



NATURE'S VOICE

For the 3 million Members and online activists of the Natural Resources Defense Council



Wind Whistle Rock, Bears Ears region

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▶ **NRDC works to safeguard the earth — its people, its plants and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends.**

Victory**CHINA DELIVERS ON IVORY BAN**

As promised, China closed its last remaining ivory carving factories and retailers at the end of 2017, fulfilling a historic pledge to shut down its domestic ivory market. China's near-total ivory ban is a big step forward for elephant conservation, directly reducing the demand for ivory that has helped push these majestic animals to the brink of extinction. The government has also destroyed some stockpiled ivory and is taking steps to lock down any remaining inventory. Chinese officials, aided by NRDC and our allies, recently launched a major public education campaign to raise awareness of the ivory ban and the need to protect elephants.

Victory**TRADER JOE'S JOINS BOYCOTT**

Grocery chain Trader Joe's announced it will stop buying shrimp from Mexico, helping save the vaquita, the world's smallest and most endangered porpoise. For decades, vaquita have been killed by entanglement in gill nets used to catch shrimp in Mexico's Upper Gulf of California. The company's decision followed pressure from the Boycott Mexican Shrimp campaign, supported by NRDC and other organizations, and turns up the heat on other companies, such as Amazon, that still buy Mexican shrimp. There are believed to be just 30 remaining vaquita, and they are facing extinction within two years unless Mexico permanently bans all gill nets in vaquita habitat.

GREENING THE SUPPLY CHAIN

NRDC and the Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs in China have launched the IPE Green Supply Chain Map, the first tool to openly link leading multinational corporations to their suppliers' environmental performance. The database and map provide real-time data and trends in air pollution emissions and wastewater discharge for nearly 15,000 major industrial facilities in China, as well as access to environmental records for half a million more. Six companies — Target, Esprit, New Balance, PUMA, Gap Inc. and Inditex — are the first to step forward to be featured on the new map, publicly sharing their lists of suppliers and showing new levels of transparency and accountability on their manufacturing abroad. Go to: www.ipe.org.cn/MapBrand/Brand.aspx

COURTROOM BATTLE OVER MONUMENTS

In the single largest attack on public lands in U.S. history, President Trump has issued orders to strip federal protections from nearly two million acres of national monuments in Utah. The move aims to shrink Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument by almost half and Bears Ears National Monument by 85 percent, putting their spectacular redrock landscapes and scores of culturally significant sites at risk from drilling, mining and other industrial exploitation.

NRDC and our allies immediately filed suit in federal court to block Trump's dangerous assault. "Trump's actions are outrageous and illegal," says Sharon Buccino,

director of NRDC's Land and Wildlife program. "The law grants presidents the authority to create national monuments to protect our special lands and waters for future generations; it does *not* grant them the authority to destroy our monuments and hand them over to polluters and private interests."

Trump's move to drastically downsize Grand Staircase and Bears Ears appears to be but the opening salvo in a plan to upend America's century-old legacy of conserving our public lands and waters. In a report released the day after Trump acted, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke recommended that the president roll back protections for two additional monuments, Nevada's Gold Butte and Cascade-Siskiyou on the Oregon-California border. He also proposed opening up six more to

industrial extractive use, including destructive commercial fishing in three marine national monuments in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Zinke's recommendations come despite the fact that 99 percent of more than 2.8 million public comments supported maintaining strong protections for our national monuments. His proposals are a boon to special interests instead. The staggering reduction of Bears Ears, for example, followed a concerted lobbying campaign by mining company Energy Fuels Resources to gain access to uranium deposits that the monument's original boundaries put off-limits to the company. Says Buccino: "NRDC will fight in federal court on behalf of the vast majority of Americans who want our government to preserve — not rip apart — our national monuments."



Wind Whistle Rock, Bears Ears region

SPECIAL REPORT

Keystone XL Pipeline Is Facing New Legal Hurdles

A major tar sands oil spill and problems with permits have cast further doubt on the viability of TransCanada's Keystone XL pipeline. In November, TransCanada's existing Keystone I pipeline spilled 210,000 gallons of tar sands oil on farmlands in South Dakota — its third spill in that state alone. The seven-year-old pipeline has leaked dozens of times despite TransCanada's assurances that it would "meet or exceed world-class safety and environmental standards." The company has used similar language in pitching the much larger Keystone XL project.

Days after the spill, Nebraska's Public Service Commission rejected TransCanada's preferred route

for Keystone XL, choosing an alternative that would introduce a host of new complications for the beleaguered project. Meanwhile, a federal judge

ruled that NRDC could proceed with a lawsuit challenging the Trump Administration's hurried and sloppy granting of a cross-border permit for the pipeline last year. The two permit battles, which could tie up TransCanada for years, have fed uncertainty about the project's future. "The obstacles keep multiplying for this dirty energy pipe dream," says NRDC Policy Analyst Josh Axelrod. "It's another reminder

that America's focus should be switching to clean, renewable energy."



The Keystone pipeline spilled 210,000 gallons.

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NRDC.ORG/GIVE

NEW NRDC CAMPAIGN AIMS TO *STOP PRUITT!* AND SAVE THE EPA

When President Richard Nixon delivered his State of the Union address in 1970, America was in the grip of a nationwide environmental crisis. Decades of industrial pollution had gone virtually unchecked, taking a devastating toll. “Clean air, clean water, open spaces — these should once again be the birthright of every American,” Nixon declared. Within the year, he would go on to create the Environmental Protection Agency.

Nearly half a century later, the agency’s impact has been profound. Indeed, thanks to the EPA, our skies are no longer choked with deadly smog, our neighborhoods aren’t regularly used as dumping grounds for toxic waste, and our rivers aren’t so polluted that they burst into flames. Yet despite the EPA’s legacy of success in reining in corporate polluters, President Trump is set on thoroughly dismantling the agency. He once vowed that when he was done, there would be only “little tidbits left,” and in Scott Pruitt, he found just the man to wield the ax.



An orca in Puget Sound, one of many treasured waterways that would lose all funding under the Trump-Pruitt EPA budget

and clean water and to upend the progress we’ve made fighting climate change.

“As EPA administrator, Scott Pruitt is tearing down environmental safeguards while putting his agency at the beck and call of industries that exist to pollute and profit,” says NRDC Trustee Robert Redford. “We cannot let his slash-and-burn attitude toward our environment continue.” To that end, Redford has been working to sound the alarm and rally massive public opposition to Pruitt’s assault. “It’s time to put renewed pressure where it’s most needed, in challenging and shining light on what is taking place every day at the EPA,” Redford wrote in a widely read op-ed for *Time*. He then signed on as spokesperson for NRDC’s historic *Stop Pruitt!* campaign, which is working to mobilize tens of millions of Americans against Pruitt’s extremist assault while waging multiple courtroom battles to

block his most dangerous attacks.

“Can we stop Pruitt? Absolutely!” says NRDC President Rhea Suh. “History has shown, time and again, that presidents and their appointees can be forced to rein in attacks on our environmental safeguards if they face a firestorm of public outrage and a string of courtroom losses.” NRDC has already racked up a half dozen wins against the Trump Administration’s frenzy of rollbacks, including victories that scuttled Pruitt’s plan to allow more toxic mercury in our waterways and more dangerous air pollution from oil and gas operations.

Pruitt’s agenda amounts to nothing short of a hostile takeover of the EPA by the very polluters the agency was created to protect us from. During his first six months in office, Pruitt met almost daily with industry executives and lobbyists, often back-to-back — yet met just three times with public interest groups. From ExxonMobil, Shell and the American Petroleum Institute to the National Mining Association and Dow Chemical (to name but a few), Pruitt’s appointment calendar reads like a who’s who of America’s biggest polluters.

Such insider access comes with big — and swift — rewards. Less than three weeks after meeting with Dow CEO Andrew Liveris, for example, Pruitt summarily overruled EPA scientists and rejected an agency ban on chlorpyrifos, a “nerve gas pesticide” that causes neurological damage in children and infants. A mere hour after meeting with Tom Collier, CEO of The Pebble Partnership, Pruitt directed the

EPA to withdraw proposed protections for Alaska’s spectacular Bristol Bay watershed. In doing so, he breathed new life into a disastrous plan to gouge the Pebble Mine — a massive open-pit copper and gold mine — out of the headwaters of the world’s largest wild salmon fishery (*see story on last page*). A full-page ad in *The Washington Post* protesting Pruitt’s Pebble Mine decision, taken out by a coalition of Alaska Native, fishing and conservation groups including NRDC, demonstrates just how far Pruitt’s anti-environmental agenda falls outside the political mainstream. The ad was signed by three former EPA administrators, all of whom served under Republican presidents from Richard Nixon to George W. Bush, as well as by President Clinton’s interior secretary, Bruce Babbitt.



Our full-page ad protesting Scott Pruitt’s decision on the Pebble Mine ran in *The Washington Post*.

To be sure, Pruitt is quite unlike any of his predecessors. “You might say he’s ‘ruling’ the EPA in a manner more befitting a potentate than a public servant,” says Suh. Pruitt operates from a new soundproof communications booth at EPA headquarters, surrounded by a round-the-clock security detail of 30 bodyguards (at a cost to taxpayers of \$2 million). He has systematically shut out the EPA’s staff of scientists and experts from policymaking decisions and launched an intimidation campaign to keep them from going

“*Pruitt’s ‘new day’ is looking more and more like a waking nightmare for anyone who wants clean air to breathe...*”

Prior to Trump’s appointing him EPA administrator, Pruitt served as Oklahoma’s attorney general for six years — and sued the EPA no fewer than 14 times to block clean air and water safeguards, often to the benefit of Big Oil, Big Ag and other industries that had supported his political career. Now in Washington, Pruitt has wasted no time implementing a scorched-earth strategy to roll back vital protections for clean air

“*History has shown that presidents and their appointees can be forced to rein in attacks on environmental safeguards...*”

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public with their concerns. He's purged scores of scientists from the EPA's scientific advisory committees, replacing them with those on the payroll of the chemical and fossil fuel industries, all the while recruiting insiders from those same industries to serve as his top lieutenants. No wonder Pruitt proclaimed at one of his industry conclaves that it's "a new day, a new future" at the EPA.

"That 'new day' is looking more and more like a waking nightmare for anyone who wants clean air to breathe, clean water to drink and food that's safe to eat," says Suh. "If we don't want to find ourselves living in a polluter's paradise, then millions of Americans must join forces right now to stop Pruitt from wrecking the EPA."



At the behest of industry, Pruitt is taking aim at safeguards that control air and climate pollution.

TAKE ACTION

nrdc.org/stoppruitt



Coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge

Arctic Refuge Faces New Drilling Threat

Caving in to decades of industry pressure, Congress has voted to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska to oil and gas drilling, an outrageous corporate giveaway that pro-polluter lawmakers tacked on to the massive tax bill signed by President Trump. The refuge is one of the last truly unspoiled wild places on earth and America's premiere birthing ground for polar bears, and NRDC has fought in court, Congress and agencies for more than 30 years to defend it from being destroyed by

the fossil fuel industry. Despite the setback in Congress, the battle rages on.

"We are going to fight every effort by Big Oil and its allies in the Trump Administration to begin drilling in the Arctic Refuge," says NRDC Alaska Director Niel Lawrence. "The industry still faces a long road ahead of securing leases and permits, and we'll be challenging those aggressively. We'll also be ready to haul the administration into court if necessary to save the refuge." As in past campaigns in defense of the refuge, NRDC will be rallying overwhelming public support to save this irreplaceable wilderness from corporate plunder.

Fighting Pesticides That Harm Pollinators

Bees and other pollinators are dying off at an alarming rate, yet the Environmental Protection Agency continues to allow the sale of toxic, bee-killing pesticides known as neonics. In fact, the EPA has failed to consider the impacts of these toxic chemicals on endangered and threatened species when approving them for sale, a clear violation of the Endangered Species Act. In response, NRDC has filed suit, aiming to restrict the use of dozens of pesticide products until the EPA obeys the law.

"The agency ignored endangered bees, butterflies and birds when it approved the widespread use of neonics," says NRDC Senior Attorney Rebecca Riley. "It's time for the EPA to do its job and make sure our most vulnerable species are protected from the products it allows on the market." The use of neonics has soared in recent years, with millions of pounds applied to crops annually. Unlike traditional pesticides, neonics turn every part of a plant poisonous, and they linger in soil and water for years. NRDC has identified 26 species at risk, including the rusty patched bumblebee, the Karner blue butterfly and the black-capped vireo.



Endangered Karner blue butterfly

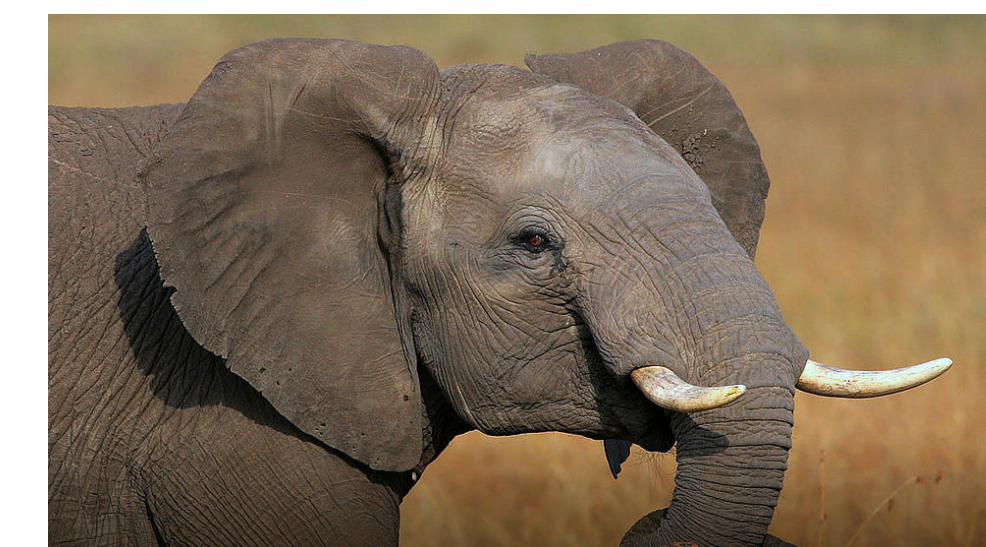
NRDC Sues to Stop Elephant and Lion Imports

NRDC and the Center for Biological Diversity have taken the Trump Administration to court for allowing hunters to import elephant and lion trophies from Zimbabwe into the United States. African elephants and lions are protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, and both have suffered staggering declines in past decades. Removing a ban on trophy imports would be a dangerous step backward in the fight to save these two iconic species.

Under pressure from NRDC and other groups, the Obama Administration banned elephant trophies from Zimbabwe in 2014. Lion imports have not been allowed since January 2016. The Trump Administration lifted the bans despite alarming elephant declines and political instability and corruption in Zimbabwe.

After a public backlash, Trump hinted on Twitter that he might reconsider his administration's stance on elephants. But he made no mention of lions, whose numbers have plummeted by 43 percent in the past two decades. The administration has also established a "conservation council" to advise Trump on the benefits of trophy hunting, which suggests that more questionable decisions could be forthcoming.

Safari Club International and the National Rifle Association have intervened to help defend the government against our lawsuit. "Elephants and lions are in crisis now," says NRDC Wildlife Advocate Elly Pepper. "If we don't force the administration to completely revoke its decision, President Trump could quietly start allowing imports as soon as he stops facing criticism on Twitter."



Renewed Push for Toxic Mine in Alaska Faces Fierce Opposition

Fueled by the Trump Administration's pro-extraction agenda, Canadian mining company Northern Dynasty Minerals is forging ahead with plans to dig the Pebble Mine — a colossal gold and copper operation at the headwaters of Alaska's Bristol Bay, home to the world's most productive wild salmon fishery. The company recently announced

application is 'garbage in, garbage out,'" says NRDC Western Director Joel Reynolds, who has led our international campaign against the mine since 2009. "That's because there is simply no way to ensure protection of the world's greatest wild salmon ecosystem — producing 60 million fish this year alone — from contamination caused

First Quantum Minerals has yet to fully commit to partnering with Northern Dynasty. NRDC is moving swiftly to build public and shareholder pressure on First Quantum to persuade it to walk away from the project and deprive it of critical financing, as we did successfully with the mine's former corporate backers, Mitsubishi, Rio Tinto and Anglo American. And we are prepared to haul the EPA and Northern Dynasty into federal court if necessary to block the mine, which, when fully developed, would generate

10 billion tons of contaminated mining waste.

A three-year, twice-peer-reviewed scientific study commissioned by the Environmental Protection Agency determined the mine would destroy nearly 100 miles of streams and almost 5,000 acres of wetlands. Under President Obama, the EPA proposed restrictions that effectively barred construction of the

mine, but those restrictions were dropped by the Trump Administration. "It's still the wrong mine in absolutely the wrong place," says Reynolds. "For as long as it takes, we will fight to defend Bristol Bay, its fishery and its people from what the EPA has already concluded would be unavoidable and potentially catastrophic harm."

by a toxic open-pit copper and gold mine in its pristine headwaters." Northern Dynasty's rosy announcement aside, formidable obstacles remain for the company before it can build its disastrous mine — and ample opportunity for NRDC and the coalition of Alaska Native, commercial fishing and other local groups to intensify the fight against it. For starters,

that it has signed on a new corporate partner for the controversial project — First Quantum Minerals, also Canada based — and has formally filed applications for federal permits to build the mine, which is opposed by 80 percent of Bristol Bay residents.

"Inevitably, Northern Dynasty's permit



Bristol Bay wilderness

Saving China's Last Great Amur Tigers



By Zack Strong,
Land and Wildlife Advocate

"They've caught both tigers and leopards on this camera," my NRDC colleague Lisa Hua told me, her eyes excited. We stood outside our vehicles along a jeep road in the forested Wangqing Nature Reserve in remote northeastern China, not far from the Russian and North Korean borders. We listened, with Lisa translating, as Chinese forestry officials explained that the field camera placed on the tree in front of us had caught images and even video of some of the region's — and the world's — last remaining wild Amur tigers and leopards, right where we were standing.

I looked around, wondering what it would be like to suddenly see a 600-pound tiger in this quiet, foggy,

mountainous forest. Back home in Montana, I'd seen a mountain lion in the wild once, in the woods of the Swan Valley. But our mountain lions are kittens compared with the great Amur tigers, which can be six times larger — big enough to occasionally prey on black and brown bears.

China recently announced that it would be developing a new Northeast Tiger and Leopard National Park. NRDC is supporting the government as it decides how best to administer the park to "ensure harmony between humans and nature." We will also be assisting with developing practices for reducing human conflicts with the big cats. The proposed park is a much-needed boon to the struggling



Amur tiger in Wangqing Nature Reserve

felines, whose populations are dangerously small. Only a few hundred Amur tigers, and only a few *dozen* Amur leopards, remain in the wild. Creating the park will be a critically important first step toward protecting and recovering these magnificent carnivores and their habitat.



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