pine forests preferred by the tortoise have been fragmented and severely degraded, with some tortoises trying to survive on two-acre slivers of unprotected habitat.

The money from the

sale of credits (\$3,500 each) is being used to relocate the tortoises and manage their new habitat, 220 acres of longleaf pine forest set aside by the city of Mobile. "The improved habitat will increase the tortoises' chances for survival," says our economist Robert Bonnie. "Our goal is to have a population of gopher tortoises that is viable over the long term."

So far, 28 tortoises have been moved to the bank, which will also benefit a host of other species, including the rare black pine snake.

To monitor the tortoises' movements, radio transmitters have been attached to their shells. Says Bonnie: "Early indications are that the tortoises are doing well."

Environmental Defense Newsletter

Editor: Peter Klebnikov
257 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10010
Main number: 212-505-2100

©2002 Environmental Defense. Published bi-monthly at New York, NY. ASSN 0163-2566

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An invasion of BUGs

It's not an outbreak of killer bees, but the health risk for California could be equally worrisome.

Ever since the state suffered rolling blackouts last year, there has been talk of firing up back-up generators (BUGs) to meet short-term power needs. At least 11,000 BUGs operate across the state.

These highly polluting, diesel generators were supposed to be used only in emergencies. But during the electricity crisis, proposals were heard to run them regularly. Elsewhere, back-up generators reportedly were used to shave electricity bills.

The problem is that BUGs are under-regulated and emit 100 times as much pollution as conventional power plants. No one knows how many there are or their toll on the public's health. To close the information gap, we are preparing a report, *Smaller, Closer, Dirtier: a GIS study of diesel back-up generators in California*. "Now," says our economist Dr. Nancy Ryan, "a few rogue operators increase everyone's risk."

The cancer rate in California is already unacceptably high. In San Francisco, the added cancer risk from air pollutants is nearly four times the national average. Says Ryan: "We hope this study will trigger strict emissions standards, better guidelines for what constitutes an emergency and better enforcement."



Tony Freeman/Photo Edit

Backlot polluters: This generator could be hazardous to your health.



Dietrich Photography

We are working with the Hoopa Valley tribe on the Trinity River.

Restoring salmon in California

As snow melted in northern California this spring, the Trinity River regained some of its natural flow, vital for its beleaguered salmon fishery. The increased flow, resulting from an interim federal court ruling, will benefit the Hoopa Valley and Yurok tribes, who traditionally have depended on the salmon fishery. Environmental Defense worked closely with the Hoopa legal team to help achieve this victory.

Former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt signed a plan to restore the Trinity in 2000. As usual in Western river issues, the most controversial element was how water would be allocated. Since 1963, 75% of the river's natural flow has gone to agriculture and hydro-

electric power.

The plan allows the river to retain about half its natural flow. While the amount of hydropower lost is small, the loss loomed large during California's energy crisis. It didn't help that there was a power outage the day of the hearing.

Subsidized water and power users have opposed the plan. "We're surprised that these power users sued," says our analyst Spreck Rosekrans. "Many of them represent cities that are considered pro-environment."

Michael Orcutt, fisheries director of the Hoopa Valley tribe, called the ruling a positive first step but added: "We will have to fight for every drop of water."

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