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Collection/Record Group: Clinton Presidential Records
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News Conference to Announce Office of Environmental Policy, February 8, 1993

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THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE OF THE PRESS SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 8, 1993

WHITE HOUSE OFFICE TO COORDINATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
President Designs New Office to Streamline, Strengthen Policy
FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY, GLOBAL ISSUES

WASHINGTON -- Streamlining and improving the Administration's ability to coordinate and craft environmental policy, President Clinton today (2/8) announced the creation of the White House Office on Environmental Policy and reinforced his intention to elevate the Environmental Protection Agency to the cabinet.

"We face urgent environmental and economic challenges that demand a new way of thinking and a new way of organizing our efforts," President Clinton said. "This office represents in action our commitment to confront these challenges in a new, more effective way, recognizing the connection between environmental protection and economic growth and our responsibility to provide real leadership on global environmental issues."

President Clinton said he is working with Congress to pass legislation that will elevate the EPA to the cabinet, further reinforcing his Administration's commitment to real changes in environmental policy.

"We must move in a new direction, to recognize that protecting the environment means strengthening our economy, and creating jobs. And, we must be ready to take advantage of the enormous business opportunities that exist both here and around the world for new environmental technologies that protect the environment and increase profits," the President said.

"The days of photo-op environmentalism are over. The Competitiveness Council is closed and so is the back door the polluters used to use to get out from under our laws," he said.

"This office represents our commitment to the environment and to a new, more efficient and effective way to craft policies that work -- policies that recognize protecting our environment means strengthening our economy; policies that recognize global environmental problems that have too long been relegated to the bottom of the agenda; policies that renew for the American people a genuine commitment to their health, their safety, and their jobs," President Clinton said.

(MORE)

The White House Office on Environmental Policy will be responsible for coordinating all environmental policy within the federal government. The Director of the White House Office on Environmental Policy will participate in each of the major policy councils: the National Security Council, the National Economic Council, and the Domestic Policy Council and work closely with the relevant federal agencies.

"The American people understand how important it is to at the same time work to protect the environment and grow our economy. And, they have been waiting too long for leadership that will confront the global ecological crisis we face," said Vice President Gore. "That work demands a coordinated, focused effort all across the government."

The Office replaces the Council on Environmental Quality, expanding the influence of the Council with a more efficient and effectively focused mandate to coordinate and influence environmental policy. The Office will retain some of the responsibilities of the CEQ, while others will be returned more appropriately and effectively to the relevant federal agencies, creating at the White House a more effective means of focusing on policy making and development.

President Clinton today (2/8) named Kathleen McGinty as Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Office on Environmental Policy. McGinty, 29, a lawyer who has served as Vice President Gore's senior environmental advisor since 1990, first joined Gore's Senate staff in 1989 as an American Association for the Advancement of Science Fellow. She is a graduate of Columbia Law School in New York City where she earned a JD, and St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia where she earned a BS in Chemistry. She has broad experience on a range of environmental issues and served as the Senate's top staff advisor for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil. She also served as an official member of the U.S. delegation to the Antarctica Environmental Protocol Treaty negotiations.

Section 3. Administration. (a) The OEP may function through established committees, task forces or interagency groups.

(b) The OEP shall have a Director and such additional staff and other assistance as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this order.

(c) All executive departments and agencies shall cooperate with the OEP and provide to the OEP such assistance, information, and advice as the OEP may request, to the extent permitted by law.

Section 4. National Environmental Strategy. (a) The OEP shall provide recommendations to the President regarding a long-range national environmental strategy before June 1, 1994. Those recommendations shall--

(1) recommend a specific plan of action for meeting long-term, measurable environmental goals;

(2) identify appropriate mechanisms for monitoring progress toward each such goal; and

(3) take into consideration national economic objectives, existing law in respect of environmental protection and requirements under treaties and international agreements to which the United States is a signatory.

(b) In developing recommendations regarding a national environmental strategy, the OEP shall consult with--

(1) appropriate executive departments, agencies and officials of the Executive Office of the President;

(2) appropriate officials of State governments, Indian tribes, and political subdivisions of States;

(3) Congress;

(4) representatives of citizens groups and industries;

and

(5) other persons or entities that the President considers to be appropriate.

THE WHITE HOUSE,

_____, 1993.

THE WHITE HOUSE
OFFICE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The White House Office on Environmental Policy represents a bold, new effort to streamline and strengthen environmental policy-making, providing President Clinton and Vice President Gore a powerful and effective means to bring their commitment to environmental protection and economic growth to the American people.

The Office on Environmental Policy will be responsible for coordinating environmental policy within the federal government, allowing the Clinton-Gore Administration to provide real leadership on critical global environmental concerns such as climate change and ozone depletion.

The Office on Environmental Policy represents in action key elements of the Administration's environmental policy goals: integrating environmental and economic issues, recognizing that environmental protection and economic growth are related; providing leadership on global environmental issues that demand a new, international perspective; fairly enforcing existing laws and protections without special favor for narrow interests; and renewing for the American people a genuine commitment to the environment and their health and safety.

The Office will be led by the Deputy Assistant to the President, Director of the White House Office on Environmental Policy who will participate in each of the major policy councils: the National Security Council, the National Economic Council, and the Domestic Policy Council and will work closely with the relevant federal agencies on environmental policy.

The Office replaces the Council on Environmental Quality, expanding the influence of the Council with a more efficient and effectively focused mandate to coordinate and influence environmental policy. The Office will retain some of the responsibilities of the CEQ, while others will be returned more appropriately and effectively to the relevant federal agencies, creating at The White House a more effective means of focusing on policy making and development.

**NEWS CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE
THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

DATE: Monday, February 8, 1993
LOCATION: THE ROOSEVELT ROOM
TIME: 11 A-M
FROM: Kathleen McGinty/Marla Romash
Office of the Vice President

I. PURPOSE

You will announce the creation of a new office within the White House to more effectively and efficiently coordinate environmental policy making across the federal government; announce Kathleen McGinty as Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of The White House Office on Environmental Policy, and reinforce your commitment to elevate the Environmental Protection Agency to the cabinet.

II. BACKGROUND

As part of your efforts to streamline and strengthen government, this new office is being created to improve the Administration's ability to craft and coordinate environmental policy and to better integrate environmental concerns in policy-making.

This office replaces the Council on Environmental Quality, expanding the influence of the Council with an office that has broader influence and a more effective and focused mandate. The office will retain some of the responsibilities of the CEQ, while others will be returned more appropriately and effectively to the relevant federal agencies.

While the CEQ in the past 12 years had principally been involved in statistical work and a year-end report on the state of the U.S. environment, this office will be directly involved in coordinating policy. The Director of this office will participate in all of the policy councils: The National Security Council, the Domestic Policy Council and the Economic Council, as well as working with the relevant federal agencies.

III. PARTICIPANTS

President
Vice President
Kathleen McGinty, Deputy Assistant to the President and
Director of the White House Office on Environmental Policy

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open press.

(*NOTE: You will announce the new office, remain while the Vice President speaks, and then depart without taking questions. The Vice President will remain to take questions.)

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

You will begin with a brief statement. (Talking points follow here). Then the Vice President will speak briefly. You will depart after the Vice President speaks.

VI. REMARKS

Talking points follow.

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TALKING POINTS FOR PRESIDENT CLINTON
Announcing the White House Office on Environmental Policy
Monday, February 8, 1993

o I AM TODAY ANNOUNCING THE CREATION OF THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY, KEEPING A COMMITMENT BOTH VICE PRESIDENT GORE AND I MADE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO BRING NEW LEADERSHIP AND NEW ENERGY TO THESE ISSUES. AND, I AM TODAY REINFORCING MY INTENTION TO WORK WITH CONGRESS FOR LEGISLATION THAT WILL MAKE THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY A PART OF MY CABINET.

o WE FACE URGENT ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC CHALLENGES THAT DEMAND A NEW WAY OF THINKING AND A NEW WAY OF ORGANIZING OUR EFFORTS. THIS OFFICE REPRESENTS IN ACTION OUR COMMITMENT TO CONFRONT THESE CHALLENGES IN A NEW, MORE EFFECTIVE WAY, RECOGNIZING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE REAL LEADERSHIP ON GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES.

o WE MUST MOVE IN A NEW DIRECTION, TO RECOGNIZE THAT PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT MEANS STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMY AND CREATING JOBS. AND, WE MUST BE READY TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ENORMOUS BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES THAT EXIST BOTH HERE AND AROUND THE WORLD FOR NEW ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES THAT PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND INCREASE PROFITS.

o THE DAYS OF PHOTO-OP ENVIRONMENTALISM ARE OVER. THE COMPETITIVENESS COUNCIL IS CLOSED AND SO IS THE BACK DOOR THE POLLUTERS USED TO USE TO GET OUT FROM UNDER OUR LAWS.

o THIS OFFICE REPRESENTS OUR COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND TO A NEW, MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE WAY TO CRAFT POLICIES THAT WORK -- POLICIES THAT RECOGNIZE PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT MEANS STRENGTHENING OUR ECONOMY; POLICIES THAT RECOGNIZE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS THAT HAVE TOO LONG BEEN RELEGATED TO THE BOTTOM OF THE AGENDA; POLICIES THAT RENEW FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE A GENUINE COMMITMENT TO THEIR HEALTH, THEIR SAFETY, AND THEIR JOBS.

o THIS OFFICE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY. THE DIRECTOR OF THIS OFFICE WILL SIT ON THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL AND THE DOMESTIC POLICY COUNCIL AND WILL WORK WITH ALL THE RELEVANT AGENCIES. I'M PLEASED TODAY TO ANNOUNCE THAT KATHLEEN MCGINTY WILL LEAD THIS NEW OFFICE AND ITS EFFORTS.

o WE ARE TODAY CHANGING THE WAY GOVERNMENT WORKS -- REPLACING THE COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY WITH A NEW OFFICE THAT WILL HAVE BROADER INFLUENCE AND A MORE EFFECTIVE AND FOCUSED MANDATE TO COORDINATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY.

o THE AMERICAN PEOPLE LOOK TO US TO MAKE GOVERNMENT WORK
BETTER, MORE EFFICIENTLY, AND MORE EFFECTIVELY FOR THEM. WE ARE
TAKING AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THAT DIRECTION TODAY. THE AMERICAN
PEOPLE, AMERICA'S ECONOMY, AND OUR ENVIRONMENT WILL BENEFIT AS A
RESULT.

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WHITE HOUSE OFFICE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Q: How is this office different from CEQ?

A: Unlike CEQ, this Office will be involved in all major policy decisions. The Office will participate fully in the deliberations of all of the policy councils and it will coordinate the work of the councils and agencies on environmental policy. Environment won't be a separate and secondary consideration as it has been with CEQ, but it will be a critical dimension of all policy.

Q: What about the statutory functions of CEQ? How will they be handled?

A: While we are working with the Congress to make this change, CEQ certainly will be maintained to fulfill its responsibilities. We would like to move quickly to make this change, however, because this new office will be a streamlined -- and much more effective and efficient -- means of coordinating environmental policy, and we would like to get it up and running as quickly as possible.

As part of the change -- and in order for the new office to be able to focus on policy development and coordination -- we will transfer some of CEQ's functions back to the Agencies. CEQ, for example is charged with producing an annual report on environmental quality. But the technical expertise for producing that report lies in the Agencies, and it really does not make sense to have a separate office duplicating the work that the agencies already do in fulfilling their own statutory mandates.

With regard to CEQ's responsibilities under NEPA to review environmental impact statements, again, much of this work is already done by the various agencies. It is important to have an objective review of those impact analyses, however, and we will be working with the Congress to devise a system that allows that to happen while avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort.

Q: What will the role of the Vice President be with regard to this new office?

A: As you know, the Vice President has a long-standing interest and considerable expertise in these issues and he and I will both prioritize our efforts in this area. This new office will enable us better to achieve our goal of integrating environmental considerations into the broad range of issues that we are facing.

Q: What does this new focus on the environment mean for business? Can they expect new regulatory burdens?

A: What we are trying to accomplish here is an integration of environmental policy into our other policy concerns. The previous Administration tried to tell us that there must be a

trade-off between a strong economy and protection of the environment. We said in the campaign that we don't believe that that is true. Far from being a way to pit the environment against business, this new office will enable us to demonstrate that a strong economy and sound environmental protection go hand in hand.

Q: Specifically, how will this office compare with the CEQ in terms of budget and staff?

A: This office represents a much more effective and efficient means of crafting and coordinating environmental policy. We are working on the exact numbers, both in terms of staff and budget, and those will be available as they are completed. But this office is designed to represent a much more efficient approach and it will be, leaving for this office broader influence on a wider range of issues and returning to the agencies work that, for all intents and purposes, they had already been responsible for completing.

EXECUTIVE ORDER

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

By the authority vested in me as President of the United States by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, including sections 105, 107, and 301 of title 3, United States Code, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Establishment. There is established in the Executive Office of the President the Office on Environmental Policy ("OEP").

Section 2. Functions. (a) The principal functions of the OEP are: (1) to coordinate the environmental policy-making process within the Executive Office of the President; (2) to coordinate and facilitate the provision of environmental policy advice to the President; (3) to assist the President in ensuring that his proposed programs, goals and decisions are consistent with federal environmental protection laws, including the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Administration's environmental goals; (4) to monitor implementation of the President's environmental policy agenda; (5) to assist and advise the President with respect to interagency disagreements concerning the environmental implications of proposed federal activities, policies, legislation, rules and other matters; and (6) to assist the President in developing a long-range national environmental strategy.

(b) All executive departments and agencies and the Assistants to the President for Domestic Policy, National Security, Economic Policy and Science and Technology Policy shall coordinate environmental policy development with the OEP.

(c) In performing its functions, the OEP will, when appropriate, work in conjunction with the Domestic Policy Council, the National Security Council, the National Economic Council and the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

June 2, 1993

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file*

MEMORANDUM FOR DESIGNATED AGENCY HEADS
(SEE ATTACHED DISTRIBUTION LIST)

FROM: Robert G. Damus *RGD*
Acting General Counsel

SUBJECT: Proposed Executive Order Entitled "Establishment
of the Office on Environmental Policy"

Attached is a proposed Executive order entitled
"Establishment of the Office on Environmental Policy."

It was prepared by the Office of the Vice President, in
accordance with the provisions of Executive Order No. 11030, as
amended.

On behalf of the Director of the Office of Management and
Budget, I would appreciate receiving any comments you may have
concerning this proposal. If you have any comments or
objections, they should be received no later than close of
business Friday, June 4, 1993. Please be advised that agencies
that do not respond by the June 4, 1993 deadline will be recorded
as not objecting to the proposal.

Comments or inquiries may be submitted by telephone to Mr.
Mac Reed of this office (Phone: 395-3563; Fax: 395-7294).

Thank you.

Attachments - Distribution List
Proposed Executive Order

cc: Alice Rivlin
Chris Edley
Gordon Adams
John Angell
Martha Foley
Joe Minarik
Isabelle Sawhill
Nancy-Ann Min
Al Burman
Barry Toiv
Jim Murr

Security and Economic Policy shall coordinate environmental
policy development with the OEP.

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Honorable John Podesta
Assistant to the President
and Staff Secretary

Honorable Jack Quinn
Acting Chief of Staff to the Vice President

EXECUTIVE ORDER

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Section 3. Administration. (a) The OEP may function through established or ad hoc committees, task forces or interagency groups.

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and

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THE WHITE HOUSE,

_____, 1993.