

LEAGUE OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

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Election Report

Environmentalists won major victories in both House and Senate elections this year. We suffered some serious defeats also, but on balance the victories were far more important.

The League's top priority was to unseat Rep. Wayne Aspinall (D-Colo.), the powerful Chairman of the House Interior Committee. His opponent in the Democratic primary was a conservationist and land use planning consultant named Alan Merson. He campaigned hard on environmental issues -- and won. Environmentalists raised over \$20,000 for his campaign. Unfortunately Merson was unable to survive the general election in a Republican district that supported President Nixon by over 70%.

In addition to Merson, the League made fundraising mailings for eight other priority candidates, and five of them won their elections. When these commitments were met, we also gave money to four other candidates, but only one of these candidates won. All thirteen candidates are listed below. Those who won have a plus sign before their names; those who lost have a minus.

+ Alan Merson (D) opposing Rep. Wayne Aspinall (D-Colo.)	-----	\$ 16,300
- Governor Russell Peterson (R-Delaware) opposed by State Rep. Sherman Tribbitt	-----	\$ 10,000
+ Rep. Ken Hechler (D-W.Va.) opposed by Rep. James Kee (D-W.Va.)	-----	\$ 6,000
+ Senator Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.) opposed by State Sen. Henry Hibbard (R)	-----	\$ 5,000
+ Alan Steelman (R) opposing Rep. Earle Cabell (D-Tex.)	-----	\$ 5,000
+ Wayne Owens (D) opposing Rep. Sherman Lloyd (R-Utah)	-----	\$ 3,000
- Rep. John Dow (D-N.Y.) opposed by State Sen. Benjamin Gilman (R)	-----	\$ 3,000
+ Rep. Les Aspin (D-Wisc.) opposed by Merrill Staulbaum (R)	-----	\$ 3,000
- Walter Thoreson (D) opposing Rep. Vernon Thomson (R-Wisc.)	-----	\$ 2,000

- + Rep. Pete McCloskey (R-Calif.)
opposed by Robert Barry (R) and Royce Cole (R) ----- \$ 4,000
- William "Bud" Davis (D)
opposing Rep. James McClure (R-Idaho) in Senate race ---- \$ 2,000
- Jay Rockefeller (D)
opposing Governor Arch Moore (R-W.Va.) ----- \$ 1,000
- Bud Fleuchaus (R)
opposing Rep. William Chappell (D-Fla.) ----- \$ 1,000

The League of Conservation Voters spent a total of almost \$70,000 in campaign contributions in 1972. Most of the money was given directly to candidates, but some was given to state environmental campaign committees that were supporting their own local slates. We also gave endorsements to a total of 57 candidates nationally in the November elections. 43 won, and 14 lost. However this ratio should not be taken as an index of environmental strength because most of these candidates were incumbents with a built in advantage.

The environmental issues themselves were naturally more potent than any financial contribution we could make. The elections showed clearly that voters care deeply about the environment, and when they are offered a clear contrast, they nearly always choose the conservationist. Politicians seeking to exploit a backlash were thoroughly disappointed, and direct attacks on "extreme environmentalists" almost invariably proved to be fatal. But politicians seeking to camouflage their anti-conservation activities and confuse the voters were considerably more successful. Sometimes they were able to distract attention away from the environment through attacks on other emotional issues like amnesty and taxes.

The depth of voter sentiment on the environment was more obvious in referendums and bond issues where no other competing issues were involved. Such referendums won sweeping victories all over the nation. The most important victory was in California, where voters approved an initiative to restrict development of the California coastline pending completion of a master plan in 1976. Proposition #20 set up state and regional commissions with broad powers to prevent nearly all kinds of destructive development. Power companies, oil companies, and real estate interests all joined together in a massive effort to kill it. Their advertising campaign cost over \$1 million, compared to only \$120,000 spent by conservationists. Yet the proposition passed with 55% of the vote. A similar initiative passed in Washington also.

Nearly all bond issues to finance pollution control and open space were approved. People in New York alone voted for over \$1.5 billion in environmental bonds to finance park acquisition and pollution control equipment. But bonds to finance development did not do nearly so well. In Colorado, the voters decisively rejected a bond issue for the 1976 Winter Olympics, partly because they feared its environmental impact.

Below is a report on each of the League's major candidates, analysing the role of environmental issues and the reasons for success or defeat.

Alan Merson (D)
vs. Rep. Wayne Aspinall (D)

Congressman Aspinall made no effort to conceal his environmental views. Early in the campaign, he told the Denver Post that "the main issues in this campaign will be my age and the attacks on me by extreme environmentalists". It was only after his unexpected defeat that Aspinall began to change his position, telling the Washington Post that his defeat was caused entirely by redistricting and environmental issues had nothing to do with it.

As Chairman of the House Interior Committee, Aspinall had more power over public lands than any other man in Congress, and he used his power quite openly to increase the profits of mining, oil, and lumber companies. Conservationists hated him for pushing dams and holding up parks and wilderness proposals. Shortly before the primary, he began pushing his Land Use Policy bill (HR 7211) to make federal administrators powerless to protect federal lands against excessive mining and logging.

As a lawyer and land use planning consultant, Merson was in a good position to attack Aspinall's land use bill, and point out to the voters that the powerful Congressman had done nothing to control the rampant urban sprawl and land speculation that was gobbling up their water supplies and property taxes. Merson also attacked Aspinall for trying to exempt large industries from federal strip mining regulations, and for getting a score of zero on the League's voting chart. Every Democratic voter received a copy of the Field and Stream article which rated all Congressmen and put Aspinall "In a Class By Himself: The Man Who Absolutely Must Go". Over half of Merson's campaign budget in the primary came from conservationists. He beat Aspinall by nearly 2,000 votes.

The political chemistry on Capitol Hill changed almost overnight. Aspinall's Land Use Policy Act was dead; it never reached the House Floor for a vote. Aspinall tried in vain to block the tough strip mining bill but the other Interior Committee members ignored him and voted unanimously to report it to the Floor, where it passed by a vote of 247 to 23.

Merson's opponent in the general election was James Johnson, a moderate Republican who refused to talk about issues. Since he was the Republican candidate in a Republican district in a very Republican year, and since he did nothing to offend the voters, Johnson managed to win with 51% of the vote. The League continued to support Merson in the general election, although not nearly as heavily as we did in the primary.

Governor Russell Peterson (R-Del.)
vs. State Rep. Sherman Tribbitt (D)

Governor Peterson was the first man in the nation to ban new heavy industry from the coast of his state. The Coastal Zoning Law that he pushed through the State Legislature is now blocking plans by 14 major oil companies to build offshore shipping terminals in Delaware Bay.

Peterson's opponent, Sherman Tribbitt, ran a well-financed and hard-hitting campaign. Since Delaware has no campaign disclosure laws, we will never know who paid for it, but it's not hard to guess. Tribbitt sought to weaken the Coastal Zoning Law in the state legislature, preferring to leave the tough decisions up to a board that would be more vulnerable to industry pressure.

Both candidates realized that the coastal ban was popular with the voters; but Peterson was extremely vulnerable on other issues. Faulty estimates of tax revenue caused a surprised deficit in 1971, forcing Peterson to call a special session of the legislature to increase taxes on sales, utilities and personal income. Peterson was further weakened by a bitter and divisive Republican primary where his opponent Buckson attacked him for his tax increases.

Tribbitt moved immediately to exploit the issue and distract attention away from coastal zoning. He published long ads enumerating every tax that had been increased. When Peterson brought up the coast, Tribbitt said he supported the new law. Peterson played a tape-recording of Tribbitt voting against the law, and then when he saw that it had a majority, calling out "change my vote from no to yes". Tribbitt countered by saying that he had originally opposed the bill because it was too weak; it did nothing to control residential development. He waved around a Sierra Club paper expressing concern about the effects of residential development on coastal wetlands and claimed that the Sierra Club endorsed his position. The Sierra Club denied it, but their denials got less news coverage than Tribbitt's claims.

Evidently the tax issue proved to be more powerful, especially when the environmental issue became so confusing. Peterson was defeated in a close race.

Peterson: 48.4%
Tribbitt: 51.6%

Rep. Ken Hechler (D)
vs. Rep. James Kee (D)

Sec. of State Jay Rockefeller (D)
vs. Governor Arch Moore (R)

The West Virginia primary elections last May were widely interpreted as a victory for environmentalists and a stunning defeat for the coal industry. Not only Hechler, but many other candidates pledging to abolish strip mining won their elections. But in November, the abolitionist candidate Jay Rockefeller lost his challenge to the incumbent Governor Arch Moore by almost 70,000 votes. This election was also considered a show-down on the strip mining issue. What happened?

Once again, investigation shows that the strip mining issue was more isolated and clear cut for Hechler and the local candidates than it was in the Gubernatorial race. The local anti-stripping candidates continued to win handily in November; some received over twice as many votes as Rockefeller. We can understand this if we compare the Hechler and Rockefeller election races.

Of all the primary election victories, Hechler's was the most dramatic. Redistricting forced him to run against another incumbent, Rep. James Kee, in an election where 60% of the voters came from Kee's old district. There were also two other candidates who were expected to take votes away from Hechler. But to everyone's astonishment, Hechler beat Kee by more than 2 - 1.

Hechler: 52%
Kee: 25%
Wells: 19%
Heck: 4%

Hechler campaigned primarily on strip mining and black lung. Kee had missed several critical votes on coal mine health and safety, and called strip mining "a blessing in disguise". He relied on his friends in the coal industry and the corrupt Boyle leadership of the United Mine Workers to get out the vote for him, as they had always done before. The coal companies launched a skillful propaganda campaign to convince people that a ban on stripping would take away jobs and mean economic disaster for the state. But despite high levels of unemployment, the voters refused to accept coal company claims about jobs. Hechler and the other environmental candidates were far more credible because they were part of a larger citizen revolt against the domination of their lives by the coal companies and the UMW. As Hechler put it, "I told them I was against the exploitation of land because it was also the exploitation of people. They saw the truth of it. Together we defeated the whole corporate-machine politics idea that the land must be sacrificed to economic growth."

Rockefeller also ran a highly personal grass roots campaign, with an emphasis on jobs and strip mining. But his ties to the rank and file coal miner weren't nearly as strong as Hechler's, and his opponent was a very different man than James Kee. Of all the anti-conservation candidates running this year, Governor Arch Moore takes the prize for political cunning.

Although Moore was allied with the coal companies and the UMW, his administration was stronger and less corrupt than that of most West Virginia Governors. He compared favorably to his Democratic predecessors, one of whom is now in jail. In preparation for the election, Moore hoarded state funds so that during the last few weeks of the campaign he could go on a spending spree. Not a day passed without him presiding over the dedication of new roads, schools, and hospitals.

Moore also worked effectively to paint Rockefeller as a carpet-bagger in a state that is traditionally suspicious of outsiders. One of his television ads showed newsmen interviewing people on the sidewalks of New York City and asking, "how would you feel if a fellow from West Virginia came up here to run for Governor of New York?" In his speeches Moore always appeals to state pride: "All they say -- that's

the opposition -- is 'poor West Virginia this' and 'poor West Virginia that'. Well, we don't have to put up with that kind of designation any more. We're on the move in this state and we're doing it ourselves! "

But Moore was still vulnerable on the strip mining issue. He responded by saying that he too favored regulations and reclamation of the land, although not abolition. He denied permits to several strip mine operators shortly before the election to demonstrate that he was getting tough. Then, he accused Rockefeller of using the strip mine issue as a pretext for trying to destroy the entire coal mining industry. The fear campaign worked much more effectively when combined with the carpet-bagger issue.

Moore was also helped enormously by Leo Goodman, a well-known opponent of nuclear power. Goodman made headlines when he charged that Rockefeller's only reason for running for Governor was to destroy West Virginia's coal industry so that it could no longer compete with the Rockefeller family investments in nuclear power. He claimed that "Rockefeller holdings and Chase Manhattan Bank financing control the nuclear power industry of the world." This is a good example of how indiscriminate paranoia can play into the hands of astute politicians. Moore immediately picked up the issue, adding that the Rockefeller family also had heavy investments in oil, another competing fuel. Rockefeller called the charges ridiculous but it was too late in the campaign for a detailed discussion of his family's holdings which he feared would only attract more attention to the issue. Moore also reminded the voters that Rockefeller's grandfather had "hired gunmen" to crush the striking coal miners in Colorado, a confrontation that led to the famous "Ludlow Massacre". Moore beat Rockefeller by a wider margin than was expected.

Rockefeller:	45%
Moore:	55%

Alan Steelman (R)
vs. Rep. Earle Cabell (D)

Very few elections offered such a stark confrontation between the candidates. After Aspinall, Cabell was more blunt and honest about his positions than any other Congressman we sought to defeat.

The election became an informal referendum on the Trinity River Project, a Corps of Engineers proposal to make Dallas a seaport by turning this beautiful river into a series of concrete ditches and impoundments. Cabell proudly promoted the project, calling the Trinity in its natural state "a mudhole" and claiming that "the ecology will be improved". His opponent Steelman opposed the project on both environmental and economic grounds, calling it "a billion dollar ditch." He received enthusiastic support from conservationists, who formed a special coalition to help his campaign.

No doubt Steelman seemed insane to most of the local politicians. No Texas candidate had ever questioned the Trinity Project before; it was pork barrel motherhood. But Steelman described how wildlife and recreational values would be destroyed, at great cost to the taxpayer, and then asked a revolutionary question: Did Dallas really want to be a seaport? Did the city really want the pollution and crime that follow in the wake of heavy industry? "The airport is

our kind of port," he concluded. Evidently the voters agreed with him, since he won by a surprising margin:

Steelman: 56%
Cabell: 44%

The Dallas Morning News remarked the morning after that the victory was "not just coattails" but was caused primarily by Steelman's skillful campaigning and environmental issues like the Trinity River Project. The future of the project was once assured, but is now in doubt. Several other state legislators have now come out against it, now that Steelman has broken the ice.

Senator Lee Metcalf (D)
vs. State Sen. Henry Hibbard (R)

Metcalf is best known as the Senate's most effective critic of the electrical power industry and its advertising and rate structures. This year, however, utility policies were overshadowed by two more emotional environmental issues: strip mining and forest management. On both, there was a big difference between Metcalf and his opponent, State Senator Hibbard, a millionaire rancher who looked like a Marlboro advertisement.

Hibbard said that "the environmental issue is going too far." He began his campaign by strongly supporting power company plans to strip vast areas in eastern Montana. Metcalf warned that uncontrolled strip mining would turn the area into a wasteland, and worked in the Senate Interior Committee to strengthen federal regulations. Later, when Hibbard realized that this issue was helping Metcalf, he reversed himself and came out for strong regulation also.

Hibbard hoped to exploit some backlash in rural western Montana, since Metcalf was partly responsible for a Forest Service decision to reduce the rate of logging there. Metcalf had also antagonized the lumber companies through his efforts to restrict clearcutting and insure that the National Forests were used for watershed, wildlife and recreation as well as logging. The companies organized a group of lumbermen's wives called WOOD -- Women Opposed to Official Depression -- who helped Hibbard spread the word that one man out of five would soon be out of work, all because of Senator Metcalf.

Despite these efforts, Metcalf feels that the conservation issue helped him much more than it hurt him. The Montana League of Conservation Voters based in Missoula campaigned hard for Metcalf, and his stand on the environment made him popular at the universities. In past elections Metcalf sometimes lost Missoula, and never took the city by more than 500 votes. But this time he won there by over 4,000 votes. (His total margin of victory was 11,000 votes.)

By the end of the campaign, Hibbard was spending most of his energy trying to link Metcalf with McGovern. Although he spent almost twice as much money as Metcalf, he still failed to unseat him. The election was very close.

Metcalf: 51%
Hibbard: 49%

Wayne Owens (D)
vs. Rep. Sherman Lloyd (R)

Congressman Sherman Lloyd was bitterly opposed by Utah conservationists largely because of his efforts to force construction of a road through the Escalante country in Southern Utah. He used his position on the House Interior Committee to block Senate legislation creating a Glen Canyon Recreation Area and Escalante Wilderness area until he could push through his own version of the bill mandating construction of the road. His opponent, Wayne Owens, was formerly an aide to Senator Frank Moss (D) who helped draft the Senate legislation that was favored by conservationists.

The Escalante issue caused many local conservationists to rally behind Owens and supply valuable manpower, but for the average voter it was not the major issue of the campaign. Owens stressed tax reform, the war, and the environment in general. He attacked Lloyd for his bad voting record, his score of only 15 on the League's voting chart, his inclusion as one of the "Dirty Dozen", and his poor rating by Field and Stream. Lloyd made the mistake of calling his critics environmental radicals and extremists, which only served to draw more attention to his poor ratings.

Owens feels that environmental issues were especially helpful in getting support from the 20,000 young voters who were a crucial part of his victory margin. He won by more than expected.

Owens: 54%
Lloyd: 45%
AIP
candidate: 1%

Rep. John Dow (D)
vs. State Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R)

The League of Conservation Voters decided to support Congressman Dow largely because he is one of the few conservation-minded Congressmen on the powerful House Agriculture Committee. When the Committee drafted a disastrous pesticide bill in 1971, Dow led the unsuccessful effort to strengthen the bill on the House Floor.

Local conservationists also gave Dow strong support, because of his stand against nuclear power plants along the Hudson River and his opposition to making a jetport out of Stewart Airforce Base. But here again, for the average voter the environment was not the major issue in the campaign. Dow lost because he was too liberal for his district, and unwilling to adapt politically.

A majority of the voters were registered Republicans, and yet Dow invited McGovern into the district to campaign with him and openly embraced his candidacy. Gilman was delighted to take advantage of this and link Dow with McGovern's positions on welfare and amnesty.

Gilman also sought to confuse the voters on environmental issues. He ran advertisements criticizing Dow for having voted against final passage of the water pollution and pesticide bills, which Dow did in protest because they were too weak. The League's endorsement got good coverage in the local press and helped to counteract these charges.

but we were unable to help Dow with his other problems. Despite the presence of a third candidate who was expected to split the opposition, Dow was badly beaten.

Dow: 39%
Gilman: 48%
Rapkin: 13%

Richard Ottinger, another New York candidate endorsed by the League, also lost his election race against the incumbent Congressman Peter Peyser by a much narrower margin. Although Ottinger has a splendid record of environmental leadership, the issue was not a major factor in the campaign.

Three Wisconsin Candidates:

Rep. Les Aspin (D)
vs. Merrill Staulbaum (R)

This election was a good example of backlash that failed. Aspin's opponent Merrill Staulbaum repeatedly accused him of sacrificing the needs of his constituents for the sake of environmental purity.

Aspin certainly seemed vulnerable on the issue. The largest American Motors plant in the nation is in his district in Kenosha, and Aspin had enraged the company by supporting strict enforcement of the auto emission deadlines in the Clean Air Act. After the usual rumors about lay-offs, Staulbaum charged that Aspin was "utterly callous to the well being and fortunes of our automobile workers," and made this the subject of a major advertising campaign.

Staulbaum also attacked Aspin for paying too much attention to the Alaska pipeline. Aspin is known as Congress' most aggressive opponent of the pipeline, and has released numerous government documents showing that the Interior Department has relaxed its environmental safeguards to oblige the oil industry. The issue is actually very relevant to this district, since Aspin is supporting the alternate trans-Canadian route which is safer environmentally and would reduce oil prices in the Midwest.

But Staulbaum pointed out that Wisconsin ranked 49th in getting federal funds, and charged that Aspin was ineffective at bringing money into the district because his aggressiveness on the pipeline issue had needlessly antagonized west coast Congressmen.

Both tactics failed. Aspin won re-election with a whopping 64% of the vote.

Rep. David Obey (D-Wisc.)
Rep. Alvin O'Konski (R-Wisc.)

When two incumbents are forced by redistricting to run against each other the election is usually close, but not so in this case. The League decided not to spend any money on this race because we were confident that Obey would win.

The biggest issue in the campaign was Project Sanguine. This is a Navy proposal to build a vast underground electrical grid in northern Wisconsin for submarine communications. The surface construction would tear apart hundreds of miles of forest land, and no one knows what effect the continuous low-frequency electrical current would have on the complex nervous systems of living organisms above and below the ground.

Congressman O'Konski was an early and enthusiastic supporter of Sanguine, probably believing that it was a new form of pork barrel that might bring jobs into the economically depressed district. His seat on the House Armed Services Committee made it easy for him to push the project. But gradually Sanguine emerged as an ecological and political nightmare. One small-scale test resulted in the disruption of all telephone communications. The people in the district became increasingly alarmed.

Congressman Obey had been a leader in the fight against Project Sanguine and one of the strongest environmentalists on the House Appropriations Committee. He is also a dynamic and effective Congressman who would deserve major support in a close race. But this one wasn't very close.

Obey: 62%
O'Konski: 38%

Walter Thoreson (D)
vs. Rep. Vernon Thomson (R-Wisc.)

The challenger Walter Thoreson campaigned mainly on peace and environmental issues. He was also a pioneer in the Wisconsin population movement. While the incumbent Congressman was not very powerful, he had a very poor voting record, and it seemed like a good opportunity to replace him with a strong environmentalist.

No single environmental issue dominated the campaign. Thoreson criticized Thomson for promoting a dam on the Kickapoo River and for waffling on the Sanguine issue. Thoreson was a founder of the Stop Sanguine Committee, while Thomson supported Sanguine until he found out that Thoreson was going to run against him. This issue was undoubtedly helpful to Thoreson, but not nearly as powerful in this district as it was further north, in the Obey-O'Konski race.

Thomson made the mistake of brining Secretary of Agriculture Earl C. Butz into the district to campaign for him, thus antagonizing both environmentalists and small farmers, who rightly associate Butz with agribusiness interests. This shrank Thomson's victory margin in the

rural areas, but he still won there because most of the farms in this district are fairly wealthy and staunchly Republican.

The race was looking very close indeed when Thomson discovered the amnesty issue. As a strong peace candidate, Thoreson had advocated amnesty for conscientious objectors. Thomson called this "a slap in the face" of combat veterans who had answered their country's call for help. Thoreson stuck by his position, and countered that Thomson himself had failed to answer his country's call because he rarely showed up to vote on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which handles matters vital to the nation's security. It was an imaginative response, but evidently failed to satisfy the voters. Thomson won a hairline victory with just under 51% of the vote.

William "Bud" Davis (D)
vs. Rep. James McClure (R-Idaho)

Conservationists knew from the start that Congressman McClure was the favorite to win this Idaho Senate race, but his record on the House Interior Committee was so devastating that it was well worth the effort. McClure used his Committee position to block Senate legislation to stop the proposed Hells Canyon Dam. He also held up protection of the White Clouds and Sawtooth Mountains by pushing legislation to allow open pit mining, but later had the gall to claim credit when Congress finally acted to put a moratorium on the mining. The Idaho Environmental Council remarked that "his disdain for environmental protection.. is almost unique" and supported his opponent Bud Davis.

McClure's election cost his industry supporters almost half a million dollars. He outspent Davis by more than three to one. During the Republican primary, Idaho's four major industries held a secret meeting with McClure and his opponents where they tried to pressure the opponents into dropping out of the race. All four industries had vested interests in various forms of environmental damage. One was a major polluter, another a lumber company, and the remaining were power companies pushing for large dams.

Davis doesn't always side with conservationists, but he offered a clear contrast to McClure. He was opposed to any more dams on the Snake River, and more important, he was not beholden to industry. He did an excellent job of combining environmental and corruption issues through his slogan, "Idaho is not for sale."

These issues were very helpful for Davis and the major factor in his endorsement by several highly respected newspapers. McClure also suffered from his poor ratings by environmental and civic groups; the Washington Post remarked that "McClure is busy swatting flies -- those pesky voting records. .. It diverts him from the more profitable tactic of linking Davis to the unpopular positions of George McGovern." What once seemed like an easy victory for McClure turned into a very close race.

But Davis could not overcome the combined impact of McClure's heavy advertising and McGovern's candidacy. McClure resorted to serious distortions of Davis' positions. While President of Idaho State University, Davis had once allowed Timothy Leary to speak on campus; therefore, according to McClure, he was all for legalizing dope.

Davis had also signed a pledge not to eat union lettuce, and this was used to link him to Cesar Chavez. non ^

McClure ended up getting 52% of the vote in a state that President Nixon carried by over 70%.

He is almost sure to get a seat on the Senate Interior Committee, where he will probably do even more damage than he did in the House. Once he is entrenched, it may be years before environmentalists get another real opportunity to unseat him.

Rep. Pete McCloskey (R)
vs. Robert Barry (R) and Royce Cole (R)

The League gave McCloskey \$3,000 in a hotly contested Republican primary and \$1,000 more when he asked for help in the general election. It turned out that the second installment was hardly necessary. McCloskey is adept at running scared.

McCloskey is a committed and articulate environmental spokesman, but this was not the major issue in either the primary or the general election. In the primary, conservation issues were eclipsed by his opposition to President Nixon and the war in Vietnam; in the general, his opponent agreed with him about the environment and tried to paint McCloskey as a fiscal conservative.

Still, McCloskey's stand on conservation and populations issues helped to generate strong support from local activists, who appreciated his work in getting Congressional Hearings on the problems of dredging and filling San Francisco Bay, plus his more recent legislation creating a San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. In the primary, McCloskey's opponent Robert Barry was embarrassed by revelations that a copper mine on his property in northern California was named one of the "ten least wanted" sources of pollution in the state. When cornered in debate, Barry called the pollution an "act of God", but failed to convince his audience.

Bud Fleuchaus (R)
vs. Rep. Bill Chappell (D)

This race was a long shot. Originally the League planned only an endorsement of Fleuchaus, but gave \$1,000 toward the end of the campaign when it seemed that Fleuchaus might have a real chance. It was hard to predict Chappell's vulnerability because he had never faced serious opposition before. We became hopeful after the local newspapers revealed that Chappell had old business ties with Vincent Razzano, a leader in organized crime. But in spite of this Fleuchaus failed to come even close.

Fleuchaus: 40%
Chappell: 60%

Chappell got a zero on the League's voting chart, which Fleuchaus used against him. He is also a hard-core Barge Canal booster, who revealed the day after the election that he was again leading an

effort by the Florida delegation to revive the Cross-Florida Barge Canal. Fleuchaus took no position on the Barge Canal, which is popular in this district.

His positions on other environmental issues were excellent. He called for Federal acquisition of the Big Cypress Swamp, and for adding parts of the Suwannee and Oklawaha Rivers to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. He strongly opposed the creation of new county drainage districts which are used to subsidize wetland drainage by real estate developers.

Rep. Neal Smith (D)
vs. Rep. John Kyl (R)

Redistricting forced these two incumbents to run against each other. Both have equally poor environmental voting records on the House Floor, making it difficult for the League to endorse one over the other. But experienced conservation leaders were anxious to see Kyl defeated, because of the extensive damage he does on the House Interior and Agriculture Committees.

There was a lot of voter education to be done. Kyl had successfully fooled many of his constituents into thinking that he loved the environment. His efforts to undermine environmental legislation were typically disguised either as pro-conservation measures or as reasonable compromises.

Shortly before the election, the League publicized a statement that exposed Kyl's record on a great many environmental issues. Among other things, we attacked Kyl's sponsorship of Aspinall's land use bill, his bad votes on water pollution, his efforts to get a weak strip mining bill in the Interior Committee, his efforts to undermine the wilderness system, his repeated opposition to new parks, and his leadership in drafting and defending a disastrous pesticides bill. When the House Agriculture Committee reported this bill to the House Floor, Kyl led the debate against nearly all the pro-conservation amendments.

The League's charges were given prominent coverage on the Op Ed page of the Des Moines Register, the largest paper in the district, along with Kyl's emphatic but rather vague denials. Local conservation leaders felt that the story seriously undermined Kyl's credibility.

Redistricting had given Smith the advantage, but local observers expected the race to be close because President Nixon was running very strong. Both candidates avoided any open clashes on the issues, so that the League's attack on Kyl provided one of the few moments of drama in an otherwise bland campaign. I would like to think we had something to do with Kyl's defeat, although there were certainly other factors also working against him. He lost by more than we expected.

Kyl: 41%
Smith: 59%

There were of course many other environmental candidates who won important victories without any help from the League. In Nevada, James Bilbray managed to unseat the incumbent Congressman Walter Baring (D) who scored a zero on the League's chart and was one of Environmental Action's "Dirty Dozen". Baring was very uncooperative on the House Interior Committee. In Vermont, Thomas Salmon (D) won the Gubernatorial election over Luther Hackett (R) mainly because of his stand on land use planning. Salmon has supported Vermont's new law imposing tighter controls over land development, while his opponent was backed by developers seeking to weaken the law.

The most dramatic and unexpected victory in November occurred in Colorado where Senator Gordon Allott (R) was defeated. His opponent Floyd Haskell (D) campaigned on tax reform and environmental issues. The League failed to help him partly because we were already so heavily involved in another Colorado election (Merson) and partly because we were overly pessimistic about his chances of success.

As a State Legislator, Haskell had introduced bills to limit the growth of the Denver metropolitan area. In July 1972 he campaigned vigorously against a bond issue to fund further water diversion to Denver, arguing that this would only feed the urban sprawl. The Denver voters rejected a water bond for the first time in the city's history, to the delight of people on the Western Slope who resented the taking of their water.

But Allott was unable to understand this change in values. In 1966 he had campaigned on the slogan "Keep Colorado Growing", and this time he continued to boast about his role in promoting Bureau of Reclamation Dams and water diversion projects. Haskell further eroded his image by publicizing his votes against tax reform and his miserable score of only 3 on the Senate chart. Thus Haskell surprised everyone by his narrow victory.

Haskell: 51%

Allott: 48%

(AIP candidate: 1%)

State Environmental Campaign Committees

Many of the candidates listed above received crucial support from state and local environmental campaign committees organized for that purpose. State environmental groups were politically active in California, Colorado, Georgia, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Wisconsin, West Virginia, and other states.

For example, the California League of Conservation Voters played an important role in the election of George Brown to Congress, and 12 of the 20 candidates it endorsed won their elections.

The Georgia League of Conservation Voters is a very encouraging example of how much can be accomplished on a state and local level. Organized only six months ago, it endorsed 28 candidates and 20 of them won. Five out of six of its high priority candidates won.

The Georgia League sent out 100,000 pieces of literature and received favorable coverage by the news media.

One of the Georgia League's key targets was state legislator Joe Higgenbotham who had blocked scenic rivers legislation. The League uncovered Higgenbotham's financial connections with Chattahoochee River developers and this publicity plus some hard work by environmentalists helped to cause his defeat. In the race for U.S. Senate, the Georgia League supported State Sen. Sam Nunn (D) over Congressman Fletcher Thompson (R) because Nunn had promised to fight for a Chattahoochee River National Park and appoint a full-time conservationist to his staff. Nunn won handily in a race that political observers thought too close to call.

Changes in Congressional Committees

The 1972 election will have a profound impact on the House Interior Committee. The defeat of its autocratic Chairman, Rep. Wayne Aspinall, will naturally make a big difference, but that is only the beginning. Four other senior members of the committee were also defeated, largely through the efforts of environmentalists. This has made a vivid impression on the surviving members of the committee. Other committee members died or ran for Senate, leaving a total of 12 new vacancies. The impact of these vacancies is hard to exaggerate. It allows younger, more conservation-minded committee members to move up the seniority ladder and take control of subcommittees.

Many conservationists including myself were disappointed that the defeat of House Public Works Committee Chairman George Fallon in 1970 did not produce greater changes in that committee. Our problem was that nearly all the other Committee members remained the same, and very few of them cared at all about the environment. The new Chairman, Rep. John Blatnik, was expected to be better than Fallon, but he proved quite ineffectual. Much of the power shifted to Rep. Bob Jones (D-Ala.) who is hardly any better than Fallon.

Some reporters have discounted the impact of Aspinall's defeat because his likely successor, Rep. James Haley (D-Fla.) also has a poor environmental record. But Haley has indicated that he will allow most decisions to be made by the younger Subcommittee Chairman who are more responsive to environmental values.

There is some hope for improvement in the House Public Works Committee, since six anti-conservation members either died or were defeated. (Only one, James Kee, was defeated by environmentalists.) In the past the Senate Public Works Committee has been much more sympathetic to conservationists, but here we are in great danger of losing our pro-environment majority. Two of the most helpful committee members are gone: Senator Cooper (R-Ken.) and Senator Boggs (R-Del.) Cooper retired and Boggs was defeated. His opponent, Joseph Biden, used environmental issues in his campaign and had a good record during his brief stint on the County Council, but he made a misleading statement about Boggs, saying he couldn't understand why Boggs wouldn't vote to open up the Highway Trust Fund for mass transit. This was a strange remark because Boggs had strongly supported diversion of Highway Trust Fund money for mass transit and resisted pressures from pro-highway forces during the critical House-Senate conference. Both the League and the Delaware Citizens for Clean Air endorsed Boggs, but these endorsements were neutralized by former Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall who campaigned for Biden.

It is very important that critical vacancies on these and other Committees be filled by environmentalists, or else a lot of the progress made in the elections could be undone. Unfortunately, it is difficult for outsiders to influence these decisions which are made by the House and Senate leadership.

Conclusion

The elections revealed a deep and widespread public support for the environment, and showed that Congress still has a long way to go to catch up with public opinion. These revelations, which were dramatized by the defeat of Wayne Aspinall, should make environmental lobbying a bit easier. But ironically, it will make environmental campaign work more difficult. As it becomes increasingly clear that voters respond well to environmental appeals, there will be fewer and fewer candidates like Aspinall who are open and forthright in their anti-conservation views. We cannot rely on the candidates to define the issues.

The voters will depend more than ever upon independent environmental groups to tell them which environmental candidate is telling the truth. While the League voting charts are helpful in this regard, there is clearly a limit to their value. No national organization can possibly fill the role of explaining so many different candidates to such diverse constituencies. If the environment is to remain a potent campaign issue, it will depend on citizen involvement on the local level and the growth of many more state and local environmental campaign committees that are known and trusted by the voters.