

Trump Regime Gutting the Endangered Species Act

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

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Richard Nixon was a friend of the earth, **Donald Trump** its mortal enemy.

Following the 1969 offshore Santa Barbara, CA February oil spill, the largest in US waters to that time, (now third-ranked after the 1989 Exxon Valdez and 2010 Deepwater Horizon spills), still the largest in offshore California waters, newly inaugurated Richard Nixon visited the affected area.

He overflew the polluted waters in a low-flying helicopter, then walked along the oil-soiled sand with his entourage and press, saying the following:

“What is involved is something much bigger than Santa Barbara. What is involved is the use of our resources of the sea and the land in a more effective way, and with more concern for preserving the beauty and the natural resources that are so important to any kind of society that we want for the future.”

“I don’t think we have paid enough attention to this...We are going to do a better job than we have done in the past.”

Skeptical environmentalists became believers. He established the Environmental Environmental Policy Act, the EPA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Clean Air Act, Earth Week, the Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act (ESA).

There’s plenty about Nixon to criticize. Overlooked were his eco-friendly policies — unmatched by today’s Republicans and undemocratic Dems.

What Nixon established, Trump is going all-out to eliminate, most recently steps to roll back ESA protections.

Established in 1973, it was enacted “to provide for the conservation of endangered and threatened species of fish, wildlife, and plants (from the) consequence of economic growth and development untempered by adequate concern and conservation.”

It requires federal agencies to consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service &/or National Marine Fisheries Service administering the law — to ensure public actions don’t jeopardize the existence of any species or their habitats.

On Monday, the Center for Biological Diversity said the following:

“In a massive attack on imperiled wildlife, the Trump (regime) finalized

rollbacks to regulations implementing key provisions of the Endangered Species Act,” adding:

“The changes, which could lead to extinction for hundreds of animals and plants, are illegal and will be challenged in court.”

Changes finalized on Monday by Trump’s Interior Department secretary **David Bernhardt**, a former fossil fuel lobbyist, “crash(ed) a bulldozer through (ESA’s) lifesaving protections for America’s most vulnerable wildlife.”

“For animals like wolverines and monarch butterflies, this could be the beginning of the end.”

“We’ll fight the Trump (regime) in court to block this rewrite, which only serves the oil industry and other polluters who see endangered species as pesky inconveniences.”

Trump’s ecocidal agenda aims “to undercut protections for the nation’s air, land, wildlife and water.”

On the same day, Earth Justice said the Nixon era’s ESA “did in 1973 what no country had done before, establishing a commitment to protect and restore the species that are most at risk of extinction.”

ESA “is one of the most popular and effective environmental laws ever enacted.”

After becoming law 46 year ago, “99% of species (it) protected...have not perished.”

The six most endangered species from Trump’s action are gray wolves, bald eagles, grizzly bears, killer whales, Florida manatees, and whooping cranes, said Earth Justice.

Also on Monday, the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) said Trump’s drastic rollback action came “months after the United Nations released a dire report, warning that one million species could go extinct if business continues as usual.”

“We’re facing an extinction crisis, and the (Trump regime) is placing industry needs above the needs of our natural heritage,” NRDC’s Nature Program legal director **Rebecca Riley** stressed.

The UN report explained that the pace of species loss worldwide today is hundreds of times greater than any time in the past 10 million years — repeat: 10 million years.

Critical forests, oceans, other waterways, wetlands, and overall nature are being devastated by climate change and over-development in areas vital to preserve for the species of the earth that need them to stay alive.

Friends of the Earth (FOE) said “Trump wants to sell off our lands and waters to Big Oil” and other corporate polluters.

In June, FOE notified Trump regime officials that it intends to sue NOAA “under the Endangered Species Act Regarding Sea Grant’s Funding of Offshore Aquaculture Projects.”

Time and again, Trump proved he’s an enemy of the earth and all its life forms — serving

exploitive monied interests at the expense of peace, equity and justice for all.

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Award-winning author **Stephen Lendman** lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. He is a Research Associate of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG)

His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html>

Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com.

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About the author:

Stephen Lendman lives in Chicago. He can be reached at lendmanstephen@sbcglobal.net. His new book as editor and contributor is titled "Flashpoint in Ukraine: US Drive for Hegemony Risks WW III."

<http://www.claritypress.com/LendmanIII.html> Visit his blog site at sjlendman.blogspot.com. Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network. It airs three times weekly: live on Sundays at 1PM Central time plus two prerecorded archived programs.

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