

# Greenwashing, Whitewashing and Pseudo Environmentalism



# What Does Being Green Mean?

## OUR SUMMER NEWSMAGAZINE

feature article describes recent attempts the government, private industry and others have made to portray their wares as “green” or environmentally sound when in fact they are often harmful, or worse, result in a 180-degree turn from the intended positive objective. As active stewards of the environment it is our responsibility to discern the well-intentioned and honest figures from those hoping to capture support through deceit.

With both the House and Senate under Democratic control after the last election, we anticipated significant progress on environmental matters. This hope appeared justified when in January the House overwhelmingly passed legislation to eliminate oil company subsidies and put the money into a clean energy fund. However, as we entered the summer months, the euphoria subsided as key Democratic committee chairs produced energy legislation that would actually take a step backward.

This is a prime example of the federal government using a bait and switch to create the image of positive, “green” legislation that in fact is environmentally detrimental. This summer Congress debated including subsidies for liquid coal in the energy bill. The burning of liquid fuel from coal in vehicles releases far more greenhouse gases than gasoline. Indeed, using a gallon of liquid



photo credit: Norm Dean

Brent Blackwelder, President

coal would emit twice the greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

It is a fundamental mistake to pursue a solution to energy independence that exacerbates global warming. We need win-win solutions, and right now, our best option is energy conservation. Any reduction in the use of coal, oil or gas helps solve not only global warming, but also problems such as air and water pollution, wildlife habitat destruction and damage to our bodies from mercury and smog.

Conservation comes in two forms: one, changing personal habits and behavior and two, utilizing technology that gets the desired result with less environmental damage. Examples of the first include walking, biking or using public transportation to get around. Examples of the second would be using water-conserving showerheads or energy-efficient refrigerators. But it most

certainly is not achieved through policies that propose increased production of fuels like liquid coal as suggested in early versions of the energy bill.

In another example of greenwashing, some oil companies are now engaged in heavy advertising to convince the public that they are really operating in environmentally sound ways. For example, British Petroleum (BP) employs slick public relations representatives to create “green” ads to promote its goal of moving “beyond petroleum,” yet the company still generates an overwhelming majority of its revenue from oil and gas. Closer examination of BP’s practices reveals further discrepancies. BP is preparing to give \$500 million to university researchers to undertake studies on genetically engineered biofuels. Far from being a no-strings-attached proposition, this gift would include stipulations that BP will have the patents on the genetically engineered fuels, and thus end up controlling the fuels of the future. Furthermore, the consequences of releasing genetically modified biofuels plants into the environment are largely unknown.

It just goes to show that in today’s environment of greenwashing, whitewashing and pseudo environmentalism we all need to be conscious consumers of news and information.

*Brent Blackwelder*

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# Greenwashing, Whitewashing and Pseudo Environmentalism

Prepare for the age of global warming lip service

By Josh Hilgart

**NOW THAT THE EMERGING** planetary climate crisis is becoming manifest, expect nearly everyone seeking customers or voters to drape themselves in green. While there are certain to remain a handful of reactionaries who will reserve their last breath to debase the “tree-huggers,” viability for most on the public stage will demand acknowledgement of human caused global warming.

Of course, acknowledging pending disaster and talking about change is not proof of conversion or commitment. Major greenhouse gas emitting industries will surely deploy campaign cash and PR flacks to spawn and promote dozens of emerald-tinted corporate and legislative initiatives conceived for the purpose of kicking real reform down the road. Joining the representatives of industry will be various snake-oil salesmen, eager to profit from bogus forms of carbon offsets or other flash-in-the-pan silver bullets.

Finally, there will be a spate of well-intentioned, but predictably insufficient measures that are derived from compromise and will forestall genuine solutions.

**Major greenhouse gas emitting industries will surely deploy campaign cash and PR flacks to spawn and promote dozens of emerald-tinted corporate and legislative initiatives conceived for the purpose of kicking real reform down the road.**

Such roadblocks present us with an enormous challenge. Not only must we discern good solutions from the bad and ugly, we must then expend time and effort persuading honest officials and our own neighbors to reject the decoys and make the hard choices. Making these choices could prove as difficult as carrying out their mandates.

To get an idea of what will be coming our way, we need only look at current examples in which the government, private industry and even environmental groups, in search of public relations victories, overplayed the benefits or soft-peddled the downsides of some action.

## The TXU Buyout

The most prominent recent example of a misleading environmental victo-

ry came with the buyout of TXU Energy by two private equity firms, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts and Texas Pacific. The equity firms, allegedly concerned that TXU’s dirty environmental reputation posed a commercial risk, struck a deal with Environmental Defense and National Resources Defense Council at the time of the buyout to scrap eight of TXU’s eleven planned coal-fired power plants. The story was leaked to the *New York Times* and subsequently bandied about the nation as evidence of a new era of industry-activist cooperation. Then, less than two months later, the other shoe dropped: the *Wall Street Journal* reported that TXU had been planning for some time to build two to five of the world’s biggest nuclear reactors – a terrible solution to cutting carbon emissions from both a cost and safety perspective.

The TXU story is disturbing for many reasons, but two stand out. First, given the longstanding (and then-unpublicized) plans for the expensive nuclear power plants, it is reasonable to question the likelihood that the eight coal-fired plants “scrapped” in the deal were ever



going to be built in the first place (only the three such plants that TXU still plans to build had reached substantial planning stages). Second, and perhaps more disturbing, the feel-good story lives on in the news media, which continue to cite positively the TXU example as evidence of a paradigm shift, without mention of the subsequent nuclear bait and switch. Only Friends of the Earth has stuck with the story, mobilizing activists in Texas and elsewhere to lobby against the nuclear plants.

### **The Planktos Carbon Offsets**

Another private-sector example of dubious environmental victories is an initiative by the company Planktos to dump thousands of tons of iron, reportedly shaved down to nano-sized particles, into the ocean off the coast of the Galapagos. Planktos – which describes itself as a “for-profit company that generates carbon offsets” – plans to use the iron to stimulate phytoplankton growth, which in turn would increase the ocean’s carbon absorption. The problem here is that this strategy is entirely unproven, and

*(continued on page 6)*

## **Are You Online?**

**Friends of the Earth is ramping up its e-Environmentalism to give our web-based grassroots network increasing opportunities to read about our work and weigh in on important issues – we want you to join us!**

**If you aren't already signed up to get our email alerts, then simply go to [www.FOE.org](http://www.FOE.org) today and drop your email in the green box.**

**Plug in and keep up today!**





according to some prominent scientists, likely to fail. Moreover, no one knows with certainty what harm the introduction of nano-sized iron particles – or even larger sized particles – might cause this ecosystem.

In a letter to the *Independent* (UK), twelve members of the National Oceanography Centre, Southampton, said of the Planktos effort: “[I]t is likely that almost all of the CO<sub>2</sub> taken up is released back to the atmosphere within a year. In addition, there is the considerable carbon cost of the [fertilization] process itself.” They add, “Commercial exploitation of this technique could cause substantial harm to the ocean ecosystem and may even reduce its ability to sequester carbon. Such an assault on these remote and fragile ecosystems should not be done until we can show there are demonstrable benefits that outweigh the costs.”

One additional window opened by the Planktos example is on the “carbon offset” industry, itself is a broad tapestry of good and bad science, with no regulation or certification. When one company or individual pays another to offset carbon emissions, what legally enforceable expectations are there that the company selling the offsets will engage in techniques that have been shown by peer-reviewed scientific study to effectively reduce carbon in predictable amounts? The answer is almost



always none, which is why Friends of the Earth will be calling for congressionally established certification programs for such schemes this year.

Friends of the Earth has already contacted billionaire Sir Richard Branson, whose name and award program for carbon capture innovations has been used by Planktos to garner media attention. We urged him to guard against those who would engage in reckless experimentation in pursuit of the Branson prize. We are also supporting the Environmental Protection Agency’s engagement of the London Dumping Convention to stop Planktos’ experiment near the Galapagos.

## Biofuels

Making fuel out of recently living organic material is a very hot area in energy policy, and one that holds great promise in the next few years. Sadly, policy is already lagging well behind the incomplete science, thanks to special interests eager to use the global warming threat to push their “solutions.”

While science is increasingly showing that corn ethanol can be a dirty, inefficient and socially and ecologically damaging power source, it remains the king of the biofuels. And despite the fact that it also holds limited potential for altering carbon emissions, it is back in Congress in 2007 –



at the center of the Democrats’ energy bill. But if corn ethanol portions of the energy bill remain intact, half of today’s production of corn would be required to meet annual ethanol targets in the bill just eight years away.

And corn ethanol is not the only bad choice out there. Demand for biofuels made from palm oil is already leading to mass deforestation, pumping tons of carbon into our atmosphere while removing filters – trees – that would have absorbed future carbon emissions.

Friends of the Earth is optimistic that there are biofuel solutions out there that could help us with our energy needs, possibly including fuel made from switchgrass or algae. But given that the biofuels we can mass produce now are not demonstrably cleaner to make or use than fossil fuels – and that the amount of corn required to fill a single 25-gallon SUV tank with ethanol could feed a person for a year – we think that responsible societies should focus today on other actions we can take to conserve energy and reduce our carbon footprint.

Friends of the Earth has taken a leading role in bringing pressure on lawmakers to enact sensible legislation regarding biofuels, having already improved bills moving through the Senate on this issue. However, there is much more work to be done before biofuels like corn

ethanol receive the scrutiny that they warrant on Capitol Hill.

## Coal to Liquid

Too often, “energy security” is pursued by Congress at the expense of the environment. The most flagrant example of this is the push for “coal to liquid” technology.

Because coal is found in abundance inside the U.S., this is a popular fuel source for those looking at displacing use of oil (not to mention the coal companies). In short, coal to liquid is a process by which coal is converted into a liquid that can be used in automobiles. But the environmental problems with this approach are manifold: the process of conversion requires a great deal of energy, boosting greenhouse gas emissions; the final product produces almost double the amount of greenhouse gases when it is burned in engines; and coal remains one of the most environmentally disastrous fuel sources to acquire, a process that results in mountain top removal, runoff of pollution into streams and rivers, and other forms of habitat degradation and pollution.

Unfortunately, members of both parties on Capitol Hill are pushing for this technology – particularly members from coal-producing

states. While the carbon and land-use impacts of coal to liquid are beyond dispute, the conflation of energy independence with energy responsibility has allowed the advancement of coal to liquid technology to parade as a sensible alternative to oil in some circles.

Friends of the Earth has had major successes on Capitol Hill by

**The promotion of flawed and outright dishonest initiatives to meet growing public demand for responsible action will continue in Congress and the media, which puts the burden of information gathering and accountability on the citizenry of this nation.**

mobilizing the public and working behind the scenes to slow down the advancement of coal to liquid to the point where there is hope that support for the process will become politically untenable.

## What You Can Do

The promotion of flawed and outright dishonest initiatives to meet growing public demand for responsible action will continue in

Congress and the media, which puts the burden of information gathering and accountability on the citizenry of this nation. Friends of the Earth will continue to bring the facts to Capitol Hill so that no staff are working in the dark, but we will also expand our public outreach efforts over the next year to ramp up not only the level of public knowledge, but public action.

If you are not already a part of our online activist network, sign up today – and get your friends on board too. This is the single most effective way for Friends of the Earth to inform the public and get them to take action over the internet or on the ground.

We also encourage you to talk to your friends, family and acquaintances about the information you get from Friends of the Earth and other reliable sources. Word of mouth is still the most effective way to get people to listen to ideas and concerns they have yet to consider.

Finally, if your membership to Friends of the Earth has expired, we hope you decide to renew. The financial support we receive from our members is what allows us to research the issues, disseminate information, lobby elected officials and organize our grassroots. ○

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

# Leave a Legacy of Blue Skies, Clean Air and Spectacular Wildflowers

**TO REMEMBER** Friends of the Earth in your estate plans, give this suggested wording to your attorney:

“After fulfilling all other specific provisions, I give, devise and bequeath \_\_\_% of the residuary of my estate [ or \$\_\_\_ ] to Friends of the

Earth, a charitable corporation (tax ID # 23-7420660) presently having offices at 1717 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington DC 20036.”

For more information, contact Chris Pabon at 866-441-7292 or [cpabon@foe.org](mailto:cpabon@foe.org) ○



photo credit: Erica Staaterman

# Learning from the Land



By Erica Staaterman

**LUNDBERG FAMILY FARMS** began production in 1937, when Albert and Frances Lundberg moved from Nebraska to California. Albert had witnessed the dramatic results of poor soil management during the Dust Bowl, so when he relocated to California he committed himself to farming organically, ensuring the utmost respect for the land.

Lundberg Family Farms grows and labels two types of GMO-free rice: “certified organic” and “eco-farmed.” The organic rice is grown under the policies of the California Certified Organic Farmers Program, which means that no synthetic fertilizers,

pesticides or herbicides are used. “Eco-farmed” is a less stringent classification: minimal amounts of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides are used only when necessary. The natural soil enrichment, planting and harvesting techniques employed for “eco-farmed” rice are the same as those used for organic rice in order to minimize the need for chemical treatments. About 55 percent of the Lundberg rice crop is classified as “eco-farmed” and 45 percent is organic.

In order to enrich the soil organically, nitrogen-fixing crops cover the land in wintertime and fields lie fallow every few years to let the soil replenish itself naturally. For weed control and pest management, fields are flooded when the seed is sown – also a necessary process for growing rice. After harvesting the rice at its fullest maturity, the leftover straw is not burned but is incorporated back into the soil and decomposed throughout the winter by waterfowl and other organisms. In storage, Lundberg organic rice is not fumigated, but is kept in an airtight,

chilled container. Insects are removed with a vacuum fan rather than chemicals. The Lundberg family also prides itself on its water conservation – typically using 25 percent less water than its rice-growing competitors.

Albert’s four sons, Eldon, Wendell, Harlan and Homer, have continued their father’s organic farming techniques for the past 65 years. In addition to their farms, Lundberg Family Farms has a dryer, mill and rice cake production facility, as well as a packaging and processing plant. This infrastructure allows the family to own and operate the entire business and ensure that their products are produced as sustainably as possible. In fact, on May 21, 2007, Lundberg Family Farms installed its second solar array as part of their effort to produce their own energy!

Please visit [www.lundberg.com](http://www.lundberg.com) to learn more about their farming practices and about where you can buy this delicious rice. ○

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

# ‘Tis the Season for Workplace Giving!

**FRIENDS OF THE EARTH** is a member of Earth Share, a nationwide network of America’s leading nonprofit environmental and conservation organizations that works to promote environmental education and charitable giving through workplace giving campaigns. If your employer participates in the federal government’s Combined Federal Campaign, United Way or other workplace giving cam-

paigns, you can donate a portion of your salary to Friends of the Earth through payroll deduction.

For more information and to find out if Earth Share participates at your workplace, visit [www.earthshare.org](http://www.earthshare.org). Friends of the Earth’s CFC designation number is 12067.

For other questions, contact Chris Pabon at (877) 843-8687, ext. 720, or [cpabon@foe.org](mailto:cpabon@foe.org) ○



**Earth Share**

# Is Trade Policy Taking a Green Turn?

By David Waskow

**FOR YEARS, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH** has been at the forefront of a broad movement to reshape trade agreements so that they support, rather than undermine, environmental protection. In recent months, we have focused our efforts on the most critical concerns in current trade deals, such as the rampant trade in illegally logged timber – an issue that was compounded by the Bush administration’s decision to push for a free trade deal with Peru, one of the worst global offenders in the illegal timber trade.

Earlier this summer, the political landscape of trade agreements shifted in important ways. In response to pressure from senior Democratic leadership in Congress, the Bush administration agreed to a set of new guidelines for trade agreements with Peru and Panama that the Bush administration wants to push through Congress in coming months.

These trade policy guidelines mark an important step forward by requiring countries to raise some environmental standards to the international level. But the guidelines agreed on by senior Democrats and the White House still fail to remedy some of the critical flaws in the general model used to negotiate trade agreements – especially the trade rules that allow foreign companies to challenge environmental laws. The final text laid out in the Peru and Panama trade deals will be the next opportunity to judge whether the revised trade policy guidelines hold water or whether yet

again environmental concerns have been set aside.

## Key Elements of the New Guidelines

For a number of years, environmental groups have criticized the U.S. model for trade agreements because it only requires countries to enforce their own, already existing domestic laws. Countries were not required to enforce international environmental standards like those on trading of illegally-logged timber from protected species such as mahogany. Under the new guidelines, countries belonging to a set of seven international environmental treaties will have to enforce those agreements, including rules that address critical issues such as endangered species protection, ozone-depleting substances and marine pollution.

The new guidelines also address a number of important timber-related issues in the agreement with Peru, where illegal logging has decimated large parts of the Peruvian Amazon rainforest. Under the guidelines, the U.S. Customs Service will have the authority to ensure that protected tree species such as mahogany are accompanied by certification that proves that they were logged legally. Peru will also have to improve its forest management laws. While limited to Peru at the moment, these kinds of provisions could be included in future agreements with other countries, particularly ones where illegal logging is a significant problem.

But the new guidelines for trade deals don’t fix some critically important problems in the U.S. trade model. For years, environmental



groups have raised concerns about the investor rights provisions that give foreign companies the right to circumvent our court system and challenge environmental laws and regulations before international tribunals. The companies can demand compensation if they believe environmental or public health laws have hurt their business interests in various ways. Already, Canada and Mexico have lost international investor lawsuits involving hazardous waste issues before tribunals established under the North American Free Trade Agreement. And the U.S. is facing a host of suits on issues stretching from restrictions on timber trade to mining regulations on lands near sacred Native American sites. Yet these investor rights rules continue to appear in our trade agreements.

The new guidelines did not tackle these threats to our public interest environmental protections. At the end of June, the so-called “fast track” negotiating authority granted to President Bush by Congress in 2002 expired. In any consideration of granting new negotiating authority to the president, it will be critical to ensure that environmental laws and our justice system are clearly protected from trade lawsuits. ○

# EcoBites

## Lake Berryessa – a Victory for our Public Lands!

Lake Berryessa is nestled between the hills of the Napa County Lake District in Northern California. Part of an 80,000 acre federal recreation area, the lake suffered from an invasion of private vacation trailers, jet-skiers and weekend vacationers in motor boats. The private trailers polluted the land and water and blocked public access to the lake, while the weekend partiers in motor boats and on jetskis were costing Napa County law enforcement millions of dollars.

Local group Berryessa Trails and Conservation came to Friends of the Earth's Bluewater team for help in protecting the lake and the surrounding environment through enhancing accessibility, environmental education and conservation projects to create nature-based recreational facilities at Lake Berryessa.

Bluewater generated thousands of public comments to the Bureau of Reclamation, easily outnumbering the pro-vacation trailer group that had dominated public land at the lake for more than 40 years. "This is a little, forgotten area of Napa County, that had 1,300 private vacation trailers on public land," said

Carol Kunze of Berryessa Trails and Conservation. "There are less than 500 permanent homes in the area, so the locals fighting for public access and the health of the lake were outnumbered by the vacationers. It was important for the federal government to see that there was broad support for these initiatives."

The six-year process bore fruit last summer with a decision to remove all private trailers and to broaden recreational activity at the lake to include hiking, biking, paddling and other forms of nature-based recreation. Furthermore, two no-motor zones were created, ensuring quiet, safe enjoyment of the outdoors.

## Climate Crisis Conference

This past April, Friends of the Earth spearheaded a conference designed to discuss the imminent danger climate change poses for the world's poorest people. The meeting brought together international development, religious, human rights and environmental leaders from around the globe and was attended by over 200 people.

Most developing nations – save perhaps China and India – contribute very little to global warming yet suffer disproportionately from



storms and flooding, droughts, drops in food production, water scarcity and disease.

Following the conference, several participants joined a discussion at Friends of the Earth headquarters where they formed a network interested in addressing issues at the intersection of international development and climate change. The group agreed that climate change is a driver of global poverty and that responsibility for mitigating and adapting to climate change should be equitable and borne by countries such as the U.S., which creates nearly 25 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

## Activists "Step It Up" on Climate Change

On April 14, 2007, activists made history by participating in the most effective day on record for global warming protests and rallies in the U.S. More than 1,400 events made up the 2007 Step It Up campaign, organized and launched by environmental author Bill McKibben ("Deep Economy") and his students from Middlebury College in Vermont.

In D.C., more than 1,000 people attended a rally on the lawn of





photo credit: Norm Dean

the U.S. Capitol where Friends of the Earth president Brent Blackwelder gave the opening remarks. His charged call for action on climate change urged people to look to places like California where electricity use per capita is half of what it is in the nation's capital and to cut wasteful electricity use and unsustainable transportation practices.

Photos of the 1,400 events are posted on the website at [www.stepitup2007.org](http://www.stepitup2007.org).

### Plug and Play in San Francisco Bay

The ports of San Francisco and Oakland will soon be a little cleaner, thanks to the advocacy of Friends of the Earth and other environmental justice groups. A regional air pollution agency has agreed to fund the installation of shorepower systems so cruise and container ships can turn off their polluting diesel engines and plug into the electric grid while docked. Ships need power while at the dock to run pumps, lights, refrigeration, air conditioning and other operations. But the deadly diesel

exhaust from the growing number of ships entering the ports threatens the lives of people living in the area. Connecting to the electrical grid can reduce air emissions by 90 percent, while slashing greenhouse gases by about 50 percent. The Port of San Francisco was awarded \$1.9 million to retrofit its main cruise terminal with electrical power lines to allow cruise ships to plug in within one year. The Port of Oakland received \$250,000 to demonstrate how a shoreside generator running on natural gas can provide cleaner power than unregulated engines burning bunker fuel on board container ships. American President Lines and Wittmar Cold Ironing are partnering with the port in the pilot project. ○

## Reception Honors Environmental Prize Winners

By: Chris Pabon

**IN APRIL, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH** held two successful events to honor the recipients of the 2007 Goldman Environmental Prize.

The Goldman Environmental Prize is the world's largest prize for grassroots environmentalists. Awarded annually since 1990, the prize has been presented to 119 people from 70 countries. Each of the winners, chosen from six continental regions, receives \$125,000. These individuals demonstrate exceptional courage and commitment, often working at great risk to protect our environment, and ultimately, life on Earth. They are extraordinary people who accomplish extraordinary things.

On April 21, we held a highly successful Goldman Prize pre-reception at Aquarium of the Bay in San



photo credit: Lisa Mathies

Francisco that we co-sponsored with the Rose Foundation and Global Community Monitor. Friends of the Earth Board member and Bluewater Network Founder Russell Long gave a presentation to 170 attendees about Friends of the Earth and the importance of dialogue and relationships with international activists.

A week later, Friends of the Earth and the Center for International Environmental Law hosted a joint

reception in Washington, D.C. for the winners. Both groups are among a very small circle of organizations who nominate people for the prize. The reception was attended by 80 people – among them ambassadors, Friends of the Earth members, and Friends of the Earth Board and featured locally produced food and beverages. Several of the award winners gave speeches. ○

# Exploring Conservation: Dr. H. Robert Krear

By Lisa Matthes

## THE FIRST TIME H. ROBERT KREAR

saw the snow-covered Rockies from the plains east of Denver he knew he was looking at a virtual mountain paradise. Fresh from the woods of the Appalachian Mountains in Pennsylvania, 20-year old Krear was embarking on a World War II military call to duty. As a member of the 10th Mountain Infantry Division Krear endured severe alpine training in one of the coldest winters Colorado has ever had – sleeping out in the snow, sometimes in -40° F, and training at altitudes of up to 14,000 feet. Krear recalls waking up one morning to the sound of tree branches cracking under the weight of the snow. But despite the frosty conditions there was nowhere else in the Service these alpine troops would have wanted to be.

Besides the atypical training conditions, this band of men was extraordinary in another way – many of the officers had been ski coaches to the men while in college and as a result they were closer than the average infantry. This was one of the reasons the 10th Mountain Division excelled in combat in the Italian mountains; another being their astonishing physical fitness.

It was there, at Camp Hale, CO, that Krear first ran across Friends of the Earth founder David Brower. Brower was a captain on the battalion staff and the two shared in the alpine training and combat experience in Italy. It was only after the war that Krear learned of Brower's background and interest in wilderness conservation, and he reflects that in a sense, Brower became a distant



mentor, albeit an unknowing one. In fact, Krear became a Friends of the Earth member when Brower founded it in 1969.

Through the mountain experiences of his home and in the war, Krear cultivated a desire to preserve wilderness and the wildlife therein. His personal commitment mirrored conservation groups nationwide that were recognizing the destruction of the pristine arctic terrain in Alaska by rampant commercialization. The only exception was the northeast corner of the Alaskan arctic and it was apparent that something had to be done very quickly to preserve that area.

In 1953, famous wildlife biologist Dr. Olaus Murie was selected to investigate an area of the northeast Alaskan lands and asked Krear to join him based on his education in forestry and zoology and experience in ecological research with the U.S. Forest Service and Fish & Wildlife

Service. As a veteran of the alpine, Krear was in his element as the Olaus Murie Arctic Brooks Range Expedition of 1956 investigated the Sheenjek Valley on the south side of the mountain range. The team of five held the same goal of preserving what wilderness remained in Alaska and recognized what privilege it was to be there, amongst the barren ground grizzlies, caribou, lynx, Dall sheep, willow ptarmigan and countless other creatures of the arctic. The Expedition ended up being a major contributor to the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).

And to this day Krear is still working in the name of preservation and conservation. In his recently-published book, "Four Seasons North: Exploration and Research in the Arctic and Subarctic,"\* he not only takes the reader on a fantastic journey from pole to pole, following his ecological research, but also elucidates on the threats still looming on the horizon for fur seals and sea otters.

Krear was recently recognized for his contribution to conservation when the Alaska Wilderness League asked him to speak about ANWR and offer his support of the Udall-Eisenhower Arctic Wilderness Act at a rally in Washington, D.C. last spring. The bill would once and for all preserve the integrity of this pristine, irreplaceable wilderness.

\*"Four Seasons North: Exploration and Research in the Arctic and Subarctic" is available through Vantage Press. ○

# Shape Up or Ship Out:

## Friends of the Earth Cruise Ship Pollution Lawsuit Demands Action from Environmental Regulators

By Teri Shore

**IN MARCH OF 2000**, Bluewater Network (now a division of Friends of the Earth), submitted a petition on behalf of 53 organizations, asking the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assess and regulate pollution from cruise ships. After waiting more than seven years for the federal government to respond by creating nation-wide regulation and monitoring of cruise ship pollution, Friends of the Earth filed a lawsuit against the EPA this past May.

The world's oceans are suffering and until the EPA responds to the demand for regulation, they will remain at risk. The lawsuit demands that the EPA assess the volume of cruise ship dumping and the harm it causes, as well as devise recommendations on how to reduce the amount of sewage, graywater, hazardous wastes and garbage discharged in bays, harbors and coastal waters.

"Since this petition was first filed seven years ago, we've seen tremendous growth both in the cruise ship industry and in the research that shows the impacts from cruise ships on our nation's waters," said Professor Michael J. Robinson-Dorn, who prepared the case for Friends of the Earth. He is director of the Kathy and Steve Berman Environmental Law Clinic at the University of Washington in Seattle. "Yet, the EPA has chosen to do nothing in response."

Calls for a national regime for regulating cruise ship dumping have also been made by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission.

The cruise industry has expanded by a whopping 107 percent over the past 10 years and in 2007 roughly 100 cruise vessels will carry more than 12 million passengers through North American waters. Yet despite this growth, our laws protecting ocean waters from pollution by dumping and contamination are stagnant.

Under current law, cruise ships are allowed to dump untreated sewage and other wastes directly into the ocean. Sewage contains fecal coli form, nutrients, viruses, bacteria and other contaminants that can harm human health by polluting beaches and other recreation areas, disrupt the food chain by killing shellfish beds and fisheries and destroy the environment through toxic algae blooms and the acidification of waterways. Equally unsavory graywater – wastewater generated from domestic processes such as washing dishes, laundry and bathing – contains fecal coli form, metals, hormones and other contaminants.

Oily bilge water – water stored in the hull of the ship to maintain equilibrium in stormy weather – can be discharged if treated, but all the major cruise lines have been fined



### Reefs at Risk!

Coral reefs support extraordinary biodiversity. They are home to over 4,000 species of fishes as well as crustaceans, mollusks and sea turtles, amongst other organisms.

Governments worldwide have taken measures to protect coral reefs because of the vast biodiversity that they support. However, our nation's very own Florida Keys National Sanctuary, home to the third-largest coral barrier reef in the world, is at risk due to pollution. As cruise ships dump sewage they release high levels of nitrates and phosphates into the water which can cause algae blooms that smother and kill corals. This in turn decreases the biodiversity of the plants and animals that rely on the corals. Removing nitrogen and phosphorous from wastewater requires technology that, at present, is lacking from sewage treatment facilities on board cruise ships. A scientific panel commissioned by the cruise industry recommended a sewage discharge ban within four nautical miles of any coral reef. At this time, however, neither the cruise industry nor the EPA has agreed to adopt such coral-saving policies.

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for bypassing treatment systems and dumping untreated bilge water.

In addition, luxury liners spew a range of pollutants into the air that can lead to acid rain and contribute to global warming. They can also spread invasive species by dumping untreated ballast water in coastal zones.

A typical one-week voyage with 3,000 people on board generates

about 210,000 gallons of sewage, 1 million gallons of graywater and 37,000 gallons of oily bilge water from the bottom of the ship.

Cruise ships can discharge raw sewage at a distance of three miles from shore, while treated sewage and oily bilge water can be released into harbors, estuaries and coastal waters without monitoring – so it is

unknown whether wastewater is even meeting treated discharge standards when dumped. Graywater can be discharged anywhere without any treatment. In contrast, discharging sewage on land requires federal permits and daily reporting on the levels of pollutants released in disposal. ○

# EPA Taken To Task in Landmark Supreme Court Ruling

By Danielle Fugere

**IN A STUNNING DEFEAT** for the Bush administration the Supreme Court recently ruled that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has the power to regulate greenhouse gas pollution from automobiles. In a lawsuit brought by Friends of the Earth and others, the Court rejected more than a dozen excuses offered by EPA for its continued refusal to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, including its claim of scientific uncertainty about global warming.

The decision is a major victory for the environmental movement. EPA must now regulate greenhouse gases from motor vehicles unless it can prove either that there is no link between global warming and greenhouse gases or that such gases do not endanger the public health or welfare. Given the overwhelming scientific consensus that global warming is caused by greenhouse gas emissions and that global warming threatens the health of the planet and its inhabitants, it will now be



nearly impossible for EPA to avoid doing its job.

Securing this victory signals the advent of change in global warming policies. For instance, EPA has finally agreed to hold hearings on California's landmark greenhouse gas reduction law for automobiles, after ignoring the request for more than a year and a half.

This case also grants states and other groups impacted by global warming standing to bring their claims to court, thus paving the path for future judicial successes.

The Court rejected EPA's arguments that it could not remedy the situation because emissions from developing nations like China will at some point offset our domestic reductions. The Court found that reducing domestic automobile emissions would reduce an enormous quantity of carbon dioxide. Based on evidence presented to the Court, the U.S. transportation sector emitted more than 1.7 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere in 1999 alone, accounting for more than 6 percent of worldwide carbon dioxide emissions. ○

# The No-Nano Guide to Sunscreen



By Ian Illuminato

**SUMMER IS A TIME FOR FUN** – escaping the house and going to the beach or pool or enjoying a sunny day in the park. Yet while the sun's rays can put a smile on your face, without protection, they can also lead to skin cancer and other diseases. Unfortunately the most common protection from overexposure to the sun – sunscreen – presents its own health safety hurdles.

Some sunscreen manufacturers are introducing possibly dangerous nanoparticles into their products. These particles are effective at blocking harmful radiation from the sun but they can also potentially wreak havoc on your body when absorbed through the skin, penetrating organs and other vulnerable areas of the body.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States; an estimated 40 to 50 percent of Americans who live to the age of 65 will have skin cancer at least once. So while nanoparticles might be dangerous, it would be unwise to stop using sunscreen all together.

The key to safe sunscreen use is to find out what is in the products you use and to ensure that they are nanoparticle-free.

Friends of the Earth wants to help you avoid sunscreens that may compromise you and your family's health. That's why we have released a consumer guide to nano sunscreens. We surveyed more than 150 sunscreen manufacturers to discern whether their products contain nanoparticles and what safety testing they have carried out. The *Friends of the Earth Guide to Nano Sunscreens*, available on our website at [www.foe.org/Sunscreen\\_Report](http://www.foe.org/Sunscreen_Report), ranks brands along a color-coded scale, from Green (Nano-Free) to Yellow (May Contain Manufactured Nanoparticles) to Red (Contains Manufactured Nanoparticles),

depending on manufacturers' published policies and the information we received from our survey.

The Royal Society and the Academy of Engineering (UK) have warned governments that nanoparticles should be treated as new chemicals, and sunscreens and cosmetics containing nanoparticles should be subject to rigorous safety testing prior to commercial release. However, sunscreen and cosmetics manufacturers in the United States are not required to identify nanoparticle ingredients on product labels or to conduct new safety tests. Our government has yet to establish sound regulation to protect consumers from risky nanotechnology and until it does, consumers should be wary.

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## Nanotechnology Exposed

Nanotechnology is a new science involving the manipulation of materials at the scale of atoms and molecules. The unit of measurement for the nanoscale is a nanometer (nm), which is one billionth of a meter – extremely tiny stuff. By way of comparison, a human hair cell is a whopping 80,000 nm wide.

However, “nano” does not simply mean tiny; rather, it is best understood to mean fundamentally different: materials engineered or manufactured to the nano-scale exhibit different essential physical, biological and chemical properties from their bulk material counterparts. For example, when a material is engineered to the nanometer-level it becomes much more reactive due to its exponentially-increased relative surface area. Nanomaterials can also have very different and unpredictable optical, magnetic and electric properties, in part because quantum physics effects come into play at the nano-scale.

Sunscreens and cosmetics are only the tip of the experimental iceberg for this new science. Nanotechnology is increasingly used in a wide variety of applications including food production and food packaging. And the technology could potentially further affect our lives – from crippling our security and privacy with the creation of never-before-seen weapons and surveillance systems to altering the fabric of the clothes we wear and creating batteries from viruses constructed at the nano-scale. For more information on nanotechnology visit [www.foe.org](http://www.foe.org) and <http://nano.foe.org.au/>.

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In the absence of government regulation, safety testing and comprehensive product labeling, our guide can help you make smart choices.

The Friends of the Earth guide is a comprehensive resource. However, there's also a quick visual test you can use to find out if your sunscreen has the potential to contain nanoparticles. Before you head pool-side, take note of whether the sunscreen you're rubbing on appears white or is instead transparent. If you're getting the usual snowman glaze, then keep rubbing. But if your sunscreen is transparent, you are most likely using lotion that contains potentially toxic nanoparticles. Sunscreen manufacturers are increasingly using this unregulated nanotechnology to reduce the size of titanium dioxide (TiO<sub>2</sub>) and zinc oxide (ZO), which makes these active, sun-blocking ingredients clear instead of solid. While perhaps visually preferable

to smears of white lotion across your face, the mostly aesthetic benefits of nanoparticle sunscreen do not outweigh the potential health risks involved in their use.

Nanoparticles were once assumed to be 'benign' and their inclusion in products such as cosmetics and sunscreens considered safe. But scientific research has now shown that many types of nanoparticles can be toxic to human tissue and cell structure. Scientists have found that some consequences of the use of nanoparticles can include increased oxidative stress, which reduces a cell's reproductive capabilities, DNA mutation and even cell death, which equates to a full out attack on the body. Furthermore, titanium dioxide nanoparticles used in sunscreen have been demonstrated to catalyze the formation of free radicals in skin cells, which can cause damage to DNA.

Choosing between protecting your skin from cancer and protecting your

body from unknown harms from nanoparticles shouldn't be a choice you have to make. And it isn't – as long as you stay informed. So until government safeguards are in place to monitor nanotechnology's risks, you can rely on Friends of the Earth's guide to avoid nano sunscreen.

## Cultivate Consumer Power

Contact the sunscreen companies yellow-listed in our guide as well as those not listed at all and demand full disclosure of whether they use nanoparticles and what safety precautions and testing they perform. And ask those companies red-listed to discontinue their use of this potentially harmful technology.

You might also want to check out Friends of the Earth's report *Nanomaterials, Sunscreens and Cosmetics: Small Ingredients, Big Risks*, which you can download on our website at [www.foe.org/Nanomaterials](http://www.foe.org/Nanomaterials). ○

A copy of the latest Financial Report and Registration filed by this organization may be obtained by contacting us at Friends of the Earth, 1717 Massachusetts Ave. NW Suite 600, Washington DC 20036-2008. Toll-free number: 877-843-8687. Or, for residents of the following states, by contacting any of the state agencies: **CALIFORNIA** – A copy of the Official Financial Statement may be obtained from the Attorney General's Registry of Charitable Trusts, Department of Justice, P.O. Box 903447, Sacramento, CA 94203-4470 or by calling 916-445-2021. **FLORIDA** - A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE, WITHIN THE STATE, 1-800-435-7352. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. Florida registration # CH960. **KANSAS** Annual financial report is filed with Secretary of State #258-204-7. **MARYLAND** For the cost of copies and postage: Office of the Secretary of State, State House, Annapolis, MD 21401. **MICHIGAN** MICS 10926. **MISSISSIPPI** – The official registration and financial information of Friends of the Earth, Inc. may be obtained from the Mississippi Secretary of State's office by calling 1-888-236-6167. Registration by the Secretary of State does not imply endorsement by the Secretary of State. **NEW JERSEY** INFORMATION FILED WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL CONCERNING THIS CHARITABLE SOLICITATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY BY CALLING 973-504-6215. REGISTRATION WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT. **NEW YORK** Office of the Attorney General, Department of Law, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271. **NORTH CAROLINA** FINANCIAL INFORMATION ABOUT THIS ORGANIZATION AND A COPY OF ITS LICENSE ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE STATE SOLICITATION LICENSING BRANCH AT 1-888-830-4989. THE LICENSE IS NOT AN ENDORSEMENT BY THE STATE. **PENNSYLVANIA** – The official registration and financial information of Friends of the Earth may be obtained from Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within the state 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement. **UTAH** – Permit #C495. **VIRGINIA** State Division of Consumer Affairs, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23218; 1-800-552-9963. **WASHINGTON** - Charities Division, Office of the Secretary of the State, State of Washington, Olympia, WA 98504-0422; 1-800-332-4483. **WEST VIRGINIA** West Virginia residents may obtain a summary of the registration and financial documents from the Secretary of State, State Capitol, Charleston, WV 25305. Registration does not imply endorsement.



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