



The EPA and the Common Defense

Of all of the myriad agencies created and maintained by the Executive Branch, few have proven to be as detrimental to the United States as the Environmental Protection Agency. Since its birth under President Nixon's executive order in 1970, the mission of the EPA has been to protect human health and the environment. The mission has been mutilated since the start, as the environment (or at least what we are led to believe is the environment) has taken so much precedent that the human health aspect — whether it is the physical, mental, social or economic sort — has been deemed worthless in comparison.



More often than not, it has appeared that the power brokers in Washington use the environment (and therefore the EPA) as a tool, a compelling means by which to exert its brand of total control over economic functions it would otherwise have a difficult time with without such propaganda. Over time, the EPA has touched everything from the food we eat (from over-the-top dust regulations to clean water rules that strip property rights) to the energy we use (telling oil and gas companies where, how and when to extract much-needed resources, creating a dependency on foreign sources) to the air we breathe (instituting utterly insane emissions standards for things as simple as portable fuel tanks). All of those rules and thousands more add to the cost of doing business and therefore the cost of living. The actual negative impact on the American consumer is in the hundreds of billions per year as we end up paying for these regulations at the market, fuel pump, and department store.

The EPA's *modus operandi* is unconstitutional in two ways. One, the federal government is not authorized to legislate environmental issues within the states. Two, in an affront to the separation of powers, it creates laws on its own accord, laws that should in all actuality be produced by Congress.

The Founding Fathers understood that the scope of the federal system should be limited and, now, more than two centuries later it still makes as much sense as it did then. The analysis, protection, and regulation of the environment, its resources and its uses should be left to both the states and the free market.

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There is no agency that better understands the uniqueness of, say New York, and its various habitats and the creatures that inhabit them than the state's environmental arm, the Department of Conservation. It is that agency and New York's state and local lawmakers (along with citizen participation) that should decide what are permissible levels of development and non-standard inputs into the environment as well as what may be taken from it. The federal government doesn't have the ability (let alone the jurisdiction) to understand the intricacies and interrelatedness of the natural world, the businesses, and the people within a given state. And, frankly, it doesn't care, either.

In all actuality, the ultimate power should belong to the individual, acting as a consumer. Participants in



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a marketplace will base their actions on morality and altruism as much as want and need. If a manufacturer, farmer or energy producer is found to be in the wrong in that consumer's mind — as well as that of other consumers — the demand at the micro and, then cumulatively, macro level will be affected, changing the business' way of doing things. The purchaser — not the government — should have the greatest effect on a specific product or industry and the practices it utilizes.

The preamble to the Constitution describes the complex yet basic and limited purposes of our government and among them is the provision of common defense. The EPA would actually have constitutional justification and legal reason for existence if it didn't focus on the internal and instead focused on the external. One of the costliest and most dangerous threats to our nation's economic and natural well-being is invasive species, animals and plants that don't belong in our country but, through global trade, end up taking root and, in many cases, taking over, destroying our resources to the tune of tens of trillions of dollars in perpetuity.

There are many scourges currently laying waste to our environs. Among them are zebra mussels, which arrived via ballast water of boats traveling the St. Lawrence Seaway. These prolific Russian shellfish coat hydroelectric and water treatment facilities and costs to eradicate them exceeds \$200 million per year. Another invader is the emerald ash borer, a beetle that came from Asia in the 1990s and has so far killed 100 million ash trees. 7.5 billion more trees are threatened by this unstoppable beast. The ash is incredibly important to our economy and were it to be erased from our forests (which looks likely), the lumber industry would lose \$25 billion in output per year, setting off a domino effect across other industries. And then there's the matter of the Asian carp, a large bottom-feeding fish currently making its way to the Great Lakes where it will be certain to disrupt the system's \$7 billion fishery. These invaders represent only the tip of the iceberg. Many more are here. More are coming.

With the vast amount of exports we bring in annually (an outcome of Big Government making the United State unattractive for manufacturing), it's no wonder that we've opened our borders to such a pestilence. More than 4 million shipping containers come to America every year, filled with unchecked product of questionable integrity from questionable sources (think of China and the toys that had lead and/or date rape drugs in their paints). If the products themselves are that faulty, imagine the skids upon which they are shipped (what insects do they carry?) or the craft that carry them (what do their ballasts hold?).

If the EPA were serious about living out its mission, it should be determined to stop these natural invaders and protect our nation from them. These outside factors will compromise our environment and health more than any domestic factors will. So, rather than harassing a locally-owned gas station that hopes to upgrade its pumping station, the EPA should instead hold accountable the foreign firms and governments that don't care the least bit about America's wild lands and natural resources; after all, corrupt trading partners — like China — would prefer to see our resources expunged because it means more exporting business for them. Our losses are their gains. Invasive species represent a sort of economic warfare.

But, it is patently obvious that the EPA isn't concerned with the foreign pests. During July of this year, the House of Representatives and the EPA worked together to craft legislation that would have eliminated all federal environmental funding to New York for 2012, something that amounted to \$869 million in 2009 (the most recent year for which figures are available). The EPA forced this maneuver because New York was doing something that the EPA won't, addressing invasive species. The state has issued new standards set for 2013 that demand cleanliness of ballast water within ships entering New



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York waters, which include important shipping hubs and routes such as New York City and the St. Lawrence Seaway. It was the intent of the state to prevent a disaster like the zebra mussels.

The Coast Guard plans to introduce similar standards later this decade, and like New York they've come under fire. EPA officials and numerous Congressmen, conveniently forgetting that we are a sovereign nation, counter with the claim that the rules are 100 times more stringent than upcoming international standards. Once again, with commentary like that Washington shows that it is more in tune with the globalists and their needs rather than the needs of the American people, our economy and our environment.

It's also interesting that the EPA won't do anything to stop the incoming creatures and diseases yet, in conjunction with Congress, will provide money to the states to stop — or at least deal with — their advance once they've arrived and taken hold. That creates a means of dependency for the states as well as job security for the EPA, two tactics that maintain the federal stranglehold over the states by somehow making it look more important than it really is.

The EPA's approach to the security of our borders is eerily similar to Washington's efforts when it comes to another invader: the *human* aliens who come to our nation unabated from Mexico. That invasion is quietly permitted for many of the same reasons — appeasement of the globalists, the destruction of America's unique identity, and the purposeful weakening of America's economy.

It's obvious that protecting our borders and ensuring our common defense are an afterthought by design. That's a major point of frustration, for it is one of the very few things for which our federal government is actually obligated and empowered to do.



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