



# Friends of the Earth

Winter 2003 Newsmagazine

Volume 33, Number 4



## Showdown Over Keeping the West Wild

# Vote: Use It or Lose It

**F**or the past 33 years I have worked to get Congress to pass important environmental laws. During this time I have noticed a very disturbing trend. As elections have become more and more costly each decade, members of the House and Senate spend far less time studying issues and more time raising money for their reelection campaign.

What this translates into, for example, is a growing unwillingness to challenge powerful corporate interests in the chemical and energy industries for fear of alienating a major source of funding. In many cases, members of Congress have become less interested in information because their mind is already made up.

Our ability to save the planet from increasing levels of pollution, ecosystem damage and habitat destruction and to protect the health of this and future generations depends upon electing, at every level, those leaders who are concerned about the health and well-being of life on earth.

Some shocking surveys over the past decade have revealed that members of prominent national environmental organizations vote no more often than the general public. I am confident that Friends of the Earth members are far above the national average for voter turnout. Indeed, I hope for 100 percent turnout from members like you.

You can do many things to help get leaders who will protect the environment into elected office. Find out how your elected officials rate on the

“Some shocking surveys over the past decade have revealed that members of prominent national environmental organizations vote no more often than the general public.”

issues you care about. For example, read the League of Conservation Voters annual scorecard, which rates how representatives and senators voted on environmental issues.

You should also talk one-to-one with neighbors about candidates, since statistics show that spreading the word can significantly affect voter turnout. Organize a luncheon or an evening gathering and discuss the candidates' records. And most importantly, don't forget to register to vote.

Our sister organization, Friends of the Earth Action, is a non-tax deductible group that can engage in unlimited lobbying and electoral activity. Friends of the Earth Action delivers a strong message to elected officials that environmental organizations will use the political process to protect our air, land and water. To find out more visit [foeaction.org](http://foeaction.org).



**Brent Blackwelder**

So please remember to do your part. Stay informed, inform others and vote! It is important to elect candidates that care more about public health and the environment than their campaign coffers.

One example of how important it is to have environmental champions in Congress is the energy bill debate. With our strategically placed full-page ads and work to raise awareness with members of Congress, we helped prevent the dirty energy bill from coming to a final vote on the Senate floor (see page 8).

Thank you for your continued commitment to Friends of the Earth. Best wishes to you and your loved ones for the holiday season and the New Year.



# Friends of the Earth

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**Our Mission:**  
**Friends of the Earth defends the environment and champions a healthy and just world.**



**Earth Share**  
*Earth Share giving campaigns allow you to designate a donation to Friends of the Earth. Federal employees can donate through the Combined Federal Campaign by marking #0908 on their pledge forms. To set up an Earth Share campaign at your workplace, contact Rosemary Greenaway at 202-222-0722.*

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UNION  
BUG

# Showdown Over the West

By Andrea Peacock

Squint your eyes. From an airplane, the Powder River Basin country looks as wild as any in the lower 48 states: It's an endless rolling landscape of breaks, dry streams, sparse groves of trees stretching across northeastern Wyoming and southeastern Montana. The buffalo are gone but their range remains, still populated by deer and elk, prairie dogs and antelope by the tens of thousands. Open your eyes now. You see a pattern below, roads traversing the beige terrain, going nowhere at regular intervals, dead-ending in the scars of drilling rigs.

These "footprints," visible from 30,000 feet, only hint at the effects of the coalbed methane craze sweeping through this arid region: dried-up aquifers, dead trees and ruined creeks. Last spring, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) finalized its plan to allow a massive drilling project in the Powder River Basin. According to a lawsuit filed by a coalition of conservation groups, the BLM's plan approves 77,000 coalbed methane wells here, with an attendant 26,000 miles of roads and 53,000 miles of pipeline, to recover about 25 trillion cubic feet of gas from the Wyoming portion of the basin alone.

This is Ground Zero for the Bush administration, which has targeted domestic natural gas as the "center-piece" of its energy plans. Locals are watching the same scenario play out all across the Rocky Mountain west, where government whistleblowers, ranchers and conservationists find themselves unlikely allies fighting an oil and gas takeover of the American West.

photo credit: Ann Fuller



Friends of the Earth caught Deputy Secretary of the Interior J. Steven Griles violating his recusal agreement after he attempted to pressure the Denver Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to change its analysis criticizing a coalbed methane project in the Powder River Basin. The EPA did not change its analysis.

## Powder River Basin: A Rancher Corrals a Mining Company

The Interior Department is supposed to be the nation's principal conservation agency, protecting lands like the Powder River Basin. However, with people like J. Steven Griles being appointed to high-power positions at the Interior, the agency seems to have lost track of its mission.

Deputy Secretary of the Interior Griles is a former lobbyist for over 40 coal, oil, gas and electric companies. Through a Freedom of Information Act Request, Friends of the Earth obtained Griles' calendars that showed he met with former clients while working at the Interior Department, even though he signed an ethics agreement stating he would not. People who want

to protect Western lands have had to take matters into their own hands.

In Wyoming, one rancher raided his life savings to slow down damage caused by one of Griles' former clients. Ed Swartz, who runs a cattle operation near Gillette, watched as water from methane wells drilled upstream slowly killed off the trees and vegetation along the creek that sustains his family's ranch. The culprit was a Denver-based company called Redstone (which recently changed its name to Fidelity Exploration and Production).

Coalbed methane mining is a relatively new business. Wyoming's boom got started in the early 1990s. To extract natural gas, a company digs a well into a coalbed where water pressure has trapped the gas, and pumps the water out, capturing the gas. Each well produces an average of 13,000 to

17,000 gallons of waste-water per day. The water can be treated or injected back into the ground, but generally is either dumped onto the surface where it flows downhill along traditional streambeds, or stored in holding ponds where whatever doesn't evaporate percolates back into the ground. The problem, says rancher Swartz, is that the water is so saline, it ruins whatever vegetation lies in its path.

Swartz ranches land his grandfather settled in 1904. He runs about 350 cattle on more than 14,500 acres of combined private and public lands, an operation he says is possible because of an ephemeral stream named Wildcat Creek.

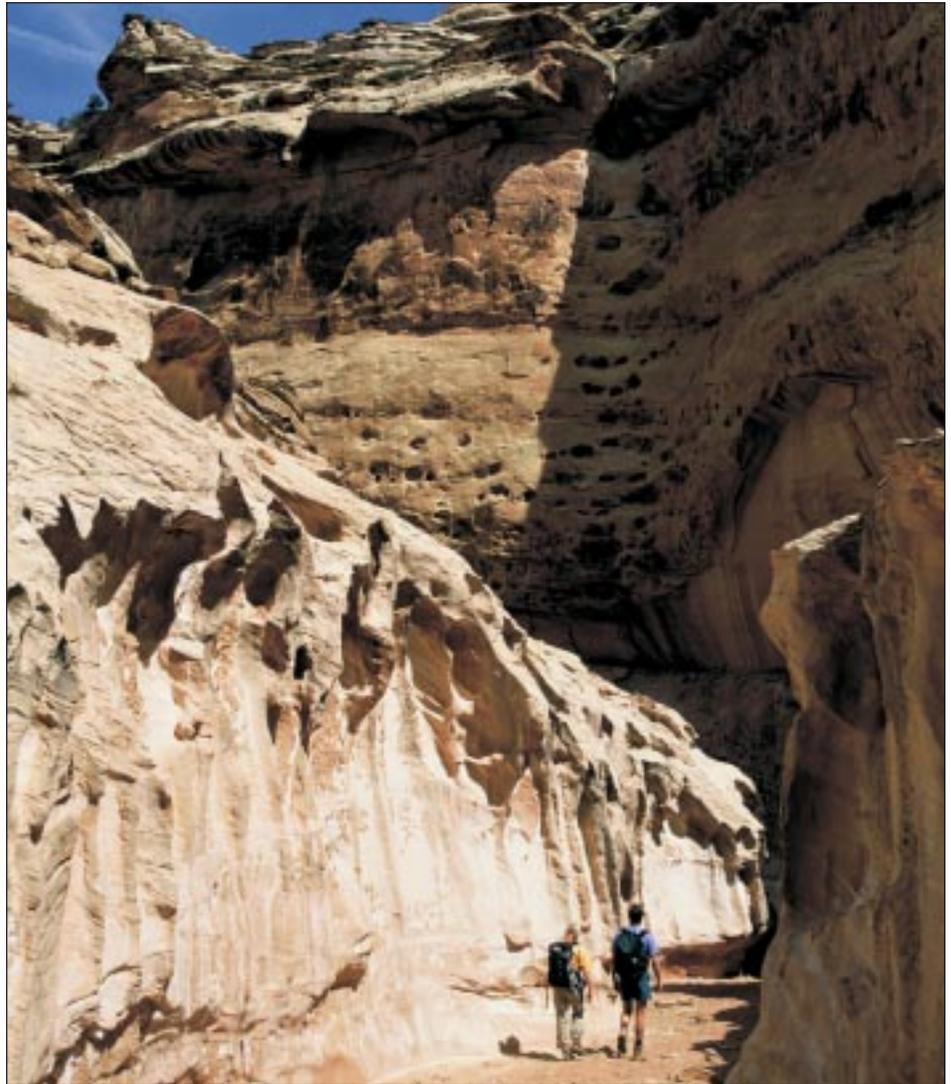
"When we do get a heavy rain, snow melt, I irrigate my meadows, grow a tremendous amount of hay," he says. "And by growing that hay, it makes this a very efficient operation. Two families have made a living on it, sometimes more than that, in my lifetime. And that's just almost unheard of."

After the BLM leased mineral rights upstream of Swartz's ranch to Redstone, Swartz says the company began dumping its salty waste-water down his creek in October 1999. By 2002, a third of his box elder trees were dead, another third were dying.

"Once the creek's full of [methane] water, it's killed the native vegetation. Then, after there weren't any roots to hold the soils, the next winter it started washing the creek banks out and eroding," he says. "Instead of having a creek you can cross on horseback or foot or with cattle most anywhere, we've got straight cut banks."

Swartz says the damage was enough to threaten the small margin by which his ranch had been profitable. He dug into his savings, hired a lawyer and sued the Wyoming agency that had issued Redstone its permits. The case was settled out of court last September. While Swartz says he can't talk about

photo credit: ©David Muench



When EPA Administrator Leavitt was the governor of Utah in 2002, he attempted to declare the San Rafael Swell a national monument, but not for the right reason. He intended to swap the land out of the Swell for land rich in minerals from the federal government. Utah would then reap all the profits from drilling and mining the public land.

the details of the settlement, the state announced that from then on, it would consider the cumulative impacts to Wildcat Creek from the permits it issues.

That's good news for other ranchers, says Jill Morrison of the Powder River Basin Resource Council, a conservation-minded ranchers' group Swartz helped to start. "We're hopeful now," she says. "Nobody else has taken it to court because nobody can afford to. Ed spent his retirement, but most people just can't afford to and industry knows that. So we all try to

band behind one or two people like Ed and take this issue on."

While the state of Wyoming may now work more cooperatively with ranchers, people like the Swartz family still have a formidable opponent in the BLM, which issues most of the leases, and has closer ties to industry than it does to family ranchers.

Of the five members of the so-called Powder River Basin Companies, three are former clients of Griles, according to Senate lobbying disclosure forms. A fourth, Barrett Resources, is owned by the Williams

*(continued on page 6)*



The Bush administration is pushing for oil and gas development in Montana's Rocky Mountain Front, one of the last, best refuges in the lower 48 states for grizzly bears. If Bush gets his way with the Rocky Mountain Front, then what's to stop him from breaking into the Arctic?

Company for which Interior Deputy Assistant Secretary Patricia Morrison served as in-house counsel for 12 years. And, Interior Assistant Secretary Rebecca Watson had to recuse herself from coalbed issues because she worked for Redstone in her former life as a Montana lawyer.

According to Friends of the Earth's "Power Politics" publication, coalbed methane developers gave \$4.1 million to elected officials during the 2002 election cycle. Andarko Petroleum and Marathon Oil (both Powder River players) gave \$345,000 alone.

In addition, Griles is still receiving annual payments on \$1.1 million he earned from selling his lobbying firm—complete with his old coalbed methane clients—to his former employer, National Environmental Strategies. Although he recused himself from involvement in coalbed methane issues because of these ties, Griles nonetheless wrote a letter to the Denver Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in April 2002 pressuring the agency not to issue a negative environmental rating on the Powder River Basin project. Ultimately the EPA did not listen to Griles and issued

the worst possible environmental rating for the project.

### San Rafael Swell: A Whistleblower Breaks a Bad Deal

Then Utah governor, and now administrator of the EPA, Mike Leavitt's request in 2002 of Deputy Secretary of the Interior Griles must have sounded uncharacteristic at first. Leavitt wanted the Bush administration to declare the San Rafael Swell a national monument. Presidents have the power to declare irreplaceable natural areas national monuments to protect them for future generations. After all, many of Leavitt's constituents were still having fits over former President Bill Clinton's similar declaration for Utah's Grand Staircase-Escalante region.

But Leavitt's logic became clear when the State of Utah School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, an independent agency that manages 3.5 million acres of Utah trust land, proposed a land swap as part of the deal: The state would give up 108,000 acres in the proposed national monument area, and in turn

the BLM would hand over 137,000 acres of federal land. The problem, according to BLM appraiser Kent Wilkinson, was that the parcels were presented as being of relatively equal value, when in fact the federal government stood to lose somewhere around \$100 million swapping out acres rich in oil and gas for the state's non-mineral land.

The State could drill for the oil and gas on these lands and the profit would go to Utah. Wilkinson and at least five other BLM employees repeatedly pointed out the inequity, but top BLM officials paid no attention.

"There are strong ties in Interior and the BLM to Utah," Wilkinson explains. "A lot of times what comes from the top down is to get the deal done. It's not the first instance where you see information that's being submitted by staff as supposedly the good science that they're supposed to use in making these decisions, you know, get doctored or modified in ways that aren't appropriate because they don't sell the deal that's being proposed by the politicians or the people in power at Interior."

Wilkinson nonetheless persisted with his criticism, drawing the ire of Utah Republican Rep. Chris Cannon who told a *Washington Post* reporter in August 2002, “I want to make sure they get slapped hard because they’re acting inappropriately.” To *The Salt Lake Tribune* he added, “One of these appraisers lied about the project. That appraiser is going to be asked some very tough questions.”

Realizing his job might be on the line, Wilkinson took his concerns to the U.S. Office of Special Counsel, where his testimony prompted an investigation by the Interior Department’s Inspector General. The ensuing report concluded that Wilkinson was correct in his assessment of the lopsided deal, and blamed several mid-level BLM officials for the scam.

But the report did not entirely exonerate Griles or BLM Chief Kathleen Clarke. Although Clarke told investigators she had “orally recused” herself from participating in the deal, Clarke’s ties to Utah are as close as they come. She worked as an aide for Leavitt and for former Utah Republican Rep. Jim Hansen, another proponent of the land deal. Prior to joining the Bush team at Interior, Clarke headed up the Utah Department of Natural Resources. Ultimately, Interior Secretary Gale Norton called off the swap. According to the *Tribune*, the Inspector General has targeted Clarke and Griles for further investigation.

## Rocky Mountain Front: Bush’s Dirty Answer to Our Energy Needs

The mountains of Montana’s Rocky Mountain Front force an abrupt end to the high plains and prairie country. It’s a visible fortress that provides one of the last best refuges in the lower 48 states for grizzly bears, and shelters the nation’s largest bighorn sheep herd. A great span of wilderness totaling 5 million acres that stretches from the state’s

After our research exposed Deputy Secretary of the Interior J. Steven Griles’ ethics violations, three books on the *New York Times* top 10 best-seller list highlighted our work, including:

- **“Bushwhacked”** by Molly Ivins and Lou Dubose
- **“Lies and the Lying Liars that Tell Them: A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right”** by Al Franken
- **“The Great Unraveling: Losing Our Way in the New Century”** by Paul Krugman

capital in Helena to the Canadian border, the Front includes a region called the Badger-Two Medicine, sacred to the Blackfoot Tribe.

Various oil and gas companies have been itching to drill the Badger and other portions of the Front for years. Government geologists estimate there could be as many as 1.8 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, though conservationists have long argued much of that may not be economically efficient to extract.

Chevron and Fina made the last big push during George Bush senior’s administration, but were shut out in a maelstrom of public opposition. In 1997, then Forest Service supervisor Gloria Flora announced a moratorium on new leases on the Front. But under the pressure of three executive orders from the Bush White House (including one which, according to *The Washington Post*, was written by the American Petroleum Institute, another of Grile’s former clients) urging federal agencies to expedite oil and gas production, the BLM is pushing to develop a series of existing leases on the Front.

Now retired from the Forest Service and working with a coalition of groups to protect the region, Flora

expects the BLM to begin an Environmental Impact Statement on the drilling proposal in early 2004, and says she believes the Bush administration intends to leave a sweeping legacy here.

“Every major species of plant and animal that was present at the time of Lewis and Clark is present now, with the exception of free-roaming bison,” she says. “So we have this tremendous treasure trove, this little tiny percentage of land that’s left, that can give us some idea of our history, our culture, of what it used to be like.

“Why is the Bush administration putting the Rocky Mountain Front in their crosshairs? Why are they putting the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in their crosshairs?”

Flora says, “I think the answer is pretty easy: They’re doing it because they know if they can get to ANWR, if they can get into the Rocky Mountain Front in Montana, there can be no other case made for lands that are more ecologically, socially or culturally sensitive than those lands. They get in there, they’ve got free reign to get in anywhere from this point forward regardless of who’s president.”

In the Bush administration’s push for more energy, some of our most stunning and irreplaceable Western lands are on the chopping block. Unfortunately, the assault of these awesome landscapes is no surprise with every key environmental post filled with former energy lobbyists. But there is hope. Friends of the Earth is defending these areas through our work to end industry subsidies in the energy bill, our exposés of corporate paybacks by Bush political appointees and our alliances with grassroots activist groups in the West.

*Andrea Peacock is the author of “Libby, Montana: Asbestos and the Deadly Silence of an American Corporation.” She lives south of Livingston, Montana.* ■

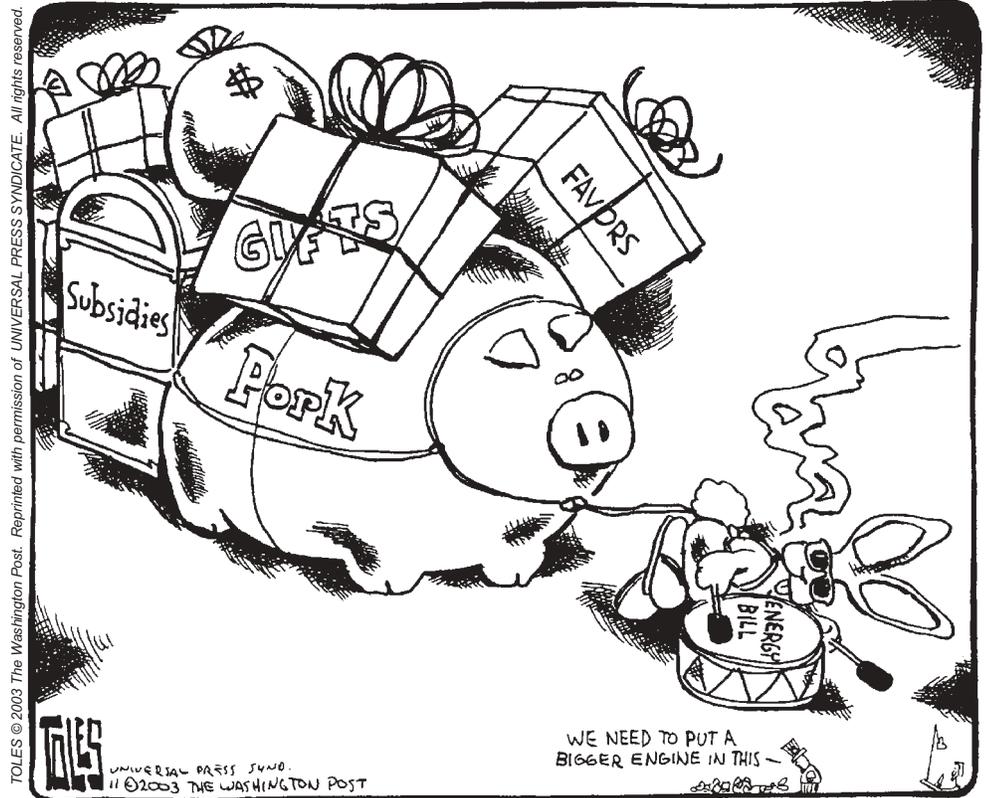
# Special Interest Energy Bill Put on Ice

By Sara Zdeb

Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) called congressional energy legislation the “leave no lobbyist behind” bill. Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.) called it the “Hooters and polluters” bill, because its giveaways would benefit everyone from ExxonMobil to a Louisiana mall housing a Hooters restaurant. After failing to muster the votes needed to pass it, Senate leaders shelved the energy bill until next year.

Defeat of the energy bill this year represents a major victory for environmental groups, and a major setback for the Bush administration. The bill was the final, legislative product of the secret Bush-Cheney energy task force, which released an energy plan two years ago after meeting with industry allies. And while proponents of the bill have vowed to revive it in January, the delay will only give senators and the public more time to uncover the many new handouts to special interests buried in the bill.

The bill emerged from a House-Senate conference after three months of negotiating, during which staff for chairmen Rep. Billy Tauzin (R-La.) and Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) wrote a final conference report behind closed doors. The resulting bill included a number of provisions not passed by either the House or the Senate, including one



that would weaken clean air standards by delaying important pollution control measures for cities whose air quality fails to meet Clean Air Act standards.

The bill also would have exempted producers of the toxic gasoline additive MTBE, which has polluted water supplies across the nation, from product liability lawsuits. This would leave taxpayers to foot an estimated \$29 billion cleanup tab, while cutting off numerous lawsuits that states and communities have filed. Between this provision and a host of tax breaks and spend-

ing subsidies, the bill would provide more than \$60 billion to America’s worst polluting industries.

Other objectionable provisions in the final bill would exempt the oil and gas industry from clean water laws, make it easier for dangerous nuclear material to fall into the wrong hands and prioritize oil and gas drilling over all other uses of our Western public lands. The bill also ballooned with the addition of pork-barrel projects aimed at securing the votes of wavering senators: for example, support for a coal plant in Minnesota was added for the benefit

of Sens. Norm Coleman (R-Minn.) and Mark Dayton (D-Minn.).

Despite Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle's (D-S.D.) support of the bill, environmentalists were able to forge a winning, bipartisan coalition of senators who opposed the bill's environmental roll-

backs and its steep price tag. Republican Sens. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.), John Sununu (R-N.H.), Lincoln Chafee (R-R.I.), Susan Collins (R-Maine) and Olympia Snowe (R-Maine) joined McCain and a number of democrats in upholding a bipartisan filibuster.

The Bush administration and the bill's congressional sponsors have announced plans to consider the bill again in January. Between now and then, environmentalists will continue working to ensure that this fall's victory remains permanent. ■

# Ad Campaign Helps Defeat Bill

**D**uring consideration of congressional energy legislation, Friends of the Earth launched a major paid media campaign to defeat it. The ads highlighted some of the bill's most egregious giveaways to polluting industries, and urged readers to contact their senators.

The campaign included a full-page ad in the national edition of *USA Today* (circulation: 2.2 million), charging energy committee chairmen with delivering polluting paybacks to powerful energy companies. The ad featured an image of oil derricks on the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol, under a headline that read "The New Energy Plan: Drilling for Dollars."

The campaign also included a series of ads targeted at undecided senators whose votes were needed to help sustain a filibuster of the bill. The ads ran in the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette*, *Concord Gazette*, *Indianapolis Star*, *Manchester Union-Leader*, *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Portland Press Herald* (combined circulation: 1.3 million).

Each of the ads criticized the bill for providing billions in taxpayer handouts to the oil, gas, coal and nuclear industries. They also high-

lighted provisions that would shield producers of the chemical MTBE from liability lawsuits, exempt the oil and gas industry from clean water protections and weaken clean air standards.



# Pushing for Fair Global Trade Rules

By David Waskow

**G**lobal trade policy will never be the same. On Sept. 14, World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations in Cancún, Mexico, collapsed over a bitter dispute between developing countries and rich countries, including the United States. Then, in November, the major summit in Miami to negotiate President Bush's trade plan for the Western Hemisphere resulted in a hollow agreement with no real substance.

## Negotiations Collapse

As the collapse of the WTO talks took place, more than 20 Friends of the Earth analysts and campaigners from around the world were there to advocate for a fair and environmentally sustainable trading system.

Following Cancún, the WTO still exists, but the critical fault lines that emerged – primarily on two key issues, multinational investment and agriculture – will not go away.

Developing countries refuse to accept an expansion of WTO rules to new areas, which would provide extensive rights to multinational corporations for their international operations – but would place no environmental or social obligations on those corporations.

During the Cancún talks, the poorest countries also refused to accept an expansion of agricultural trade policies that allow agribusiness to dump large quantities of foodstuffs into developing countries, placing an intense economic squeeze on small farmers and peasants. Friends of the Earth believes that an environmentally sustainable approach to agricultural trade must have the interests of small farmers at its center, not factory farms and

photo credit: Damian Sullivan



The Corporate Giant and Friends of the Earth activists catalyzed the collapse of the World Trade Organization negotiations in Cancún, Mexico.

agribusiness corporations. Developing countries rightly said that no deal is better than a bad deal.

What happened in Cancún was a major victory for all those working for international trade that is consistent with the needs of poor people and the environment. The task ahead is to turn the opportunity created by the rejection of bad trade policies into momentum for a proactive and positive response to the realities of a global economy.

## A Hollow Agreement

Trade ministers from 34 countries met behind closed doors in Miami to negotiate the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) trade agreement. Friends of the Earth was there, too, with a coalition of environmental, labor, farmer, consumer and religious groups to call a halt to the secret negotiations.

The FTAA threatens natural resources and environmental laws from Alaska to Chile. It will lower barriers to trade and give new rights to corporations, without including any measures to protect the environment.

To the dismay of the Bush administration, the leaders could only agree on a watered down declaration for the proposed FTAA proposal. With the trade agenda in disarray, we have some real opportunities ahead to work on alternatives to fundamental problems with the global economy, such as the lack of disclosure by U.S. companies of their environmental, labor and human-rights practices abroad.



Read David Waskow's daily updates for *Grist Magazine* from the FTAA Ministerial meeting [www.foe.org/camps/intl/green-trade/ftaa](http://www.foe.org/camps/intl/green-trade/ftaa).

# Better Options Than More Roads

By Greg Smith

**T**he U.S. House and Senate have until February to act on a massive and highly controversial transportation spending bill. This bill is the second largest discretionary funding package considered by Congress – second only to the military budget. Whatever the amount Congress and the administration decide upon, that money could do a tremendous amount of good or an incalculable amount of damage.

Known as TEA-3 (Transportation Equity Act – 3) this bill will fund the next six years of surface transportation programs – roads, bus and rail transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities and related environmental programs.

Members of Congress are feeling intense pressure to channel transportation dollars to their states, and the highway lobby is already working to sell TEA-3 as a massive jobs bill, the answer to the nation's job woes, a potent election-year argument.

At the heart of an increasingly fierce debate are two complex issues. The first issue is how much money to spend and where to get it. And the second issue is whether to pave over the nation's fundamental environmental laws such as the National Environmental Policy Act and Clean Air Act in the rush to build highways.

## How Much and What's at Stake?

The Bush administration is asking for roughly \$250 billion, about 25 percent more than Congress approved in the 1998 transportation bill. Senate leaders are lobbying for a \$310 to \$320 billion package, with roughly \$250 billion going towards roads. Historically, 80 percent of the funding



Congress is preparing to work on the massive TEA-3 bill that will cover transportation funding for the next six years. The highway lobby is grabbing for its pork, while also attempting to dismantle federal laws that protect the environment.

goes towards highways and transit is left with the remaining 20 percent.

Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, is shooting for \$375 billion, nearly double the amount authorized by Congress in 1998. To get his \$375 billion, Young would have to convince his congressional colleagues and the administration to support either a hefty hike in the gas tax or pile onto the already huge and rapidly growing national debt.

Completely absent from the debate and draft bills so far is any serious discussion of the nation's transportation plan as it relates to our energy policy and global climate change despite the fact that transportation accounts for roughly 75 percent of U.S. oil consumption and one-third of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.

Instead, the highway lobby, with its friends in Congress and the administration, are determined to fill the highway pork barrel and dismantle federal laws that provide essential protections to public health and the environment.

## The Better Option

1. Increase funding for new transit, to maintain and better accelerate the increased rider ship seen over recent years.
2. Increase funding for other beneficial programs such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities, wildlife underpasses and renovations of historic train stations.
3. Provide substantial, reliable funding for Amtrak and other rail programs.
4. Repair, modernize or replace the hundreds of billions of dollars-worth of roads, bridges and rail systems.
5. Address the huge effect our transportation infrastructure has on global warming and our nation's addiction to oil.



## Take Action

Tell your members of Congress to fund transportation programs that protect the environment and promote mass transit. Visit [www.foe.org/action](http://www.foe.org/action). ■

# Financing Destruction: The Inter-American Development Bank

By Jon Sohn

**T**he Inter-American Development Bank's (IDB) decision in

September 2003 to finance the controversial Camisea gas pipeline in Peru has revealed the institution to be one of the most environmentally and socially irresponsible international financial institutions. While other public institutions refused to support this project, the IDB provided \$135 million in financing. The project cuts through protected forests and a wetland, and will expose uncontacted indigenous peoples to the outside world.

The IDB was established in 1959 to "accelerate economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean." Today, 46 nations are members of the IDB. Like the World Bank, voting power at the IDB depends on member nations' financial contributions to the institution. The United States has the largest percentage of voting rights, with approximately 30 percent control, giving the United States significant influence. The U.S. contribution is appropriated by Congress. All too often, however, our tax dollars are used by the IDB not for sustainable development as its mission directs, but to finance environmental disasters like Camisea.

Other public international institutions, such as the World Bank and

Photo credit: Derrick Hinderly, Amazon Watch



The U.S. Export-Import Bank, the U.S. Overseas Private Investment Corporation and Citigroup have all pulled out of the Camisea project due to violations of indigenous peoples' rights and the destruction to rainforests. Despite these negative consequences, the IDB provided \$135 million in financing to the project. The Camisea pipeline is only 100 meters away from this Shima community's school (above).

U.S. Export-Import Bank, have established environmental and social safeguards and environmental impact assessment policies that while imperfect, have stopped some of the worst projects and thereby helped protect indigenous peoples and environmentally critical habitats. Private banks like Citigroup are even starting to voluntarily adopt World Bank safeguard policies. Yet the IDB is mired in the past; its environmental policies remain broad and vague.

Nor does the IDB have any policies to protect the livelihoods and rights of indigenous peoples, even though these rights are recognized under international law. The IDB's "Independent Inspection Mechanism" is often dismissive of or unresponsive to the concerns of local communities, making it a useless mechanism to hold the institution accountable. If support for the Camisea project is a

trend of increased IDB investments in oil, gas and mining extraction in Latin America's tropical forests, the failure to even acknowledge the existence of indigenous peoples will threaten these forest dwellers and cast severe doubt on the IDB's legitimacy as a public institution.

Friends of the Earth will target the IDB in the coming months, including:

■ **Monitoring the Camisea Loan.** If environmental conditions attached to the Camisea loan are not fulfilled, we will call

on the IDB to revoke the loans and halt the project.

■ **Stopping Future "Replenishments."** The IDB periodically calls on member governments to replenish the bank with billions in public taxpayer dollars. Unless sweeping reforms are taken by the IDB's board of directors that protect the environment and indigenous peoples, we will lead efforts to block new funds to the institution.

■ **Blocking Congressional Appropriations.** To implement replenishments, Congress appropriates U.S. taxpayer dollars to the IDB. A public institution that lacks sound environmental, social and accountability mechanisms should not receive appropriations from the U.S. Congress. ■

# Do You Have a New Year's Resolution?

It's that time of year again when you start thinking about your New Year's Resolution. How can you be a better person for the new year? Have your past New Year's Resolutions only lasted a month or two? Well, here at Friends of the Earth, we thought of a great resolution – become a better friend of the Earth! You'll feel good and so will the planet.

## 1. Eat Free Range, Not Factory Farmed

Eat meat from free-range, organically raised animals, or choose meat alternatives. Buy locally-grown, organic, sustainably-raised food. Visit [www.foe.org/factoryfarms](http://www.foe.org/factoryfarms) for more information.

## 2. Use Cloth, Not Paper or Plastic

U.S. annual plastic bag consumption requires an estimated 12 million barrels



of oil – do your part to lessen America's addiction to oil. Visit our online store [www.foe.org](http://www.foe.org) or go to page 15 and order your Friends of the Earth tote bag made of organic cotton.

## 3. What Goes Around, Comes Around

Would you like your friends and family to know about a charity you care about, and provide them with a chance to support them in your name in place of a birthday, anniversary, Christmas or bar mitzvah gift? Now you can with [whatgoesaround.org](http://whatgoesaround.org). In less than five minutes you can create a 'wish list' of your favorite charities, then let your friends know that they can go to [whatgoesaround.org](http://whatgoesaround.org) and make a gift in your name to one of the charities you support. It helps a good cause, and cuts down on the clutter in your closet!

We've only listed a couple ways to live better but there are plenty more, such as recycling, reusing, not littering and reminding friends to do likewise. ■

## Earth Friendly Design of Our New Offices

### *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle*

By Lisa Grob

Friends of the Earth has moved to a new space. We are now located near historic Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C. In the design of our new offices, we found many ways to address environmental concerns. Existing materials such as doors, hardware, light-fixtures and

ceiling tiles were reused wherever possible. Some materials from our Vermont Avenue location such as the shelving units in the library have been reused in the new space. The materials generated in the demolition process, which would normally be sent to the city dump, were recycled instead. "Environmentally preferable" low-VOC paint was used on the walls. The kitchen and copy rooms' flooring tiles

are composed of natural materials. Materials for our built-in furnishings, like the receptionist desk and administrative stations are formaldehyde-free.

Greener building practices are becoming more accepted in the building industry. And, even with a modest budget we were able to make a difference. ■

# Breast Milk – A Canary in the Coal Mine

By Lisa Archer

**O**f the estimated 85,000 synthetic chemicals currently registered for use in the United States, more than 90 percent have never been tested for their effects on human health. Many of these chemicals, including dioxins, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and DDT, have been linked to cancer. Shockingly, recent studies have detected more than 200 of these synthetic chemicals in one of the last places they should be – human breast milk.

The most recent of these studies, one released by the Environmental Working Group and one by the University of Texas, found a toxic chemical used as a flame retardant for consumer goods in the breast milk of American women. Levels of this class of chemicals, known as PBDEs (polybrominated diphenyl ethers), are 10 to 100 times higher in the breast milk of American women compared to that of European women.

PBDEs are chemical flame retardants found commonly in furniture, computers, automobiles and animal fats. While researchers haven't determined the precise manner in which these chemicals are entering the human body, they continue to appear in large amounts. Scientists haven't definitively determined how PBDEs affect humans, but animal studies have shown that they can damage the developmental nervous systems of a fetus.

## How Did it Get There? Breast Milk and Body Burden

Breast milk has become yet another “canary in the coal mine” – an indica-



Flame retardants plus 200 other synthetic chemicals are appearing in American women's breast milk. These dangerous chemicals are passed to their infants during breast feeding.

tor of the pervasive pollution in our bodies and our environment. Synthetic chemicals including solvents, pesticides, fuels and flame-retardants, as well as toxic heavy metals accumulate in water, air and soil. From there they work their way up the food chain and eventually are consumed by humans. These chemicals accumulate in body fat and can remain in breast tissue for decades. The level of personal chemical contamination is referred to as an individual's “body burden.”

Studies show that all women carry a body burden of persistent pollutants in their blood, breasts and other fatty tissues. As mothers breastfeed their babies, some of these pollutants enter their babies' systems. Despite these

findings, scientists still consider breast milk the best nutrition for infants because of immunologic and neurological benefits.

## What Can We Do?

While this news is extremely disturbing, there is hope. Reducing or eliminating exposure to chemicals that persist in the environment or bioaccumulate in the food chain is an important first step.

Europeans began eliminating PBDEs years ago, which may account for the difference in the levels between American and European women's breast milk. Many countries have banned the use of organochlorine insecticides (such as DDT), which has resulted in significant decreases of insecticide levels in breast milk over the last two decades. This demonstrates that eliminating the production or use of a persistent, hazardous chemical can make a significant difference in exposure levels and the attendant health risks.

In addition, industry should be required to prove the safety of a chemical before it is put on the market and chemicals already on the market should be proven safe for human health and the environment.

Friends of the Earth and partner groups are currently working to develop a cancer prevention effort that will seek to eliminate the preventable causes of cancer, such as exposure to persistent environmental pollutants through our food, consumer products, air and water. Stay tuned for more information on this important effort as it develops. ■

## “Getting More From Less” T-Shirts

\$15 members, \$18 non-members

This v-neck tee reminds us, “the less we need, the less we use, the less damage we cause.” It is made from fairly traded Indian organic cotton that feels like silk. Available in sizes medium and x-large.



## Anti-SUV Bumper Stickers



\$2 each, \$5 for three

Show the world how you feel about high-polluting sport utility vehicles. The slogans came from a contest held at [www.suv.org](http://www.suv.org).

## Large Tote Bags

\$10 members,  
\$15 non-members

Friends of the Earth’s roomy, organic cotton canvas bag features a large Friends of the Earth logo. It is a perfect alternative to paper or plastic.



## Checks, Labels and Hemp Checkbook Covers

200 Single Checks \$14.95

240 Labels \$9.95

Hemp Cover \$14.95

Let people know you’re a friend of the earth with each check you write.

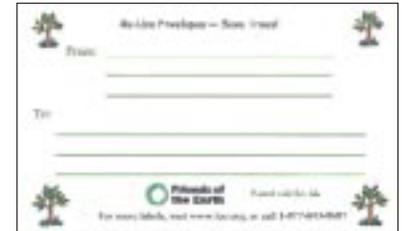
Order at <http://www.foe.org> and click on the store link or call toll free 800-243-2565.



## New Look! Reuse Envelope Labels

\$5 members, \$7 non-members

Save trees! Reuse your envelopes with Friends of the Earth’s labels. Just stick the 3” x 5” label over the old address and you can reuse envelopes, reducing the amount of waste that you produce. 50 labels per pad.



### ORDER FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM	SIZE	QUANTITY	COST	TOTAL
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<i>Start/Renew my Membership!</i>		x	\$25	=

<i>Shipping costs:</i>	
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\$15 - \$19.99:	\$4
\$20 - over:	\$5

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Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

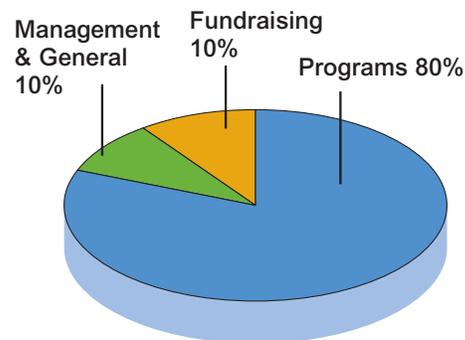
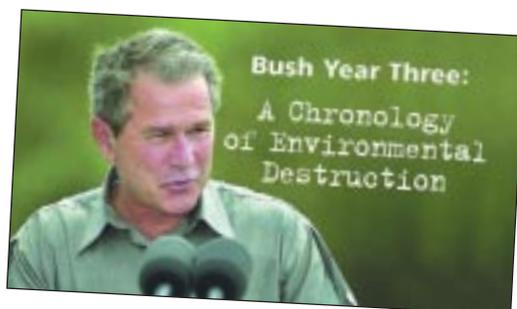
Shipping: \_\_\_\_\_

**Grand Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.*

# Your Contributions Are Working to Protect the Planet.

**J**oin Friends of the Earth today and get 10 of our Bush Chronologies to hand out to friends and family. The more people know about Bush's nonstop assault on our environment, the stronger the movement will become to protect our air, water, health and wildlife. Become a member by filling the form out on the back of this page.



■ **Our FY2003 Expenditures**

## Friends of the Earth On the Working Assets Ballot for 2004!

**I**f you use Working Assets long-distance service or have a Working Assets credit card, please keep Friends of the Earth in mind when you fill out your customer ballot in 2004. Your vote makes a big difference to us!

For those of you not familiar with Working Assets, it is a company that gives more than \$1 million annually to non-profit organizations across the country. It directs 1 percent of profits from these services to charities working for the environ-

ment, civil rights, international peace, education and economic and social justice. Since 1985, Working Assets has given more than \$35 million in grants and support.

Working Assets customers nominated Friends of the Earth to be one of the groups on the ballot. Then, an independent foundation chose 50 groups out of the pool, and Friends of the Earth was one of those groups. Now it is the customers turn to vote again on how the money is distributed among the chosen groups.



For more information about Working Assets, please call 1-800-788-8588, or go to [www.workingassets.com](http://www.workingassets.com). Don't forget to vote!



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