



Trump's EPA pick will make Obama regret his environmental overreach

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Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt's nomination for administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency is as clear a signal as the incoming administration can send with regard to its environmental policies.

It is also a sign that the administration is far more meticulous, internally consistent and thorough than its detractors have thought, and that it is on a clear mission not just to stop, but to reverse many of the actions of Obama's EPA.

It is noteworthy that global warming was the second action item mentioned in President Obama's 2009 inaugural, and that a mere 90 days later, the administration had issued a "preliminary finding of endangerment" from carbon dioxide and other greenhouse emissions.

Under their interpretation of the Supreme Court's landmark 2007 climate change ruling, *Massachusetts vs. Environmental Protection Agency*, such a finding not only permitted the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1992, it compelled the agency to do so.

Seven years ago, on Pearl Harbor Day 2009, the administration announced its final Endangerment Finding. By March, Pruitt and 15 other state AG's joined in a combined suit against it, which was ultimately not successful.

As long as the Endangerment Finding stands, any EPA, including one headed by Pruitt, will be in court defending against any subsidiary attempt to halt or reverse any regulation of carbon dioxide.

It may very well be held that the EPA remains responsible for regulation under the Supreme Court's 2007 decision unless there is a specific act of Congress reversing its progeny policies, such as the Clean Power Plan. So the Endangerment Finding must be reversed.

But how to do it? For years, federal agencies have thrown massive support at scientists who, as human beings, serve their best interests (and their employer-universities) by generating horror-show results that also generate more support and professional advancement.

The Trump administration is going to have to stock up on scientists and administrators who are savvy to this game, and they are going to be very hard to find, as there's very little incentive to not play along.

There's going to have to be a massive effort to pick apart failing climate models and questionably-adjusted data. They're going to have to find people willing to expose the current regime's blatant abuse of logic in generating inflated "costs" of global warming, while largely ignoring the co-benefits of fossil fuel power, like doubled life expectancy and undreamt-of wealth.

The academy is going to howl, and Washington's science lobbies, like the American Association for the Advancement of Science (headed by Democratic ex-congressman Rush Holt) are going to go berserk.

Fasten your seat belts, for we may be about to witness the scientific-cat fight of our time.

On one side will be a massive and entrenched establishment, defending models that we now know were (and this is truly shocking) often adjusted to give a predetermined result. On the other will be a dogged and far smaller clan, tearing apart the code of these models, much like the ENIGMA busters of Bletchley Park. This will get ugly.

In nominating Pruitt, the administration is signaling that it is clearly up to such a fight — and not just over climate change.

He is also on record as being against EPA's most recent interpretation of Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which was used to pre-emptively prohibit the owners of what may be the largest copper-gold-molybdenum deposit on earth, the Pebble deposit in southwestern Alaska, from even applying for a permit to mine. This, even though it is on land zoned for mining by the State of Alaska.

Our friends in the environmental movement should rightly be at Defcon Five. It appears that President-Elect Trump — in many ways just like his predecessor — is going to keep his environmental campaign promises, which means reversing eight years what many feel was an era of green overreach.

Remember that Obama said he would "bankrupt" anyone foolish enough to build a new coal-fired power plant, because he would render them unprofitable. That's just what his Clean Power Plan does. Trump promises to nix it.

The nomination of Scott Pruitt is further evidence that the president-elect is serious, and circumstantial evidence that the influence of Al Gore's recent visit was of little consequence.

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