

UNIVERSITÉ DE LA REUNION
MASTER “LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES” : MENTION “INTERCULTURALITÉ” 2008-2009
SPÉCIALITÉ : CULTURES ET CIVILISATIONS

UE « *Justice environnementale et communautés au Etats-Unis* » (F. Duban)

Schedule - Zimmerman’s problematic

	Date	Topics and documents		Panel (names of moderators)
1	Monday 2 February 2009 (14h-16h30)	An introduction to the seminar Main concepts Collecting keywords		Duban
2	Friday 6 February 2009 (9h-11h30)	The historical background Concept map		Duban
3	Monday 9 February 2009 (14h-16h30)	Problematic 1 – “ Saving Nature, But Only for Man ”	Anthropocentric critique of environmentalism	Duban • • • •
4	Friday 13 February 2009 (9h-11h30)	2 – “ [Deep Ecology's] Basic Principles ”	The principles of radical ecologists	• • • •
5	Monday 16 February 2009 (14h-16h30)	3 – “ Shades of Darkness: Race and Environmental History ”	Race and environmental history in the United States	• • • •
6	Friday 20 February (9h-11h30)	4 – “ The Beginnings of a Movement: A Story of Hope ”	The early years of the Environmental Justice movement and its links with the Civil rights movement of M.L. King, Jr.	• • • •
7	Monday 23 February 2009 (14h-16h30)	5 – “ Principles of Environmental Justice ”	The principles of ecologists within the Environmental Justice movement	• • • •
8	Friday 27 February (9h-11h30)	6 – “ Healthier Communities - Preserving Our Land ”	Obama’s environmental platform (excerpts)	• • • •
Monday 9 March 2009 mid-term paper See http://web.me.com/fduban/Sandvox/aids_for_students_documents_2/synthese.html				

Questions from Zimmerman and Calicott’s *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology*

Philosophers concerned about environmental issues raised basic questions about humanity's relationship with nature. Are humans the only inherently valuable beings in the known universe, or does the natural world—plants, animals, bioregions—have its own worth, independent of the use to which it can be put by human beings? Do humans have moral obligations only to other humans, or do we also have moral obligations to animals, to plants, and even to whole ecosystems? To what extent do ecological problems arise from anthropocentrism and from humanity-nature dualism? Do humans have any obligations to future generations? Is it morally wrong to exterminate a species of plant or animal? When we are told that industrial technology furthers man's progress, what is meant by "man"? Is it merely an illusion that wealthy groups seem to gain the most from technological innovation, often at the expense of poor or dispossessed people? To what extent do technological innovations free people, and to what extent do those innovations generate serious social and ecological problems? Is human freedom compatible with the disappearance of everything wild and free in nature? How do we know that history has any direction at all, much less a "progressive" one? If there is a progressive trend in history, on what basis do we assume that it requires in almost every instance that humans dominate nonhumans? - SOURCE: Michael Zimmerman, J. Baird Callicott, ed., *Environmental Philosophy: From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology* (Upper Saddle Rive, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1998) 1-2.

American environmental movement(s)

The pastoral tradition (agrarianism) ANTHROPOCENTRISM ±1890 Conservation Gifford Pinchot	Romanticism (Transcendentalism) BIOCENTRISM Preservation John Muir ±1930 Wilderness movement Aldo Leopold
ECOLOGISM ±1970 ENVIRONMENTALISM	
mainstream environmentalism institutionalization lobbies professionalism litigation ecological hedonism not in my backyard (NIMBY)	radical environmentalism radicalism activism ecoterrorism environmental ethic Social Ecology Deep Ecology BIOCENTRISM bioregionalism ecofeminism
networks of	local communities gender, class, ethnicity Environmental Justice local groups

Useful links

Google>"sitaduban index">civ. United States en M1>homepage (http://homepage.mac.com/fduban/Sites/public_html/Master1/evlm_history/M1.html)

<http://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>

<http://www.qrist.org/news/maindish/2006/02/13/pate/index1.html>

<http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/>

<http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/featurearticles.htm>

http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=will_environmental_justice_finally_get_its_due

<http://jukwaa.proboards58.com/index.cgi?board=general&action=display&thread=2886>

<http://aaenvironment.blogspot.com/>

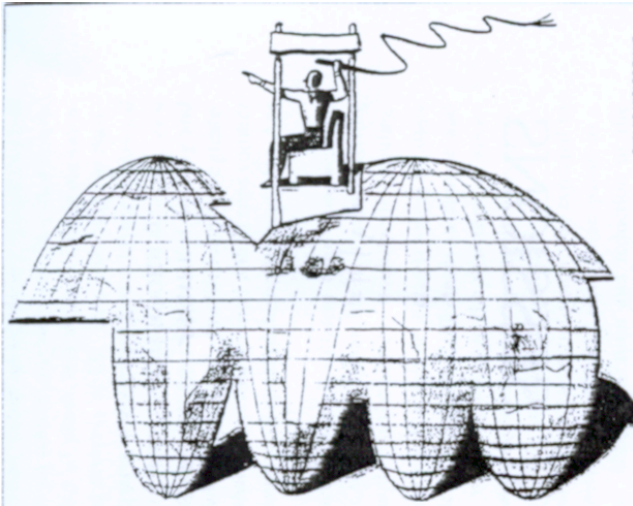
http://americanaffairs.suite101.com/article.cfm/obama_and_the_environmental_future_in_the_us

<http://www.avoiceonline.org/environmental/>

<http://www.epa.gov/swerosps/ej/index.html>

1 **Texts**

2 **Saving Nature, But Only for**
3 **Man - June 1991**



4 Essay Charles Krauthammer

6 **Charles Krauthammer**

7 Columnist



8 **Saving Nature, But Only for Man**

9 Environmental sensitivity is now as required an
10 attitude in polite society as is, say, belief in democracy or
11 aversion to polyester. But now that everyone from Ted
12 Turner to George Bush. Dow to Exxon has professed love for
13 Mother Earth, how are we to choose among the dozens of
14 conflicting proposals, restrictions, projects, regulations and
15 laws advanced in the name of the environment? Clearly not
16 everything with an environmental claim is worth doing. How
to choose?

17 There is a simple way. First, distinguish between
18 environmental luxuries and environmental necessities.
19 Luxuries are those things it would be nice to have if costless.
20 Necessities are those things we must have regardless. Then
21 apply a rule. Call it the fundamental axiom of sane
22 environmentalism: Combat-ting ecological change that
23 directly threatens the health and safety of people is an
24 environmental necessity. All else is luxury .

25 For example: preserving the atmosphere-stopping
26 ozone depletion and the greenhouse effect is an
27 environmental necessity. In April scientists reported that

28 ozone damage is far worse than previously thought. Ozone
29 depletion not only causes skin cancer and eye cataracts, it
30 also destroys plankton, the beginning of the food chain atop
31 which we humans sit.

32 The reality of the greenhouse effect is more
33 speculative, though its possible consequences are far
34 deadlier: melting ice caps, flooded coastlines, disrupted
35 climate, parched plains and ultimately, empty breadbaskets.
36 The American Midwest feeds the world. Are we prepared to
37 see Iowa acquire New Mexico's desert climate? And Siberia
38 acquire Iowa's?

39 Ozone depletion and the greenhouse effect are
40 human disasters. They happen to occur in the environment.
41 But they are urgent because they directly threaten man. A
42 sane environmentalism, the only kind of environmentalism
43 that will win universal public support, begins by
44 unashamedly declaring that nature is here to serve man. A
45 sane environmentalism is entirely anthropocentric: it enjoins
46 man to preserve nature, but on the grounds of self-
47 preservation.

48 A sane environmentalism does not sentimentalize
49 the earth. It does not ask people to sacrifice in the name of
50 other creatures. After all, it is hard enough to ask people to
51 sacrifice in the name of other humans. (Think of the chronic
52 public resistance to foreign aid and welfare.) Ask
53 hardworking voters to sacrifice in the name of the snail
54 darter, and, if they are feeling polite, they will give you a
55 shrug.

56 Of course, this anthropocentrism runs against the
57 grain of a contemporary environmentalism that indulges in
58 earth worship to the point of idolatry. One scientific theory—
59 Gaia theory—actually claims that Earth is a living-organism.
60 This kind of environmentalism likes to consider itself
61 spiritual. It is nothing more than sentimental. It takes, for
62 example, a highly selective view of the benignity of nature.
63 My nature worship stops with the April twister that came
64 through Kansas or the May cyclone that killed more than
65 125.000 Bengalis and left 10 million (!) homeless.

66 A nonsentimental environmentalism is one
67 founded on Protagoras' maxim that "Man is the measure of
68 all things." Such a principle helps us through the thicket of
69 environmental argument. Take the current debate raging
70 over oil drilling in a corner of the Alaska National Wildlife
71 Refuge. Environmentalists, mobilizing against a bill working
72 its way through the U.S. Congress to permit such exploration,
73 argue that Americans should be conserving energy instead of
74 drilling for it. This is a false either or proposition. The U.S.
75 does need a sizable energy tax to reduce consumption, but it
76 needs more production too. Government estimates indicate a
77 nearly fifty-fifty chance that under the ANWR lies one of the
78 five largest oilfields ever discovered in America.

79 The U.S. has just come through a war fought in part
80 over oil. Energy dependence costs Americans not just dollars
81 but lives. It is a bizarre sentimentalism that would deny oil

82 that is peacefully attainable because it risks disrupting the
83 calving grounds of Arctic caribou.

84 I like the caribou as much as the next man. And I
85 would be rather sorry if their mating patterns are disturbed.
86 But you can't have everything. And if the choice is between
87 the welfare of caribou and reducing an oil dependency that
88 gets people killed in wars, I choose man over caribou every
89 time.

90 Similarly the spotted owl in Oregon. I am no
91 enemy of the owl. If it could be preserved at no or little cost, I
92 would agree: the variety of nature is a good, a high aesthetic
93 good. But it is no more than that. And sometimes aesthetic
94 goods have to be sacrificed to the more fundamental ones. If
95 the cost of preserving the spotted owl is the loss of livelihood
96 for 30.000 logging families, I choose family over owl.

97 The important distinction is between those
98 environmental goods that are fundamental and those that are
99 merely aesthetic. Nature is our ward. It is not our master. It is
100 to be respected and even cultivated. But it is man's world.
101 And when man has to choose between his well-being and
102 that of nature, nature will have to accommodate.

103 Man should accommodate only when his fate and
104 that of nature are inextricably bound up. The most urgent
105 accommodation must be made when the very integrity of
106 man's habitat—e.g., atmospheric ozone—is threatened. When
107 the threat to man is of a lesser order (say, the pollutants from
108 coal- and oil-fired generators that cause death from disease
109 but not fatal damage to the ecosystem), a more modulated
110 accommodation that balances economic against health
111 concerns is in order. But in either case the principle is the
112 same: protect the environment—because it is man's
113 environment.

114 The sentimental environmentalists will call this
115 saving nature with a totally wrong frame of mind. Exactly, A
116 sane—a humanistic—environmentalism does it not for
117 nature's sake but for our own.¹

¹ Krauthammer, Charles. "Saving Nature, But Only for Man." *Time* 17 June 1991: 56.

[Deep Ecology's] Basic Principles² - 1985

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman Life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.

2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.

3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy *vital* needs.

4. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.

5. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating *life quality* (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to

try to implement the necessary changes.

Naess and Sessions Provide Comments on the Basic Principles...

RE (1). This formulation refers to the biosphere, or more accurately, to the ecosphere as a whole. This includes individuals, species, populations, habitat, as well as human and nonhuman cultures. From our current knowledge of all-pervasive intimate relationships, this implies a fundamental deep concern and respect. Ecological processes of the planet should, on the whole, remain intact.

The term "life" is used here in a more comprehensive nontechnical way to refer also to what biologists classify as "nonliving"; rivers (watersheds), landscapes, ecosystems. For supporters of deep ecology, slogans such as "Let the river live" illustrate this broader usage so common in most cultures.

Inherent value as used in (I) is common in deep ecology literature.³

RE (2). More technically, this is a formulation concerning diversity and complexity. From an ecological standpoint, complexity and symbiosis are conditions for maximizing diversity. So-called simple, lower, or primitive species of plants and animals contribute essentially to the richness and diversity of life. They have value in themselves and are not merely steps toward the so-called higher or rational life forms. The second principle presupposes that life itself, as a process over evolutionary time, implies an increase of diversity and richness. The refusal to acknowledge that some life forms have greater or lesser intrinsic

value than others (see points I and 2) runs counter to the formulations of some ecological philosophers and New Age writers.

Complexity, as referred to here, is different from complication. Urban life may be more complicated than life in a natural setting without being more complex in the sense of multifaceted quality.

RE (3). The term "vital need" is left deliberately vague to allow for considerable latitude in judgment. Differences in climate and related factors, together with differences in the structures of societies as they now exist, need to be considered (for some Eskimos, snow-mobiles are necessary today to satisfy vital needs).

People in the materially richest countries cannot be expected to reduce their excessive interference with the nonhuman world to a moderate level overnight. The stabilization and reduction of the human population will take time. Interim strategies need to be developed. But this in no way excuses the present complacency-the extreme seriousness of our current situation must first be realized.

² Devall, Bill and George Sessions. *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered*. Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, Peregrine Smith Books, 1985. (70-71)

³ ("The presence of inherent value in a natural object is independent of any awareness, interest, or appreciation of it by a conscious being." Regan, Tom. "The Nature and Possibility of an Environmental Ethic," *Environmental Ethics* 3, 1981.)

Shades of Darkness: Race and Environmental History⁴

Carolyn Merchant – July 2003

IN *THE HIDDEN WOUND*, published in 1989, environmentalist Wendell Berry writes that “the psychic wound of racism has resulted inevitably in wounds in the land, the country itself.” When he began writing the book in 1968 during the civil rights movement, he tells us, “I was trying to establish the outlines of an understanding of myself, in regard to what was fated to be the continuing crisis of my life, the crisis of racial awareness.” Berry’s book is an effort to come to terms with the environmental history of race as reflected in his family’s history as slaveholders, in his own childhood on a Kentucky farm in the segregated South, and in his adult life as a conservationist and environmentalist.¹

In recent years, environmental historians too have reflected on the crisis of racial awareness for the field and collectively have begun the process of writing an environmental history of race. The negative connections between wilderness and race, cities and race, toxics and race, and their reversal in environmental justice have been explored by numerous scholars who have analyzed the ideology and practice of environmental racism. Throughout the country many courses now include multicultural perspectives on the environment.² We have learned important new ways to think about the relationship between race and environmental history. These include the following perspectives:

- Slavery and soil degradation are interlinked systems of exploitation, and deep-seated connections exist between the enslavement of human bodies and the enslavement of the land. Blacks resisted that enslavement in complex ways that maintained African culture and created unique African American ways of living on the land.³

- Native Americans were removed from the lands they had managed for centuries, not only during settlement, as is well known, but during the creation of the national parks and national forests. Indians resisted these moves in an effort to maintain autonomy and access to resources.⁴

- American Indians and African Americans perceived wilderness in ways that differed markedly from those of white Americans.⁵

- A “coincidental order of injustice”—in Jeffrey Romm’s phrase—reigned in post-Civil War America as emancipated blacks in the South were expected to pay for land with wages at the same time that free lands taken from Indians were being

promoted to whites via the Homestead Act and other land acts.⁶

- African Americans bore the brunt of early forms of environmental pollution and disease as whites fled urban areas to the new streetcar suburbs. Black neighborhoods became toxic dumps and black bodies became toxic sites. Out of such experiences arose African American environmental activism in the Progressive Era and the environmental justice movement of the late twentieth century.⁷

All of this work is an auspicious beginning to compiling an environmental history of race. But we need to do much more in integrating multicultural history and environmental justice into our courses and frameworks. We especially need more research on the roles of African Americans in the southern and western U.S. environment and in early urbanization and more research on Asian and Hispanic practices and perceptions of nature.⁸

I hope to contribute to this growing body of literature by looking at views held about American Indians and African Americans in environmental history. If an environmental justice perspective is to permeate the field of environmental history, we need to be aware of the racial ideas of the contributions of the founders of the conservation and environmental movements. I shall argue that whiteness and blackness were redefined environmentally in ways that reinforced institutional racism.

Indians and Wilderness

THE 1964 WILDERNESS ACT defined wilderness as areas where “man is a visitor who does not remain.” As environmental historians have pointed out, this characterization reads Native Americans out of the wilderness and out of the homelands they had managed for centuries with fire, gathering, and hunting. By the late nineteenth century, following the move to eliminate Native Americans and their food supplies, Indians were moved to reservations. National parks and wilderness areas were set aside for the benefit of white American tourists. By redefining wilderness as the polar opposite of civilization, wilderness in its ideal form could be viewed as free of people, while civilization by contrast was filled with people. Yet this was a far different view of Indians than had been the case for most of American history, where Indian presence in the landscape was prominent. For William Bradford, the New England forests had been filled with “wild beasts and wild men.” For Henry David Thoreau, forests and parks were areas where native vegetation would be restored and where even the “red man” might walk again. National parks initially were conceived by George Catlin as places where Indians would be free to roam and carry on their way of life. In the mid-nineteenth century, travelers going west expected to see Indians as part of the “untamed wilderness.”⁹

By the end of the century, Indian removal had become part of a program to provide tourists with access to wild animals and

scenery, but without dangerous and negative encounters with Indians. The national parks were configured as living Edens containing beautiful scenery, rivers, animals, flowering trees, and carpets of wildflowers. They were “virgin” places of rebirth in which people could be spiritually renewed. The new wilderness areas were managed places in which the wilderness encounter was predictable within given parameters. There were “wild beasts,” but no “wild men.” Unpredictable elements such as Indians were removed or carefully managed for tourists so that they became part of the total “wilderness experience.” The parks were vast managed gardens in which the wild was contained for viewing. People could have a wilderness experience in a protected environment.

At the same time that parks and wilderness were being reconstructed as white and pure for the benefit of white tourists, Indians were being characterized as dark and dirty. John Muir envisioned national parks as pristine wilderness, without domesticated animals or Indians. In *My First Summer in the Sierra* (1911), a saga of his Sierra Nevada travels in 1868, Muir wrote disparagingly of the Indians he encountered there, equating Indians with unclean animals that did not belong in the wilderness. In 1868, he visited Brown’s Flat near Yosemite’s Merced River, where he encountered a group of Indians denigrated as Diggers whom he found dirty and unclean. On another occasion, he was visited by Indians from Mono and commented that the clean air and water of the mountains “cover and cure the grossness of their lives.” He wrote: “A strangely dirty and irregular life these dark-eyed dark-haired, half-happy savages lead in this clean wilderness.” He described a band of Indians from Mono collecting acorns on their way to Yosemite: “They were wrapped in blankets made of the skins of sage-rabbits. The dirt on some of the faces seemed almost old enough and thick enough to have a geological significance. ... How glad I was to get away from the gray, grim crowd and see them vanish down the trail! Yet it seems sad to feel such desperate repulsion from one’s fellow beings, however degraded. To prefer the society of squirrels and woodchucks to that of our own species must surely be unnatural.”¹⁰

⁴ <http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/eh/8.3/merchant.html>

The Beginnings of a Movement: A Story of Hope⁵ - January 2000

by Phaedra Pezzullo, January 2000

[Our story] is about a poor, predominately black community standing against the powerful State. I think that's what's motivating. And in terms of where we are now, I think people still are amazed that people are still fighting the fight and are still struggling and are still willing to make the State live up to its promise.

-- Dollie Burwell, Warren County resident, February 19, 1998

Despite the debt to longer historical traditions (i.e., the civil rights movement), according to most accounts, what Warren County residents and their allies did from 1978-1982 transformed their community into the symbolic center and birthplace of the environmental justice movement. After those events, according to the Washington Post (10/12/82), the marriage of civil rights activism and environmental concerns was explicitly linked for the first time in the United States.

Yet, there has been a shadow over the ending of Warren County's story for many years: despite their ability to draw national attention to the correlation between social injustices and environmental degradation, the landfill they initially protested is still in their county. This summer, the ending of that story has begun to change. So, in honor of our debt to Warren County and the renewed hope that they bring to all of us, let me again start with the beginnings. In the summer of 1978, PCB-contaminated transformer oil was illegally dumped on the shoulder of 210 miles of North Carolina state roads in 14 counties. After discovering this dumping site of 32 cubic yards, an investigation found Ward Transformer Company to be the guilty party and pressed charges. This still left the state with the dilemma of removing the chemicals and finding a new, safer storage place. That winter, the state proposed 142 acres of land in Warren County to become the site of the landfill. In 1979, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) claimed the site could be made safe with engineering. Warren County took the State to court on several accounts in

order to protest the decision. Finding no clear evidence for their case, the federal court rejected their suit. Since Warren County did not think their environment was the most ecologically sound choice, they began to question the political reasons for why their community was chosen. Being a predominately poor and black population, a second lawsuit was filed based upon discriminatory intent. However, it too failed. In 1982, therefore, the state began trucking the contaminated soil to the site in Warren County. Residents and civil rights leaders attempted to stop the trucks with six weeks of peaceful civil disobedience. Over 523 arrests resulted, and Warren County became a national news story. In response to the strong vocal protest in Warren County and nationally, Gov. Hunt wrote an open letter to the community stating that Warren County was chosen for the site solely on the basis of technical reasons and promised to detoxify the site when feasible technology is developed. The following year, the General Assembly also committed the state to detoxify the landfill as soon as the technology for doing so is available. Although the landfill was not stopped, many successes have been attributed to the efforts of those involved in Warren County's struggle. First, citizens in Warren County challenged the common assumption that waste must be made and, therefore, it has to go somewhere. Warren County residents drew a line and said there must be social concerns for public health when making environmental decisions. Second, those involved in the protests named their experience environmental racism. When Warren County residents articulated the concepts of environmental and racism together, they not only gave language to a process of domination, but they also expanded the existing definitions of each of these terms. In denaturalizing the process of articulating political influences and scientific findings, residents of Warren County created the impetus for several studies which have provided empirical evidence of systematic inequities in U.S. toxic and solid waste disposal policies (Bullard, 1990; Bullard & Wright, 1987; United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice, 1987; Lavelle & Coyle, 1992; U.S. General Accounting Office, 1983). These studies offered quantitative evidence that prompted further discussions to interrogate the relationship between socio-political standing and environmental decision-making. The environmental justice movement, therefore, is indebted to the residents of Warren County for initiating the framework of a movement that has the capacity to transform the political landscape of this

nation (Chavis, 1994, p. xii). Yet, the story continues. Ten years after the building of the landfill, the state announced up to 1.5 million gallons of water was trapped inside. They agreed to meet with the citizens of Warren County to decide what would be the best means to detoxify the site. As a result, the Warren County Working Group was formed with members representing local citizens, state employees and various environmental organizations. For the past five years, they have met regularly to discuss how the state may deliver on their/our commitments. They hired independent scientists to characterize the site, assess the integrity of the landfill, and determine technical feasibility.

As a result of that analysis, the scientists have concluded that it is not only technologically feasible to detoxify the site, but it is also necessary due to the conditions of the site. Based upon this scientific expertise, the Working Group began to lobby Gov. Hunt and the General Assembly to fulfill their promises and fund detoxification now that it is possible. This summer, as a result of their efforts, the General Assembly allocated \$7 million dollars towards detoxifying the site, and the Governor renewed his commitment to keep his word and end this story. As of this writing, the people of Warren County are still awaiting funding for the detoxification of the landfill. Releasing funds from the state is predicated upon acquiring matching funds from the federal government. Budget negotiations being what they are, the approval of matching funds is yet to come. If Warren County residents have set a precedent in the past, they are certainly providing another today by working with the state and environmental groups to find common ground. If you are interested in more information on their story and strategies to make environmental justice a reality, please contact the Working Groups Office in North Carolina: (252) 257-1948.

⁵http://www.sierraclub.org/environmental_justice/stories/northcarolina.asp

Principles of Environmental Justice⁶ - October 24-27, 1991

Delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit held on October 24-27, 1991, in Washington DC, drafted and adopted 17 principles of Environmental Justice. Since then, The Principles have served as a defining document for the growing grassroots movement for environmental justice.

PREAMBLE

WE, THE PEOPLE OF COLOR, gathered together at this multinational People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit, to begin to build a national and international movement of all peoples of color to fight the destruction and taking of our lands and communities, do hereby re-establish our spiritual interdependence to the sacredness of our Mother Earth; to respect and celebrate each of our cultures, languages and beliefs about the natural world and our roles in healing ourselves; to insure environmental justice; to promote economic alternatives which would contribute to the development of environmentally safe livelihoods; and, to secure our political, economic and cultural liberation that has been denied for over 500 years of colonization and oppression, resulting in the poisoning of our communities and land and the genocide of our peoples, do affirm and adopt these Principles of Environmental Justice:

1) Environmental Justice affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.

2) Environmental Justice demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.

3) Environmental Justice mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for

humans and other living things.

4) Environmental Justice calls for universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food.

5) Environmental Justice affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples.

6) Environmental Justice demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.

7) Environmental Justice demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

8) Environmental Justice affirms the right of all workers to a safe and healthy work environment without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment. It also affirms the right of those who work at home to be free from environmental hazards.

9) Environmental Justice protects the right of victims of environmental injustice to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.

10) Environmental Justice considers governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law, the Universal Declaration On Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.

11) Environmental Justice must recognize a special legal and natural relationship of Native Peoples to the U.S. government through treaties, agreements, compacts, and covenants affirming sovereignty and self-determination.

12) Environmental Justice affirms the need for urban and

rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and provided fair access for all to the full range of resources.

13) Environmental Justice calls for the strict enforcement of principles of informed consent, and a halt to the testing of experimental reproductive and medical procedures and vaccinations on people of color.

14) Environmental Justice opposes the destructive operations of multi-national corporations.

15) Environmental Justice opposes military occupation, repression and exploitation of lands, peoples and cultures, and other life forms.

16) Environmental Justice calls for the education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.

17) Environmental Justice requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to insure the health of the natural world for present and future generations.

⁶ <http://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.html>.

**HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES -
PRESERVING OUR LAND⁷ -
2008**

HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

As president, Barack Obama will continue his fight, begun as a community organizer, to protect our children from health hazards and developmental disabilities caused by environmental toxins, such as lead, mercury, particulate matter, and industrial land waste. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will fight to clean brownfields, restore abandoned industrial riverfront sites, and give communities the tools they need to eat healthy foods and expand livable, walkable neighborhoods.

Protect Children and Families from Lead Poisoning: Lead is a neurotoxin that is especially harmful to the developing nervous systems of fetuses and young children. There are currently 400,000 children suffering from lead poisoning in the U.S. In 2005, Barack Obama introduced the Lead-Free Toys Act, which would require the Consumer Product Safety Commission to ban children’s products containing more than a trace amount of lead. Following news reports that millions of Chinese-made toys were being recalled because of lead paint, he has pressured toy manufacturers and Bush administration officials to do a better job of protecting American children.

In 2006, Barack Obama introduced the Lead Poisoning Reduction Act, which would help protect children from lead poisoning by requiring all non-home-based child care facilities, including Head Start programs and kindergartens, to be lead-safe within five years. The legislation would also establish a \$42.6 million grant program to help local communities pay to make these facilities safe. The Environmental Protection Agency recently announced support for Obama’s proposal to remove toxic lead from child care, pre-school, and kindergarten facilities.

Barack Obama has fought to get the Environmental Protection Agency to publish long-overdue rules for how contractors involved in the

renovation and remodeling of homes should deal with lead paint hazards. When the rules are eventually finalized, they will prevent 28,000 lead-related illnesses each year, resulting in an annual net economic benefit of more than \$4 billion.

Protect the Public from Nuclear Material: After a series of reports that Illinois nuclear power plants failed to disclose that radioactive substances had leaked into the groundwater, Barack Obama worked with Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) to introduce legislation that would require nuclear companies to inform state and local officials if there is an accidental or unintentional leak of a radioactive substance. In 2005, Obama introduced legislation requiring the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to track unaccounted spent nuclear fuel rods used at power plants in the United States.

Control Superfund Sites and Data: Barack Obama demanded that the Environmental Protection Agency report on what it is doing to reduce and control human exposure to hazardous contaminants at more than 100 Superfund sites nationwide. As a state senator, he voted to create the Brownfields Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Program, which encourages private sector voluntary remediation of environmentally-distressed and underutilized sites. As president, Obama will restore the strength of the Superfund program by requiring polluters to pay for the cleanup of contaminated sites they created.

Strengthen Federal Environmental Justice Programs: Barack Obama and Joe Biden will make environmental justice policies a priority within the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). As a U.S. Senator, Obama has worked to ensure that low-income communities are represented in the EPA’s long-term planning. As president, he and Joe Biden will work to strengthen the EPA Office of Environmental Justice and expand the Environmental Justice Small Grants Program, which provides non-profit organizations across the nation with valuable resources to address local environmental problems. They will also work to ensure that environmental health issues in the wake of man-made or terrorist disasters are promptly addressed by federal, state and local officials. They will work to provide low-income communities the legal ability to

challenge policies and processes that adversely affect the environmental health of low-income and minority communities.

Build Healthy Communities: How a community is designed – including the layout of its roads, buildings and parks – has a huge impact on the health of its residents. For instance, nearly one-third of Americans live in neighborhoods without sidewalks and less than half of our country’s children have a playground within walking distance of their homes. This lack of a safe place to walk and play is a major contributor to the growing numbers of overweight children. Barack Obama introduced the Healthy Places Act to help local governments assess the health impact of new policies and projects, like highways or shopping centers. Once the health impact is determined, the bill gives grant funding and technical assistance to help address potential health problems. Minorities in America are significantly more likely to be affected by toxins and pollutants. To focus federal attention on this environmental health problem, Barack Obama introduced the Healthy Communities Act, which would expand research on toxins and provide the resources to clean up blighted communities.

Encourage Organic and Sustainable Agriculture: Organic food is the fastest growing sector of the American food marketplace. Demand for sustainable, locally-grown, grass-finished and heritage foods is also growing quickly. These niche markets present new opportunities for beginning farmers because specialty operations often require more management and labor than capital. To support the continued growth of sustainable alternative agriculture, Barack Obama and Joe Biden will increase funding for the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program to help farmers afford the costs of compliance with national organic certification standards. They will also reform the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Risk Management Agency’s crop insurance rates so that they do not penalize organic farmers.

Support Local Family Farmers with Local Foods and Promote Regional Food System Policies: Farming is a vanishing lifestyle. Less than one million Americans claim farming as their primary occupation.

⁷ <http://www.barackobama.com/pdf/issues/EnvironmentFactSheet.pdf>

1 Those farmers who sell directly to their customers cut
2 out all of the middlemen and get full retail price for their
3 food - which means farm families can afford to stay on
4 the farm, doing the important work they love. Barack
5 Obama and Joe Biden recognize that local and regional
6 food systems are better for our environment and support
7 familyscale producers. They will emphasize the need for
8 Americans to Buy Fresh and Buy Local, and they will
9 implement USDA policies that promote local and
10 regional food systems.

11 PRESERVING OUR LAND

13 Barack Obama and Joe Biden believe that we
14 have a responsibility to our children to leave this Earth
15 better than we found it. All Americans have an interest
16 in the protection and proper maintenance of our
17 irreplaceable national treasures. Conservation is also
18 vitally important to providing clean drinking water,
19 cleaning our air and reducing greenhouse gas pollution.
20 Barack Obama and Joe Biden believe we need a new
21 vision for conservation that both protects our existing
22 publicly-owned lands while dramatically expanding
23 investments in protecting and restoring forests,
24 grasslands, and wetlands across America for generations
25 to come.

26 Protect National Parks and Forests: For too
27 long, America's National Parks and Forests have been
28 threatened by lax protection. Barack Obama fought
29 efforts to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
30 Obama supports the Roadless Area Conservation Rule
31 to keep over 58 million acres of national forests pristine.
32 As president, he and Joe Biden will repair the damage
33 done to our national parks by inadequate funding and
34 emphasize the protection and restoration of our
35 National Forests.

36 Barack Obama is also an original cosponsor of
37 the Combat Illegal Logging Act, which would prohibit
38 the importation of illegally harvested wood products.
39 This would make foreign companies much less likely to
40 engage in massive, illegal deforestation in other
41 countries. Saving these endangered forests preserves a
42 major source of carbon sequestration.

43 Conserve New Lands: Barack Obama is a

44 strong supporter of increased funding for the Land and
45 Water Conservation Fund, which supports land
46 acquisition and maintenance of parks. As a state
47 senator, he supported the creation of the Illinois Open
48 Land Trust Act, which allowed the state to buy property
49 from willing sellers for conservation and recreation
50 purposes and make grants and loans to local
51 governments for acquiring land for open spaces.

52 While Americans can take great pride in our
53 National Parks and other public lands, there are many
54 landscapes and ecosystems which do not have adequate
55 protection. As president, Barack Obama will lead efforts
56 to acquire and conserve new parks and public lands,
57 focusing on ecosystems such as the Great Plains and
58 Eastern forests which do not yet have the protection
59 they deserve.

60 Partner with Landowners to Conserve Private
61 Lands: Because most land is privately-owned, private
62 landowners are the principle stewards of America's land
63 and water. As a U.S. Senator, Barack Obama has
64 supported conservation programs that serve as a
65 resource to landowners and assist them with sustainable
66 environmental planning and best land management
67 practices. As president, he and Joe Biden will put an
68 unprecedented level of emphasis on the conservation of
69 private lands. They will advance legislation that works
70 with landowners and follows in the tradition of the
71 Wilderness Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Clean Air
72 Act to focus federal attention and increased resources
73 for this key environmental issue. They will also increase
74 funding for the Conservation Security Program and the
75 Conservation Reserve Program and will create
76 additional incentives for private landowners to protect
77 and restore wetlands, grasslands, forests, and other
78 wildlife habitat.

79 Encourage Farmers at the Cutting Edge of
80 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency: Farmers
81 realize that they can help their bottom line and the
82 environment by using more wind and solar power
83 production systems and sharing energy with other users.
84 They are using new irrigation practices to conserve
85 energy and water. Barack Obama and Joe Biden will
86 encourage the use of methane digesters that are being
87 used to produce power from animal waste. "No till" and

88 other agricultural practices are reducing energy input
89 and keeping the health of our soil sustainable. Barack
90 Obama and Joe Biden will expand USDA projects that
91 focus on energy efficiency and conservation.

92 Paid for by Obama for America

93 Printed in House 🍏