

**From Jimmy Carter to George W. Bush: Presidential Policies and
Involvement in the Debate over the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge,
1977-2009**



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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: Arctic Wildlife, Environment, and Petroleum Resources

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), located in the Northeastern corner of Alaska, has for the last three decades been the focus of one of the most contentious land-use conflicts in the United States. Encompassing 19.3 million acres, it is the largest unit in the National Wildlife Refuge System, equivalent in size to the state of South Carolina. From the interior highlands in the south to the Arctic coastal plain in the north, it spans across five undisturbed ecological regions each harboring unique and abundant Arctic wildlife including multiple caribou herds, several varieties of bear, Dall sheep, muskox, moose, wolf, and numerous local and migratory bird species. Furthermore, the combined geographical vastness and the pristine condition of the flora and fauna, offers wilderness opportunities largely lost in the continental states of the twenty-first century. It is frequently referred to as “America’s Serengeti.”

Aside from the value associated with unparalleled Arctic ecosystems and teeming wildlife, the North Slope of Alaska has—since the 1960s—been one of America’s primary energy regions. During the latter half of the 1980s, the ANWR petroleum output was in excess of 2 million barrels per day, accounting for 25% of the total domestic production. Production at Prudhoe Bay—the largest oil field ever discovered in North America—has, since then, been declining. In 2005, the North Slope accounted for 17% of national extraction.¹ According to assessments presented by the U. S. Geological Survey (USGS), the solution to the downward trend could lie within the 1.5 million acre coastal plain of the ANWR. In 2005, the USGS calculated that the coastal plain, including adjacent State waters, hold approximately 10 billion barrels of oil. Availability depends on the oil price, but the USGS points out that at a suggested price of \$50 per barrel, 90% of the volume is economically recoverable.² Thus, with legitimate prospects of 10 billion barrels of oil, the coastal plain could very well be one of the largest remaining oil fields in the United States.

Owing to the magnitude of potential oil resources, the ecological significance of the refuge, and the widespread ramifications of any decision to undertake oil exploration, an array of different actors from various levels government and society across the United States have taken interest in the refuge. Most significantly, these include the indigenous peoples of

Alaska, the State government of Alaska, NGOs, petroleum corporations, and members of Congress and the executive branch. Of these actors, this thesis sets the focus on the role of the president and the executive branch of the federal government in the United States.

The question over the use of the refuge coastal plain took legislative shape under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980. The act stipulated, under section 1003: “Production of oil and gas from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is prohibited and no leasing or other development leading to production of oil and gas from the range shall be undertaken until authorized by an Act of Congress.”³ All of the presidents from Jimmy Carter through to George W. Bush developed policies and made decisions relating to the management of the coastal plain. In regard to their stances represented in policy initiatives on the ANWR, the presidents fall in two lines along the debate: Democratic presidents Carter and Clinton supported full preservation based on the ecological values of the refuge, while Republican presidents Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr. all advocated drilling the coastal plain as a national security concern to fortify domestic energy control in a volatile world market.

The direction of presidential policies towards either opening up the refuge for hydrocarbon extraction or continuing preservation of the area in an ecologically intact state, plays out on a particularly compelling platform where historical environmental values contend with contemporary energy challenges facing the president and the American people in the twenty-first century. A synopsis of the historical narratives that led to creation of the refuge, and the larger environmental and energy themes that came to be coupled in the conflict leading up to 1977, now follows and provides the relevant context of the debate.

1.2. Environmental Values and Energy Challenges

Wilderness as a concept has been an intrinsic part of American society since the first pioneers settled along the Eastern coast at the beginning of the seventeenth century. In *Wilderness & the American Mind*, Professor Roderick Nash points to the generally negative perceptions that the settlers held of the natural environment. To the settlers, wilderness represented hardship and danger—an element that had to be conquered in order to establish civilization.⁴ It was first as a reaction to the invention of the railroad and the impact of nineteenth century industrialization, that the wilderness began to be valued for its positive qualities in America.⁵ Within the currents that shaped the American wilderness ideal, transcendentalist writer and philosopher, Henry David Thoreau, is one of the pioneers. Thoreau and fellow transcendentalists were decisive in terms of restructuring the

conceptualization of nature—conveying nature as a collective benefit and a sanguine aspect of human existence.⁶ In *Walden*, published in 1854, Thoreau presents a detailed and very positive description of the natural environment. In contrast to the dominant approach within materialism, Thoreau emphasizes the solitary, aesthetic, and spiritual qualities of the uncluttered natural environment as reinvigorating. He characteristically proclaims that “we can never have enough of Nature.”⁷

During the final half of the nineteenth century, the American preservation movement took shape under the auspices of author and nature philosopher, John Muir. Muir argued for protection on the grounds of scenic qualities, but he also considered it an antidote to the growing economic approach to flora and fauna. In a “Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf,” Muir criticizes man’s approach to nature for being driven too much by material incentives: “A numerous class of men are painfully astonished whenever they find anything, living or dead, in all God’s universe, which they cannot eat or render in some way what they call useful to themselves.”⁸ In short, Muir’s statement can be interpreted as a critique of America’s dominant social paradigm (DSP), and the manner in which it influenced how people approached the environment. Over the centuries—and largely continuing into the present day—the American DSP has embodied values such as individualism, unrestrained economic growth, and strong free-market principles. In practice, these values have often been at odds with environmental protection and nature preservation. A more extensive discussion of DSP theory is carried out in chapter three of this thesis.

Muir’s argument was an apparent reaction to the philosophical split that occurred in the U.S. over land use at the turn of the twentieth century. Muir and like-minded individuals wished to preserve areas untouched and free from any industrial development. Others, such as Gifford Pinchot, who was chief of the Department of Agriculture under the Theodore Roosevelt administration, advocated a utilitarian approach to natural resources. The conflict was best illustrated through the struggle over the construction of a dam at Hetch Hetchy Valley in California.⁹ Muir wished to preserve the area, while Pinchot strongly advocated the dam’s construction. In contrast to a move for preservation founded on aesthetic and intrinsic values, Pinchot’s utilitarian policy implicated the use of natural resources over the longest possible period of time and for the benefit of as many as possible.¹⁰ Roosevelt, with a profound interest and concern for the natural environment, had conflicting feelings about approving the plans; yet, he ultimately conceded that it was necessary for supplying water to San Francisco.¹¹

In the 1950s, the concept of wilderness protection as formulated by Thoreau and Muir, and by and large practiced by Roosevelt, came to fruition through the incorporation of scientific values, and thus setting the stage for the establishment of the Arctic National Wildlife Range (prior to being designated as a refuge in 1980, the ANWR was classified as a range). With *A Sand County Almanac*, Aldo Leopold popularized ecology as a central argument among wilderness advocates, giving the preservationist movement a scientific edge.¹² Ecology, defined as the study of the relationship between organisms and their environments, is peaceably represented in *A Sand County Almanac*, with thoughtful arguments on man's approach to nature. The main theme, reverberating throughout Leopold's account, is a call for an improvement in the collective human land ethic.¹³ In *The Last Great Wilderness*, Roger Kaye—who is an affiliate professor at the University of Alaska—notes that many of the persons that pioneered the drive to establish the refuge were profoundly inspired by Leopold's work. Along with efforts from resourceful and passionate individuals, the ecological concerns reflected in the “emerging environmental movement,” was also a crucial factor leading to the currently preserved status of the refuge.¹⁴ Most of the public and political campaigning for the creation the refuge took place during the 1950s, with the Wilderness Society and the group's president Olaus Murie, considered as particularly important in the movement.¹⁵

There were legislative attempts to establish the Range, but in the last days of the 86th Congress the Arctic Range bill did not reach the floor of the Senate. Alaskan Senators Ernest Gruening and Bob Bartlett, who both strongly opposed the proposal, succeeded in preventing the bill from leaving committee.¹⁶ In a similar fashion to how Alaskan politicians would later come to advocate drilling in the coastal plain, the two senators argued that the establishment of the range would hinder Alaska from developing valuable natural resources.¹⁷ Ultimately, the 8.9 million acre range was established in December 1960 through an executive order issued by a preservationist-minded Secretary of the Interior, Fred Seaton. The order was crafted under the authority of President Eisenhower in the waning days of his presidency, who was—at that time—inclined to have little direct involvement in the matter.¹⁸

In *The Last Great Wilderness*, Kaye has on the whole carried out an extensive study of the history and events leading up to the formation of the range in 1960. After analysis of campaign writings, testimonies, and relevant literature, Kaye identifies five distinct values that were both important for the initial establishment of the range/refuge and to the subsequent expansion of the area twenty years later. Kaye's five values are encapsulated as follows:¹⁹

- Wildlife—preserving a pristine segment of free wildlife within a larger ecological society.
- Science—base region for the study of undisturbed ecological processes.
- Recreation—an opportunity for man to retreat from civilization in order to experience nature and rejuvenating feelings of solitude and self-reliance.
- Heritage—preserving the frontier conditions that once characterized the United States and shaped the national character.
- Bequest—to preserve a region intact for the benefit and enjoyment of following generations.

During the same period as parts of the Alaskan wilderness were placed under federal protection, important transformations occurred in the environmental and energy policy sectors. In the 1960s, advances in science pertaining to the negative effects of everyday chemicals, urban smog, and environmental accidents (such as the Santa Barbara Oil spill of 1969), made the public more aware about the negative implications of industrial development and its effect on human life. Numerous legislative acts for clean air and water, containing increasingly rigorous specifications, illustrate the emergent new awareness.²⁰ Moreover, the enormous Prudhoe Bay oil discovery of 1968, established Alaska's petroleum resources as a vital element of America's energy policy. In the 1920s, the federal government had already created a National Petroleum Reserve on the Western part of the North Slope; however, Alaskan oil first became a household concept with the findings at Prudhoe Bay.

The ensuing debate over the construction of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) reiterated the long-existing tensions between pro-development advocates and environmentalists surrounding the natural environment of Alaska. Environmentalists argued that the Alaskan wilderness would be permanently disturbed by a pipeline that stretched right through the state, while pro-developers viewed it in material terms and highlighted it as an economic necessity.²¹ According to historian John Strohmeier, environmental organizations achieved considerable success in halting the construction of the pipeline through the courts. Strohmeier contends that if it had not been for the 1973 oil embargo, the heated debate could have continued both in the courts and in Congress for several years; and further suggests the embargo resulted in strident political attention: "Moving oil from Prudhoe Bay became a patriotic mission, and Congress took the cue."²² The 1973 oil embargo reflected the sensitivity of the American economy to changes in the international oil-market. The embargo

was one of the main reasons for the economic recession in the mid-1970s, and as a result made a profound impact on the collective consciousness in the United States.²³ In 1977, as oil began flowing through the TAPS, attention shifted gradually from the operational fields in the Prudhoe Bay area and to the ANWR coastal plain.

On the basis of the issues raised above, this thesis hypothesizes the following: In response to strategic energy concerns, environmental challenges, and centuries-old wilderness values, American presidents have found it necessary to formulate policies on the use of the ANWR since the late 1970s. These presidents have, based on their analysis of the needs of the nation and their sense of role in national policymaking, strategically utilized the powers of the presidency to participate in the policy process. Their actions regarding the ANWR, in turn, significantly conveyed these important ideological preferences, at both the personal and political level, to the American people.

In order to examine the hypothesis it is necessary to address the following interrelated questions: Firstly, how, and to what extent have the presidents of the relevant period been influential participants in the proceedings determining the best collective utilization of the ANWR? Secondly, what were the motivational factors behind these presidents' ANWR policies? Thirdly, how can models and theories, subsumed under the study of the presidency, help explain presidential involvement and decisions on the ANWR issue? And finally, were the presidents' ANWR policies reflective of how they approached larger environmental and energy policy themes? These questions establish the framework for the following consideration, and will be revisited directly in the final, concluding chapter of this thesis.

1.3. Materials and Background Literature Review

To construct a well-rounded discussion, materials have been gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources relevant to the different presidents and their policies regarding the ANWR, include several searchable digital archives of speeches, statements, remarks, and press briefings. *The American Presidency Project*, an online searchable database hosted by the University of California, provides vital access to presidential documents pertaining to the ANWR debate. Furthermore, the various presidents also have individual, online presidential libraries or equivalent portals, with digital archives of documents from their periods in Office. The databases present the documents in complete formats, with clear citations of authorship, time, date, and location.

The development of the presidential role is necessarily reflected with the advancement of the ANWR debate in Congress. In this context, the online version of the Library of Congress offering a complete online archive of the Congressional Record as far back as the 101st Congress, is an invaluable source for studying primary documents relevant to the ANWR debate. The Congressional Research Service (CRS) is another important governmental resource. The CRS supplies objective reports to members of Congress, and the service's reports—often made available to the public—are useful both for their independent assessments, and for cross-referencing information found in other sources relevant to the ANWR debate. Agencies such as the U.S. Geological Survey and the Energy Information Administration have supplied important scientific assessments and statistical data relevant to the question of drilling for oil in the ANWR coastal plain. Statistical data on, for example, energy consumption and production, provide a vital, quantitative supplement to the present analysis which situates itself, primarily, within a qualitative methodological approach to the study of the ANWR debate.

Other than the executive branch and Congress, most of the other actors in the ANWR debate, have made available material that can be applied as primary sources. These figures include the indigenous peoples of Alaska, the state government of Alaska, environmental organizations, pro-development lobby groups, and oil companies. Clearly, for many groups the flat structure of the internet has made it a highly compatible medium for spreading their views on the ANWR debate. The question over drilling for oil in the coastal plain has received extensive coverage in the media and to better understand the context of the debate, the thesis makes use of several news services. In this study, *The New York Times* constitutes the most frequently consulted media outlet for materials relating to the ANWR issue. The internet—when utilized with caution—contains a multitude of resources relevant to the ANWR debate.

Furthermore, in order to study how the presidents have influenced the ANWR debate, the thesis draws widely from printed literature on the topic. The role of the president in the American political system has been extensively debated since the establishment of the U.S. constitution. However, as the power of the executive branch greatly expanded during the twentieth century, the president has been the subject of increasingly rigorous, academic scrutiny. *The Politics of the Presidency* by presidential studies scholars, Joseph A. Pika and John Anthony Maltese, constitutes a valuable source when studying the question of drilling for oil in the ANWR from a presidential angle. The book is both useful for its analysis of the presidency, and the manner in which Pika and Maltese identify important theories and models

and key scholarly works within the field of presidential studies. *The Environmental Presidency*, edited by political scientist, Dennis L. Soden, provides a compilation of texts which analyze how presidents have affected environmental policy in the U.S. up until 1997. Findings from *The Environmental Presidency*, are utilized in the present study facilitating analysis of how and why presidents have influenced the ANWR debate. In order to better understand the different presidents the thesis consider both work written by the presidents themselves, as well as their biographers, and the analyses of presidential scholars and other academics. These materials are presented throughout the study, as necessary.

Although, the primary focus of the thesis is the presidency, it is necessary to draw on secondary sources from multiple disciplines including history, political science, environmental studies, and materials pertaining to energy security. In *Hooked on Growth*, retired associate economics professor and environmentalist, Douglas E. Booth, discusses how the general desire for continuous economic growth has in the past, and to an even greater extent in the present, been the cause of environmental damage in the United States. Booth presents important theories and concepts which aid understanding of how presidents have approached the issue of drilling for oil in the coastal plain. *Hooked on Growth* also helps place the ANWR issue in the larger context of the struggle between economic growth and environmental strain. In *Addicted to oil*, economic historian, Ian Rutledge, presents an assessment of the massive increase in energy consumption that characterizes the United States of the twentieth century, and the consequently strong governmental and public concern over constant supply and energy security. Rutledge's observations function as perspectives that can elucidate why, on account of America's energy needs, drilling for oil in the ANWR has become a policy alternative.

American Environmental Policy, 1990-2006: Beyond Gridlock, by political scientists Christopher McGrory Klyza and David M. Sousa, is useful for considering the fate of the ANWR debate in the light of general developments in U.S. environmental politics at the turn of the century. Moreover, Klyza and Sousa pay extensive attention to the role of the president in environmental politics. Michael E. Kraft's *Environmental Policy and Politics*, Samuel P. Hay's *Environmental Politics Since 1945*, and Zachary A. Smith's *The Environmental Policy Paradox* also provide relevant environmental and energy policy perspectives. *Last Great Wilderness: The Campaign to Establish the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge* by Roger Kaye, and Daniel Nelson's *Northern Landscapes: The Struggle for Wilderness Alaska* offer important analyses relating to the historical background of the refuge. In *Last Great Wilderness*, Kaye discusses in close detail the campaign that led to the creation of the refuge,

its participants, and their strong ideological motivation. Finally, in *Northern Landscapes*, historian Daniel Nelson addresses the attempts undertaken to expand the refuge during the period of 1960 to 1980, with a particular focus on how the debate developed in Congress.

1.4. Method and Theoretical Models

The thesis is designed as a case study of presidential policy and involvement in the use of the ANWR. The main study questions are presented in the hypothesis section, establishing the objectives of the thesis. Furthermore, theories and models that address various aspects of the presidency, form the ground for the conceptual framework which allows the questions to be studied. The conceptual framework is composed of four different policy-related aspects relevant to how the various presidents have approached the question of drilling for oil in the ANWR. The four aspects are not necessarily equally applicable to each of the presidents, but instead offer a guide to the different kind of topics to be explored in order to better understand the role of the executive in the ANWR debate.

1. The energy and environmental policies of the different administrations and presidents. The ANWR debate is necessarily part of larger frames of discourse within the rubric of policy. How the presidents approached challenges pertaining to energy and environmental politics is highly relevant to how they each considered the question of opening the refuge to industrial activity. The president's role in legislative politics grew dramatically during the twentieth century, and according to presidency scholar Fred I. Greenstein's model of the modern presidency: "Presidents have come to be the chief agenda setter in federal-level policy-making."²⁴ As a result, the president becomes the natural leader on environmental and energy politics. By speeches and specific proposals, the president both has the power and is expected to set the national policy agenda. Hence, aside from exploring the different policy views that the administrations advocated with regards to the refuge, it is also necessary to consider what types of environmental and energy policies that the presidents put forward. Moreover, the dynamic between the executive and legislative branch also depends on facets interpreted via application of the theory of divided government, and related models and theories explaining how different societal circumstances cause movements in public opinion on energy /environmental politics.

2. The Presidents' interpretations of the role of the executive branch as seen in relation to the ANWR specifically, and energy and environmental politics in general. In terms of environmental and energy politics, Theodore Roosevelt's stewardship theory appears

especially relevant. Roosevelt reasoned that the president “was a steward of the people bound actively and affirmatively to do all he could for the people, and not to content himself with the negative merit of keeping his talents undamaged in a napkin.”²⁵ The concept of stewardship implies that the president should be constantly concerned with providing for the common good. This philosophy seems to be particularly pertinent since the refuge in essence is a public resource which the federal government and the president manage for the American people. The president has to decide whether the environmental risks of drilling for oil in the coastal plain are acceptable, and if the potential oil resources hold a greater collective value than the ecological qualities of the refuge. Moreover, because the concept of stewardship largely has become synonymous with environmental protection in U.S. politics, Roosevelt’s theory seems eminently relevant to the thesis. The stewardship theory also implies that the president can take any actions not explicitly prohibited by the Constitution to achieve a desired policy result, a philosophy which establishes an active role for the chief executive in environmental politics.

As in environmental politics, the president is likewise regarded as a steward of the national economy. Prior to 1921, the executive branch had no particular responsibility in the economic arena. However, in order to make the budget process more efficient, Congress enacted the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 which stipulated that the president was to be in charge of formulating the annual budget.²⁶ The act created the statutory and bureaucratic framework for the president’s role in fiscal politics. Furthermore, with Franklin D. Roosevelt’s active leadership during the Great Depression the president generally came to be recognized “as manager of the economy.”²⁷ The Employment Act of 1946 solidified the president’s duty to ensure the growth of the domestic economy. The act stipulated that the president and the federal government were to work for “maximum employment” and positive economic growth.²⁸ Thus, during the first part of the twentieth century, Congress actively assigned—through statutes—the main leadership responsibility for the economy to the executive branch.²⁹ The public, and in extension Congress, responded to these developments and have since continued to hold the president accountable for the state of the domestic economy. Energy policy constitutes an integral part of the president’s economic stewardship. The extraction and production of energy creates jobs, generates fiscal activity on the local and state level, and most importantly underpin the growth of the U.S. economy. How the different presidents approached and balanced the environmental and economic stewardship roles looks to be significant to this study of the ANWR.

3. *Presidential and administrative characteristics.* Because the executive branch has evolved into an office that, relative to other parts of the federal government, endows one person with a large and disproportionate amount of power, the personal characteristics of the president have become increasingly important.³⁰ The most important factors that mould presidential performance are background experiences, stylistic traits, personal attitudes, and political skills.³¹ Political scientist James David Barber, who was a pioneer on the study of presidential character, argues with regards to the fundamental importance of a president's overall personality that "the degree and quality of a President's emotional involvement in an issue are powerful influences on how he defines the issue itself, how much attention he pays to it, which facts and persons he sees as relevant to its resolution, and finally what principles and purposes he associates with the issue."³² The question of drilling in the coastal plain appeals to personal environmental values and it is therefore necessary to examine the presidents' character traits. Barber also developed a four-pronged model to systematize the presidents' characters. The model assesses whether the presidents appreciate and find enjoyment in their work, or whether they primarily consider it a taxing and unpleasant experience (positive-negative), and the extent to which the presidents work and apply themselves to the job (active-passive). This study keeps an eye on how the different presidents have been classified, and evaluates how the categorizations relate to the topic of the thesis.

Furthermore, the president's performance is intrinsically related to the overall composition of the administration. Vice presidents and cabinet members contribute advice and can be influential in formulating policy. Political scientists Jonathan P. West and Glen Sussman note in relation to environmental politics that, "Presidents rely on various information sources for expertise in formulation and implementation of environmental policy, especially from key advisors and bureaucratic officials."³³

4. *External influences.* Relations to outside actors are an aspect that can affect how presidents interpret the political situation of the ANWR. The government of Alaska and the state's congressional delegation hold strong interests in the refuge, along with private business, NGOs, and the indigenous peoples of Alaska. By way of personal relationships, lobby organizations or sympathizers in the administration, forces outside the administration can play a contributory, although indirect role in affecting the policy agenda of the executive branch. It is necessary to consider, as far as it is justifiable, how the presidents handled outside forces, and to what degree interest groups potentially could have affected presidential policy on the refuge.

1.5. Outline

With a view to crafting a comprehensive study of presidential attention to and participation in the ANWR debate, the thesis is organized in chronological order running from 1977 to 2009. The start- and end-points of the time parameter and the chapter divisions reflect developments in the executive branch that influenced the direction of the ANWR debate.

Chapter two examines the major actors who have interests in the use of the ANWR. The chapter is an exception to the chronological structuring, and provides a background analysis of the ANWR debate. The state of Alaska, the indigenous peoples of Alaska, Congress, oil companies, and environmental organizations together with other interest groups, are the primary factions that presidents have had to relate to when formulating policy regarding the use of the refuge. These groups and their overall direction in the debate are introduced in this section.

Chapter three (1977-1989) discusses how Jimmy Carter's and Ronald Reagan's policies affected the formative period of the ANWR debate. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980 is the legislative centerpiece of the ANWR debate. The ANILCA will be discussed in light of how the Carter administration affected the outcome of the bill. In relation to President Reagan, the chapter considers how Reagan's wish to explore for oil in the ANWR corresponded with his business-oriented approach to energy and environmental politics. Reagan held office while the Department of the Interior carried out a major study on the coastal plain of the ANWR which considered whether it was responsible to allow oil exploration, and the chapter assesses how Reagan—through his subordinates—influenced the conclusion of the report.

Chapter four (1989-2001) considers how George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton used the powers of the executive branch to influence the ANWR debate in the period 1989-2001. The Exxon Valdez oil spill in March 1989, in Prince Williams Sound, Alaska, is arguably the largest environmental disaster in modern American history, and the chapter considers how the accident affected Bush's pro-development ANWR policy. During his presidency, Bush Sr. generally voiced genuine concerns for the environment, and helped pass significant laws such as the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. The chapter examines how and why the Bush administration displayed contradictory tendencies in the environmental policy arena. President Clinton is assessed in light of how an ideological shift in the executive branch can affect proceedings related to the ANWR debate. The 1995 budget battle with the Republican

controlled Congress, and Clinton's subsequent veto of the budget bill which included an appropriation to open the refuge to oil exploration, is the defining event of the chapter.

The main focus of chapter five (2001-2009) is the Bush administration's active and continuous effort to open the coastal plain to oil drilling. The total energy consumption in the U.S. and the dependence on foreign oil had reached unprecedented heights at the turn of the twenty-first century, and the chapter assesses how the Bush administration's energy policy strategy was reflective of the historical energy policy discourse. The chapter studies how the Bush administration reintroduced drilling in the ANWR as a major national policy theme. Furthermore, how the administration viewed and worked for the passage of various ANWR bills which were introduced in the period 2001-2009, is also examined.

Based on the thesis questions, the conclusion presents a four-point overall assessment concerning the extent to which American presidents have been important actors in the ANWR debate. The chapter considers how the different presidents influenced proceedings that pertained to the question of drilling for oil in the coastal plain and considers which executive powers proved to be most influential. Moreover, findings from the individual chapters are used to draw parallels between the different factors that motivated and influenced the presidents' policies on the ANWR. The conclusion also assesses how presidential models and theories were helpful in studying the executive's role in the ANWR debate. Finally, the chapter explores how the question of drilling for oil in the ANWR relates to larger themes in American energy and environmental politics.

Chapter Two: The Deep Context of the ANWR Debate

2.1. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to analyze the major parties implicated—via their actions, priorities or jurisdiction—in oil drilling on the ANWR coastal plain. At the local and state levels, the chapter examines why the native peoples of Alaska have come to be an integral part of the conflict, and how the state government of Alaska in its representational capacity has assessed the resources of the ANWR. At the federal level, a broad consideration is made of how and under what circumstances members of Congress have handled the ANWR issue. Aside from these participants, multiple environmental and pro-development NGOs, as well as oil companies, are the most significant parties. These organizations are assessed in terms of their relations to the ANWR as regards their interests and bases of existence. Together, the different groups constitute the milieu of the debate and consequently the historical and continuing sphere of presidential activity. It is essential to actualize the full context of the ANWR controversy in order to interpret the role of the president as a part of, and a contrast to, the larger fabric.

2.2. Indigenous Views on Oil Development in the ANWR

Indigenous Alaskans have, in respect of their historical presence, large state-wide population, and unique relations to the land, attained an important role in the ANWR debate. At present, indigenous Alaskans constitute over 15% of the state's total population.¹ By the sheer size of their numbers, then, the indigenous population represents a significant voice in the debate. However, it may be reasonably assumed that their subsistence lifestyle and deep connection to the natural environment bestow their perspectives with further significance. Indigenous Alaskans lived for centuries largely removed from outside cultural influences. Oil discoveries in the second half of the twentieth century, however, created new and irreversible relations between extant and “modern” America which were subsequently institutionalized in the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971. Questions regarding aboriginal title to land had remained unresolved since the purchase of Alaska in 1867, but converging developments in the 1960s ushered the process forward. The robustness of liberalist politics

and lawmaking during the 1960s, the Civil Rights movement, the necessity of establishing clear land titles in order to start construction of the oil pipeline, along with social rejuvenation inside the Alaskan indigenous community, eventually lead to an agreement.²

The ANCSA was signed by President Nixon on December 18, 1971, granting indigenous Alaskans surface and subsurface rights to 40 million acres (about 11 percent of Alaska) and an additional \$962.5 million.³ Under the agreement, future lands claims based on aboriginal title were precluded. ANCSA established 12 regional corporations in Alaska—a thirteenth corporation was created for non-resident indigenous Alaskans who received financial compensation and no land—and 220 village corporations to manage the settlement.⁴ The regional and village corporations were organized as for-profit businesses, and all persons with one-fourth indigenous heritage received stocks based on geographical affiliation. The corporate structure introduced in the ANCSA and its impact on the lives of indigenous citizens, has had a mixed reception. Some corporations became affluent through successful investment and natural resources, while others suffered under unprofitable management, large deficits, and consequentially failed to provide either jobs or a dividend to their shareholders.⁵ The formation of village corporations and regional corporations established by the ANCSA has influenced how indigenous Alaskans consider the question of oil drilling in the ANWR. By and large, the establishment of the refuge has been viewed positively within the indigenous community, owing to the consequent economic opportunities provided.

Within the village echelon, the city of Kaktovik—the sole village located within the ANWR and the disputed coastal plain—has become a focal point for controversy. In spite of its relatively small population, Kaktovik (comprised of approximately 300 Inupiat Eskimos) has captured nationwide interest due to its location and native heritage. While the people of Kaktovik have widely been considered as pro-development, a more nuanced explanation of the position on the ANWR issue is revealed in the document acknowledged by the Kaktovik city council as representative of the city's official policy, entitled "In This Place."⁶ They claim to not adhere to the strict development versus preservation paradigm that has characterized the debate on the national level; rather they consider oil extraction as a dynamic opportunity equal to other benefits inherent in their land.⁷ The chief motivation is to continue to persevere in the area on the basis of a subsistence lifestyle primarily involving bowhead whaling. However, they also recognize the positive economic impact oil development has had, and can continue to have, in their community. In Kaktovik, revenues from the oil industry have provided substantial advances in personal economy, village services, and local

infrastructure. Due to the North Slope developments, the community has gained a modern school, a community center, Fire and Police services, running water, and indoor plumbing.⁸

The primary condition of acceptance of oil development by the Kaktovik populace, is that they are given an influential say over the initiation of any industrial projects. They consider themselves the most knowledgeable about the local environment and its sustainability and so argue: “We cannot allow uncontrolled activity here, nor can we hand over to anybody the full responsibility to protect us and these lands and waters, which are essential to our survival.”⁹ Despite moves to distance themselves from the general context of debate, they likewise advocate limited production under strict environmental regulations. This pragmatic stance values the potential gains brought to the community by oil development over any projected negative consequences. The Inupiat Eskimos residing in Kaktovik hold title to the land surrounding their city, which in all likelihood will become attractive oil leasing territory should the coastal plain be opened. Furthermore, as Kaktovik is under the jurisdiction of the North Slope Borough (NSB) and a member of the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation (ASRC), they would benefit economically from further oil developments on the slope.¹⁰

The ASRC was one of the twelve regional corporations established in Alaska under the ANCSA, and according to their website, “the ASRC is a private, for profit Alaska Native owned corporation representing the business interests of the Arctic Slope Inupiat.”¹¹ Due to oil-related commerce on the North Slope, the ASRC has become an affluent corporation.¹² It is heavily involved in the oil business and generates revenues through activities such as land leasing and the refining and distribution of oil. With regard to the ANWR, the ASRC proclaim that “ASRC will continue to advocate for development of our resources in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.”¹³ The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), the largest statewide organization representing indigenous Alaskans, also endorses drilling in the refuge. In the report, “Alaska Federation of Natives 2006 Federal Priorities,” the AFN state their motivation for supporting development: “Responsible development will bring considerable economic benefits to Alaska, some of which should be devoted to promoting the economic and social welfare of Alaska Natives.”¹⁴

In contrast to the city of Kaktovik, the ASRC, the NSB, the AFN, and the state of Alaska, the Gwich'in Athabascan Indians have remained adamantly opposed to oil drilling on the coastal plain. The Gwich'in number about 9000 citizens who are spread across 15 villages located along the Porcupine caribou migration trail in Northeast Alaska and Northwest Canada. In Alaska, they are one of the few prominent anti-drilling groups, and as a result of

their position, indigenous status, and dependence on the Porcupine Caribou Herd (PCH), they have received extensive publicity. The official opinions of the Gwich'in are presented in the report, "A Moral Choice for the United States: The Human Rights Implications for the Gwich'in of Drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge" published in 2005 by the Gwich'in Steering Committee.¹⁵ A two-pronged argument underpins the Gwich'in account of why oil exploration on the coastal plain should be prohibited. Firstly, they claim drilling would lead to a major reduction in the Porcupine Caribou Herd, upon which the Gwich'in base their existence. As a consequence, drilling—viewed as jeopardizing the future of the Gwich'in people—is therefore ultimately seen as potentially commissioning a breach of international human rights.

Every spring, the PCH migrates from its winter territories in Northwest Canada to the coastal plain of the ANWR, which provides a combination of high nutrition flora, low predator population, and insect relief that makes the area ideal for calving. The objection against oil exploration is that the Porcupine Caribou would to a large extent shun oil industrial installations and be displaced to less ideal areas during the calving season, in turn leading to a decline in the already sensitive calving rate of 4.6%.¹⁶ Studies have consistently confirmed that, on the North Slope, pregnant caribou and those with young are likely to avoid areas of pipelines and roads.¹⁷ The Gwich'in Steering Committee's arguments presented in the report persuasively rely on authoritative, scientific data; primarily gathered from studies authored by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), the National Academy of Sciences, the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The USGS report, "Arctic Refuge Coastal Plain, Terrestrial Wildlife Research Summaries," is cogent in the analysis of the PCH's relation to the coastal plain in Northeastern Alaska, and the negative impact of industrial development:

"The location of the annual calving grounds and concentrated calving areas was variable among years in response to variable habitat conditions and was often coincident with the 1002 Area [the coastal plain]. Empirical relationships between calf survival, forage available to females in the annual calving grounds and predation risk derived from 17 years of ecological data predict that June calf survival for the Porcupine Caribou herd will decline if the calving grounds are displaced and that the effect will increase with displacement distance."¹⁸

The latter part of the Gwich'in people's argument relies on the assumption that the predictions of the first section hold, claiming that the assumed decline in the PCH brought on by industrial development would be a violation of their human rights. The herd is

indispensable in all aspects of Gwich'in life and if they are deprived of the opportunity to hunt caribou, it would put at risk their cultural survival, subsistence lifestyle, collective health, and religious traditions.¹⁹ This stance is substantiated by human rights legislation from several international institutions, for example within the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) established by the United Nations and also within the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Article 27 of the ICCPR is crucial for the Gwich'in Steering Committee's interpretation of human rights for minorities: "In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities exist, persons belonging to such minorities shall not be denied the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language."²⁰ Based on a wide legal interpretation, Article 27 supports the view that industrial development in the refuge is inconsistent with the rights of the Gwich'in as a minority group. The report states the Gwich'in Indian's firm belief that development would have a catastrophic impact on their way of life.

However, the jurisdiction and enforcement of international human right treaties by U.S. courts is convoluted, and, beyond the law, the projected outcome of drilling in the ANWR is open to a degree of interpretative scope. Consequently, claims of human rights violations can easily be weakened and left largely impotent. While the Gwich'in interpret the potential consequences of oil development to the ANWR as untenable and a breach of human rights, proponents may see the predicted damage as within the warranted boundaries of industrial development. Ultimately, the actual impact on the PCH may only be known years after any of the proposed developments are commenced.²¹

The Gwich'in Indians of Northeast Alaska and the Inupiat Eskimos of the North Slope are illustrative of the polarity of opinions within the indigenous perspective over the ANWR. However, the split is not necessarily as clear-cut as described through their official statements. There are, as will be addressed below, scores of nuances over opinions of drilling in both communities. The Gwich'in Indians have for decades worked against the prospect of drilling on the coastal plain; nonetheless, they have previously shown that they are not categorically opposed to oil development. In 1980, the Gwich'in leased part of their land for oil development, however, there were no economically recoverable discoveries and the agreement was terminated in 1984.²² This episode is frequently cited by drilling proponents attempting to discredit the Gwich'in position, a case in point being the lobby group, Arctic Power.²³ The Eskimos residing on the North Slope offer a striking parallel to the alleged double standards of the Gwich'in Indians. As described above, North Slope Eskimos have

through the North Slope Borough and the Arctic Slope Regional Corporation, backed onshore oil development on the slope, and generally favor opening up the refuge. They are, however, opposed to offshore extraction. North Slope Inupiat Eskimos fear that extensive industrial activity in the Beaufort and Chukchi Seas may disrupt the migration routes of Arctic sea mammals.

In a direct analogy to Gwich'in reliance on caribou, Inupiat have for millennia based their physical and spiritual survival on the bowhead whale. In Kaktovik alone, the possibility that oil infrastructure could limit access to traditional hunting grounds and that extraction on land could spur development in adjacent waters, has created disagreement.²⁴ In a 2008 article in *The Anchorage Daily News*, Edward Itta, the mayor of the North Slope Borough, outlined the Inupiat's reasons for rejecting offshore extraction: "The ancient values that define us as a people are transmitted through participation in traditional whaling and hunting activities...If we lose the hunt, we lose our identity. It's that simple."²⁵

The Gwich'in's' and Inupiat's' similar and yet, diverging, policies regarding oil development bear witness to the fact that for Alaska Natives the question of the ANWR revolves around pragmatic circumstances as well as environmental or ethical concerns. In hope of potential monetary rewards beneficial to their communities, Gwich'in and Inupiat have previously consented to oil developments that did not interfere excessively with their subsistence lifestyles, and, also, these two groups have rejected ventures considered to endanger their cultural and physical survival. On the local level in Alaska, oil development is a question of evaluating advantages versus disadvantages impacting upon everyday life. To Inupiat, drilling in the refuge represents a chance to generate revenues and taxes for the NSB and fiscal activity in local village corporations and the ASRC, and so, in turn, services and infrastructure for the citizens. By contrast, the Gwich'in, who derive no direct economic benefits on the coastal plain, plainly considered development to be an unnecessary risk.

2.3. Oil, Politics, and Society in Alaska

Since the controversy over the coastal plain emerged in the 1980s, the State of Alaska, as represented by the governor and the state legislature, has constantly been a proponent of opening the ANWR. Such efforts have been grounded in the opinions of Alaskan citizens who generally favor drilling. The Alaskan polling corporation, Dittman Research, reports, on the basis of multiple surveys over the period of 1990-2005, that approximately 70% of Alaskans consistently supported allowing oil and gas exploration in the refuge.²⁶ The most lucid

evidence of the public's support, moreover, is the regular election to office of pro-development governors and legislators. Reflection upon the economic impact which oil has had on life in Alaska over the last forty years is critical to understanding the depth of the state's pro-development commitment.

The discovery of the giant Prudhoe Bay field in 1968, and the financial revolution it brought to the comparatively small population, is arguably the main reason why a majority of Alaskans embrace opening up the ANWR. Oil began to flow through the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) in 1977, yet even earlier the period of economic prosperity was heralded by sales of Prudhoe Bay leases and pipeline construction, bringing an influx of residents and increased wages. The 1969 lease sales alone brought in \$900 million, which at the time was equivalent to over three annual Alaskan state budgets.²⁷ This sudden flow of revenue into the new and unproven state economy had a positive impact on the public mood in Alaska. In "North Slope: Oil Rush" dated October 3, 1969, Luther J. Carter writes: "By offering a large new source of public revenue, the North Slope oil is giving Alaskans hope of attaining greater prosperity, better state services."²⁸

In the December 1999 edition of *Alaska Economic Trends*, "Long Term Retrospective, the 40 Years of Alaska's Economy Since Statehood" published by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development in Alaska, three periods in the Alaskan economy since the pipeline came on-stream are identified: The initial oil boom of 1980-1985; the downturn of 1986-1987; and a phase of moderate economic growth which characterized Alaska from 1988 to the start of the twenty-first century.²⁹ Economic boom-bust cycles have been fairly common in the Arctic region, and especially in areas such as Alaska which depend heavily on natural resources.³⁰ According to state statistics the state budget of Alaska soared from roughly \$1 billion in 1980 to over \$3 billion in 1982, and reaching its peak in 1985 at approximately \$3.5 billion, before settling in the \$2-2.5 billion range throughout the 1990s.³¹ As observed in "Long Term Perspective," the sharp increase was the result of the concurrence of the North Slope production rate, which throughout the 1980s steadily climbed from 1.5 to 2 million barrels per day, and the extraordinary rise in the world oil prices. Between 1980 and 1982, the value climbed from \$13 to \$35 per barrel.³²

Linda Leask and co-authors of "Where Have All the Billions Gone?" published in the *Alaska Review of Social and Economic Conditions*, further note that the state actively tried to encourage development through outlets which had not, or only to a negligible degree, existed before 1980. Between 1981 and 1986, \$6 billion was spent on measures such as mortgage subsidies, student loans, resource development loans, transfers to public corporations, and

capital grants to municipalities. Subsidized mortgage rates, for instance, made it possible for Alaskans—who otherwise would have been excluded—to enter the housing market; and, in order to stimulate new economic activity, the state allocated one-third of the \$6 billion to public corporations.³³ Dermot Cole captured the zeitgeist of the period in *Amazing Pipeline Stories*: “In the early 1980s, when the money flowed like the Yukon River, the state directed money into everything from opera to little league.”³⁴

In 1986 as a response to fellow OPEC nations failing to meet production quotas, Saudi-Arabia increased its output, sending world oil prices tumbling from \$30 to about \$10 in a matter of months. This decision made the extent of Alaskan dependency on oil revenues painfully obvious. Between 1981 and 1985 the population had grown from 434,300 to 543,900 citizens, but during the 1986-1988 period, 34,955 more people emigrated from than migrated to Alaska, and the population growth rate fell to -1.44%.³⁵ Jobs disappeared all over Alaska; the sectors that suffered most were construction, real estate and finance.³⁶ Professor Oran R. Young—who is an authority on Arctic studies—argues in *Arctic Politics* that the state government of Alaska became caught in a “petrodollar trap” through their excessive spending. Young points to factors exacerbating the state government’s situation at a time when income was reduced. For instance, construction of new and large projects initiated by the state—such as roads and airports—needed continual maintenance funding. The state government, moreover, had become a large statewide employer, a mammoth contributor to the state gross product, and generally taken an overly central position in the economy of local governments.³⁷

Throughout the 1990s the economy settled, and Alaska saw diversification in the employment market. Most jobs are now found within retail, health and education, construction, fishing, and in the military, while the oil and gas industry—as an employer—has become merely one amongst the many. However it continues to be the main source of government revenue, and has since 1980 generated on average over 80% of the state’s general purpose unrestricted revenues.³⁸ Thus, for governors of Alaska—appointed to look after local interests and ensure state adherence to responsible economic policy—drilling in the ANWR has always been a priority. Following his predecessor (Republican Steve Cowper), Democrat Tony Knowles, governor between 1994 and 2002, also pushed for exploration. In the State of the State address in January, 2001, Knowles summarized his view on drilling in the coastal plain: “ANWR is America's best chance for major oil and gas discoveries at a time of national energy shortages. With our congressional delegation and a new national administration in favor of development in the Arctic Refuge, we're better positioned than ever for success.”³⁹

In line with the office of the governor, the Alaska state legislature has consistently passed resolutions endorsing development of the ANWR. For instance, House Joint Resolution NO. 7 made by the 22nd Legislature in 2001-2002: “Urging the United States Congress to pass legislation to open the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, to oil and gas exploration, development, and production.” This resolution was passed by an overwhelming margin of fifty-two to three (with three abstaining and two absentees).⁴⁰ Bipartisan backing in the state legislature is further evidenced through continual appropriations to the Alaska-based pro-development lobbying association, Arctic Power.⁴¹

Frank Murkowski, who served twenty-one years as a U.S. senator for Alaska prior to becoming governor in the 2002-2006 period, has historically been one of the foremost champions of drilling in the state. In his 2005 State of the State address, Murkowski reiterated his opinion on the ANWR while also touching upon one of the most renowned legacies of the North Slope boom: “Our oil and gas industry has generated immense riches for Alaska. It helped build our state and provided us with a nearly 30 billion dollar Permanent Fund.”⁴² In 1976 it was settled that 25% of the oil revenues would be set away in a permanent fund; at the turn of the 1980s it was further decided that part of the yearly fund surplus would be paid out in cash to Alaskans. By 1982, the state government began sending out annual dividend checks to all eligible Alaskans. Depending on yearly revenues, their value has ranged from a low \$331 in 1983, up to \$2,069 in 2008.⁴³ It is, moreover, noteworthy that there is neither a personal income tax nor sales tax in Alaska. Alaska had in 2008—compared to a national average of 9.7%—the lowest U.S. rates of state and local taxation, at 6.4%.⁴⁴

Actions taken by the state legislature, and opinions voiced by both Republican and Democratic governors, confirm that there is bipartisan support for drilling in the ANWR. Nationwide, controversy over the ANWR has primarily followed party lines, as will be discussed in the next section. Yet, in Alaska, the local economic ramifications have been considered too great to produce any potent opposition. While the main goal for governors and legislators from other states is ensuring their constituencies thrive, in Alaskan political terms this primary objective becomes synonymous with development of natural resources.

In “Alaska’s Economy Transformed,” economist Neal Fried observes that Alaska seemed to be on its way of wresting out of the boom-bust pattern in the 1990s. However, Fried also questions whether the economy, which has been growing steadily since 1987, can be maintained without development of a new and major project.⁴⁵ Drilling in the ANWR and the construction of the proposed Alaska gas pipeline, which would run parallel to the TAPS, stand out as key opportunities. There are 35 trillion cubic feet of known natural gas resources

on the North Slope, the equivalent of 6 billion barrels of oil, and the reserves may prove to be even greater.⁴⁶ As a result of her political position and heightened public profile, Republican Sarah Palin, recently retired governor of Alaska (and former vice presidential candidate), has become the most striking advocate for further development in Alaska. She has been pushing strongly for opening the ANWR, and even more so—probably because of the political feasibility of the project—for the construction of the gas pipeline. In 2007, Palin proclaimed: “This gasline will fuel our homes, our economy, and careers for Alaskans—for generations. The gasline is critical not just for our future, but for the nation’s future.”⁴⁷ Republican Sean Parnell, the newly appointed governor of Alaska, has likewise expressed support for drilling in the ANWR.⁴⁸ It is apparent that Parnell and Palin, like their Alaskan colleagues, are vying for a new and large project that will once again produce an upswing in the state economy.

2.4. Congress and Partisan Environmental Politics

Congress has since 1980 held the power to open the coastal plain, however the decision remains pending. A core facet of proceedings has been the degree to which congressmen usually have voted along party lines. Polls indicate that the relatively equal split which has characterized the ANWR debate in Congress is largely reflective of the measured attitude of the public. Zogby International reported in December 2004 that 55% of Americans were opposed to drilling, while 38% approved and 7% were not sure.⁴⁹ In a more recent nationwide survey, the Pew Research Center reported that in June 2008, amid rising energy prices, 50% favored drilling in the ANWR, up 8% from February 2008. In both the February and the June polls, twice the number of Republicans, relative to Democrats, approved of drilling.⁵⁰ Results naturally vary depending on time, circumstances and survey organization, but overall the polls illustrate the divisive nature of the conflict. The differences between the two parties on the ANWR are rooted in their general approaches to environmental policy as evolved since the 1960s.

In reaction to the growing strength and widespread acknowledgment of the environmental movement in the mid-1960s, Congress emerged as an important bi-partisan force in national politics by enacting a number of unprecedented laws. The Wilderness Act of 1964—under which large parts of the ANWR are protected—established *wilderness* designation as the strictest standard of federal environmental protection. The Act reads that wilderness, “In contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are

untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.”⁵¹ The wording of the Wilderness Act, consequently, leaves no room for industrial activities such as mining, logging, or oil extraction.

Historian Paul S. Boyer identifies the enactment of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 as a pivotal moment in American environmental history.⁵² Section 101 of the NEPA, signed by Nixon on January 1, 1970, instructed the federal government to implement an overall environmental policy that in the face of increasing industrial development simultaneously secured the overall protection of man, the urban environment, and nature. Section 102 of the NEPA required federal agencies to conduct environmental impact surveys on any future agency-related actions that could significantly affect the environment.⁵³ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was created to properly administer and oversee the new and increasing body of environmental laws and regulations.⁵⁴ In the context of the Republican and Democratic parties, the NEPA is particularly interesting because it epitomizes the bipartisan character of environmental politics at the start of the 1970s. The NEPA was passed by massive margins in Congress: 372 to 15 votes in the House, and 71 to 6 in the Senate.⁵⁵

In “Environmental Policy and Party Divergence in Congress,” Charles R. Shipan and William R. Lowry analyze the combined result of the environmental voting score of all congressional members between 1970 and 1999. Compiled yearly by the League of Conservation Voters (LCV), Lowry’s and Shipan’s data sets contain over 16,000 observations, and their study confirms that the correlation between the two parties was closest in the early 1970s. Overall, the research reveals that, in the period between 1970-1999, the gap between the two parties in Congress consistently widened. LCV operates with a 0-100 scale, and on average the two parties differed by circa 25 points. Whereas Democrats over time became considerably more attuned to environmental issues, Republican scores dropped marginally.⁵⁶ Of course, members within each of the two parties are not unanimous in their approach to environmental politics and the degree to which government regulations should restrict commercial activity. Nevertheless, on the whole, the pattern is incontrovertible.

Environmentalism stayed at the forefront of the legislative agenda and in American society throughout the 1970s, but under the leadership of President Reagan—as is discussed further in the next chapter—the focus on deregulation and economic growth largely paralyzed environmental programs.⁵⁷ Passed by the House 401 to 25 and the Senate 89 to 10, the Clean Air Amendments Act of 1990, which strengthened the standards of previous Clean Air Acts, is one of the last noteworthy bipartisan environmental efforts made in the Congress.⁵⁸ The

collective tendencies experienced in the Congress during the 1970s had, by the 1990s, disappeared. The ideological differences which had come to pervade major blocs of the two parties, and relatively equal representation in Congress, made it difficult for either of the parties to implement their policies or reach amenable compromises. Environmental politics in Congress after 1990 has accurately been characterized as “gridlocked.”⁵⁹

Within this distinct congressional environmental policy framework the debate concerning use of the ANWR has taken shape. The House of Representatives has consistently approved legislation to permit drilling in the refuge, both in the form of single issue-bills and as part of larger omnibus legislation.⁶⁰ Don Young, the sole representative from Alaska since 1973, has been one of the primary driving forces behind pro-development ANWR bills. In relation to the American-Made Energy and Good Jobs Act of 2006, which was a direct vote on drilling in the ANWR, Young stated: “This is the 12th time we [the House] have passed this legislation concerning the needs of energy for this country. And by the way, for those listening to this program and those watching, Alaskans want to drill. Alaskans want to produce this oil for America.”⁶¹ Imbedded in his frustration with the Senate Democrats repeated dismissals, Young’s comments also highlight correspondence in local and national incentives. As part of the Alaska’s congressional delegation, Young endorses and utilizes the concept of increased national energy production to promote drilling in the ANWR, a policy which in all likelihood will have more beneficial economic effects on Alaska directly than on the U.S. as a whole.

It takes a majority vote to pass laws in the House and as Democrats and Republicans, since the 1980s, have generally taken distinctly different approaches to environmental policy, it has been repeatedly possible to establish majorities grounded by party affiliation. Consequently, votes to open the refuge have primarily taken place when the Republican Party has held majorities in Congress. While the partisan split has been the overarching tendency, there are clear regional divergences from the pattern which explain why some congressmen decide to sway from the majority opinion of their respective party. Representatives from the Northeast generally rate full protection of the ANWR higher than fellow members from Southern states. On April 10, 2003, the House voted 226 to 202 in favor of the inclusion of an amendment in the Energy Policy Act of 2003 that would have opened the ANWR. The roll call was a single issue vote over the coastal plain, and thus interesting as an indicator of party affiliation. In the 108th Congress, the party balance was 229-205 in favor of the Republican Party, and out of the Democrat’s 201 participating votes, 30 voted in favor of drilling. The Democrats primarily came from Republican-dominated Southern states: nine from Texas, two

from Arkansas and one each from Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, Tennessee and West Virginia. In the Northeast, all House members—including Republicans—from Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Hampshire and Rhode Island, opposed the amendment. The majority of the 30 Republicans who voted against drilling in the ANWR—equal to the amount of Democrats who supported the bill—came from the Northeast.⁶²

Support for drilling in the South and a preference for protection in the Northeast is commensurate with overall regional attitudes on environmental policy in the United States. After the breakdown of the “Solid South” in the 1960s, Southern Democrats remained more moderate in their policy views than their peers in the Northern states, including as regards the environment. Even though traditional, conservative, Southern Democrats have gradually disappeared, both through replacements by Republicans and through ideological shifts, there are still differences.⁶³ Regardless of party affiliation, the South is the region of the U.S. least supportive of legislation protecting the environment. However, Southern Democrats grew considerably closer to the party average during the period of 1970-1999.⁶⁴

In *Environmental Politics Since 1945*, environmental historian, Samuel P. Hays, confirms both the party and regional disparities, presenting several pertinent explanatory observations. In areas such as the Northeast and along the West Coast, where the environment has an overall higher priority, there are several coinciding characteristics: more public resources are made available to environmental programs; there are a higher number of active environmental organizations; the media has a stronger focus on environmental issues; and colleges, universities and other educational institutions place greater emphasis on the environment in their curricula. Furthermore, as environmentalism generally tends to be a more prevalent theme in urban areas, larger cities in the South also place greater emphasis on environmentalism than adjacent rural areas.⁶⁵ When considering the voting pattern on the ANWR, it is especially useful to take into account Hays’s descriptions of different regional economic patterns.⁶⁶ Areas with economies that largely are, or have been, based on extraction or production, have a weaker environmental profile. In broad terms, they favor less intrusive regulation and more competitive free-market structures. There are of course differences, but with its historical base in agriculture, natural resources, and with a gradual shift in the second half of the twentieth century to manufacturing, production has remained the mainstay of the Southern economy. In regions like the Northeast, where the economy to a larger degree revolves around tertiary industries, such as information and services, environmentalism and, subsequently, preservation of the ANWR, receives higher support.⁶⁷

Thus, as the South is grounded in more conservative political ideals and largely different economic characteristics, it is natural for some Southern Democrats to be positioned closer to their Republican counterparts in order to appeal to their constituencies. With notably the highest number of Democratic representatives voting in favor of drilling in the refuge, Texas is a good illustration of regional disparities. Texas, much like Alaska, is deeply seated in cultural and economically conservative values, and, moreover, has yielded greatly from petroleum extraction. Democrat Gene Green's approval of the proposed American-Made Energy and Good Jobs Act in May 2006, attests to how regional differences and constituency considerations can lead congressmen to vote against the party majority. Green, who is a Texan representative, firstly voices support for drilling in the refuge, noting that working-families unable to pay the cost of alternative energy will continue to need affordable petroleum for the foreseeable future, before concluding; "I represent an area on the western Gulf of Mexico, and we are also environmentally fragile, but we have been producing for America for a number of years. We just need some help from other areas in our Nation."⁶⁸ Representatives may be motivated to vote against the party majority on the ANWR issue by an array of factors, such as constituency interests, political "log-rolling," ideological conviction, and interest organizations; but environmental regionalism encapsulates the overall trend.

Partisanship, coupled with the power of the filibuster, has made the Senate the main congressional hurdle for passing legislation on the ANWR. In the Senate, Republicans and Democrats have, since the late 1980s even more consistently relative to the House, voted along party lines. The difference between Democratic and Republican senators has, in the period between 1981 and 2008, not exceeded a margin of 57 to 43. As a consequence the Senate has never been able to pass an ANWR bill by a two-third majority, which is necessary to overcome the filibuster. The composition of the Senate from the time of the writing of the constitution was designed as a check on the House, and although its members in some instances have proven to be more unpredictable than their peers in the larger chamber,⁶⁹ the Senate has largely functioned as intended in relation to the ANWR. Opinions regarding the decisive impact that the Senate has had on the ANWR issue obviously differ, but it has prevented small new-found majorities from pushing through highly disputed legislation with wide-ranging effects. Furthermore, the concept of divided government has been a central component of the ANWR debate. Generally, when the same party controls the executive branch and both houses of Congress, it is easier for the president to achieve legislative success; while divided governments, on the other hand, have often made it more difficult for

presidents to see their policy priorities through Congress.⁷⁰ Hence, because of the partisan nature of the debate, the ANWR issue has magnified the potential effects of divided government.

The threat and use of filibusters by Democrats in the Senate has repeatedly led Republican pro-development advocates to seek alternative policy routes. They have been most successful when utilizing the budget reconciliation process, which is protected from the filibuster. Republican pro-development advocates have, in relation to the budget negotiations of 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2006, been able to procure passing votes in the Senate for drilling in the refuge.⁷¹ All the amendments were passed through solid partisan backing, and by slim margins. However, only once, in 1995 was an ANWR provision left in the final budget bill which gained approval by both houses. This event, the impact of divided government, and the budget reconciliation process, is addressed more closely in chapter four.

Ted Stevens, involved in national politics since the early 1950s, and a senator for Alaska from 1968 to 2008, through laborious work, came to personify the effort to open the refuge. Over the last four decades, Stevens has on numerous occasions addressed the Senate concerning the necessity of opening the ANWR. His arguments, while contingent upon the specific contexts, regularly referred to drilling as imperative for national security, the land rights of Alaskans, and the pro-development support of the Eskimos residing on the North Slope. Stevens regularly lamented adversaries in the Senate for being misrepresentative in their arguments, and ignorant of the needs of the nation. On March 16, 2005, his opposition to an amendment introduced by Democratic Senator Maria Cantwell from Washington to strip an ANWR drilling provision from the 2006 budget, summarizes the main tenets: “It is a vote for closing our Nation's single greatest prospect for future oil development.”⁷²

Bills to place the coastal plain of the ANWR under wilderness protection have been regularly introduced in the House and the Senate since the 101st Congress, but none have achieved any significant legislative success in Congress.⁷³ Sen. Joseph Lieberman, from the 107th Congress onward, consistently introduced ANWR wilderness bills. Amongst those co-sponsoring protection in the Senate, there have been a number of high-profile Democrats including John Kerry, Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, Joseph Biden and Edward Kennedy.⁷⁴ However, there has been little political viability for a wilderness bill. First of all, Democratic majorities in both houses are prerequisites, and secondly, a wilderness bill would also be open to filibustering. Moreover, because it entails a more definite position than leaving it under the rule of the ANILCA of 1980, it would be difficult to gather the required majorities.

2.5. The ANWR, Nongovernmental Organizations, and Oil Companies

Outside of the federal, state, and local governments, are non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private corporations with considerable interests hinging upon the protected status of the ANWR. Multiple entities, on both sides of the debate, have been working actively to influence the legislative and executive branches of government. Their efforts are in line with the structure of American lawmaking which encourages vertical participation. Democracy in the United States, as noted by Zachary A. Smith in *The Environmental Policy Paradox*, is pluralistic; “public policy is determined, in large part, through bargaining, compromise, and negotiating of various interest groups in society.”⁷⁵ The struggle over the ANWR is consequently a product, and at the same time, a model case of pluralistic American politics.

In her M.A. thesis “Perspectives on the Defense of Nature: Environmental Coalition Building in Alaska,” presented at the University of Oslo in 2008, Guro Stenvoll Johannessen analyzes the different groups involved with the protection of the ANWR in contrast to the concept of twenty-first century “New Environmentalism.” Johannessen’s study is based on work presented by, among others, environmentalist writers, Robert J. Brulle and Mark Dowie. Brulle and Dowie argue that if the environmental movement is to regain its prominence of the 1960s and 1970s as an encompassing social force, it has to include a broader range of values. More individuals and groups have to be engaged by embracing a wider range of social and cultural aspects, such as class, indigenous people’s rights, gender and religion.⁷⁶

Johannessen considers whether the efforts of the Alaska Coalition to preserve the coastal plain of the ANWR could be considered to be the materialization of “New Environmentalism.” However, based on a discourse analysis of arguments presented by pertinent groups, she is reluctant to argue that this is indeed the case. The Alaska Coalition (AC) was formed in 1971 and has since remained the national umbrella organizations for all groups concerned with preserving wildlife and wilderness in Alaska.⁷⁷ Johannessen aptly states that the ANWR has brought together a wide range of groups with different interests, which in itself could be viewed as an indication of progress. Nevertheless, more than converging in a new form of environmentalism, the organizations represent various ideals with coinciding interests in the same matter.⁷⁸

Although Johannessen’s work is outside the scope of this thesis, it is clear that she raises valuable points. Groups tend to primarily represent their special field of interest. The Episcopal Church has by official proclamation denounced drilling in the ANWR. Johannessen argues, as the church delineates on its website, that even if protection of nature is relevant

from a religious perspective, defense of the Gwich'in is the most important objective.⁷⁹ The Episcopal Church highlights this as "a question of human justice and the fundamental rights of the Gwich'in people."⁸⁰ David Standlea in *Oil, Globalization, and the War for the Arctic Refuge*, which is one of Johannessen's main sources, also observes that the church is involved with the issue because of the human rights implications, more so than the environmental perspective.⁸¹ The Wilderness Society and the Wilderness League of Alaska have, as Johannessen's analysis shows, largely incorporated indigenous human rights into their discourse; however, their material and wording indicate this to be secondary to their original, environmental, focus.⁸²

The two key organizations within the Alaska Coalition are the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club. Cornerstones in the creation of the AC, they have since been central to its operations.⁸³ Furthermore, they are two of the largest national environmental organizations that have been actively and continuingly working to preserve the ANWR. Membership numbers and available funds grew parallel to the expanding environmental movement. In 1960, the Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club had 10,000 and 15,000 members respectively. By 1990, membership had climbed to 350,000 for the Wilderness Society, and 600,000 in the Sierra Club. Annual budgets in 1990 were \$14 million for the Wilderness Society and \$28 million for the Sierra Club.⁸⁴ The two groups have experienced similar development, for instance, by 2005 the Sierra Club had 750,000 members and a budget of about a \$100 million.⁸⁵ Samuel P. Hays argues that "the environmental drive in modern society stems from new human values about what people want in their lives."⁸⁶ According to Hays, protection from pollution, sustainable urban development, and preservation of undeveloped areas, were the main tendencies that emerged during the second half of the twentieth century. The result of these developments was the formation and growth of environmental organizations. In the case of the ANWR, environmental organizations represent collective outlets for individuals who see protection as the preferred policy.

The Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club are, in terms of their ethics and historical commitment to nature preservation, invested in the ANWR debate. The two organizations are involved in a range of nationwide preservation issues. In regard to the ANWR specifically, both groups were involved in the establishment of the refuge. The Sierra Club served in a support function. Richard Leonard, president of the Sierra Club during the period from 1953 to 1955, strongly advocated the creation of the ANWR and the organization's bulletins and biannual conferences were important for promoting the ANWR proposal.⁸⁷ The Wilderness

Society is fighting for its legacy, by and large. In 1937, the founder, Bob Marshall, became the first person to propose extensive preservation in Alaska.⁸⁸

The websites of the Sierra Club and the Wilderness Society reflect, on the whole, strong biocentric ideals. Carolyn Merchant defines biocentrism as, “the idea that all plants and animals are centers of life, and as such have inherent worth and are worthy of moral consideration.”⁸⁹ In *Hooked on Growth*, Douglas Booth presents a more pragmatic explanation of biocentrism. Booth states that “although commitments to human individuals remain in place, an additional layer of ethical concern is added by those with a biocentric outlook.” The two groups’ websites predominantly describe the unique and invaluable natural qualities of the Arctic north and defend the local wildlife. Both groups are highly critical of how the Bush Jr. administration influenced the direction of American energy policy, and the Wilderness Society proclaims part of their main platform to be: “working to defend our public lands from needless sacrifice and to push clean, sustainable energy policies forward.”⁹⁰ The two organizations also frame the protection of America’s wild areas, including the ANWR, as part of a strategy to mitigate the effects of climate change. The Sierra Club notes that, aside from the direct negative impact construction and pollution would have on the local wildlife; “burning fossil fuels found in the Arctic will only accelerate global warming.”⁹¹ The organizations’ political influence is closely related to their membership bases, and the current size of the Sierra Club and the Wilderness society confirm that environmentalism remains a central social undercurrent in the American society at the start of the twenty-first century.

Environmental organizations utilize different measures to disseminate and implement their preferred policies. In *Total Lobbying*, Anthony Nownes argues that most lobbying activities are generally directed at Congress, essentially due to its multifaceted composition and accessibility. Congressmen and lobbyists have complementary interests.⁹² Politicians appreciate donations for reelection and solid information,⁹³ while lobbyists wish to see their preferred policies implemented. Regarding donations to members of Congress from both environmental organizations and the oil and gas industry, it is clear that the former have considerably less monetary resources available. In the 2006 election cycle environmental organizations contributed \$2.9 million, and the oil and gas industry with their smallest donation in ten years provided \$20.1 million. 89% of the money from environmental organizations went to Democrats, while the oil and gas industry donated most of their money to Republicans.⁹⁴ The long term Sierra Club lobbyist, Melinda Pierce, approaches this paradigm by highlighting the virtue of grassroots membership organizations: “Other lobbyists may have the cachet of money, but our cachet is people.”⁹⁵

Aside from lobbying Congress, environmental organizations direct their efforts towards the president and the executive branch, the judiciary, and the public. For *Total Lobbying*, Nownes interviewed 34 lobbyists, reviewed environmental literature, and concluded that to receive time with the president is difficult and rather exceptional. It is more common—and often more successful—that lobbyists approach the different departments, agencies and underlying bureaucracies.⁹⁶ In relation to the environmental lobby, Robert J. Duffy confirms these discoveries, and reasons that availability also has been contingent upon how interested the different presidents have been in environmental questions.⁹⁷ Duffy adds that environmental organizations often have had most impact when working through the courts and through the public.⁹⁸

Holdings in the Alaska oil industry are split approximately three ways between British Petroleum (BP), ExxonMobil, and ConocoPhillips.⁹⁹ Oil companies are at the core based on profit margins, hence, they have by necessity in comparison to environmental organizations, taken a different approach to evaluating the ANWR. Their primary function is to supply oil to the market, and such operations are intrinsically dependent on available resources. In *Addicted to Oil*, Ian Rutledge highlights a paramount aspect of oil company activity labeled “territorial imperative.” Oil companies always have to seek out new areas because oil deposits are finite resources.¹⁰⁰ Thus, in theory, the coastal plain of the ANWR is an interesting prospect for BP, ExxonMobil and ConocoPhillips. It is a new and untapped field located in a region which for decades has proven to be very profitable. Most of the oil infrastructure is in place by way of the Alaska pipeline and the political climate is hospitable. Some concerns have been voiced regarding the potential of the coastal plain due to the fact that only one test well has actually been drilled on the coastal plain. However, this has not dampened pro-development efforts. Substantial amounts of oil have been discovered in areas close to the border of the ANWR, and USGS estimates for the coastal plain are promising.¹⁰¹

The single-issue lobby group, Arctic Power, is the best example of multilateral efforts to open the ANWR. The concept presented on Arctic Power’s website is grounded strongly in anthropocentric ideals. In contrast to biocentrism, anthropocentrism carries the idea that the values of the natural environment are secondary to the “interests of humans.”¹⁰² In *Hooked on Growth*, Douglas Booth captures the core of anthropocentrism: “Under the anthropocentric approach, the environment is treated as an instrument for human benefit.”¹⁰³ The organization places heavy focus on the rewards that man can obtain by drilling in the ANWR, while the potential negative impact on the wildlife is given little space. Compared to environmentalists’ presentations, animals have a significantly smaller role in Arctic Power’s description of the

ANWR. Anthropocentrism and biocentrism are not exclusive categories. There are various levels to the concepts, and differences in philosophy and pragmatic circumstances, may often lead persons and organizations to simultaneously embrace both anthropocentric and biocentric values.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, in the case of Arctic Power it is evident from the group's explicit pro-development ideology and disregard for ecological values, that their conceptualization of the ANWR is overwhelmingly in human terms.

The assumed necessity of drilling as evaluated by different pro-development parties has influenced the campaign to open the ANWR. Political scientist David M. Standlea argues that because Alaskan politicians had, and still have, more depending on the ANWR than BP, ExxonMobil, and ConocoPhillips, they, along with Arctic Power, have effectively taken over public and political spheres, allowing the oil companies to follow along as quiet allies.¹⁰⁵ Although Standlea is strongly opposed to drilling and has no intention of remaining objective, frequently showing strong disdain and often vilifying Young, Stevens, and other top Alaskan politicians, his observations are grounded in valid evidence. As pointed out by Standlea, British Petroleum discontinued monetary support to Arctic Power in 2002, and in 2004 issued a statement that they take no policy position on the ANWR.¹⁰⁶ By 2005, ConocoPhillips had also dropped out of Arctic Power, leaving ExxonMobil as the only remaining major oil company.¹⁰⁷

Environmental controversy and the potential for bad publicity have turned oil companies away from promoting drilling in the refuge. In *Oil, Globalization, and the War for the Arctic Refuge*, Standlea brings forth the point that it is in reaction to increasing concern in the twenty-first century regarding the necessity of diversifying and shifting away from fossil fuels as the primary source of energy, that oil companies have been updating their images.¹⁰⁸ Since Standlea's book was published in 2006, this trend has only been accentuated. BP, ExxonMobil, and ConocoPhillips all acknowledge the dangers of climate change, and commit to reducing both their own, and global greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁰⁹ For future diversification, BP and ConocoPhillips also actively advertise alternative and renewable energy programs, whereas ExxonMobil confines itself to oil and gas.¹¹⁰ All three companies, nonetheless, will remain within their primary fields of production as hydrocarbons continue to be the mainstay of the world energy economy. According to assessments by the U.S. Energy Information Administration for the period from 2005 to 2030, natural resources—such as petroleum, coal, and natural gas—will continue, and progressively increase as the primary sources of energy, far outranking renewables and nuclear energy.¹¹¹

In regard to drilling in the coastal plain, the oil companies receive substantial support from lobbyists and interest groups. The American Petroleum Institute (API), one of the major trade associations representing the industry, endorses drilling in the refuge. API's analyses of the history of oil development in Northern Alaska makes apparent their pro-development organizational policy on the ANWR: "The most significant barrier to realization of the growing resource potential of Northern Alaska has been a policy of consistently over-restrictive limitations on access to Federal land."¹¹² The Heritage Foundation is a right-wing oriented research institute supporting drilling in the refuge as a measure to increase the nation's energy security.¹¹³ Parallel to the environmental groups representation of public opinion on matters related to the natural environment, the existence of API and the Heritage Foundation is a testament to the position of conservative policy values in American society, and that a substantial part of the population sees it in the best interest of the nation to drill for oil in the ANWR.

2.6. Conclusion

Geographical location, projected benefits, views on environmental and energy politics are factors dividing the different actors concerning the best use of the ANWR coastal plain. Coinciding interests have created distinct coalitions on the ANWR issue. On the one side are actors such as the Eskimos of the North Slope, the state government of Alaska (with the majority support of their population), oil companies, conservative think-tanks, and pro-development Republicans in Congress. On the other side are the Gwich'in Indians, the Episcopal church, various environmental organizations, and preservationist inclined Democrats in Congress. The next and primary objective of the thesis is to consider how presidents and their administrations have, since 1977, approached and determined the question of drilling for oil on the coastal plain.

Chapter Three: Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, 1977-1989

3.1. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to examine Presidents Carter's and Reagan's policies on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), and their impact upon the founding period of the ANWR controversy, from 1977 to 1989. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) was signed in December 1980, only a month before Reagan took office, creating the 1002 area (more commonly known as the ANWR coastal plain). It was written as the environmental agenda of 1960s and 1970s waned, and energy security was becoming an increasingly familiar term in mainstream society. Carter and his administration are considered here in view of their significant role in the creation of the ANILCA. President Theodore Roosevelt's ideology on preservation and his formulation and practice of the stewardship theory are central components for understanding President Carter's policy on the Alaskan wilderness, and in effect on the ANWR.

During Reagan's presidency the most noteworthy developments relating to the ANWR were the results of the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment*. The ANILCA had directed the Department of the Interior to carry out an assessment of the flora, fauna, and mineral resource potential of the coastal plain and report the degree to which the area would be disturbed by industrial activity. The secretary was further instructed to present final recommendations to Congress. Secretary of the Department of the Interior, Donald P. Hodel, proposed to open the coastal plain to full leasing. This chapter analyzes the extent to which Hodel's decision was in concurrence with Reagan's overall policy agenda. In relation to Reagan, examination is required in respect of how the president used the executive bureaucracy to establish a policy agenda over the ANWR. In order to better comprehend Reagan's policy on the ANWR, the chapter considers his approach to environmental and energy politics in light of dominant social paradigm theory and the concept of weak sustainability.

3.2. President Carter: the Energy Crisis, and the First Actions on the Alaska Lands Bill

Carter took office in January 1977, amidst a national economy heading into recession, and the nation's energy supply emerged as one of the administration's main challenges. On April 18,

1977, he addressed the people about the state of the energy situation in the United States. Carter singled out America's growing dependency on oil and gas as a major energy liability. From the 1980's to the present, energy-related issues would come to increasingly dominate the political agenda; however, by pointing to the domestic oil and gas situation, Carter had already touched upon the core energy problem that would trouble his predecessors. It is clear from the speech that the 1973 oil embargo had strongly influenced Carter's perception with the need to change the direction of American energy habits. He refers to the embargo several times, and laments the lack of previous political initiative.¹ Considering the level of knowledge Carter portrays in the speech, it is particularly relevant that presidential scholar Erwin C. Hargrove notes in an analysis of the president that "Carter's strongest cognitive drive was for competence."² According to Hargrove's assessment, Carter consistently wanted to be the most informed person in the administration about policy issues. Throughout the speech, it is evident that he had a comprehensive understanding of the energy situation, and a personal desire to implement far-reaching measures. Carter's analytical skills are often traced back to his engineering background, an attribute relevant to the energy policy context.³

Carter displays in the speech a genuine sense of concern about the state of the domestic energy market and its impact on American society. There is a sense of urgency to solve current problems, but also to correct the negative development for the sake of future generations. He proclaims in the speech thus: "With the exception of preventing war, this is the greatest challenge that our country will face during our lifetime." Carter also feared for the environment, noting that if the situation was not tackled "we will feel mounting pressure to plunder the environment."⁴ These concerns would become palpable in Carter's approach to the environment. Carter's understanding of political obligation can be traced back to his political career in Georgia. In *Our Endangered Values*, Carter espouses a strong sense of personal responsibility and he states that he was, as a Georgia state senator, "almost overwhelmed with the diversity and importance of the questions and problems they [the people of his constituency] brought to me."⁵ Hargrove argues that, as president, Carter saw a positive obligation in leadership. He was primarily concerned with implementing the best long-term solutions for the public good, and worried less about how idealism and insensitivity to political ramifications could hurt his presidency.⁶

Carter's handling of the energy crisis can be explained by utilizing John Kingdon's "stream model." Kingdon's "stream model" conceptualizes the formation of the domestic policy agenda, and in *The Politics of the Presidency*, Joseph Pika and John Maltese argue that Kingdon's model also can be used to understand how the president relates to different policy

topics.⁷ The “problems and issues” stream of the model explains how subjects initially become part of the president’s agenda. Problems and issues often develop over a longer period time, thus continuously building pressure that eventually causes the president to act, or they are forced onto the agenda by a particular event.⁸ The energy crisis had been gradually developing since the oil embargo, and thus spurred on by his positive approach to leadership Carter saw the need to address the situation.

In order to alleviate the energy crisis, Carter presented legislation that emphasized conservation and focus on renewables over drastically increasing domestic production of fossil energy. According to Michael E. Kraft, professor of public and environmental affairs, the plan drafted an active role for the government in regulating the domestic energy market.⁹ However, since fossil fuels supplied the majority of all the energy used in the United States at the time—as it still does—Carter also promoted increased production of coal in order to stimulate and diversify the supply-side of the national energy economy.¹⁰ Carter’s legislative proposals overlap with the solution “stream” of Kingdon’s model. Solutions surface as a response to previously established problems, and can, as in Carter’s case, produce direct action from the president.¹¹ As observed by Kraft, the energy proposals were initially created by a small executive-led task force which worked largely separate from congressional leaders or business interests. The administration was not able to create any public momentum to push the energy plan through Congress either.¹² Political feasibility is a central aspect of the solution “stream,” and by not listening to the interest of decision makers in Congress or build sufficient public support, the Carter administration did not adequately address, according to Kingdon’s model, one of the main factors necessary to achieve political success.¹³

In the end, Congress enacted parts of Carter’s energy policy plan. The National Energy Policy Act of 1978 did among other establish federal economic incentives to increase the production of alternative energy, raise efficiency regulations for appliances that used electricity, increase taxes on high-consumption cars, and place stricter restrictions on the use of oil and gas in power plants.¹⁴ The reason why Carter did not achieve full political success with his energy proposals can be explained by employing Kingdon’s implementation “stream.” How the president’s legislative plans are received in Congress depend largely on the balance between—and interest of—lobby groups and legislators, and energy policy is an area where this tendency is especially prevalent.¹⁵ Hence, since the administration paid little attention to these forces in the energy policy process, the plan became subject to considerable modification in Congress, and the final act was not as far-reaching in terms of conservation as Carter had first envisioned. Still, Carter appeared to be fairly satisfied with the bill and the

extent to which it placed focus on efficiency and diversification.¹⁶ During his presidency, Carter also actively worked to ensure that automobile corporations increased the corporate average fuel economy (CAFE) standards for new cars according to enacted regulations.¹⁷

At the same time as the energy bill was finalized in Congress, discussions over the designation of federal land in Alaska were well underway. Section 17d (2) of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) of 1971 stipulated that the Secretary of the Interior select 80 million acres of federal land in Alaska. This area would then be studied, and Congress was given a specific period of time to consider whether the lands were to be preserved permanently. In *Northern Landscapes*, historian Daniel Nelson has conducted an exhaustive study of the events that led up to the finalization of the previously mentioned ANILCA. Besides detailed descriptions of the deliberations in Congress, Nelson makes several noteworthy observations on the roles that environmental organizations and the Carter administration played in the passage of the ANILCA.

According to Nelson, the Alaska Coalition—discussed in the previous chapter—was the main environmental organization pushing the ANILCA campaign, and their efforts were encouraged by Carter’s victory in the presidential election and the appointment of Cecil Andrus as Secretary of the Interior. The Alaska Coalition drafted the first ANILCA bill and convinced Representative Morris Udall to introduce the legislation.¹⁸ Overall, the efforts of the Alaska Coalition appear to have been central in activating congressional action. The first ANILCA bill passed the House in May 1978, but was stopped in the Senate in October 1978. Action on the land studied in the wake of the ANCSA was to be taken by the end 1978, and the failure in the Senate meant that the areas could again become open to industrial activity.¹⁹ Interestingly, Nelson notes that the leaders of the Alaska Coalition had met with Carter’s top domestic affairs adviser, Stuart Eizenstat, and the administration’s main Senate lobbyist, Bob Thompson, to consider what the best possible action would be if a bill failed to materialize. The coalition urged the president to make use of the Antiquities Act, and Thompson, specifically, thought this was a good idea.²⁰

3.3. December 1978: the Antiquities Act

In December 1978, Carter applied the Antiquities Act of 1906, creating more than a dozen new National Monuments in Alaska over an area spanning 55 million acres. He directed Secretary Andrus to temporarily withdraw an additional 40 million acres of Alaskan land under other laws. Carter’s sweeping use of the Antiquities Act is a powerful indicator of his

genuine interest in preserving the wildlands of Alaska. By way of explanation, he stated to the public on December 1, 1978, that passing legislation which would protect the nature of Alaska “is the highest environmental priority of my administration.”²¹ Carter justified his decision by arguing that if the lands were made open, they would instantly be subject to development interests, and that he wanted Congress to have another year to reach an agreement. Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus, was lead man on the ANILCA in the administration; and, according to his autobiography, he was the person who advised Carter to use the Antiquities Act.²² Carter confirmed this in an article published by the environmental group Defenders of Wildlife: in a private meeting with Andrus and his lawyers, it was jointly decided that the Antiquities Act was the best option. The intention, as Carter writes, was to break the “deadlock” in the Senate and force the opposition such as that of the Alaska congressional delegation, to be more forthcoming in reaching a compromise over the Alaska lands bill.²³

Since then, Carter has consistently expressed strong personal opinions about the protection of Alaskan land, and he undoubtedly supported the use of the Antiquities Act. The combined effect of his strong personal preferences on the issue and leadership style would have been incompatible with delegating such an important decision to a cabinet member. Carter generally appreciated the collegial advice of his aides, but drew upon the experiences he had gathered as governor in the decision-making process. He was a hands-on president and wanted as far as possible to make the final decisions himself.²⁴ Furthermore, the use of the act is an attest to Carter’s thorough understanding of the presidency. The context notwithstanding, use of the Antiquities Act of 1906 is a legitimate measure. It allows the president, “in his discretion, to declare by public proclamation historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest...to be national monuments.”²⁵ The act was initially intended for protection of comparatively smaller areas, and expansive uses of the act by presidents have occasionally created struggles and disagreements within Congress.²⁶

Carter’s handling of the Alaska lands bill accords with the stewardship theory on multiple levels. In an op-ed article published December 2000, Carter stated: “National monuments are a unique form of recognition that presidents have used for nearly a century to single out the finest examples of America's natural heritage.”²⁷ Thus, implicitly, twenty years after the enactment of the ANILCA, Carter still regarded his use of the Antiquities Act as correct. His interpretation of the act is expansive, clearly considering it within the scope of presidential power. Had Carter adhered to a narrower interpretation of the role of the

president, he could never have utilized the Antiquities Act to the same extent. However, the decision significantly reduced the ability of the executive branch to designate new national monuments in Alaska, as the ANILCA stipulated that any future withdrawals issued by the president exceeding 5000 acres would require congressional approval. This is a measure of the fact that Carter clearly stretched the limits of the power inherent in the Antiquities Act.

The Antiquities Act has been labeled a source of power for the “imperial presidency,” and Carter’s action supports such an interpretation of the statute.²⁸ In the early 1970s, historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. first formulated the concept of the “imperial presidency” to describe the growing strength of the president and the executive branch as seen in relation to the other branches of the federal government. In short, the concept was built on the theory that the president’s dominant position in foreign policy, especially after World War II, and the ability—through the constitutional role as Commander in Chief—to lead military operations abroad caused the executive branch to pursue similar power over domestic policy.²⁹ Originally, during the twentieth century, a more active president had generally been welcomed and demanded by both Congress and the public. However, the manner in which the Gulf of Tonkin resolution was passed, Lyndon B. Johnson’s and Richard Nixon’s unilateral approaches to the Vietnam War, and the Watergate scandal convinced Congress that the executive branch and the president had become overly powerful to the extent where it was dangerous for the balance between the three branches of the federal government. As a result, Congress, during the 1970s, passed a series of statutes—such as the War Powers Resolution and the Impoundment Control Act—to curtail the influence of the executive branch in both foreign and domestic policy.³⁰

Consequently, Carter’s use of the Antiquities Act took place during a period of time in which Congress was trying to halt the president’s abilities to override Congress in the legislative process. Hence, the Carter administration’s involvement in the Alaska lands debate both confirmed the commanding effect of the Antiquities Act in environmental policymaking, and in extension provided credence to the theory of the “imperial presidency.” Although Carter utilized the act to ensure collective environmental benefits, it is evident that his actions could be perceived as high-handed and even “imperial.” This was most evident in relation to Alaska as Carter dismissed the economic concerns of the state’s governor and congressional delegation, and in effect a majority of the Alaska populace. Alaskan Senator Ted Stevens called Carter’s application of the Antiquities Act “arbitrary and dictatorial.”³¹

Carter’s use of the Antiquities Act and assertiveness on the Alaskan land issue marks him as successor to Theodore Roosevelt’s brand of environmentalism. Both considered the

defense of nature to be an executive concern and took strong action. The stewardship theory is in part based on protection of the environment. In his outline of the theory, Roosevelt explains, "I acted on the theory that the President could at any time in his discretion withdraw from entry any of the public lands of the United States."³² Roosevelt's land withdrawals had a profound impact on the future of nature preservation in the United States. By executive order he established the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge in 1903. It is generally recognized as the first unit in the National Wildlife Refuge System, which, in addition to fifty other refuges created by the Roosevelt administration, institutionalized the system.³³ In an article in *The New York Times*, Carter proclaimed his admiration for Roosevelt by stating that the former president "pioneered bold presidential action for conservation."³⁴ Carter clearly identified with the former president, and based part of his approach to preservation on Roosevelt's maneuvers.

Carter shared a common understanding with Roosevelt of the concept of stewardship. In his December 1, 1978, address on the Alaska land withdrawals, Carter emphasized that for the sake of both the present and future generations America should save some of its last pristine areas.³⁵ In a fashion very similar to his handling of the energy situation, Carter exhibited a sincere concern on behalf of the people and a willingness to use the presidency. In the energy speech, Carter also brought up the interests of the children and grandchildren of America both as an incentive to turn the situation around and as justification for his decisions.³⁶ Carter had won the election declaring that he would be honest, restore the integrity of government,³⁷ and promote policies for the public good. His main tenets are closely related to the opening paragraph of Roosevelt's stewardship essay in which the earlier president argued that his administration was founded on "courage, honesty, and a genuine democracy of desire to serve the plain people."³⁸

Carter's call for passing a sound Alaskan lands bill for the benefit of future generations draws on the concept of bequest, which both is a primary incentive for preservation of nature in general and was one of the core ideas that initially led to the establishment of the ANWR. In *Last Great Wilderness*, Roger Kaye notes that bequest was one of the five values—which previously have been presented in the introduction—that motivated environmentalists to fight for the creation of the ANWR. The idea of protecting selected areas from human interference in order to ensure the existence of pristine nature for future generations first became prevalent in the postwar years. The 1950s saw extensive transformation of the environment brought on by population growth, consumerism, and

construction, and as a consequence the notion that the environment could be permanently changed by these developments surfaced as a legitimate fear.³⁹

Concerns for future generations have since remained one of guiding standards of U.S. land protection policy. This principle is incorporated explicitly in the opening paragraph of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which states that to avoid “that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization” consumes all wild areas, the government will actively work to ensure the future existence of undisturbed lands and regions in the United States.⁴⁰ By referring to future generations, Carter tapped into deep-seated ideas that both govern and rationalize the need for nature preservation. The U.S. economy and population grew steadily throughout the second half of the twentieth century, developments which on the whole increased the strain on the environment. Hence, by 1978 the Alaska lands bill and implicitly the ANWR including the coastal plain, already represented continuously disappearing and fundamentally important ecological values in the United States.

Carter was concerned about protecting Alaskan land, but as mentioned previously he also recognized the need for fossil fuels. He promoted increased production of coal, a resource that both in terms of extraction and emissions has a severe impact on the environment.”⁴¹ During his presidency Carter also advocated an increase in production in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska—which lies on the Western side of the North Slope—and in the Outer Continental Shelf in Alaska, to alleviate the energy situation.⁴² Carter’s policies illustrate the perennial trade-off in U.S. politics, between natural resource extraction and environmental protection. Extraction and use of fossil fuels are a feature of modern life, thus protection of the environment necessarily becomes a question of finding a balance between ecological concerns and public opinion. Carter could not simply advocate conservation to solve the energy problem, however, by preserving and expanding the ANWR in the face of economic interests, he created a progressive precedent of environmental protection for succeeding presidents.

Carter’s desire to protect the environment was founded on the same premise as Roosevelt’s: a deep-seated and private interest in nature.⁴³ In a personal message to *The Nature Conservancy*, Carter reflects on the formative impact his upbringing in Georgia had on his perception of nature: “My excursions into the woods to observe wildlife, hunt, fish, or just wander the paths gave me a lifelong affinity for the natural world.”⁴⁴ Carter carried his earlier experiences with nature into his adult life and presidency. In later years, Carter has, for instance, hiked and camped in the ANWR.⁴⁵ The camping trip—and his subsequent

enthusiastic description of the experience—along with the account of his youth, are strong indications that Carter’s stewardship approach to the protection of Alaskan lands grew out of a personal appreciation of nature.

Religion has, moreover, been the cornerstone of Carter’s life, and respect for God’s creation has clearly framed his perception of the environment. In *Our Endangered Values*, Carter states that in congregation during his childhood, “at least one Sunday each year was devoted to protection of the environment, or stewardship of the earth.”⁴⁶ Thus, he was presented with a clear and respectful idea of man’s relation to the environment from an early age. Carter’s Southern Baptist upbringing evidently shaped his political views, and by extension his involvement with the passing of the ANILCA.⁴⁷ Furthermore, Carter writes that, as man had received from God the privilege of being the ruling species on earth, “the emphasis was on careful management and enhancement, not waste or degradation.”⁴⁸ Carter has voiced similar religious sentiments in relation to the preservation of the ANWR. In “Arctic Folly,” Carter recounts from his trip to the refuge that to experience the muskoxen and the caribou in their undisturbed and natural habitat “is to touch in a fundamental way God’s glorious ark of teeming wildlife.”⁴⁹ In this description Carter reaches back to the nineteenth century transcendentalist biblical perception of the environment. Carter, sees divinity in nature, just as Thoreau and Muir did; the caribou become a representation of God’s creation and the ANWR an area that should not be disrupted for unjustifiable reasons.

3.4. Final Approval of the ANILCA

As Carter embarked on what would be his last two years in the White House, further challenges transpired in the environment and energy sectors. On March 28, 1979, a meltdown occurred in the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, spreading radioactive pollution over local communities. The accident caused negative publicity for the safety of nuclear energy, and the building of over thirty scheduled nuclear plants was shelved.⁵⁰ As a direct consequence, between 1978 and 2007 there were no orders for the construction of new reactors in the U.S.⁵¹ Thus, the disaster at Three Mile Island effectively blocked further and more extensive use of nuclear energy in the United States. In the aftermath of the accident, Carter stated—based on a Three Mile Island commission report—that it would be necessary to enforce stricter safety standards on nuclear plants, but that the energy situation in the U.S. did not allow for a ban on nuclear energy.⁵² In the oil sector, prices rose significantly in response to shortages caused by the Iranian revolution. In April

1979, Carter, in turn, ended the governmental control over domestic oil prices—regulations had kept the price artificially low—to promote reduced consumption by Americans.⁵³

Parallel to the developments in the energy sector during the spring of 1979, congressional ANILCA negotiations were in full swing. On May 14, 1979, Carter sent the same letter to all the members of the House asking them to pass the Alaska lands bill which would be up for vote in a few days. Carter also warned that if a bill was passed which did not meet the administration's priorities on land management, he would continue to use his executive powers to protect Alaska's wildlands. Hence, Carter engaged in direct correspondence with Congress over the legislative protection of the ANWR. He placed emphasis on the fact that other bills which had been proposed would have endangered "the calving grounds and migratory route for the last great caribou herd" by making them subject to oil development.⁵⁴

Furthermore, in the letter Carter argues that the bill would benefit indigenous Alaskans. He reasoned that the bill "protects what is essential to Alaska's native cultures, scenic wonders and abundant wildlife."⁵⁵ Carter does not specifically mention the Gwich'in Athabascan Indians nor their efforts to protect the coastal plain in the letter to the congressmen. However, he has in recent years expressed concerns for the Gwich'in's cause. Carter notes with regards to protecting the coastal plain and the caribou that, "having visited many aboriginal peoples around the world, I can empathize with the Gwich'in's struggle to safeguard one of their precious human rights."⁵⁶ The comment overlaps with Carter's special concerns for human rights, which can be traced back to his time in Georgia. In *Our Endangered Values*, Carter relates how his experiences surrounding the detrimental effects of racial segregation in the South awakened a human rights perspective in him.⁵⁷ During his presidency Carter established a very good record on human rights and, in later years, he has become a high-profile humanitarian particularly through the work of the Carter Center.⁵⁸

Carter's statements reflect a biocentric environmental ethic, as discussed by Douglas Booth in *Hooked on Growth*. Booth explains that people with a biocentric outlook "seem to accept the idea that nature is more than just an instrument and has value for more than strictly material ends." Booth further adds that such ethics can, in turn, influence how people approach questions relating to the environment: "Simply put, some may bring to the table of environmental decision making more than just an anthropocentric outlook."⁵⁹ Carter displays this view in his comments relating to the caribou. He clearly considered them to have an objective and intrinsic value that was worth protecting both for the animals themselves, and for human benefit. The biocentric sentiments are part of his personal character and it

undoubtedly influenced his policymaking as president, as evidenced through his work with the ANILCA.

In October 1979, however, wilderness protection for the coastal plain was eventually removed from the bill by the Senate Energy Committee.⁶⁰ The ANWR was already in 1979 suspected to hold considerable oil resources. Wilderness designation was a divisive issue that potentially could trip up the bill on the Senate floor, thus it was not included again.⁶¹ Nelson's analysis identifies the Alaskan congressional delegation, especially Senator Mike Gravel, and development interests based in Alaska, as the primary opponents to the ANILCA. They saw it as an overwhelming intrusion on the economic states' rights of Alaska. Gravel has in retrospect stated to *The Anchorage Daily News* that he wanted to hold the bill until 1981. He thought Alaskans would get a better agreement with Reagan in office and new Republican majorities in Congress: "Had we delayed, I thought we could bring about a more balanced bill."⁶² In Gravel's eyes this meant less environmental restrictions.

Deliberations on the ANILCA moved slowly through Congress and a final decision did not materialize before November 1980. During the summer of 1980, Carter and Andrus made "numerous calls" to build support for the ANILCA, but the 1980 election naturally took up much of Carter's time during the final negotiations.⁶³ It is apparent, considering the range of domestic and foreign issues Carter had to address, that opportunity for actual involvement in the ANILCA negotiations was limited. The presidential news conference on September 18, 1980, reflected on both past and present issues. On the international stage, Carter had held successful negotiations with China, arranged the Camp David Accords between Egypt and Israel, and confronted the Soviet Union over their invasion of Afghanistan. However, the Iranian hostage situation came to be the main international issue during the last year of the Carter presidency. The president's answers in the press conference indicate that he assessed the state of the situation on a daily basis.⁶⁴ The hostage crisis brought out Carter's acute attention to detail and concern for humanitarian values.⁶⁵ On the domestic scene, Carter struggled with the economy. It had been on a downward curve throughout his presidency, and when asked if he thought the country was now out of recession he answered diplomatically: "The point is, I believe that we'll have ups and downs during the next few months."⁶⁶

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act was finally signed by President Carter on December 2, 1980. As observed in *Northern Landscapes*, Carter's defeat by Reagan in the presidential election and a shift to Republican rule in the Senate had urged preservationists to accept a compromise bill. Opposed to having the legislation entirely fall through, Carter also favored a bill that lacked some of the initial suggestions. Carter

“informally asked House leaders” to pass the Senate version of the bill, which was less restrictive in terms of environmental protection.⁶⁷ The act placed over 100 million acres of Alaskan land under Federal Park and Refuge protection, 56 million of which were designated as wilderness. It was, as noted by President Carter, an area larger than the state of California; and doubled the size of the refuge from 9 to 18 million acres. Furthermore it stipulated under section 1002 that the Secretary of the Interior conduct a study of the ANWR coastal plain and present recommendations on future activities in the area to Congress. The assessment was to consider how, and to what degree, industrial activity affected the fish, wildlife and their habitat.

Carter has expressed regret that they were not able in the ANILCA to designate the coastal plain as wilderness. In *Our Endangered Values*, Carter elucidates the mindset of the administration: “Our natural presumption was that it would be virtually impossible for both houses of Congress and any president all to agree to despoil the area.”⁶⁸ They accepted a conciliatory agreement that has since kept the coastal plain off limits, and hence, fulfilled their policy goal. Carter has at times been criticized for having been unable to efficiently lead and work with members of Congress. As established earlier, Carter was very busy with other issues during the final negotiations of the ANILCA; however, according to Nelson’s analysis, the opposition in Congress consisting of members against designating the coastal plain of the ANWR as wilderness was too solid for the Carter administration to have significantly altered the situation.⁶⁹ Carter also received some internal opposition from Secretary of Energy Charles Duncan, who held the position during the last two years of the administration. Duncan proclaimed unilaterally in public that he considered it best to open the coastal plain of the ANWR to oil drilling. The statement had made it more difficult for the administration to gather support for protecting the coastal plain.⁷⁰

In his continuous defense of the ANWR both during and after his presidency Carter has exhibited a biocentric approach to the natural environment based on “strong sustainability.” In *Hooked on Growth*, Booth discusses the concept of sustainability and divides it into two strains, “weak” and “strong.” In “weak sustainability,” man-made products and natural capital (e.g. animals, trees, plants, fish, water, and soil) are considered equal, and natural assets are developed based on their greatest economic value to society. The idea of “strong sustainability,” in contrast, differentiates between the two types and, Booth argues, the preservation of the environment overrides excessive economic activity that only further drives “the status-consumption arms race or the inessential acquisition of consumer novelties.”⁷¹ Concerning oil development on the coastal plain, Carter has noted that it “would

forever destroy the wilderness character of America's only Arctic Refuge and disturb countless numbers of animals that depend on this northernmost terrestrial ecosystem."⁷² The statement further demonstrates Carter's separate evaluation which distinguished the possible capital value that drilling represents in economic output, and the land's natural values in the form of undisturbed ecosystems and animal populations. For Carter, the natural capital of the ANWR far outweighs its return in physical economic activity.

In attribution to his environmental views on the ANWR, Carter has been classified on the basis of James David Barber's presidential character model as an "active-positive" president. Active-positives are adaptable, self-confident persons who "enjoy their work and find it a challenge to use power productively as a means to pursue goals beneficial to others."⁷³ For Carter, the profile fits his handling of the ANWR, situated as it is within the contexts of energy and environmental policy. Carter revealed a solemn concern for the state of the energy market in America in the late 1970s, and with the use of concrete measures tried to alleviate the situation. Still, he realized an upper limit to natural resource extraction, and had the foresight to approach nature preservation as a collective value. Along with the Alaska lands bill, one of Carter's last actions as president was to authorize the Superfund bill. It established a federal monetary fund for cleaning up hazardous waste, and, as Carter remarked in December, 1980, "fills a major gap in the existing laws of our country."⁷⁴

Carter was on the whole perceived as a president who placed special emphasis on the protection of the environment. Dennis S. Soden and Brent S. Steel in *The Environmental Presidency*, present a survey they conducted that asked the respondents—high ranking officials in environmental groups—to evaluate all presidents from Truman to Clinton on two overarching criteria. They were to consider firstly whether the presidents had been passive or active, if they had been indifferent to the environment and projected no goals, or if they had earmarked specific objectives and made the environment an important part of their policy agenda. Question number two asked whether their environmental policies had caused positive long-term results, or if they had proposed and implemented policies that were opposite to "basic environmental principles," and had a negative impact on the environment.⁷⁵ The use of Barber's classification places their survey squarely within the field of presidential studies, however, the categories have, as noted by the authors, been modified to fit the environmental policy context.

Carter was classified as an active-positive. Out of all the presidents he scored highest on the active scale, and was only outranked by Richard Nixon on the positive scale. Nixon, as discussed in *The Environmental Presidency*, did not personally harbor biocentric values, but

he and the administration were attuned to the high environmental spirit that characterized American society at the beginning of the 1970s. Nixon received a favorable reputation because of the significant number of landmark environmental bills passed during his presidency.⁷⁶ In contrast to Nixon, classified by Barber as an active-negative, Carter's active-positive image and personality corresponded in terms of environmental policy. Carter was both perceived as and exhibited the traits of an active-positive president. These active-positive qualities were observable in the way that Carter argued for the Alaska lands bill and the protection of the coastal plain.

In the op-ed "Make This Treasure a National Monument," Carter stated, "I listened to scientists who emphasized that the coastal plain is the ecological heart and soul of this, our greatest wildlife sanctuary." It appears accurate, as observed earlier in Hargrove's analysis of Carter's political personality, that his foremost concern was to make informed decisions for the betterment of the American people. Although, it is clear that religious convictions played a part in Carter's understanding of the environment, he also greatly valued the scientific aspect of preserving the ANWR. Carter has clarified that he sees no contradiction between religion and science, and that he always has had an interest in developing his knowledge and has valued the information provided by empirical disciplines.⁷⁷ In *The Presidential Difference*, Fred I. Greenstein confirms Carter's receptiveness to science by noting that Carter "took pride" in being well-informed, and in the ability to thoroughly understand and handle the policy priorities of his administration.⁷⁸ Carter defended ecological values and showed strong determination in relation to the ANILCA. Such attributes are requisite for a president in order for the executive branch to successfully influence Congress on policy decisions significantly affecting the environment.

3.5. President Reagan: Right Wing Shift

President Reagan won the 1980 election with a landslide margin and turned the nation markedly to the right. His overall policy agenda was to reduce the size of the government by cutting taxes, curtailing federal spending, easing regulations, and encouraging more private-sector activity. These were key features of Reagan's "supply-side economics."⁷⁹ Reagan, moreover, also applied supply-side theory in the energy policy arena. Thus, instead of promoting more efficiency and conservation—policies which by 1981 had contributed to a significant decline in total U.S. energy consumption—to keep demand down, the administration focused on improving opportunities for development of fossil fuels and

allowed consumption to grow unchecked.⁸⁰ Reagan wanted as little government interference in the energy market as possible, and as a consequence several of the energy saving programs which Carter had helped implement was, by and large, dismantled. The administration's budget cuts, for example, halted practically all federal funding for conservation policies and research on renewable sources of energy.⁸¹ Historian Jeffrey K. Stine notes that the environment never was a priority concern in the Reagan administration, and that it only featured as a proxy for the administration's economic goals.⁸² Hence, the administration's pro-development policy on oil extraction in the ANWR was necessarily a product of a larger energy policy plan.

Reagan's period at General Electric (1954-1962), and his governorship in California (1967-1975), were experiences that influenced his political views, and subsequently his policy on the ANWR. As spokesman for GE, Reagan was strongly influenced by GE President, Ralph Cordiner, and Vice President, Lemuel Boulware. Thomas W. Evans, in *The Education of Ronald Reagan*, studied the relationship between Boulware and Reagan. Aside from their personal interaction, Evans especially emphasizes the reading material that Boulware "assigned" to GE employees. President Reagan was an avid reader and he consumed, in addition to Boulware's personal writings, GE recommended material by conservative free-market economists, Henry Hazlitt and Lewis Hanley. Evans writes that "the texts undoubtedly helped shape his basic philosophy."⁸³ "Salvation is not Free" from 1949 captures the essence of Boulware's ethics. In this speech Boulware criticized the growing size of the government and expressed the need for businessmen to better convey their ideas: "We have simply got to learn, and preach, and practice what's the good alternative to socialism."⁸⁴

The values that later would shape Reagan's view on the ANWR were already prominent during his time as governor of California. Reagan favored local business activity and disliked federal regulations, but since California—relative to other areas in the country—was an environmentally-friendly state he did not fully pursue his preferred view.⁸⁵ Jeffrey K. Stine further references Lou Cannon, Reagan's biographer, who writes that after his governorship Reagan became increasingly aligned with business friends on the outer right-wing and their pro-development ideology on natural resources. According to Cannon, Reagan did not have any "pro-environment advisers" in the period between the end of his governorship and the start of the presidency.⁸⁶ In *Ronald Reagan*, John Patrick Diggins highlights a case that provides perspective on Reagan's views on nature preservation. In opposition to the establishment of the National Redwood Park and the restrictions it would cause on lumbering in the area, Reagan proclaimed that "a tree is a tree—how many more do

you need to look at?”⁸⁷ Reagan’s argument carries strong anthropocentric sentiments, a concept which was discussed in the previous chapter. The comment is indicative of his approach to natural resource extraction and the policies he would implement as president.

Upon entering the White House in 1981, Reagan initiated a sharp shift in executive environmental policy. He sought to affect environmental policy by means of implementation, by hiring officials who were aligned with his own views, instead of working through Congress.⁸⁸ Reagan has become known for his detached management style, and it is worth noticing in this context that his inspiration most likely had been his former chief, Ralph Cordiner at GE.⁸⁹ Thomas W. Evans notes that Cordiner became famous for his decentralized management style that gave his subordinates unchecked executive power in their everyday work, and that, aside from his acting career this was the only management style Reagan had worked under.⁹⁰ Reagan has proclaimed himself to be a big supporter of Cordiner and his mode of operation.⁹¹ To Reagan, the key factor was that the secretaries followed his ideology of reduced regulation and free-market principles.

Reagan’s pro-development preferences became most visible through the policies implemented by the Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator, Anne Burford (also referred to as Anne Gorsuch). In *The Environmental Policy Paradox*, political scientist Zachary A. Smith provides an illustrative analysis of Anne Burford’s tactic: “Uncharacteristic of typical agency behavior, Burford sought smaller, not larger appropriations for her agency and, atypically for EPA administrators, her main priority was relief for regulated industries.”⁹² Smith adds that by 1983 the action budget of the EPA had been reduced by almost half its size and thereafter the agency’s activity level was likewise curtailed. Reagan, it is argued, had a profound and sometimes naive confidence in technology and thought that scientists would be able to solve issues such as pollution.⁹³ Thus, for Reagan it may have appeared unnecessary to be overly concerned about negative impacts on the environment. James Watt was the administration’s most prolific proponent of the free-market. He vied to open for exploration and production in all areas that could generate economic returns. Watt, for example, allowed mining in wilderness areas under “sleeping” laws.⁹⁴

Reagan’s disregard of enacted environmental legislation and lack of enforcement borders on a prerogative interpretation of the constitution. A prerogative approach to the constitution expands on the stewardship theory and argues that the president can take any actions that are necessary to provide for “the public good,” even when such measures conflict with rules and laws.⁹⁵ Article II section three of the constitution orders that the president

“shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed,” and although it was Watt and Burford who were in charge of respectively the Department of the Interior and the EPA, Reagan selected subordinates who agreed with his overall political views and dictated the policy course of the administration. The environmental policy of the administration was part of a larger conviction that deregulation would encourage economic growth which in turn would benefit the public.⁹⁶ It is reasonable to argue that even if the administration’s goal in terms of improving the economic situation at the time was well-intentioned, Reagan’s policy coincidentally deprived the American people of important environmental protection. Thus, Reagan’s actions were by no means justifiable under the prerogative theory. The administration chose not to carry out their executive duties, ignored legislation passed by Congress, and infuriated a substantial segment of the U.S. population.

Jeffrey K. Stine provides an extensive examination of both Watt and Burford in *The Reagan Presidency*. He depicts Burford’s denial—ordered by Reagan—to provide Congress with requested documents that confirmed the administration’s intentional mismanagement of the Superfund program, as a striking example of Reagan’s environmental policy. Burford received extensive criticism over the EPA’s negligent approach to toxic waste management, and the superfund case brought out discrepancies that existed between Congress and the Reagan administration over the enforcement of environmental regulations.⁹⁷ During the 1980s Congress would become increasingly hostile to Reagan’s environmental policy.⁹⁸ Burford and Watt were both eventually forced to resign in 1983 because of the amount of controversy their actions created. Reagan’s refusal to release the Superfund documents—eventually overturned by Congress—and the circumstances of Burford’s and Watt’s departures, are all indicative of prerogative sentiments. Upon examination of *The Reagan Diaries*, it is evident that it was Reagan who staked out the general environmental “outlook” of the administration and that he fully supported Watt and Burford. Reagan expressed regret over both Watt’s and Burford’s resignations. In regard to Watt’s departure, Reagan wrote in his personal diary entry that, “He [Watt] knew that in carrying out my policies his days would be numbered. Actually he thought he would have had to leave sooner than he did.”⁹⁹

In *A History of Environmental Politics*, Samuel P. Hays has classified the Reagan administration as part of “the environmental opposition.” President Reagan, Hays argues, represented the attitude of the extraction industries of the West such as lumbering, mining, agriculture, and grazing.¹⁰⁰ For persons involved in these industries environmental regulation can function as an element that adds costs to operations and reduces land availability. Michael E. Kraft notes that the Sagebrush Rebellion, which temporarily took form in Western states at

the end of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, was a product of the opposition that existed against the new-found federal environmental initiatives. Largely lead by ranchers, the Sagebrush Rebellion, for example, fought against increasing preservation of lands in the West.¹⁰¹ The movement wished to reverse the expanding role of the federal government, and place more land under state and private control. Under these conditions, the movement hoped to receive more influence over how the lands were used.¹⁰² Both Hays, and Kraft, remark upon the Reagan administration's sympathy with the callings of the Sagebrush Rebellion. Kraft's and Hays's observations are telling of the pro-development political environment within which the administration shaped its policy on the ANWR.

3.6. Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska, Coastal Plain Resource Assessment

Parallel in time to the Reagan administration's efforts to reshape American environmental policy, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the USGS, and the BLM were—by order of the ANILCA—carrying out studies on the ANWR coastal plain. From the outset, Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, assembled a group that worked on opening the refuge. The group initiated various tactics, one of which was aimed at trading prospective federal land in the refuge with local indigenous groups in order to create sympathy for drilling among congressional members.¹⁰³ The Fish and Wildlife Service undertook biological studies of the fish and wildlife in the period 1981-1985, while during the summers between 1983 and 1985, third-party companies were allowed to carry out geological field observations and surface measurements. Seismic data was collected during the winters of 1984 and 1985. Based on the various studies, Secretary of the Interior, Donald Hodel, presented his recommendation to Congress in 1987.¹⁰⁴

In the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment* released in April 1987, and in the Senate committee hearing on Energy and Natural Resources in June 1987, Secretary Hodel framed the ANWR issue as a matter of energy security. Thematically, Hodel's pro-development argumentation was identical both in the report and at the hearing. One of the first trends Hodel points to in the report is the simultaneous increase in U.S. consumption of petroleum during a period of declining domestic production.¹⁰⁵ U.S. production peaked in 1970 at 9.6 million barrels per day and by 1987 had dropped to 8.3 million barrels per day.¹⁰⁶ Hodel feared that America's increasing dependence on imported oil, "could have potentially serious ramifications for our national security."¹⁰⁷ Moreover, the secretary warned that not exploring a potentially large oil field would send dangerous signals to the world. It would indicate that

the United States were “not willing” in the bare minimum to develop its own resources, in order to ameliorate dependence on the Middle East.¹⁰⁸

In his personal discussion, Secretary Hodel provides a pro-development interpretation of the potential environmental effects that could be caused by oil production. The analyses in the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment* concluded that production could have major biological effects on the Porcupine Caribou Herd and the Muskox herd, potentially causing a decline in both herds.¹⁰⁹ Hodel recognizes these warnings. However, instead of focusing on the potential negative consequences he chooses to highlight the Central Arctic Caribou Herd tripling in size in spite of the Prudhoe Bay fields having occupied “a considerable portion of its range, including calving areas.”¹¹⁰ Like the biologists in the report, Hodel notes that comparisons between the two herds should be made with caution, but he still decides to state that growth of the Central Herd is “a strong measure of assurance that caribou can coexist successfully with oil development.”¹¹¹ The scientists, on the other hand, are more careful to convey that oil production generally displaces caribous and that only “some calving occurred” by the Central Arctic Caribou Herd when production began at Prudhoe Bay.¹¹² Furthermore, because the Porcupine Caribou Herd is substantially larger, its density is over ten times than that of the Central Herd during calving seasons. This means that the Porcupine caribous “would encounter oil development much more extensively throughout its summer range.”¹¹³

By his recommendation in the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment*, Secretary Hodel established a precedent in the executive branch over the question of the use of the coastal plain. He firmly placed it within the national security context where the energy needs of the nation override the environmental values of the ANWR. The report was published on the heels of the 1986 drop in world oil prices, which increased consumption and subsequently demand in the U.S. More than ever, the need for more domestic production became a pressing issue. Reagan, in his message to Congress on energy security in May 1987, identified America’s growing dependency on foreign oil and its implications for national security as the administration’s main energy concern.¹¹⁴ The administration firmly supported development of the 1002 area, and the historical context must have only functioned to validate and further enforce Reagan’s policy views.

With regard to the ANWR, Secretary Hodel definitely spoke on behalf of Reagan in the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment* and in the subsequent hearings. In the “1988 Legislative and Administrative Message,” the president affirmed his personal and the administration’s policy on the ANWR. Reagan stated that he considered the coastal plain to be the best oil and gas prospect in the U.S. and that “Congress should move expeditiously to

enact legislation implementing our recommendation.”¹¹⁵ In the document, the president also commented on the administration’s pro-development policy for the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). Analogously to the ANWR, drilling in the OCS is an issue where energy and environmental interests conflict. Since inauguration, under the auspices of the Secretary of the Interior, James Watt, the administration had tried to open the OCS to oil drilling, however much of the plan was stymied by widespread public disapproval and a reluctant Congress.¹¹⁶ On the subject of environmental protection, Reagan declared that the administration intended to avoid “unnecessary” governmental interference. The speech’s content describes a positive environmental record, nonetheless Reagan made the following revealing remark upon the meeting point of economic and environmental priorities; “Of course, sometimes trade-offs exist and choices have to be made.”¹¹⁷ The administration’s handling of issues such as the ANWR and the OCS are evidence that Reagan, more often than not, favored industrial development over preservation.

3.7. Reagan: Weak Sustainability, Dominant Social Paradigm Theory, and Passive-Positive Character

The Reagan administration implemented an overall environmental policy that correlates with the concept of “weak sustainability.” Booth argues that “under weak sustainability, the goal is to preserve the total stock of capital in a society, adding together the value of both human-produced and natural capital under the assumption that one can be substituted for the other.”¹¹⁸ Resource development that could potentially yield positive economic results, as exemplified by policy on the ANWR, consistently received priority over environmental concerns. Thus, Reagan’s supply-side philosophy carried heavy overtones of “weak sustainability.” The “weak sustainability” sentiments were most evident through the appointments of Burford to the EPA and Watt to the Interior, and their focus on business-friendly regulations and mass resource extraction. Reagan tried, to a degree, to ameliorate the administration’s reputation after the departures of Burford and Watt by appointing more environmentally friendly officials, such as William Ruckelshaus to the EPA.¹¹⁹ However, except for routine land additions, for example to the National Wilderness Preservation System, Reagan’s policies did little to protect the environment for future generations.

Reagan’s partiality to business interests on topics such as the ANWR and environmental policy in general, strongly overlaps with values that are associated with dominant social paradigm (DSP) theory. The DSP embodies the different principles and

values that are fundamental to the basic workings of a society, often in terms of economic concerns. Zachary A. Smith notes that in Western democracies, and in the U.S. particularly, the governing values of the DSP have been capitalism, individualism, and an intense belief in the ability of science to push society forward and protect against negative environmental developments.¹²⁰ These values are still dominant today, and Smith argues—as other scholars have before—that, because the American DSP is so strongly based on continuous economic growth and expansion, the paradigm is largely incompatible with environmental protection. Hence, Smith reasons, “In this sense, capitalism may not be consistent with sound long-term environmental management.”¹²¹

Reagan’s economic policy was founded on free-market ideals such as tax cuts and unrestrained capital flow. His “political philosophy” was built on the concept of self-reliance and freedom from government intervention, and he had—as discussed earlier—a deep-seated confidence in technological progress to protect the environment.¹²² Thus, Reagan appears to have been the quintessential modern representative of the American DSP. The potential negative effects of the DSP on the environment appear to be contingent upon the degree to which the main values of the paradigm are prevalent, and with regard to natural resources the Reagan administration practiced strong DSP principles. The unsustainable economic growth values of the American DSP—of which Reagan was both a product of and facilitator in—underpin the effort to open environmentally sensitive areas, such as the ANWR, to industrial exploration. These regions are protected because of their biocentric value, and may hold even stronger ecological future significance that are as yet indiscernible. Immersed in the DSP, the Reagan administration were willing to sacrifice such values for the possibility of more instant material rewards, a predominantly negative development for the future environmental sustainability of the United States.

The influence of the DSP is apparent in further aspects of Reagan’s environmental policy, such as the administration’s attempts to reduce the amount of government control and “interference” in industrial operations. Reagan’s practice of strong DSP values in relation to the environment is representative of opinions that existed in the U.S. during the 1980s, for example in relation to the Sagebrush Rebellion (which has been discussed earlier in this chapter). However, Jeffrey K. Stine observes that because the administration was forced to primarily implement Reagan’s environmental priorities through the administrative process and not through Congress, the policies had little long-term influence. During the 1980s, the House was controlled by the Democratic Party and Congress was in general more attuned to

environmental concerns than Reagan was; as a consequence the administration achieved little legislative success.¹²³

The paradox of Reagan's environmental policy as highlighted by Jeffrey K. Stine, Dennis L. Soden, and Michael E. Kraft, was that it turned out to be considerably more pro-industry than the opinions of the general public. Despite the fact that Reagan claimed that the administration believed in the concept of stewardship of the environment, most Americans actually disagreed with Reagan's more business-friendly policies.¹²⁴ In the period between 1960 to 1980, Americans became increasingly concerned with both urban and rural environmental protection. Hence, by the 1980s significant contradictory tendencies apparently surfaced among the general public in relation to the environmental values embodied by the traditional DSP. There has—as discussed in the introductory chapter—long existed a strong environmental element in the American society, furthermore, opinion polls indicate that public concern for protection of the environment grew considerably during the 1980s.¹²⁵ Although issues such as the economy remained, on the whole, more important in terms of elections, growing ecological concerns for the future would come to function as primary incentives for environmental organizations and politicians to work towards the preservation of areas such as the ANWR.

Reagan's failure to implement lasting changes sheds light on the limits of the president's powers in the environmental policy-making arena. The president can initiate substantial transformations through the administrative process, as Reagan did with the appointments of Watt and Burford. However, the drawback is that the executive decisions can in most cases be overturned by future presidents. The ability of the president to pass environmental legislation through Congress is dependent on public opinion, the composition of the two houses, and the attitudes of the lawmakers. Thus, if and when the president misinterprets or is out of synch with the public mood—as the Reagan administration was—there appears to be little leeway to move sensitive environmental legislation through Congress.

James David Barber has classified Ronald Reagan as having a passive-positive presidential character. According to Barber, the passive positive president “is the receptive, compliant, other-directed character whose life is a search for affection as a reward for being agreeable and cooperative rather than personally assertive.”¹²⁶ Barber's model characterizations can on the surface appear to be very specific and too rigid to accurately describe the personality of a president. However, as Barber points out, analyzing the personalities of presidents is “a matter of tendencies.”¹²⁷ Thus, Barber's model

characterizations necessarily capture the characteristics which were most prevalent for the different presidents.

Contrasting Reagan's environmental views with Barber's passive-positive characterization of the president brings out some interesting aspects. Contrary to the assumption that passive-positives are perceptible to change their views in order to achieve recognition, Reagan had a distinct pro-development approach to the environment and was not willing to adapt these sentiments to satisfy the environmental community. In his personal diary, Reagan states in relation to an unsuccessful meeting which he had with several leaders from top environmental organizations that he found them to be "arrogant & unreasonable."¹²⁸ Then again, it is important to point out that there appears to have been no motivation for Reagan to alter his environmental policy views either. Since Reagan primarily appointed persons to the administration that held the same political ideologies, there was no one who challenged his environmental politics. Although it seems highly unlikely given the strong convictions Reagan displayed in relation to the environment, but had there been more contradicting opinions in the administration Reagan might have been more inclined to reevaluate his environmental policy views. Moreover, most people who were especially concerned with the environment tended not to vote for Reagan anyway.¹²⁹ The passive activity-level which Barber classifies for Reagan appears to be fitting in terms of environmental politics. He was active only in the sense that he worked to remove legislative barriers to energy production, but very passive and unconcerned with mitigating the effects of his pro-development policies.

Historian John Patrick Diggins appropriately characterizes Reagan's approach to the environment as "puzzling." Reagan, Diggins comments, was in his personal life an avid rancher who appreciated physical labor, relished opportunities for horse riding, and enjoyed the outdoors, and thus it might appear somewhat contradictory that he showed such little interest in protecting the environment.¹³⁰ In his autobiography, *An American Life*, Reagan places positive emphasis on ranch life; evidently this, along with the cathartic feeling he received from riding horses, was the strongest connection he felt to the natural world.¹³¹ In *The Role of a Lifetime*, Lou Cannon provides an extensive analysis of Reagan's personal view of the environment, which from an ecological standpoint is largely negative. Cannon argues that Reagan's perception of the environment was infused by the combination of solitude and large expanses that life on the ranch provided: "Reagan has a westerner's sense that "forever" is just around the next bend in the river. The West is so vast, beautiful and deceptively rugged that it is difficult for westerners of Reagan's mind-set to believe that the region's fragile

ecological system stands at the raw edge of existence.”¹³² From Reagan’s perspective, the North Slope of Alaska must have seemed infinitely large and distant, and oil development on the coastal plain must have appeared to be the only rational policy choice.

For Reagan, one of the overriding goals of his presidency was to reconfigure the concept of freedom in the U.S. He wanted society to see freedom more as an opportunity for self-reliance than as a concept of equality enforced by the government.¹³³ Thus, with a policy paradigm dominated by individual freedom, limited government, and free-market economics, for Reagan to oppose development in the ANWR would have been incongruous. The Reagan administration considered the growing dependency on imported oil a national security threat, and viewed in light of their policy beliefs, not developing the coastal plain would contradict the role of the government and unduly endanger the freedom of America.

3.8. Conclusion

Founded in his personal affection for nature, Carter displayed an active-positive approach in applying his knowledge and judgment to form policy on the ANWR. In line with Barber’s classification, Carter was also adaptable, and rather than suffer a large political defeat, supported a compromise bill when it became clear that all their priorities weren’t going to be realized. And yet, Carter’s impetus to preserve the coastal plain never wavered. He remained persistent and vocal as efforts to open the ANWR escalated in the following decades subsequent to his presidency.

In a natural accordance with Fred I. Greenstein’s analysis of the modern presidency, Reagan, as the “chief agenda setter” shaped policy proceedings on the ANWR. He exerted influence both through his subordinates, in particular Donald Hodel who was in charge of the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment*, and by public speeches. The decision whether to open the coastal plain was always going to reside with Congress, but as described in *The New York Times* in April 1987, “[Hodel’s] decision sets the stage for what promises to be a spirited and protracted legislative battle on Capitol Hill.”¹³⁴ The conclusion to the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment* provided potent support for pro-development ANWR advocates in Congress.

Chapter Four: George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, 1989-2001

4.1. Introduction

The goal of the present chapter is to evaluate how the ANWR debate developed within and was affected by the executive branch during the 1989-2001 period. The commencement of the G. H. W. Bush administration in January 1989 signified a continuity in the executive branch's pro-development Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) policy initiated with the Reagan administration. President Bush, after eight years of being vice president under Reagan, defeated the Democrat candidate, Michael Dukakis, by a substantial margin.¹ Particular examination is made of the degree of success in the president and his administration's attempt—via the proposal of the National Energy Strategy—to influence Congress to pass legislation regarding the coastal plain. Further investigation is made regarding the impact of external factors on the executive branch, such as the Exxon Valdez accident, and how Bush's views on energy policy and the environmental record of the administration can be considered to be reflections of his preferences on the ANWR.

The latter half of the chapter continues with an assessment of impact of the election of Bill Clinton, and the consequent shift in mentality in the executive branch which changed the dynamic of the ANWR debate. Clinton was against drilling on the coastal plain, and how he utilized the powers of the executive branch to preserve the ANWR against the majority will of Congress is a subject for consideration. To comprehend Clinton's actions, the chapter examines the relation to the ANWR of his personal understanding of the concept of nature preservation, and environmental politics. The chapter also evaluates how the appointments of Al Gore as vice president and Bruce Babbitt as secretary of the interior, and outside forces such as the environmental community, may have influenced Clinton's environmental policymaking. The chapter, moreover, examines the overall environmental record of the Clinton administration to see whether protection of the ANWR was part of a larger agenda.

4.2. President George H. W. Bush: ANWR Policy

George H. W. Bush made explicit his pro-development policy on the ANWR from the beginning of the presidency. On February 22, 1989, in a speech at Elmendorf Air Force Base

in Anchorage, Alaska, Bush highlighted the fact that Alaska had been bestowed with unparalleled natural qualities and immense energy resources. He believed that the ANWR could provide both for the American people. The speech brings forth several of the most significant aspects of Bush's approach to the ANWR.² Regarding the proposed development of the coastal plain Bush stated; "I know, as a businessman formerly and now as President of the United States, that we can and must develop our energy resources for the sake of economic development and particularly for the sake of the national security of the United States."³ Prior to his political career Bush had moved from the Northeast to Texas where he experienced great success in the oil business.⁴ Bush was, as he expressed, "a businessman," and he approached the ANWR partly with the mentality of an oil developer. Life in Texas, arguably one of the most pro-development oil states in the nation, had clearly established precedents for his perception of the subject. Bush, in all likelihood, valued the opportunity to spur on the positive economic trend of the Reagan years.

Bush echoed national security concerns set out by the Reagan administration, and Donald Hodel in the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment* in 1987. He was profoundly committed to drilling in the refuge as a national need. From his experiences as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, American Representative to China, Director of the CIA, and during his years in the Reagan administration, Bush had gathered a wealth of experience relating to America's position in the world.⁵ Observing that the U.S. was already too dependent on foreign oil, he perceived a danger to national security, concluding increased domestic production was needed to alleviate the situation.⁶ Bush's concerns regarding the oil situation were well-founded: during the late 1980s, U.S. oil imports rose substantially from five million barrels per day in 1985 to eight million barrels per day.⁷

As regards the potential damage to the ANWR from drilling, Bush claimed: "I could never support development that failed to provide adequate safeguards for land and wildlife."⁸ Bush chose a markedly stronger environmental profile than his predecessor, even labeling himself as the "environmental president."⁹ Bush's remark appears to have been sincere. Given his concern with the administration's policies, the Elmendorf speech, and later comments he would make regarding the ANWR, it seems like he had examined the issue thoroughly before reaching a conscious decision. According to political scientists Dilys Hill and Phil Williams, Bush was "a hands-on pragmatist with a preference for competence over ideology."¹⁰ Fred I. Greenstein similarly remarks on Bush's managerial style, accurately observing that Bush's attention to detail represented the opposite of Reagan's detached policymaking style. Bush was "fully on top of his administration's policies."¹¹

To Bush, drilling in the coastal plain evidently represented a policy initiative that would facilitate increased domestic oil production—a critical national objective. It seems, therefore, by implication from his stance expressed earlier (as above)—that he had apparently judged the environmental risks to be acceptable. Drilling would be limited to a comparatively small area, and most of the ANWR would under any circumstances remain undisturbed. However, only three months into Bush’s presidency, the possible actualization of guiding any ANWR bill through Congress, was drastically curtailed.

4.3. The Exxon Valdez Oil Spill

On March 24, 1989, the United States experienced the largest oil spill in the history of the nation. Shortly after leaving Valdez, Alaska, the tanker *Exxon Valdez* hit a reef in Prince William Sound spilling approximately a quarter million barrels of oil. In *Extreme Conditions*, historian John Strohmeier labels it “an oil-disaster of world shaking dimension,” and notes that it devastated the local marine wildlife, and as a result, destroyed the subsistence resources of several small villages in the region. The accident, moreover, received widespread attention from the media which projected the disastrous images to homes all across the United States.¹² The *Exxon Valdez* calamity revived, in part, the ecological mood of the 1970s, and helped to once again place the environment at the forefront of the national agenda.¹³ The disaster also effectively, stymied—for the coming years—any political opportunity of opening the ANWR coastal plain to oil drilling.¹⁴

John Kingdon’s “stream model” explains how the *Exxon Valdez* incident functioned as a “focusing event” for President Bush. Kingdon’s model—which was introduced in the previous chapter—helps explain how the domestic policy agenda of the president takes form. The *Exxon Valdez* accident can clearly be classified as part of the initial problems and issue stream: an incident which by its salient nature defined the agenda. In respect of the specific case of Bush’s pro-development ANWR policy, however, it can be argued that the accident functioned as a negative “focusing event,” directing attention towards the safety of oil-related activity in the Arctic and raising public consciousness of the potential damage such activity could cause to the environment. It worked to discourage the administration’s proposal for drilling in the ANWR. In *Environmental Policy and Politics*, Michael E. Kraft utilizes Kingdon’s model to assess how environmental policy generally develops in society. Kraft points out that, as part of the problems and issues stream, the *Exxon Valdez* disaster helped heighten the focus on environmental issues.¹⁵

One week after the incident—at a question and answer session in the White House—the president was asked by one of the journalists if he, in light of the catastrophe, would reconsider his policy stance on the ANWR. Bush answered firmly in the negative. The logic was founded on oil production and transportation as unavoidable features of human existence—the only solution was focus on safety measures. Significantly, Bush also commented on the president's, his own, responsibility to ensure the security of the nation: he argued that America's growing dependency on foreign oil prevented him from casting off a potentially large domestic field.¹⁶ For Bush, then, national security in terms of securing domestic energy sources outweighed his sense of responsibility of guarding the ANWR for future generations. That the answers were presented only a week after the largest environmental disaster ever in the United States, strongly indicates both Bush's steadfastness on the issue, and that protection of the environment can, under almost all political circumstances, be framed as secondary to securing adequate energy supplies.

Bush concluded, in the question of the *Exxon Valdez* calamity and drilling in the ANWR; “what you do is do the best you can, express the genuine concern that you feel on the environment -- and I do feel a concern -- but not take irresponsible action to guard against an incident of this nature.”¹⁷ The statement highlights the paradoxical nature of Bush's environmental policy. He spoke with authentic care about the environment, and enthusiastically propagated approval of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. On the reverse, however, Bush had a tendency to side with corporate concerns on resource extraction issues.¹⁸ Philip Shabecoff, long term environmentalist writer for *The New York Times*, commented in April of 1989 that the Bush Administration exhibited a “split personality” on environmental policy. Much of the cause, Shabecoff enlightened, could be traced back to the officials that Bush selected as chiefs for respectively the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of the Interior.¹⁹ Bush selected William K. Reilly, former President of the World Wildlife Fund, as administrator of the EPA. In contrast to, for example, Reagan's first EPA administrator, Anne Burford, who had practically no experience relevant to environmental work, Reilly's background in the environmental community set standards for his approach to the job.²⁰ Manuel Lujan, Bush's secretary of the interior, on the other hand, adhered to a more unrestricted pro-development approach, as practiced by former secretaries James Watt and Don Hodel.²¹ These internal differences would come to effect the administration's environmental policy achievements.

4.4. 1990's Environmentalism: The Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and the Outer Continental Shelf

The Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA) of 1990 are the epitome of the Bush administration's environmental policy record. From 1977 to 1990 there were no developments on the Clean Air Act due to resistance to tightening regulatory standards by, among others, President Reagan and Senate majority leader, Democrat Robert Byrd representing West Virginia, one of the largest coal states in the U.S.²² While proposing the CAAA on June 12, 1989, President Bush set forth three main priorities. First, cutting acid rain emissions by half; reduce the amount of smog in American cities; and, thirdly, slash all air-pollution by seventy-five percent. Bush criticized the lack of progress and unity on clean air legislation during the 1980s and stated that this "is a rare opportunity to reverse the errors of this generation in the service of the next."²³ It is clear both from the initiative and the speech that Bush thought that the federal government and the president had an important responsibility in protecting the environment, particularly by comparison to the Reagan administration.

Glen Sussman and Mark Andrew Kelso contend that Bush, utilizing the presidency, played a central role in the passage of the CAAA. He set the agenda with the speech and, as opinion leader, raised public awareness about the issue. Sussman and Kelso further note that Bush put together an executive working group that conferred with all relevant actors, including congressional leaders, corporate industry, and environmental organizations, to see the bill through Congress. There were also changes in Congress, both in leadership and political formations that made it considerably easier to pass the CAAA.²⁴ The incorporation of the Environmental Defense Fund's acid rain program in the act stands as a testament to the Bush administration's inclusive approach to the creation of the CAAA.²⁵ The acid rain program—a trademark of the CAAA—allowed companies to trade and buy emission licenses, hence it was partly guided by free-market principles. Evidently, Bush functioned as a mediator and his personal dedication to implement the bill was an important factor for its passage. Upon signing the CAAA in November, 1990, Bush proclaimed that as president he considered it his "mission" to secure clean air for the American people.²⁶

Regarding offshore exploration, Bush decided on a markedly different path than his predecessor, closing off most of the outer continental shelf (OCS) to oil drilling. Congress, since 1982, had annually reinstated a ban on oil drilling in the OCS through denying funds for leasing activity. Bush, by presidential directive, solidified the decision by placing a ten-year moratorium on all OCS areas, except in the Gulf of Mexico and areas of Alaska.²⁷ Allegedly

Bush had “agonized” for months over whether or not to go ahead with the presidential directive before he decided to protect the OCS.²⁸ James David Barber classified George H. W. Bush as an active-positive president and, indeed, these characteristics seem to have been relevant for his approach to environmental politics. The OCS policy was a conciliatory decision that both signified Bush’s environmental concerns and his pragmatic approach to politics. Bush’s handling of the OCS, much like the signing of the CAAA, indicates that he saw the environment as an important priority and that, on occasion, he was disposed to favor regulation over unrestrained commercial development.

4.5. The ANWR and the Gulf War, the National Energy Strategy, and the Economy

Parallel to his focus on the environment, President Bush’s political actions reflected the growing energy needs of the United States. The Gulf War made American dependence on foreign oil explicit. On August 2, 1990, Kuwait, one of the great oil-powers of the Middle East, was invaded by neighboring Iraq. The United States, along with the rest of the world community, reacted with dismay and imposed a unified trade embargo.²⁹ In *Addicted to Oil*, Ian Rutledge notes that the overriding view of the National Security Council was that if Saddam Hussein were allowed to take control over Kuwaiti oil fields, he would gain enormous geopolitical influence. Bush adapted to the predictions that an empowered Iraq would constitute a serious threat to U.S. national security.³⁰ The right of Kuwait to not be unjustly attacked by a foreign power and principles of freedom and sovereignty were naturally key reasons for the intervention, but preventing a disruption of the oil balance in the Middle East was equally important. In late November, 1990, Bush gave a speech to American forces in Saudi Arabia, and stated; “Today the worldwide march of freedom is threatened by a man hell-bent on gaining a choke-hold on the world’s economic lifeline.”³¹

The stable flow of energy is highly interchangeable with the health of the American economy. Political scientist Donald F. Kettl argues that “the economy—its performance and how well voters judge that presidents manage it—has long been at the absolute center of election campaigns.”³² However, the dilemma for the president is the tendency for public expectations to exceed the actual power and influence that the chief executive has over the development of the economy.³³ In *The Presidency and Economic Policy*, political scientist Chris J. Dolan and co-authors reach the same conclusion regarding the public’s sometimes unfairly high expectations of the president in the economic arena. Nonetheless, they, like Kettl, also emphasize—based on data stretching back to 1948—that the state of the economy

has generally been and still remains an essential factor in presidential elections.³⁴ Thus, with regards to the Gulf War, the interests of the Bush administration and the American people correlated. Bush, as president, desired public support and high approval ratings, while the people would benefit from a prosperous economy. For Bush, the war appears in retrospect to have represented a pragmatic and highly needed policy decision. The 1973 oil embargo and subsequent recession likely functioned as a potent reminder of an economic scenario which needed to be avoided.

As the Gulf War drew to a close in February 1990, Bush moved forward the administration's National Energy Strategy (NES). The thrust of the plan involved more domestic drilling, more focus on alternative energy and fuels, energy efficient technologies, and nuclear energy.³⁵ Of the items receiving particular attention, was the inclusion of a provision to open the ANWR. Drilling on the coastal plain had clearly remained part of Bush's plans and the aftermath of the Gulf War represented a good opportunity for its reintroduction from the executive branch. The White House Schedule of the President on February 19, 1991, makes plain the link between the NES and the ANWR provision, moreover confirming Bush's interest in the subject. In the afternoon of a day including several appointments pertaining to the Gulf War, President Bush met with key officials to discuss opening the ANWR to oil exploration. Present at the meeting from the administration were Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan, Secretary of Energy James Watkins, Chief of Staff John Sununu, and assistant, Frederick McClure. The key figures from the executive—Watkins, Lujan, and Sununu—were, like Bush, unanimously pro-development on the ANWR. Also attending were Senators John Bennett Johnston, Malcolm Wallop, Frank Murkowski, and Representative Don Young.³⁶ Johnston, who was chairman of the Natural Resources and Energy Committee and fellow member Wallop, introduced the NES—containing the ANWR provision—in Congress.³⁷

Upon presenting the NES on February 20, 1991, Bush referred to the previous day's meeting, noting that Senators Wallop and Johnston had advised him to be "fully involved" in the process. They considered the president's participation a prerequisite for legislative success.³⁸ Wallop's and Johnston's request underscores the position of the president in the legislative process and the necessity of a strong pro-development executive voice on the ANWR. The interests of Young and Murkowski overlapped with those of the Bush administration, in all likelihood their presence was owing to the enormous economic value that the ANWR represents to Alaska. The meeting was, in terms of policy development regarding the ANWR, a top level assembly. The fact that the White House was the location

for this exclusive sit-down of the central actors confirms the prioritization given to the ANWR issue by the administration. The timing of the meeting suggests it was a final coordinating effort before launching the proposal. Bush's approval ratings had soared as a result of the successful campaign in the Gulf; due to his popularity, it likely seemed an appropriate time for placing the ANWR high on the national policy agenda.³⁹

In terms of energy policy, Bush clearly adapted to the concept of being "a steward of the people." He exhibited, as above, a strong concern for the domestic energy situation and made critical decisions to ameliorate the situation. Bush's leadership in the Gulf War expressed his desire to provide for the common good by ensuring that Americans had a stable supply of petroleum. The Bush administration clearly evaluated the potential oil resources in the ANWR on the same national security premises. Unlike the Gulf War, however, the question over the use of the coastal plain poses a direct contradiction between environmental and energy stewardship. Bush proclaimed that he considered ecological stewardship to be an important objective,⁴⁰ which seems true given his previously established fairly active-positive approach to environmental concerns. However, in the ANWR debate, Bush's sense of environmental stewardship was clearly eclipsed by the idea of energy stewardship motivated by more dominant economic considerations.

The Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources approved the energy bill including an ANWR development provision, in May of 1991.⁴¹ It reached the Senate floor on November 1, 1991. In a cloture motion to prevent a Democratic filibuster, pro-development advocates were ultimately unable to gather a two thirds-majority, losing the vote 50 to 44. In consequence, the drilling provision was removed from the bill and did not resurface in the House version.⁴² Michael E. Kraft observes that although the Gulf War had basically been waged in order to secure a stable flow of petroleum from the Middle East, it regardless did not create a consensus among the public for either strict conservation measures or extensive pro-development initiatives.⁴³ As a consequence, and owing to substantial Democratic majorities in both houses of Congress plus the after-effects of the *Exxon Valdez* accident, conditions precluded Bush from opening the coastal plain during his term.

Increasing the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards was, along with drilling in the ANWR, discarded in the energy bill reformulation. In *Addicted to Oil*, Ian Rutledge quotes an article from *The Financial Times* published during the shaping of the NES castigating American politicians for not taking responsibility in bringing down domestic fuel consumption. The article—which Rutledge agrees with—argues that the main reason why the U.S. had by the 1990s become overly dependent on foreign oil, was due to excessive

consumption and the public's expectation of cheap petroleum for motoring.⁴⁴ This serves as Rutledge's principle rationale of why the U.S. has become overly dependent on oil and, furthermore, why both in 1991 and 2003 the U.S. became entangled in military conflicts in Iraq.⁴⁵ Consumption has also forced the U.S. to consider domestic petroleum exploration in environmentally sensitive areas. Addressing the integral position that the automobile has in American society, Rutledge calls attention to one of the underlying social structures leading politicians as well as presidents to advocate drilling in the ANWR.⁴⁶ Raising the CAFE standards is one of the measures that effectively can reduce consumption and alleviate both the urban and rural environment. However, Bush considered increasing the CAFE a threat to domestic economic activity and opposed stricter regulations.⁴⁷

The American economy grew steadily throughout the 1980s. However, in the early 1990s the U.S. entered a period of negative development.⁴⁸ Dilys M. Hill argues that Bush relinquished his environmental priorities in the effort to remediate the situation. He eased pollution regulation for corporations and opened up more public lands for resource exploitation. As Reagan did, he used the executive bureaucracy—the Department of the Interior and the EPA—to effect his policies.⁴⁹ Bush's response to the recession is reciprocal with his refusal to endorse higher CAFE standards and pursue drilling in the ANWR. During periods of negative development, the public often demands the president take responsibility by providing quick solutions, and Bush consistently matched expectations in prioritizing immediate human economic concerns over protection of the environment.⁵⁰

In relation to the ANWR, Bush emphasized the human values and expressed little concern for the caribou, or for the argument of those who wished to preserve the coastal plain because of its significance to the Porcupine Caribou Herd (PCH). In December 1991, in a teleconference speech broadcasted at a fundraising dinner for Senator Frank Murkowski, Bush stated; "the critics said years ago when the debate was on the pipeline up there, the Alaska pipeline, that caribou would be extinct because of this. Well, there's so many caribou they're rubbing up against the pipeline, they're breeding like mad."⁵¹ Bush continued by making parallels between the Central Arctic Herd and the PCH. As previously described (see chapter 3) the two biosystems cannot be compared with any accuracy. Presented in a pro-development context, the remark is obviously simplistic in its approach to the ANWR; however Bush repeated the main tenets on several occasions.⁵² On the whole, Bush showed disdain for people with strong biocentric values, so called "environmental extremes" as he labeled them.⁵³ Those who forfeited potential economic revenues in order to protect the refuge for the sake of the PCH certainly fell within this classification.

Discussion of drilling in the ANWR is frequently framed with reference to its potential domestic economic impact. In a letter to Senator Murkowski dated February 3, 1992, President Bush placed the ANWR in context of the recession. He stated, “It will provide hundreds of thousands of desperately needed jobs spread throughout nearly every State in the Nation.”⁵⁴ Hence, for Bush oil production in the ANWR also symbolized stewardship in the specific terms of creating jobs for Americans. The Congressional Research Service more soberly estimates that if oil is found—and depending on the quantities—the ANWR will generate between 60, 000 and 130, 000 jobs.⁵⁵ Moreover, the letter, the high level meeting, and the fund raising dinner, establish the link between Bush and Senator Murkowski as based on overlapping interests. Murkowski, first and foremost, advocated development because of the benefits it would produce for Alaska, while Bush primarily was concerned with the national aspect; nevertheless, both were of course highly supportive of each other’s arguments. For Bush, Murkowski and in effect the rest of the Alaska delegation functioned as his representatives in Congress on the ANWR issue.

As the Bush presidency neared its end, global environmental challenges were beginning to receive attention. The depletion of the ozone layer caused by chlorofluorocarbon emissions had already been an issue during the 1980s.⁵⁶ Moreover, from the outset of the 1990s the international community came to be increasingly concerned with climate change. Bush stated explicitly that he intended to use the power of the executive branch to tackle the hazardous level of greenhouse gas emissions, however, his claims were only rhetoric and it became evident that he was not willing to commit to actions that could infringe on the U.S. economy.⁵⁷ The most vivid case in point occurred at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro where Bush decided against any agreement that would place real obligations on the U.S.⁵⁸

In *The Environmental Policy Paradox*, Zachary A. Smith clarifies a problem which has been—and still largely is—an inherent obstacle for politicians when dealing with climate change: “It is a long-term problem that does not have immediate identifiable effects on the public. Politicians are hesitant to ask for sacrifices now that will reap non-visible present benefits and uncertain future benefits.”⁵⁹ Since Smith’s book, from the 1990s, climate change has since received significantly more attention and the effects have to some extent become observable to the public. For Bush, this was a more legitimate question and his reluctant performance at the Earth Summit was a product of this dilemma. The basic principle in itself, of not wishing to forgo current and tangible rewards for future environmental betterments, is still highly relevant. Based on the paradigm that the public is first of all concerned with the economy, it is clear that addressing environmental issues such as global warming can be

incongruous with the president's sensibilities. Presidents are disinclined to take actions that may hamper their bid for election, and in the case of Bush's handling of global warming this appears to have been the determining factor.

During the final weeks of the election campaign, President Bush signed the Energy Policy Act of 1992. Both houses were at the time controlled by the Democratic Party, and compared to the Bush administration's energy policy, the final bill represented, to a larger degree, Democratic priorities. In contrast to Bush's "supply-side" approach, the bill focused more on encouraging efficiency by raising electricity efficiency standards and offering lucrative tax breaks, and by increasing the role of renewable energy through subsidies for research and opening up access to electricity distribution infrastructure.⁶⁰ Michael E. Kraft, however, predicted that because the bill largely failed to address America's dependence on oil, for example through measures such as the CAFE standards, it would not significantly alter the domestic energy situation.⁶¹ In the end Bush's efforts to unlock the coastal plain never materialized. The administration faced a downfall after a series of critical problems in the election campaign. With the victory of Bill Clinton, so also came a shift in executive branch priorities concerning the use of the ANWR.

4.6. President Clinton: Appointments and Initial Policy Developments

Democratic candidate Bill Clinton defeated Bush by a substantial margin in the 1992 presidential election, and set the stage for a rejuvenation of environmental policy in the White House. Clinton's victory can be credited to a combination of his own merits and deficiencies of the Bush campaign as well. The main cause of Bush's defeat was his failure to adequately address the economic downturn, which ruined his once high post Gulf War approval ratings.⁶² The Clinton campaign on the other hand took advantage of the fact that Bush was perceived to have neglected domestic policy, and then pushed hard on issues such as health care and economic reform in particular.⁶³ Furthermore, Clinton distinguished himself from his predecessor by openly resisting drilling in the ANWR.⁶⁴

In stark contrast to Reagan's choices twelve years earlier, Clinton selected several persons with defined environmental profiles for central positions in the administration. As a Senator, Al Gore had built an environmental profile by, for example, leading the congressional effort to reduce the amount chlorofluorocarbon emissions damaging the ozone layer.⁶⁵ Gore's approach to the environment had also made a personal impression on Clinton. In his autobiography, *My Life*, Clinton states that before selecting a vice president he had read

Gore's *Earth in Balance*, which addressed issues such as global warming, ozone layer depletion, and the need for a more consistent biocentric approach to the environment. Clinton, in his own words, "learned a lot" from the book and concurred with Gore's views.⁶⁶ To the post of secretary of the interior, Clinton appointed the former president of the League of Conservationist Voters, Bruce Babbitt. According to *The New York Times*, Environmental groups "rejoiced" over the selection.⁶⁷ Carol Browner, the new director of the EPA represented the same values as Gore and Clinton. The composition of the Clinton administration indicated a strong focus on the environment. However, an unintended consequence brought on by the appointments, as noted by Byron Daynes, appears to have been that they created unreasonably high expectations in the environmental community, which in the end might have hurt Clinton's environmental profile.⁶⁸

In *The Presidential Difference*, Fred I. Greenstein observes that Clinton exhibited an unstructured management style where officials were largely given freedom to select which issues to work on, and which meetings to attend. However, Clinton did not have a detached approach to detail and implementation, in contrast to President Reagan whose lax management style occasionally functioned to his detriment. Clinton was known for his intellect and political skill, and his staff's task was, moreover, to help conceptualize and work out his policy proposals.⁶⁹ On environmental policy, Gore was Clinton's most central advisor in the administration.⁷⁰ It is safe to assume that Gore's strong ideological commitment had a stabilizing effect on Clinton's approach to the environment. As governor of Arkansas, Clinton had a rather negative record with respect to environmental politics. In particular, he had received criticism for failing to impose stricter standards on the poultry industry which, through inadequate waste procedures, had contaminated streams in Northwest Arkansas.⁷¹

During Clinton's first two years in office the economy rebounded, however, the administration experienced only limited political success. On the upside, Clinton signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), however, he had been unable to see a major health system reform—his core issue—through Congress.⁷² Michael E. Kraft notes that Clinton made efforts to both alleviate the need for imported oil and reduce America's total energy consumption. He allocated more federal funding to conservation and efficiency programs, and placed focus on the production of natural gas. However, faced with strong opposition from business interests in Congress, Clinton failed to neither implement a major energy tax or a significant raise in the gas tax, measures which could have significantly reduced energy use in the U.S.⁷³ The price of oil in the United States remained relatively low during the 1990s and there was little political will to implement measures that could either

increase the cost for consumers or reduce the profits of automakers. According to Kraft, “The politics of energy in the 1990s dictated that only painless measures would be acceptable in the U.S. Congress.”⁷⁴

Initially, the Clinton administration saw few environmental policy victories either. Glen Sussman and Mark Andrew Kelso argue that the only piece of substantial environment-related legislation passed during Clinton’s first two years, and actually during his first term, was the 1994 California Desert Protection Act. The administration did not actively focus their efforts towards Congress to have the bill passed. Yet, in contrast to Reagan’s and Bush’s negative disposition towards the legislation, Clinton provided vocal support from the executive branch.⁷⁵ Douglas Jehl suggests that the absence of environmental policy progress during the first years was partly a consequence of Clinton’s lack of personal enthusiasm. According to his aides, Clinton “was a golfer, not a hiker, and he came from Arkansas, where environmental protection had never registered much on his political radar.”⁷⁶ The aides provide a strong characterization that repudiates Clinton’s concern for the environment at the beginning of his presidency. His mishandling of the poultry case in Arkansas and failure to produce results during his first term are factors that support the statement. On the other hand, Clinton’s choices for central posts in the administration were a definite signal that he planned to place focus on the environment. However, more than a mere statement to be interpretively treated as factual or otherwise, the aide’s impression provides nuances to Clinton’s environmental profile. The statement indicates that Clinton’s approach to the environment was both shaped by and evolved during his time in office.

One of the other positive environmental developments during the administration’s first two years was the fact that there were no votes on the floor in Congress to open the ANWR.⁷⁷ The combination of the Clinton administration’s opposition to drilling in the ANWR and substantial Democratic majorities in both houses, effectively blocked any realistic efforts in the 103rd Congress (1993-1995). The 1994 midterm election changed the conditions and brought exploration in the ANWR back into the realm of political viability. On the initiative of Senator Newt Gingrich, Republican candidates up for election in 1994 gathered around a joint declaration labeled “Contract with America,” which described both the failures of congressional Democrats and the Clinton administration. The Republicans’ tactic was successful and the party won solid majorities both in the House and Senate.⁷⁸

The Job Creation and Wage Enhancement Act was one of the proposed bills, and the wording of the legislation encapsulated the Republicans’ views on the regulatory and economic policies of the Democratic Party and the Clinton Administration: “Government-

imposed mandates and regulations suppress wages and excessive taxation of capital and investment stifles economic growth and job creation.”⁷⁹ Among several initiatives, the Republicans proposed deregulating environmental legislation such as the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act, drastically cutting the funding for the EPA and other environmental programs, and allowing for increased extraction of natural resources on federal land.⁸⁰ The intention behind the initiatives was to reduce federal spending and interference, making it easier for corporations to engage in activities which were potentially environmentally damaging, in order to promote economic growth. The combined effects of the Republican Party’s policies can clearly be considered as a model case of “weak sustainability” in practice. It correlates strongly with Douglas Booth’s interpretation of the concept, as discussed in chapter three.

Opening up the ANWR for oil exploration was an element of the Republican policy plan, however, the Clinton administration made it plain that they would veto any bills including a development provision. In a press conference on September 22, 1995, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt stated that Clinton “will veto a reconciliation bill with the current proposals to open the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. It is an extraordinarily, audacious display of lobbyists' muscle.”⁸¹ It is apparent from press briefings given by the Clinton administration that the ANWR emerged as a central issue during the fall, and it is equally clear from the briefings that the president would veto any bills that opened the coastal plain to drilling.⁸² In *Between Hope and History*, Clinton recalls the fall of 1995: “Last year a small army of lobbyists for polluters descended on Capitol Hill and mounted a full-scale assault on the environment and on public health.”⁸³ Clinton presents a harsh assessment of the Republican majority. He considered the Republicans to have been reactionary and careless, and clearly disagreed strongly with their environmental ideology. Political scientist Robert J. Duffy observes that the Republican victory resulted in more development oriented committees, and generally provided a boost for “wise use” sentiments in Congress. These developments in turn made it easier for industry lobbyists to help rewrite already existing regulations and push for more resource development.⁸⁴ The “wise use” movement endorses the anti-regulative viewpoints of the traditional Western extraction industries. These sentiments have from time to time emerged as a force in federal policymaking, under labels such as the “Sagebrush Rebellion” in the early 1980s—as discussed in the previous chapter—and the “wise use movement” in the 1990s.⁸⁵

The filibuster in the Senate has, in the ANWR matter, consistently functioned as the main hurdle for Republican pro-development advocates. The budget reconciliation process

has consequently been used to procure passing votes. Introduced in 1974, the budget reconciliation process allows committees to include policy measures to meet spending targets set by the Senate and House budget committees in the budget resolution process.⁸⁶ Thus, projected revenues from drilling in the ANWR can be included as part of an omnibus budget bill. The reconciliation bill is then voted on again by the House and the Senate. However, the reconciliation bill is exempted from filibustering in the Senate, requiring only a majority vote to pass.

Senator Frank Murkowski and House Member Don Young had—at the start of the 104th Congress—been appointed chairpersons of, respectively, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the House Resources Committee. The two Alaskans included \$1.3 billion ANWR revenue measures in their bills and the initiatives succeeded by large majorities and were adopted in both committees.⁸⁷ The inclusion of the leasing provision in the budget reconciliation process and the Republican majorities in the House and Senate, meant that Alaska finally had a good chance of having pro-development ANWR legislation approved. Tony Knowles, then governor of Alaska, in an editorial in *The New York Times* gave an outline of the standard pro-development reasoning of the state. Knowles proclaimed; “We have the technology to do it right,” but subsequently questioned whether there was sufficient political will in the United States to authorize development.⁸⁸ In a close roll call on October 27, 1995, the Senate voted down an amendment to remove the ANWR provision by 51 to 48, and on November 17, the House followed up by approving the final budget bill with the ANWR provision by 237 to 189.⁸⁹

4.7. Budget Veto—Clinton’s Views on Federal Responsibility

Clinton’s defining involvement in the management of the ANWR, was his use of executive veto power over legislation approved by Congress which would have opened up the area for drilling. On December 6, Clinton issued the letter containing the budget veto to the House of Representatives. The tone of the message is strongly critical. After first highlighting that the budget proposed reckless cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, and student loan programs, Clinton stated: “Title V would open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) to oil and gas drilling, threatening a unique, pristine ecosystem, in hopes of generating \$1.3 billion in Federal revenues—a revenue estimate based on wishful thinking and outdated analysis. I want to protect this biologically rich wilderness permanently.”⁹⁰ The paragraph is relevant because it illustrates Clinton’s personal commitment in protecting the refuge, and his views regarding

the extent to which the government should guard the environment for the American people. Furthermore, the paragraph underscores the power of the veto and the president's role in the ANWR debate, and under which legislative conditions that the president can be decisive.

The executive veto power is imbedded in Article 1, Section 7 of the Constitution, hence Clinton's choice to act as the final branch of government and stop the opening of the ANWR was within the boundaries of the law. Clinton's veto had direct and far reaching effects on the future use of the ANWR. Thus, for Clinton there was a strong reciprocity between his political interests and executive powers. Clinton wished to protect the ANWR on behalf of the people, and under the given circumstances the most decisive influence he could have was through the veto power, which lay within his defined jurisdiction. Pika and Maltese argue on point that "the veto is the president's ultimate legislative weapon."⁹¹

Clinton's general understanding of the role of the federal government in society and his concern for responsible government contributed largely to his use of the veto power over the ANWR provision. Clinton writes, "The main reason I rejected Congress's budget bill last year was because it abandoned many of these responsibilities, especially those involving education, the environment, and the care of children and the elderly."⁹² The Republican Party had during the Reagan and Bush era worked to reduce the size and influence of the federal government, and make the free-market overwhelmingly the driving force of society. Clinton, however, argued that this mentality was hurting America. As noted by Paul S. Boyer, Clinton practiced a type of middle-of-the-road liberalism. While he on the one hand focused on health reform, protection of the environment, and higher taxes; on the other hand he worked for more conservative causes, such as cut-backs to staffing in the federal government, a balanced budget, and NAFTA.⁹³ Clinton's personal view was that in order to secure freedom and equal opportunity, the government had to ensure a framework of services such as public health, education, and a safe and clean environment.⁹⁴ Even if he was somewhat receptive to conservative economic values, the plan presented by the Republican leadership clearly contradicted Clinton's basic sense of governmental responsibility.

Protection of the environment was one of the areas where Clinton thought that the federal government had a particular responsibility. He strongly opposed the anthropocentric approach which tended to dominate human interaction with the natural environment in the United States. Clinton observed, "Over the years, America's abundance of land and resources fostered a 'disposable' mentality in which we took what we needed and threw away what we didn't."⁹⁵ This attitude has been prevalent in all strata of society, from the individual to businesses and industries, in Congress, and in the executive branch (particularly during the

Reagan administration). Clinton does not specifically refer to either the Reagan or Bush administrations, but the statement, coupled with a progressive agenda, effectively served his and the administration's interests in distancing themselves from their predecessors. Moreover, Clinton considered it critical for the U.S. to counter the direction set by the Republican leadership in 1995.⁹⁶ In the interaction between the executive branch and Congress, professor of government and politics Roger H. Davidson observes; "the veto power makes the president a major player."⁹⁷ Clinton's veto signaled how he would handle pro-development ANWR bills, effectively ending any realistic congressional efforts to open the coastal plain for the remainder of his presidency.⁹⁸

Clinton's approach to the ANWR—as president—overlapped with the fundamental responsibility that he personally considered every individual to have in helping preserve the ecological balance of the environment. Clinton observes: "Maintaining and enhancing our environment, passing on a clean planet to future generations, is a sacred obligation of citizenship and perhaps our ultimate responsibility."⁹⁹ On the basis of the budget reconciliation letter, Clinton wished to preserve the ANWR fully intact because of the biological values it represented to current and future Americans. Hence, his argumentation in the veto letter concurred with ideological beliefs. Protection of the ANWR constituted both sound management and accountability towards coming generations. On the personal level, Clinton projected a normal positive approach to nature. In *My Life*, Clinton recalls trips to the Grand Canyon and Yellowstone with excitement, and he generally seemed to enjoy such excursions.¹⁰⁰

Clinton's understanding of responsibility can, according to David Maraniss, be traced back to his educational years. During his time at Georgetown University, Clinton was strongly influenced by the ideas presented by one of his professors, Carroll Quigley, who contended: "What made Western Civilization great was the notion that each generation sacrifices for the betterment of the next, and that comes largely through education."¹⁰¹ Clinton's speech at Georgetown University in November 1994, confirms that Quigley's ideas were central for his general approach to politics and government.¹⁰² In both wording and philosophy, parallels may be drawn between Clinton's address of environmental issues in *Between Hope and History* and *My Life* (see above) and the concept of future preference as outlined by Quigley. Quigley's philosophy, moreover, overlaps with Clinton's decision to oppose oil drilling in the ANWR in order to preserve it for future generations.

Logically, of course, influences beyond Clinton's attested "major reason," could have influenced his decision to use the veto. Central members of the administration such as Gore

and Babbitt were both avowedly opposed to drilling in the ANWR. Babbitt, for instance, stated in September 1995 that he would advise Clinton to veto any bill that included an ANWR provision.¹⁰³ Democratic minority leader in the Senate, Tom Daschle called the budget—which passed through the Senate in late October—“mean and extreme,” and expected that it would get vetoed by the president.¹⁰⁴ Former President Carter published an editorial in *The New York Times* arguing that opening the coastal plain would be mismanagement of federal land policy in Alaska. Carter reasoned that because practically all of the oil-rich lands in Alaska were already open, it was not unreasonable to preserve the ANWR intact for its ecological value.¹⁰⁵ Robert Duffy notes that “most of the mainstream [environmental] groups” approached the executive branch and Clinton directly, in order to get him to veto legislation which they considered harmful to the environment. There has always been a strong opposition to drilling in the coastal plain in the environmental community, thus the ANWR presumably was one issue where they demanded action from Clinton.¹⁰⁶ These contributing factors variously pressured Clinton in direction of the veto. Nevertheless, on the basis of his writings and actions on both the ANWR and the environment in general, Clinton appears to have been motivated by a personal desire to protect the coastal plain.

In the aftermath, the Republican’s attempt to deregulate environmental laws and pass the ANWR legislation via the budget process, was severely criticized. Clinton has called it a “stealth” move for which there was no public consensus.¹⁰⁷ In chapter three of *American Environmental Policy*, Christopher McGrory Klyza and David J. Sousa provide an in-depth analysis of the Republican budget tactic, of which the reconciliation processes, and the ANWR as a subject, were central components. They see the strategy as a reaction to the post-1990s stalemate in congressional environmental politics, but clearly, in light of democratic principles, consider it a negative trend and question this method for implementing policy. Klyza and Sousa add that environmental politics in Congress, which in the 1960s and 1970s were a bipartisan representation of the democratization of American politics, had by the 1990s become “a game played on unconventional legislative pathways and, arguably, at the boundaries of political legitimacy in service of decidedly partisan and ideological objectives.”¹⁰⁸ Political scientist Gary C. Bryner reasons that the Republican leadership underestimated the general support that existed in the America society for the protection of the environment. The Republicans pushed their agenda too far, and most of their environmental policies were never enacted.¹⁰⁹

4.8. The Environmental Policy Revival

The exercise of the veto power was the principal influence that Clinton had on the ANWR proceedings during his presidency. However, policy actions during the second term helped define the administration's environmental agenda, and further revealed the biocentric values which had led Clinton to act on the ANWR issue. In September 1996—less than two months before the election—Clinton created the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in Utah. The region was known to have substantial coal reserves and Clinton invoked the Antiquities Act to shield the area from mining. In the speech inaugurating the monument, Clinton embraced the authority that the Antiquities Act provided to the president. He proclaimed, “I thank goodness that the Antiquities Act was on the books and that Presidents, without regard to party, used it to protect them for all of us and for generations to come.”¹¹⁰ Based on his personal writings, Clinton had no reservations about using the act in the Utah case. He recognized that the majority of Utah officials were against the monument, but claimed that it was “necessary” in order to protect the area from corporate interests.¹¹¹ The designation created strong controversy, particularly among Western Republicans such as Senators Orrin Hatch and Frank Murkowski. It was considered a massive federal “land grab” and an infringement on Utah's states' rights.¹¹² The sense of federal overreach that the politicians espoused in relation to the designation of the Utah Monument, raised again the issue of lost economic opportunities that has characterized the ANWR debate in Alaska. Some of the citizens of Utah—particularly those living in rural areas—felt that the Clinton administration was precociously dominant.¹¹³

Political scientist Byron Daynes argues that Clinton took a more active approach to the environment during his second term. He points to four specific circumstances that improved the president's performance: (1) Clinton's stronger use of executive powers. (2) The administration remained stable as both Browner at the EPA and Babbitt at the Interior continued in their positions. (3) Clinton's successful repeal of the Republican leadership's environmental initiatives during the fall of 1995 had created a momentum shift, and (4) Gore's emphasis on the environment in the lead-up to the 2000 election made it a more salient subject.¹¹⁴ Douglas Jehl notes that Clinton also was motivated by Bruce Babbitt. He made Clinton aware of his marginal record and pushed him to aim for Theodore Roosevelt's legacy during his second term.¹¹⁵

On the international scene global warming by the late 1990s had emerged as a major concern, and infused with new determination Clinton chose a more active approach to the

subject than President Bush had done seven years earlier at the Rio Earth Summit. In a speech at a White House conference on climate change in October 1997, Clinton confirmed his views on the issue. Clinton firmly stated “I’m convinced that the science of climate change is real.”¹¹⁶ Clinton’s concerns about climate change were moving towards the same ecological sentiments that he had emphasized in relation to the ANWR. The globalization of the economy through arrangements such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and NAFTA, had lead to greater focus on environmental problems as transnational issues.¹¹⁷ Growing international concern over greenhouse gas emissions was addressed at the Kyoto Conference in December 1997. Clinton was interested in “setting aggressive targets” for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, but he also showed concern about reaching an agreement that would be acceptable to the U.S. Congress. At the conference, the administration was represented by Undersecretary of State Stuart Eizenstat. Towards the end of the negotiations, Gore joined to add his political influence and finalize an agreement.¹¹⁸ The administration demonstrated their commitment to address climate change, however, due to the amount of opposition from industry forces and like-minded senators, Clinton never put forward the Kyoto protocol in Congress during his presidency.¹¹⁹

Clinton, during his last year in office, took several far-reaching conservation actions. However, he chose to not designate the coastal plain of the ANWR as a national monument. In sum, under the Antiquities Act, he protected about 8 million acres of land, and through the jurisdiction of the Forest Service he created a rule that effectively protected 58 million acres of national forest.¹²⁰ The possibility of Clinton using the Antiquities Act to change the status of the coastal plain, stirred much discussion both among pro-developers and environmentalists.¹²¹ Alaskan politicians widely opposed the idea, while environmental groups actively lobbied Clinton to use his executive powers. Former President Carter, in an editorial in *The New York Times*, fearing that the incoming Bush administration could succeed in pushing drilling in the ANWR through Congress, called on Clinton to make the coastal plain a national monument.¹²² Despite the pressure from the environmental community, Clinton refrained from moving on the ANWR.

The overlying reason for the decision to not proclaim the ANWR a national monument, appears to have been that the administration wanted to avoid the intense controversy that designation, in all likelihood, would have produced, both during their final days in office and in the post-presidential period. The administration argued that the coastal plain already had “legislative protected status” under the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), and that monument designation would not add further

protection.¹²³ The power of the president to withdraw public land under the Antiquities Act is in itself a contentious issue in Congress, and Interior Secretary Babbitt was concerned about the implications of pressing through on the ANWR monument. The administration had already used executive power extensively, and Babbitt considered that further action on the ANWR could undermine the legitimacy of the Antiquities Act.¹²⁴ The ANILCA stipulated that any new presidential withdrawals in Alaska larger than 5, 000 acres would have to be approved by Congress. Overstepping the provision would have certainly produced heated discussion, and it was likely a circumstance that made the Clinton administration more reluctant to move on the ANWR.

Congress has the power to overturn or to change the status of national monuments created by the president via the use of the Antiquities Act, although, it has seldom taken such a strong stand against the presidential authority.¹²⁵ The ability of the president to abolish a national monument is a more convoluted situation. The Congressional Research Service observes that the president seemingly has the power to modify a previously established monument, largely because this has in fact occurred on several occasions, but also because the wording of the Antiquities Act gives the president the right to determine the geographical size of a monument. There is, however, no provision in the Act that provides the president with the power to abolish a monument, and more importantly, no president has ever taken such action.¹²⁶ Klyza and Sousa point out that Clinton's national monuments generated widespread opposition from local politicians, industry interests, and the new administration. The Bush administration, however, did not initiate an effort to repeal the monuments, as it would have created outrage in the environmental community and a subsequent storm of bad publicity which could have drained the administration's political capital.¹²⁷

It is difficult to predict how the Bush administration would have proceeded had Clinton decided to declare the coastal plain a national monument. Bush was—as will be addressed in the next chapter—vocal and consistent in his desire to open the coastal plain to oil drilling and the administration tried to make the 58 million acres of national forest lands that Clinton protected available to the timber industry.¹²⁸ Hence, in this sense, the administration showed a willingness to repeal Clinton's environmental achievements. On the other hand, the fact that the administration did not try to overturn the national monuments could be indicative of concerns over blatantly pursuing a pro-development ANWR policy. Had Clinton decided to declare the ANWR a national monument, it would have unquestionably caused uproar among Alaskan politicians and other pro-development forces throughout the nation. Governor Knowles stated that Alaska would have taken the decision to

court.¹²⁹ It seems likely that the Bush administration might have supported such action on the legal basis that the monument would have violated the 5000 acre provision in the ANILCA.

Clinton, as a measure of his undeniable political skills, and complex and sometimes even flawed personal character, has been considered, in light of Barber's model, to exhibit both strong active-positive and active-negative personality traits.¹³⁰ David Maraniss's analysis of Clinton brings out the same conflicting qualities. Maraniss summarizes this view, stating that; "the first thing to understand is that with Bill Clinton, everything coexists. The same appetites that helped propel him into office, that make him a success in so many ways—the appetite for life and policy and ideas and that remarkable energy—also drive him in negative ways."¹³¹ Both analyses provide the impression that Clinton, all things considered, was an active-positive president; but owing to his sometime impetuous personality, he also exhibited strong active-negative characteristics. His approach to environmental policy, and to the ANWR, was consistent with his largely active-positive character. The selection of Gore as vice president, the appointments of Babbitt and Browner, the signing of the California Desert Protection Act, the ANWR veto, the creation of the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, the Kyoto Protocol negotiations, and the extensive use of the Antiquities Act, are all initiatives indicating that Clinton had in general an active-positive take on environmental policy. Clinton's efforts on the environment were also perceived by the public as active-positive.¹³² He scored lower than, for example, Carter; however, this was based on a survey done in 1996. Hence, considering that many of Clinton's environmental accomplishments were achieved during the second term, the score would presumably have been higher had the study been carried out after his presidency ended.¹³³

Clinton's philosophy on the role of the government made him disposed to environmental concerns, and his personality furthermore affected his final achievements in the environmental sector. Byron Daynes argues that Clinton exhibited a willingness to lead and to tackle environmental problems, but that the "politics of the moment" and other large issues such as welfare, crime, health care, and education, often tended to trump the administration's environmental agenda.¹³⁴ The tendency to overreach as described by Daynes, corresponds with Pika and Maltese's characterization of Clinton, whose approach to politics they considered to be marked by "impatient activism."¹³⁵

One of the main conclusions of *The Environmental Presidency* is that environmental policy is apparently a second term issue. In relation to presidential elections, questions concerning the environment tend to be less salient than issues directly relating to economic matters. It is, therefore, easier for presidents to pursue environmental concerns in a second

term, when they are not concerned with re-election.¹³⁶ This certainly appears to have been the case for Clinton. He did not necessarily consciously decide to not focus on the environment, but it appears that he rather chose to use his political capital on other issues during the first term. Clinton is said to have exhibited an “eagerness to please everyone” and it appears likely that this was a factor that affected him during the second term.¹³⁷ Klyza and Sousa note that because of his lackluster record, Clinton, was in the lead-up to the 1996 election “desperate” to appeal to his environmental voters.¹³⁸ Furthermore, it seems—based on his accomplishments—like the incentive to gratify the environmental community affected Clinton throughout his second term. Clinton received praise from environmental groups, and based on his speeches and personal descriptions it is obvious that he appreciated the positive publicity that was associated with such accomplishments.¹³⁹ Hence, if Clinton’s predisposition to overreach first led him to forgo the administration’s environmental priorities, the desire to please his supporters was a factor motivating him to revive the environmental agenda.

It is fair to consider—as also outlined by Douglas Jehl—that Clinton’s approach to the environment evolved during his presidency.¹⁴⁰ His record indicates that he gradually both developed his understanding of, and increased his focus on the environment. Keeping the ANWR protected from oil drilling was in line with Clinton’s conceptualization. It appears, based on his personal writings, his actions as president and understanding of the role of the government in society, that Clinton had a heartfelt and real interest in protecting the environment. Clinton probably augmented his environmental profile through his vocal abilities. In speeches, news conferences, at town meetings and talk shows, Clinton spoke avidly about issues such as emissions reduction, recycling, and protecting the natural landscape; because of his talent he was successful in conveying the messages to the public.¹⁴¹ Fred I. Greenstein summarizes Clinton’s rhetorical skills by stating that “at his best, Clinton was an outstanding public communicator.”¹⁴²

As Carter before him, Clinton was influenced by the stewardship theory and the manner in which Theodore Roosevelt actively had outlined the president’s responsibilities in protecting the environment. Clinton personally establishes the link to Roosevelt while reflecting on his environmental accomplishments, “Bruce Babbitt, Al Gore, and I had done our best to be faithful to Roosevelt’s conservation ethic and to his admonition that we should always be taking what he called “the long look ahead.”¹⁴³ Clinton adapted to both the idealistic and legal aspects of the stewardship theory. The decision to protect the coastal plain during the budget battles of 1995-1996 was grounded in a deep-seated difference of opinion

between the Republican leadership, and Clinton and his allies. Clinton was not required to go beyond the authority of the chief executive—as defined in the constitution—to protect the ANWR. However, the fact that it was prioritized as an issue in a veto that brought parts of the government to a halt was in itself a strong signal and proved the decisive role that the president has in determining the use of the coastal plain.

4.9. Conclusion

In *Between Hope and History*, Clinton conveys a philosophy that categorizes environmental protection as a collective responsibility for which the federal government and the executive branch must take lead roles. Consequently, preserving the ANWR accomplished multiple objectives for the administration. At the outset, the veto protected the area physically which was in itself critical, but this also offered up the ideal opportunity for the Clinton administration to communicate the concept of protecting the environment *for the public good*. Rather than relinquishing the ecological values of the area to a comparatively smaller group of politicians and oil companies with immediate economic concerns, Clinton protected the ANWR as a timeless collective benefit which should exist separate from anthropocentric interests.

By and large, Clinton not only voiced but, also indeed, he practiced extensive environmental stewardship. While President Bush had likewise acted as a “steward of the people,” and yet in his dealings with the matter at hand—the ANWR issue—Bush had clearly considered the energy resources of the ANWR to be more important to the American people than the area’s ecological values. Presidents by necessity advocate their administrations to represent a healthy environmental policy; however, as seen in the ANWR debate during the 1990s, the degree to which presidents actively put environmental protection into practice makes a critical difference. Had a pro-development bill been passed by Congress in the period between 1989 and 1993, President Bush would have approved such action; whereas, with his use of the veto power in 1995, Clinton largely ended the debate for the rest of the 1990s.

Chapter Five: George W. Bush, 2001-2009

5.1. Introduction

The aim of chapter five is to examine the course of the ANWR debate under the reins of the Bush administration. To apprehend the pro-development mindset of this administration, the chapter explores Bush's personal and political background. The formation of an umbrella, nationwide energy strategy was one of the administration's first major undertakings. The chapter reviews the formulation of the strategy, the content of the report and its fare in Congress. A link is, furthermore, drawn over the reflexive nature of this administration's stance in promoting oil exploration, as seen in their ANWR strategy, and the wider historical context of energy policy discourse in the United States.

During the Bush presidency, from 2001 to 2009, various attempts were made in Congress to open up the ANWR. The chapter, then, continues with an evaluation of the administration's role in the legislative process in relation to the bills introduced. President Bush portrayed drilling in the ANWR as a domestic, energy-related, security concern. This contextualization of the pro-development argument, and the degree of success it had in forwarding their agenda, is analyzed. Bush had a clear understanding of executive politics and a distinct legislative style; the chapter proceeds to analyze how these elements affected the administration's course of action in the ANWR debate. The administration's approach and the methods by which they pursued other environmental issues—such as air pollution, protected species and offshore exploration—are considered to achieve a more complete understanding of Bush's ANWR policy.

5.2. The ANWR and the Texas Mindset

The presidential debate, in Boston on October 3, 2000, made it abundantly clear that the election would effectively decide whether the powers of the executive branch would be used to actively pursue or deter drilling in the ANWR. In response to a question concerning America's growing oil dependency, the two candidates provided distinctly different answers. While Democratic candidate Al Gore spoke mostly about the necessity of focusing on conservation and renewable energy, Bush criticized the Clinton administration's lack of focus

on domestic oil production and strongly emphasized the need for more oil, gas, and coal extraction. The two candidates' replies, moreover, illustrated their philosophical differences regarding energy development. Gore reasoned that while he considered it necessary to produce more domestic energy, he did not want to sacrifice what he called, "the environmental treasures of our country," such as the ANWR. He stated; "We don't have to do that. That's the wrong choice. I know the oil companies have been itching to do that, but it is not the right thing to do."¹ Characteristically, Bush responded; "It's the right thing for the consumers. Less dependency upon foreign sources of crude is good for consumers. And we can do so in an environmentally friendly way."²

It seems reasonable to surmise that Bush's background in both the oil industry and Texas politics had established precedents for his approach on the ANWR issue. During the debate, Bush highlighted his time in the industry as influential for his understanding of the domestic oil situation: "It's an issue I know a lot about. I was a small oil person for a while in West Texas."³ The business values and economic impact of the oil business were central elements of Bush's life since his youth. During his boyhood days in Midland Texas, at a time of prosperous growth in Texan cities owing largely to the influx of oil money, Bush was witness to the effects of the oil industry as "the dominant economic force" of the city.⁴ According to geographer J. H. Paterson, the Texan oil industry was responsible for economic prosperity in the state; "[It] created wealth and made capital available with an ease and speed relative to effort expended that can seldom have been equaled in history."⁵ Later, during the late 1970s and 1980s, while exploring a career in politics, Bush also held several executive managerial positions in the Texan oil industry.⁶

Beyond Bush's earlier career, the significance of the oil and gas industry extended into his political career. The industry was a central contributor in all of Bush's campaigns to enter into public office, including his 1978 effort to win a seat in the House of Congress, his 1994 race for the Texas governorship, and his 2000 and 2004 runs for presidency.⁷ Craig Mitchell, executive director of the Texans for Public Justice—an NGO which traces the money flow in Texan politics—has gone so far as to label the oil industry as the "kingmakers" behind Bush's political career.⁸ However, as well as his experience of the positive influences, Bush also was witness to some negative aspects of the oil industry in relation to the economy and downturns in the oil-market. In 1986, as an oil industry executive, Bush's business suffered badly from the 1986 oil price drop; and, in 1998, as governor of Texas, he observed how an economic decline in a core industry could affect the state's welfare.⁹

Both in positive and negative terms, Bush's experiences with the oil business in Texas can be seen to somewhat parallel the industry's effect on life in Alaska. Much like Texas during the twentieth century, oil discovery on the North Slope in the late 1960s had a transformative effect on Alaskan life and society. Likewise, precisely as the 1986 oil market crash produced a severe economic decline in Texas—with a significant increase in unemployment and a collapse in retail sales and across the broader financial sector—similarly far-reaching negative effects were experienced in Alaska (as discussed, above, in chapter one).¹⁰ Furthermore, Bush himself lived in Alaska for a period of time during 1974, an experience he recalls with great joy.¹¹ He was employed at a local airline and construction company in Fairbanks, and presumably received firsthand knowledge of the impact that the Prudhoe Bay discovery had on Alaska.¹² Hence, in both Texas and Alaska, Bush personally observed the effects that large oil deposits can have on a single state. It is plausible that these corresponding oil-related experiences made Bush empathize to an even greater extent with Alaskan politicians and their efforts to open the ANWR.

Natural resources, and oil and gas in particular, have been an integral part of the Texan economy since the turn of the twentieth century. Although production has gradually declined since the 1970s and the economy has diversified, oil remains an important socioeconomic influence in the state. Texas produces about 20% of all oil and 30% of all gas in the United States—the highest percentage of any individual state—and several of the largest and most prominent companies in the industry are located in Texas.¹³ The position of the oil companies has been solidified by the political culture's values in Texas, which are strongly pro-business. Political scientists, Anthony Champagne and Rick Collis, note that in Texas, "Government is viewed as a necessary evil that must be kept small and unable to interfere with the free-enterprise system."¹⁴ Champagne and Collis refer to David Elazar's comment on politics in Texas being marked by traditionalistic and individualistic values.¹⁵ In a traditionalistic political culture, government is seen as an institution which has the function of preserving the status quo, and where power and participation is reserved for the elite.¹⁶ Individualism encompasses traits such as self-reliance, small government, and free enterprise. Champagne and Collis remark on this relation of traditionalism and individualism; "In Texas, the combination of these subcultures creates a government with limited purposes run by elites who are an interlocking network of successful businessmen."¹⁷

Champagne and Collis' review of the political climate in Texas was written in the early 1980s. It can be argued, therefore, that traditionalism and individualism were the dominant traits of Bush's milieu at the time, in respect of both the oil business and politics.

These values appear to have shaped Bush's approach to politics, and they fit squarely with his decision to actively promote drilling in the ANWR. While some have argued, for instance political scientist David Standlee, that the Bush administration's effort to pursue exploration in the refuge was a handout to oil companies, for Bush it may have represented a natural policy relationship.¹⁸ Opening up the ANWR is in accordance with the free-market principles that dominate politics in Texas.¹⁹ Successful exploration would have generated revenues for private businesses, which again could have had positive economic effects for Alaska and the U.S. as a whole.

5.3. The 2001 National Energy Policy

Once elected, Bush adopted the Texan-style, pro-business, approach to energy policy, and made garnering congressional approval for drilling in the ANWR a top priority. As has been previously established (see the earlier chapters, above), one of the most significant aspects of presidential power is the opportunity to set the national policy agenda. Thus, the Bush administration immediately made the ANWR an integral part of a comprehensive energy policy proposal. In January 2001, Bush established a policy group—headed by Vice President Dick Cheney—charged with shaping the administration's new energy strategy. The energy policy group's composition and the meeting schedule created a substantial amount of controversy due to its pro-business profile. Dick Cheney had, like Bush, worked in the Texas oil industry for a number of years. Cheney was primarily a career politician and had been employed as an assistant in the Nixon administration and had also held central positions in the Ford administration. During the 1980s he served as a congressman for Wyoming, and in 1989 he was appointed secretary of defense in the Bush administration. However, after his period in the Bush administration, Cheney became increasingly associated with the oil industry: firstly, by working for the American Petroleum Institute—an oil industry interest group—and subsequently, in the second half of the 1990s, serving as a Chairman and CEO for Halliburton.²⁰

Aside from Cheney, Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and Andrew D. Lundquist—a White House advisor—have been listed as the leaders of the energy policy group.²¹ Lundquist's employment record supports the interpretation that the group was predisposed to formulate a pro-development strategy for the ANWR. Prior to the establishment of the group, Lundquist had worked for Alaskan Senators, Ted Stevens and Frank Murkowski, and since had been, for instance, a lobbyist for British Petroleum.²²

For the top-level positions in the administration, Bush chose persons who had widespread political experience. He, furthermore, assigned his subordinates with considerable responsibility in shaping policy. In *What Happened*, Scott McClellan, employee of the Bush administration (as deputy press secretary and, later, as press secretary within the period 2003-2006), confirms that Bush placed great trust in his closest advisors such as Karl Rove, Condoleezza Rice and Dick Cheney.²³ In respect of the dynamic between the president and the vice president, McClellan states; “Bush and Cheney’s relationship was close—and substantially private.”²⁴ McClellan, moreover, substantiates Cheney’s leading role in developing the energy policy plan: “Bush showed Cheney great deference, especially when he designated him to take on a specific task, such as heading the energy task force early in the administration.”²⁵

The energy task force received considerable criticism for the overwhelming degree in which they met with energy companies, largely overlooking the interests of the environmental community. Cheney had originally refused to release the meeting schedule. Furthermore, in 2004, the Supreme Court ruled that the administration had the right to refuse such publication. However, in July 2007 a former and unnamed White House official presented the documents to *The Washington Post*.²⁶ The schedule confirms the pro-development profile of the task force. Among the numerous meetings during the spring of 2001 the group had consulted with individuals and corporations such as Jim Rouse, the vice president of Exxon; British Petroleum, including Bob Malone who later would become chief of BP America; and high-ranking officials from ConocoPhillips. The meeting schedule also lists that the group met with Senator Frank Murkowski, Arctic Power, and the American Petroleum Institute, although for these meetings the document does not provide dates.²⁷ As previously established, all these actors have interests in the prospect of drilling for oil in the ANWR.

A further objection to the task force, outlined in *The Washington Post*, was that the administration attempted to actively conceal from the public information relating to the process of policy development. The court’s decision had roused politicians, the media, and environmental groups; however, Cheney and the administration considered withholding the documents to be a question of executive privilege. The administration wished to retain the opportunity to be able to confer with groups and persons that the task force viewed as pertinent to help shape policy without public scrutiny.²⁸ This line of thought was central to Cheney’s approach to the presidency, and, because of the power and trust that was deferred to him, such sentiments became a central part of the Bush administration. Cheney stated, in an interview with presidential studies scholar, John Maltese; “You’re never going to get

anywhere if you let someone step on your lead or if you step on your lead yourself. That means you've got to control what information you put out."²⁹ McClellan acknowledges that the decision to keep the schedule confidential may have damaged the administration's standing with the public: "[It] created an early impression of an administration prone to secrecy and reinforced the image of the Bush White House as in thrall to corporate interests."³⁰

The environmental community was highly critical of the policy process leading to the formulation of the energy strategy. Political scientist, Robert Duffy, implies strongly that the energy industry received a central voice in the group owing to the large amount of contributions that it provided to Bush's campaign. Environmental groups, moreover, were only consulted briefly, late in the policy process, and their concerns were largely ignored by the task force.³¹ With the Bush administration in mind, Scott Furlong, professor of public and environmental affairs, argues: "It is easier to approach such officials with requested changes when they are predisposed to favor industry's position."³² Furlong's assumption is relevant to the energy policy group and the inclusion of the ANWR in the energy plan, since it is apparent that the industry-related groups did not have to persuade the Bush administration to promote drilling in coastal plain. Bush and Cheney were already familiar with the option of undertaking oil explorations in the refuge, and the meetings merely served the pro-development corporations and interest groups with more opportunities to further infuse the administration's view on the subject.

Cheney's task force highlights the effect changes in the White House have over the question of drilling for oil in the refuge; and, further, it reveals the extent to which the dynamics of the debate can be altered by a new president. Apart from the veto, Clinton had focused little attention on the ANWR debate. However, the election campaign of 2000 and the possibility that a presidential candidate holding pro-development views could win, had pushed the issue to the forefront of the policy agenda. Bush's victory was testament to how the inherent powers in the presidency are enabling of presidential influence over the direction of the ANWR debate. Historian, David McCullough, contends that the personality of, and the objectives which the president brings to the job, largely affect how the presidency unfolds. McCullough accurately observes, "The truth is, of course, it makes an enormous difference who's in the White House."³³ As a result of the freedom that the executive office provides, Bush's task force could choose freely to predominantly shape energy proposals according to the administration's pro-development interests. This was done in cooperation with business

interests, which, according to Scott Furlong, received an influential voice in the Bush administration, in direct contrast to the environmental community.³⁴

In May 2001, after several months of preparations, President Bush presented the administration's energy plan to the public. He framed the administration's energy strategy as a "watershed" proposal, and an opportunity for Congress to protect the American people from diminishing energy supplies and rising prices. During 2000 and 2001, California experienced several, deliberate, blackouts. The shutdowns were provoked by a combination of high demand, old and inadequate energy plants, and price deregulation, which had resulted in a rise in the wholesale energy price, and in turn made it unprofitable for local distribution companies to sell electricity to the public.³⁵ Bush referred to the blackouts on several occasions and interpreted them as a negative preview of the future of America's energy situation if Congress failed to act. The administration's plan called for increased conservation, more domestic energy production, and incentives to encourage further use of renewables. However, the main focus rested with fossil fuels and supply-side measures. The administration advocated more domestic oil exploration, more refineries, new energy plants, clean coal technology, more natural gas production, and the revival of nuclear energy in the U.S.³⁶ Ian Rutledge contends that the plan merely provided "lip service" to measures that would bring down total energy consumption.³⁷ The Democratic leadership also directed strong criticism towards the Bush administration, considering the strategy backward and a threat to the environment.³⁸

The administration claimed that advances in technology reducing the number of required wells and making drilling rigs more efficient, in combination with the use of ice roads and exploration exclusively during the winter season, would keep the ANWR coastal plain and the regional wildlife safe.³⁹ In regard to drilling in the Arctic expanses of Alaska, the Congressional Research Service (CRS) has concluded that technological developments during the last few decades have indeed considerably reduced the adverse effects that oil exploration and production has on the environment.⁴⁰ In this sense, hence, it appears that the Bush administration's portrayal of drilling in the ANWR was justified. However, the CRS further elaborates the limits of technology in prevention of damage on the coastal plain, stating; "the probability of spills, and the loss of wilderness as a result of human intrusion are issues that technology advances cannot address." Industrial activity on the coastal plain would demand the construction of drilling pads, airstrips, gravel roads, pipelines, and production facilities. Such activity requires a considerable amount of gravel extraction, altering the local environment.⁴¹ Hence, a focus on technology can be used to propagate either side of the

debate—in the promotion or determent—of oil development in the ANWR. While referencing technological improvements was, for the Bush administration, a method for “selling” the administration’s ANWR policy in the media; simultaneously, environmental groups and likeminded politicians, could, on the other hand, point to the same drilling operation and highlight how the process would undeniably damage the environment.

The Bush administration expounded upon their interpretation to claim that, since it was environmentally sound, exploration in the ANWR should be approved on national security grounds.⁴² Bush co-opted the national security argument developed and implemented by the preceding Reagan and Bush Sr. administrations; noting that oil production in the ANWR could significantly reduce America’s dependence on foreign oil. Reagan and Bush Sr. had warned about the growing rate of U.S. oil imports when they advocated exploration in the ANWR, however, by the time Bush Jr. entered office, imports had reached unprecedented levels.⁴³ In order to make the potential amount of oil that could be located relatable to the public, and to portray it as a subject of national security, Bush—presumably—made the decision to draw an association to Iraq: “ANWR can produce 600,000 barrels of oil a day for the next 40 years. What difference does 600,000 barrels a day make? Well, that happens to be exactly the amount we import from Saddam Hussein's Iraq.”⁴⁴

5.4. Congress and the ANWR, 2001-2002: Legislative Movements, Historical Energy Context and the September 11 Attacks

To Republicans in Congress, the energy plan marked a fresh start for working towards opening the coastal plain to oil drilling. The election of a president who supported exploration meant that Republicans would not face the possibility of a veto should they succeed in passing a pro-development ANWR bill through Congress. After the 2000 elections, the Republicans continued to be the dominant party in the House. However, due to Senator James Jeffords’s decision to leave the party in June 2001, the Republicans were temporarily unable to maintain their grip on the Senate.⁴⁵ On August 2, 2001, the House passed a major energy bill which included a provision to open the ANWR by a margin of 240 to 189.⁴⁶ Bush had publicly endorsed the energy bill on the previous day and particularly lauded it for including a provision to allow for oil development in the ANWR.⁴⁷

The bill generated considerable lobbying activity, and Republicans received critical support from labor unions on the subject of oil exploration in the refuge. The involvement of the AFL-CIO and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters had earlier pressured several

members—predominantly Democrats—to appeal either to the environmentalist or union worker blocks in their constituency.⁴⁸ Several of the largest unions have traditionally supported development of the ANWR.⁴⁹ Thus, as the environmental groups, the unions represent a specific concern in the debate. The unions, striving to promote opportunities for their members, perceived that the large number of jobs generated by successful exploration in the ANWR could, for the union members who receive employment, have a positive impact on their lives and on their support for the union leadership. While the relationship between organized labor and the Bush administration was generally cold, in the energy proposal they found common ground on employment. Chief spokesperson for the Teamsters, Bret Caldwell, concisely summarized why a number of labor organizations supported the energy plan: “It’s about job creation.”⁵⁰

In *Hooked on Growth*, Douglas Booth employs the metaphor of concentric circles in illustration of how environmental questions are approached. At the center of the model is the specific (environmental) issue, circled by layers of personal concerns—a tight circle with a greater concentration of personal concerns closer to the center (the issue), implies a greater prioritization applied to that issue. Booth explains: “Occupants of the inner circles, such as family and friends, would take precedence in most ethical decisions over occupants on the outer circles, such as the local neighborhood community, the nation as a whole, and nonhuman species or particular ecological systems.”⁵¹ Adopting this model to the question of exploring for oil in the refuge, the environmental community and the labor unions clearly operated with and were representative of two different sets of concentric circles. While the environmental groups placed the ecocentric values and the integrity of the national wildlife refuge system on a closer circle, the labor unions were on the basis of their commitment to their members, more concerned with the jobs that industrial activity in the ANWR could provide. Although the Bush administration outwardly tended to focus more on the national security aspect than on creation of employment, the president clearly shared overlapping concentric circles with the unions in regard to the concerns of organized labor on the ANWR, and both parties decided to not prioritize the ecological values of the coastal plain. Oil companies and other business interests were part of the same pro-development concentric circles because of the potential economic value that the deposits in the coastal plain represent.

The Bush administration’s utilization of the energy plan to promote drilling in the ANWR was part of a larger, developing, debate on the energy policy of the United States, commencing in the late 1970s. In *Strategic Energy Policy: Challenges for the 21st Century*, an independent task force concluded that the U.S. faced a tight energy market and subsequent

high prices because the nation had for decades lacked “a comprehensive, integrated strategic energy policy.”⁵² The report, released in 2001, pointed to several double-edged policy decisions from the last twenty years to explain the situation in the domestic energy market. Most significant was the U.S. government’s pursuit, since the 1980s, of a free-market energy policy in order to encourage supply at the lowest possible price.⁵³ Although President Carter had—as discussed in chapter three—outlined an active function for the government in curbing oil use near the end of the decade, consumption was allowed to develop unrestricted according to demand during the remainder of the twentieth century.

Strategic Energy Policy was published during a time marked by the California blackouts and high energy prices, and the CRS argues that such events tend to jolt American perceptions of the domestic energy situation: “Whenever the United States has experienced a period marked by sharp increases in the price for energy and concern about the adequacy of essential supplies, there is widespread concern that the nation has no energy policy.”⁵⁴ The CRS approaches U.S. energy policy slightly differently than the task force and states that the U.S. has since the 1970s in fact practiced a distinct policy. The two reports do not provide contradictory assessments, however, the CRS, in contrast to the task force, chooses to acknowledge the free-market approach as a distinct energy policy alternative regardless of the results it produces. The free-market strategy has been constructed by various supply-side initiatives, such as opening land for fossil fuel exploration, tax incentives to private companies to encourage domestic energy production, the establishment of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, and oil imports. Demand-side measures, like the CAFE standards, subsidies to promote the use of more efficient alternative fuels, and raising electricity efficiency standards have been less prevalent, as observed throughout this thesis.⁵⁵ The wide range of policy measures has created a fragmented energy picture, and it seems fair to suggest that the resulting incoherence has been a primary reason for why U.S. energy policy has at times been perceived as nonexistent. The free-market approach is also less visible than more interventionist actions, for instance price-controls on oil.

In order to explain the energy exigency, the *Strategic Energy Policy* task force and the CRS, moreover, point to complementary deep-seated causes. American citizens have long expected energy to be a low-cost commodity, and throughout the 1980s and 1990s, market forces were able to supply more than enough.⁵⁶ This development created a “myth of plenty” and reinforced the attitude that there were unlimited amounts of resources available.⁵⁷ However, allowing private businesses—which first and foremost are concerned with profit-margins—to dictate the direction of the national energy policy, has made measures that could

have reduced demand a secondary priority.⁵⁸ The CRS pertinently explains that because conventional fuel prices remained low and stable for most of the 1980s and 1990s, there was therefore less incentive for politicians to promote costlier initiatives that could increase efficiency or produce viable sources of alternative energy.⁵⁹ During the latter part of the 1990s, the U.S. experienced strong fiscal development, and the demand for and use of energy in general, and oil in particular, increased significantly. This pushed delivery capacity and increased the oil price. Hence, by relying on the market, the U.S. had reached a level of oil dependency that both was increasingly difficult to handle and dangerous for the national economy.⁶⁰

During the first months of his presidency Bush had primarily been concerned with domestic issues, such as passing a large tax cut bill and the energy plan. However, the September 11 attacks refocused the administration's foreign policy agenda.⁶¹ The impact of September 11 did not change how Bush or the administration viewed the ANWR, a course had already been firmly established, except to perhaps to strengthen the conviction that national security—and in practice energy security—was the utmost priority. Hence, for Bush, the heightened sense of threat caused by the terrorist attacks, in all likelihood further legitimized the prospect of drilling in the ANWR as a method to augment U.S. national security.

Hugo Heclo asserts that the terrorist attacks had a profound impact on Bush's understanding of his role as president and on how he should govern to best protect the interests of the United States: "He [Bush] saw history as having called both the man and the nation to action. Both the man and the nation had to have the will to act rather than wait on threats to fully materialize."⁶² According to Heclo, this notion of politics was grounded in "the Bush family ethos," which emphasized both personal responsibility and the importance of proving individual merit by engaging in public service in a positive manner. Heclo furthermore notes; "for Bush men, public service meant public leadership."⁶³ The "Bush family ethos" draws on many of the same elements as the stewardship philosophy. Both concepts emphasize the civic obligation of serving the people responsibly and with integrity. Moreover, and much like it is described by Theodore Roosevelt in the stewardship theory, the September 11 attacks heightened Bush's belief in the need for active executive leadership.

Bush's understanding of presidential responsibility became eminently visible through the formulation of the Bush Doctrine.⁶⁴ In short, the doctrine claimed that the U.S. had the right to take pre-emptive military action against nations and regimes that posed a significant threat to U.S. national security. The logic Bush used in his foreign policy "doctrine" is

transferable to his approach to the ANWR. Bush knew—as all other politicians did—that it would take more or less a decade before any oil to be possibly found in the ANWR would reach American consumers. However, the fact that production in the refuge could not increase supply before his presidency had ended, did not deter Bush’s legislative efforts. Bush’s advocacy on the ANWR was infused by the “Bush family ethos” of active responsibility. Bush acted as a steward of the people in terms of national security, and genuinely considered drilling in the ANWR to be an important and justifiable, supply-side measure, which would make America less dependent on foreign oil.⁶⁵ Bush, moreover, has both been classified as having an active-positive and an active-negative character.⁶⁶ In relation to the ANWR, Bush’s high activity level was evident in the manner in which he consistently tried, through means of speeches and public appearances, to convince the American people and Congress that the coastal plain should be opened to oil drilling. The positive-negative scale would become more evident later in the presidency.

The influence of the September 11 attacks on the discussion over the ANWR, was, moreover, directly discernible in Congress. In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks a sense of national emergency emerged, and Republican Senator James Inhofe tried to utilize the national mood by attaching the Bush administration’s energy bill to a large Defense Appropriations bill. In late September, upon presenting the possibility that the energy bill should be considered as part of the defense bill, Inhofe proclaimed, “I can assure Members there is no time in our history that should be more clear that we will have to do something about our dependency on the Middle East for our ability to fight a war.”⁶⁷ Inhofe was concerned about the high percentage of U.S. oil imports from the Middle East and from an unfriendly regime like Iraq. The attempt created considerable debate in Congress, and Democratic Senator Harry Reid, for instance, noted that the energy bill was an important subject which the Democratic leadership should bring up in due time. However, using the defense bill as a vehicle was perceived to be wrong because it would ignore the input of multiple energy-related committees. Reid had a number of articles from a wide range of newspapers printed in the Congressional Record to illustrate the public outrage that Inhofe’s attempt had created. *The Chicago Tribune* claimed that it was “an astonishingly crass move, to manipulate the Sept. 11 tragedy to get the energy bill approved.”⁶⁸

The failure to incorporate the energy bill including an ANWR drilling provision into the defense appropriations bill displays the limits of the national security argument. President Bush had repeatedly called on Congress to open the ANWR, and the September 11 attacks had generated both record high presidential approval ratings and strong bipartisanship in

Congress. However, and in spite of the favorable conditions, Democrats in Congress and the public proved to be far from ready to accept exploration in the refuge. The U.S. was experiencing arguably the largest shock since Pearl Harbor, but those who opposed drilling in the coastal plain before the attacks appear to have been no more receptive to Bush's ANWR policy because of heightened national security tensions. September 11 brought out the fundamental differences that exist over the use of the ANWR, and evidenced that—regardless of circumstances—it is difficult for those who advocate drilling by referring to national security to directly override the ecological values that are associated with the coastal plain.

President Bush failed to open the ANWR during his first year, however, as the War on Terror evolved, the administration continued to consistently project drilling in the coastal plain as a policy subject that should be interpreted through the lens of national security. The rhetoric became particularly noticeable as the possibility of a war against Iraq was emerging as a central theme in the media. On three separate occasions during the period April 8-15, 2002, the administration linked Iraq's and Saddam Hussein's decision to stop domestic oil exports for a month—in response to U.S. support of Israel—to the importance of exploring in the ANWR. Referring to the ANWR in a speech in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Bush stated: "When Saddam Hussein stood up and said he wanted to cut off energy--and we're importing energy from him--it makes sense to me that we'd better, in order to make sure he doesn't hold us hostage, that we'd better figure out a way to explore for more energy at home."⁶⁹ Moreover, in an interview with *The Wall Street Journal* Bush declared that the recent developments were, in his eyes, the strongest possible confirmation that the U.S. should proceed with environmentally-safe exploration in areas such as the ANWR.⁷⁰ The war in Iraq would, much like the first Gulf War—described in the previous chapter—be, in part, a conflict over oil. The war in Iraq stands indicative of the steps the administration considered necessary to ensure the regular flow of oil.

The administration's heightened attention to the ANWR in mid-April 2002 was also a result of the fact that the Senate was at the time considering drilling in the coastal plain as part of the energy bill. *The New York Times* pointed to the coincidence of the Iraq-ANWR argument and the developments in the Senate, referring to it as the administration's "most explicit effort yet to use the turmoil in the Middle East to press for what has become a symbolically vital part of its national energy plan."⁷¹ Majority leader Tom Daschle, as a response to the Bush-orchestrated energy bill passed by the House in August 2001, had put forward an energy bill in the Senate. After Jeffords's turnaround, the Democrats were setting

the premises of the energy debate in the Senate,⁷² and in accordance with the priorities of the Democratic Party, the bill did not include drilling in the refuge. The two senators from Alaska disagreed and proposed amendments that would discard the Senate version and confirm the bill approved by the House. However, On April 18, 2002, pro-development advocates failed to vote down a proposed ANWR filibuster by 46 to 54. The energy bill eventually stalled in conference during the 107th Congress.⁷³

5.5. The ANWR and President Bush's Legislative Style

Despite the setbacks, the Bush administration remained unrelentingly vocal in their efforts to open the ANWR. Their determined approach to the ANWR mirrored Bush's preference for pursuing a rigidly defined policy agenda. Bush had, since his time as governor of Texas, practiced a policy model where legislative goals are identified early. Once in office, Bush had characteristically continued to campaign hard for the already established legislative priorities.⁷⁴ Compared to Carter and Clinton, Bush generally practiced a tighter plan, and unlike his predecessors he seldom let extraneous cases stymie his predetermined agenda.⁷⁵ Bush followed the same policy pattern on the question of drilling for oil in the ANWR by presenting, during the campaign—as discussed earlier—the basic premises of the subject which would be reiterated throughout the presidency. He contended that development was environmentally safe and that exploration should proceed for reasons tied to national security. Social policy scientist, Hakan Seckinelgin, elaborates on Bush's national security reasoning on the ANWR issue and argues that the administration effectively framed it as part of a larger energy crisis that could, in extremis, have a devastating impact on the nation. Hence, the economic security of the nation necessarily had to take precedence over environmental apprehensions. According to Seckinelgin, the Bush administration was “asking everyone to put national interest and a certain level of patriotism over other possible concerns.”⁷⁶

The administration's consistent reference to the ANWR as a subject that should be considered in terms of national security, was also a product of Bush's legislative style. The Bush White House was known to carefully plan their policy proposals in all confidentiality. They decided on a set of arguments that most effectively would promote their view and from which none of the members of the administration were to deviate.⁷⁷ Based on the uniformity of the arguments presented regarding the ANWR by President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Secretary of the Interior Norton and the various press secretaries, it is evident that the administration worked from a fixed position.⁷⁸ Scott McClellan confirms that the

administration “prided itself on message discipline.”⁷⁹ McClellan himself largely espoused the tactic, explaining that, in order to overcome the enormous amount of issues competing for attention in the media at any given time an administration “has to develop simple, straightforward, and consistent messages that connect with people’s interests, concerns, and needs.”⁸⁰

Although there were no decisive movements on the ANWR issue during the 107th Congress, Bush had utilized the media to generate extensive engagement with the subject. His method was in line with the public relations concept of “going public.” Presidency scholar Mark J. Rozell explains: “Today, no president can adequately lead without “going public.” By reaching out to the public through the media, presidents seek to overcome the stalemate engendered by the constitutional scheme of separation of powers.”⁸¹ However, as Rozell discusses throughout the essay, the degree to which publicity actually creates damaging or beneficial results has historically been largely dependent on the president’s personal skills, preparations, and overall relations with the media. Although Bush’s strong push for development clearly helped generate legislative activity in Congress, he was subject to— due to the conflict-ridden nature of the ANWR debate—substantial critique, both from the environmental community and high-standing politicians. The negative press was generated by the fact that, irrespective of the Bush administration’s promotion of the ANWR as an energy question, it continued nonetheless to also be interpreted as an important ecological subject in U.S. politics.

5.6. Environmental Policy and Commercial Activity

In *A Divider, Not a Uniter: George W. Bush and the American People*, Gary C. Jacobsen argues that the Bush administration’s pro-development policy on the ANWR “typified” their approach to environmental politics, and was representative of a policy view that consistently favored development and business interests over environmental protection.⁸² Jacobsen’s assessment appears justified in that the Bush administration regularly made decisions that contradicted the interests of the environmental community and of values represented by more environmentally-inclined members of Congress, primarily Democrats. In a review published in March, 2003, *The New York Times* pertinently concluded that Bush’s environmental policy generally represented a departure from the Clinton administration and that with a strong focus on spurring on economic growth and less on regulation it was more reminiscent of the Reagan era.

The most visible, and arguably the most publicized, environmental policy decision that the administration made was Bush's unilateral rejection of the Kyoto Protocol. Only months after he had entered office, Bush made it clear that—as the nation's chief diplomat—the content of the Kyoto Protocol conflicted with the interest of the country. Bush's primary motivation for dismissing the protocol was fear that the centralized and rigid greenhouse-gas emission standards would impede on the growth of the U.S. economy.⁸³ In a letter to the Senate in March, 2001, Bush furthermore expressed skepticism towards, “the incomplete state of scientific knowledge of the causes of, and solutions to, global change.”⁸⁴ These uncertainties were, according to Bush, another reason why it would be irresponsible to commit the U.S. to an agreement that could force the U.S. away from the use of a central energy source such as coal causing an increase in the domestic energy price.

Beyond foreign policy implications, the Bush administration likewise adopted a pro-business approach to environmental policy in relation to domestic concerns. One of the most lucid cases, as analyzed by Christopher Klyza and David Sousa, was the administration's attempt to modify the New Source Review Program (NSR)—an element of the Clean Air Act—to allow pollution units, for example factories and power plants, more leniency in updating their pollution controls. NSR was originally created to ensure that new pollution units implemented state of the art emission controls, but the program also applied if already existing units carried out modifications. Hence, every time the structure of a plant, refinery, or factory was modified or expanded, except in cases of small repairs or replacements, the Environmental Protection Agency activated the NSR program.⁸⁵ The executive branch, charged with implementing the laws that Congress passes and having achieved little headway with their agenda in Congress, decided to utilize the regulation process to reinterpret the Clean Air Act.⁸⁶ The administration inserted a new rule, conceived with the objective of making operations more profitable, whereby refineries and energy plants, for instance, were allowed to carry out modifications that were worth up to 20 percent of the total replacement cost of the facility without being charged with an NSR. The rule created extensive controversy and over a dozen states decided to take the administration to court. The directive was eventually repealed by the District of Columbia Court of Appeals in 2006, and then by the Supreme Court in 2007, the latter of which adhered to the earlier determination on the grounds that the administration's interpretation of the Clean Air Act was too broad.⁸⁷

On land management issues, the Bush administration exhibited a strong willingness to make federal areas more accessible to commercial development. Upon entering office, Bush immediately began challenging Clinton's “roadless” rule which had prohibited logging and

the construction of roads throughout 58 million acres of national forest.⁸⁸ The rule had generated several lawsuits from states denouncing Clinton's action, and in 2005 the Bush administration issued a new and more lenient instruction which would allow states much more influence in deciding which areas were to be set aside. This again created more legal activity from states that had been content with the framework established by the Clinton administration.⁸⁹ Bush's new rule was countered through the judicial system and it also faced resistance in Congress. Hence, by February 2009, the forest areas previously under the protection created by Clinton remained largely undisturbed.⁹⁰ The administration placed—as exhibited with their ANWR policy—strong focus on expanding domestic oil and gas exploration. In the Cheney task force report the administration outlined the possibility for oil and gas exploration in the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), both onshore and offshore in Alaska, and in the 48 continental states.⁹¹ There are multiple sources of evidence of the administration's active attempts to implement the agenda; for instance, between 2003 and 2004, the Department of the Interior granted a total of 6000 new drilling leases, the highest number ever during one year.⁹²

The Bush administration's unfaltering push to make areas available for industrial development, such as the ANWR, appears to have been based on a conviction that too much federal land was off-limits due to environmental restrictions. Federal land regulations have long generated hostility (see previous chapters), as evidenced through, for example, the Sagebrush Rebellion, the "wise use" movement, and the 1995 Republican Congress. These initiatives have often been considered regressive and fuelled by purely economic interests, however, there are legitimate concerns that increased federal land regulation during the 1980s and 1990s has reduced America's ability to produce much-needed domestic energy. *Strategic Energy Policy* calls attention to the fact that while demand for energy grew drastically during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, and the government failed to enact a comprehensive demand-side energy policy, such as through stronger CAFE standards; "U.S. Policy frequently allowed energy supply goals to take a back seat to environmental considerations."⁹³ In relation to land management, the task force notes that, in the period from 1980 to 2000, the total amount of federal land open "for private lease to oil and gas exploration companies" dropped from about 75% to 17%.⁹⁴

On the whole, *Strategic Energy Policy* advised that the U.S. needed to more thoroughly coordinate its supply-side energy policy and environmental priorities.⁹⁵ In light of the report's consideration that U.S. environmental policymaking during the last part of the twentieth century has had a negative effect on domestic energy production, it is evident that

the task-force advocates more flexible environmental standards. It appears, therefore, that the Bush administration's supply-oriented energy policy was partly built on a valid concern over excessive restrictions that also existed outside of the executive branch. Bush's policy on the ANWR, along with the proposal to open the OCS, reflects the worry that existed within the administration over the interference of regulatory legislation with economic and energy security related policy objectives. The Energy Information Administration calculates that, based on a mean estimate where output would peak at around 800,000 barrels per day in 2027, production in the ANWR would at the most reduce U.S. oil imports by 3%. Development implies that less federal money would be used to purchase foreign oil, and more capital would remain in the U.S., thus improving the trade balance.⁹⁶ The effect that drilling in the ANWR would have on the domestic market, is also contingent on the extent to which the oil would be exported; although, historically, only a very small amount of oil produced in Alaska is sold abroad. Ultimately, regardless of whether any of the oil potentially found in the ANWR is exported or not, the U.S. would, in the event of successful exploration, assume a stronger economic position as a power controlling a larger share of the world oil market.⁹⁷

The possible discovery of oil resources in the ANWR area is particularly significant within anthropocentric value-systems, and represents a genuine opportunity. There is, however, no necessary implication that such discovery would affect the U.S. energy security question. In *Addicted to Oil*, Ian Rutledge refers to a report from 1996 published by the US General Accounting Office (GAO) that concluded that "it wasn't the high percentage of oil imports which threatened America's energy security, but the nation's dependence *on oil itself*."⁹⁸ Due to the fact that most of the oil in the world is located and produced outside of the United States—and because the oil price is determined globally—the U.S. would still be prone to disruptions in the market, even if it does not specifically receive oil from the country, or countries which are upsetting the world balance.⁹⁹ The Bush administration recognized that "overdependence" on one type of energy such as petroleum was dangerous, and particularly if a large percentage was supplied by foreign nations. As a consequence, they proposed to increase domestic production by opening the ANWR.¹⁰⁰ The drawback with the administration's logic, as considered in view of the conclusion from the GAO report, is that drilling in the ANWR would only be a temporary measure that would, in no considerable way, address the systemic problem of overdependence on oil or improve U.S. energy security.¹⁰¹

5.7. Congress and the ANWR, 2003-2008: the 2005 Energy Act, the Budget Negotiations of 2005, and the Defense Appropriations Act of 2006

There were some legislative attempts to have drilling in the ANWR approved during the 108th Congress, however, Republicans in Congress, and in effect the Bush administration, came closest to passing ANWR during the first session of the 109th Congress (2005). Deborah Lynn Guber and Christopher J. Bosso point out that various developments leading up to 2005 had generated a “window of opportunity” for opening the coastal plain. The complementary effect of the administration’s energy policy priorities, the Republican’s control of both houses of Congress, and events such as the September 11 attacks, the 2003 Northeast energy blackout, the war in Iraq, and the rise in oil prices, created a pro-development policy arena, attuned to the idea of exploration in the ANWR.¹⁰² The Californian blackouts had also clearly been a contributing factor. Perhaps of greatest significance in forwarding this agenda, were the 2002 and 2004 midterm elections and the re-election of President Bush over Democratic candidate John Kerry, consistently one of the most prominent opponents of drilling in the ANWR, leaving the Republican Party in control of the legislative and executive branches of the federal government.

Capitalizing on the favorable mood, the Republican dominated Senate Budget Committee included, in the 2006 federal budget, spending targets that implied the opening of the ANWR for leasing and exploration.¹⁰³ Senator Maria Cantwell—who has been endorsed by the Sierra Club and other environmental organizations—put forward legislation that would have removed the drilling provision from the budget bill. However, on March 16, 2005, the amendment was struck down 51 to 49, with seven Republicans and three Democrats crossing party lines. The two independents, James Jeffords from Vermont and Joseph Lieberman from Connecticut, voted with the Democrats. The Republicans came mainly from states with high environmental profiles, such as Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Oregon. Of the Democrats who crossed, one was from Louisiana and two were from Hawaii.¹⁰⁴

The Bush administration was, of course, highly supportive of the pro-drilling ANWR decision in the Senate. In a personal statement President Bush proclaimed: “I applaud today’s vote in the Senate to allow for environmentally responsible energy exploration in a small part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.”¹⁰⁵ Aside from the budget, a coastal plain drilling provision was also being moved through a large energy bill. Bush had worked for the passage of encompassing energy legislation since the start of his presidency, but the breakthrough in Congress came first in 2005. The energy bill—including the ANWR—was introduced in the

House during the spring, and on April 20, 2005, Congress voted down an amendment to strip the drilling provision from the bill.¹⁰⁶ Just the previous day, on Scott McClellan's account, President Bush had met "with the ranking members and the chairs of the relevant committees" that would be working to get the energy bill enacted.¹⁰⁷ McClellan does not name which specific issues were discussed at the meeting, but it seems likely that, as the ANWR was a key priority for Bush and the House was to vote the next day, the coastal plain was a talking point. The personal statement and the meeting underscore Bush's particular involvement in the ANWR issue, as does his active participation in the legislative process to have the energy bill passed.

Despite early legislative victories, neither the energy bill nor the budget bill succeeded in opening the ANWR. The Senate approved its version of the energy bill during the summer of 2005 and on August 8, President Bush signed the Energy Policy Act of 2005 into law. However, as noted by the CRS, the final bill failed to provide decisions on a number of important and controversial issues. Resembling the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (discussed in the previous chapter), the 2005 Energy Act did not allow for drilling the ANWR or raise the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) limits.¹⁰⁸ Hence, the contrasting ANWR and the CAFE standards were again too divisive, and were both removed so as not to completely derail the energy bill. Klyza and Sousa reach the same conclusion regarding the bill's inability to deal with major issues such as the ANWR, the CAFE standards, or greenhouse gas emission limits. According to Klyza and Sousa "the heart of the bill" was financial support to hydrocarbon industries to encourage more exploration and production of energy from fossil fuels. The act provided some incentives to increase focus on conservation and more environmental-friendly technologies, but it was primarily a bill which was economically favorable to the business sector.¹⁰⁹

Drilling in the coastal plain reappeared as an issue during the fall of 2005 as the House began to debate the final version of the budget bill. Republicans in the House, owing to their strong partisanship ties—as discussed in chapter one—have generally been able to pass pro-development bills on the ANWR. However, because the leaders of the Republican Party in the House had written a budget bill which was wholly unacceptable to all House Democrats—it included for example large cuts in Medicare and in student loan programs—it became possible for a small faction of moderate Republicans to stymie the effort to open the ANWR.¹¹⁰ 24 moderate Republicans, a majority of which came from the Northeast, proclaimed in a letter to Richard Pombo, who was Chairman of the House Resources Committee: "the reconciliation process is an inappropriate venue to be debating this [ANWR]

important environmental issue.” Thus, the moderates opposed the attempt on procedural grounds, but they also strongly implied that the ANWR should be preserved on ecological grounds. DeWayne L. Lucas and Iva E. Deutchman present findings that concur with this analysis of the moderates’ decision to reject drilling in the ANWR. According to Lucas and Deutchman, the moderate faction of the Republican Party in the House has a tendency to support environmental friendly legislation more often than other Republican congressmen.¹¹¹ Exploration in the refuge was, as a direct consequence of the moderates’ opposition, removed from the House version of the budget and it did not reappear in the final version of the bill.¹¹²

The Republicans made one final effort to open the ANWR in 2005, by attaching it to the 2006 Defense Appropriations bill. This attempt generated a heated debate in Congress. Many Congressmen and Senators argued that by first inserting the ANWR provision in the bill during conference, Senator Ted Stevens was breaking the rules of Congress.¹¹³ They also berated Stevens and other pro-development advocates for consciously juxtaposing the issue of economic support for American troops in Iraq and Hurricane Katrina victims with the issue of opening the ANWR to oil development.¹¹⁴ Stevens’s tactic worked in the House which, on December 19, passed the defense bill including the ANWR by a large margin. The inclusion of the aforementioned measures had prevented the build-up of any significant “ANWR-opposition” in the House.¹¹⁵ The Bush administration followed the developments in the Senate closely, and, as made apparent in the White House press briefings, endorsed Stevens’s tactic. On December 20, in response to a journalist who inquired whether the administration supported the inclusion of a non-germane item such as exploration in the refuge in the defense bill, McClellan stated that it was critical to ensure both funding for the military and the Senate’s approval of drilling in the ANWR. Despite the highly controversial nature of the tactic, McClellan voiced no hesitancy against using the defense bill as a vehicle for passing the pro-development ANWR provision. Rather, he emphasized the administration’s commitment to see Congress open the coastal plain to oil drilling.¹¹⁶ The Senate, however, proved more reluctant than the House in accepting the “heavy” defense bill; on December 21, the Republicans failed to vote down a proposed anti-drilling filibuster by 56 to 44. John Kerry—one of the senators present in opposition to drilling in the ANWR—referred to the outcome as “a vote of conscience.”¹¹⁷

The administration’s dogged pro-development policy on the ANWR and vocal approval of Stevens’s tactic is consistent with Bush’s approach to executive politics. Gary C. Jacobsen describes Bush as having a strong-minded confidence in his personal policy opinions, and further, that, “for a president who likes to present himself as something of a

populist, Bush's conception of leadership is decidedly elitist: He knows what's right for the American people and insists on pushing for it even if most of them might prefer otherwise."¹¹⁸ Bush was primarily concerned with having Congress approve ANWR and he showed little concern for the method or manner in which it was accomplished. On the whole, Bush's unreserved approach to the ANWR was typical of the prerogative attitudes that often characterized the administration's view of executive politics.¹¹⁹ It is worth noting without delving further into the issue that the Bush administration's prerogative behavior helped fully reignite the debate surrounding the theory of the "imperial presidency."¹²⁰

In 2006, the Republicans achieved approval for drilling in the refuge on the Senate floor by including an exploration provision in the 2007 budget bill, and in the House on a single issue bill; however, none of the two bills went to vote in the other house with the ANWR stipulation still included.¹²¹ Meanwhile, the viability of the administration's success with their ANWR agenda was effectively ended by the Democratic victory in the 2006 midterm election. The results placed the Democrats in control of both the House and Senate and, thus, completely overturning the dynamics of the ANWR debate. *Petroleum News*—an oil industry new service—reported in January 2007 that under the new conditions successful passage of a pro-development ANWR bill was "practically nil."¹²² The CRS provided the same type of conclusion and noted, "Changes in party control in the 110th Congress have encouraged those who seek wilderness protection for this portion of ANWR." Although, the CRS added that such legislation would meet strong opposition from pro-development parties. The initial prediction turned out to be correct, and no significant developments occurred in the ANWR debate during 2007 and 2008.¹²³

Thus, irrespective of how much the Bush administration advocated and entreated Congress to open the ANWR, no presidential powers could help the administration overcome the Democratic opposition in Congress. Because the president and the Department of the Interior cannot begin leasing in the ANWR without legislative approval, Congress succeeded as the defining actor in the ANWR debate during the final stages of the Bush presidency. The administration's failure to win over the Democrats in Congress with regards to the ANWR, can be interpreted to be a product of Bush's decidedly partisan approach to executive politics. Bush consciously pursued a largely conservative policy agenda, which, when coupled with his headstrong leadership style, the controversial nature of the 2000 election, and the fact that he had taken office during a time in which Congress was inherently divided, produced "the most divergent partisan assessments of any president since the advent of regular polling on the president's job performance."¹²⁴ Historically, the question of drilling for oil in the coastal

plain had been a very partisan policy topic, and Bush's approach as president cemented the divide between Democrats and Republicans on the ANWR issue.

5.8. Industrial Activity over Environmental Protection: Last-Minute Decisions

In the final months of his presidency Bush made several "last-minute" executive decisions that shored up his preference for industrial development over environmental protection. During the summer of 2008, Bush withdrew the executive moratorium on drilling in the OCS which his father had introduced in 1990, and Clinton later had renewed.¹²⁵ Bush called attention to the rising oil price and argued—as he had done throughout his presidency—that the U.S. had to increase domestic production. He criticized Congress, and specifically the Democrats, for continually refusing to act on his initiatives to open new areas to exploration, blaming them for the costs that Americans were experiencing "at the pump." Technological improvements, the president argued, would shield the marine environment from any adverse effects, and he therefore recommended that Congress eliminate its far-reaching restrictions on the OCS.¹²⁶ Democrats in Congress were skeptical about the scope of Bush's OCS proposal, but faced with the possibility of a lengthy struggle that could have brought government funding to a stop, they agreed in late September to let the ban on federal leasing activity expire.¹²⁷ However, given sufficient support, Congress could reinstate the ban at a point in the future.¹²⁸

Author and former presidential council, James W. Dean, classifies George W. Bush as an active-negative president—an assessment which overlaps with Bush's supply-side approach to ameliorating America's dependence on oil.¹²⁹ Active-negatives tend to be very connected to their own policies, often perceiving them as "vital to the nation's interest, and impossible to compromise."¹³⁰ In consequence, active-negative presidents may, on Joseph Pika's and John Maltese's view: "pursue a course of action even if it obviously is not working, exhibiting a pattern of 'rigidification' that ultimately can cause their own political failure."¹³¹ Bush's energy policy did not cause political ruin, and yet his relentless, although often fruitless, efforts to open up new areas to oil development reflect strong, active-negative traits. Coming from the oil-industry himself, Bush unquestionably believed strongly in his "top-heavy" supply-side energy approach and he worked hard for his proposals. However since the administration's energy policy failed to curb the growing oil prices of the first eight years of the twenty-first century, and American oil imports only increased during Bush's presidency, their policies became subject to extensive criticism.¹³² Nevertheless, Bush did not

reconsider his supply-side approach despite the fact that it was evident that there was insufficient political support to achieve many of the administration's top exploration proposals.¹³³ Bush, for example, continued to advocate drilling in the refuge long after it was evident that the political opposition was too solid, and he was not able to convince Congress to let the OCS ban temporarily expire before he used executive power to provoke a decision. Exhibiting strong active-negative tendencies and often facing overwhelming political opposition, Bush pushed hard for an energy policy that had a highly questionable impact on the trends of the American energy market.

The Bush administration tried on several occasions to weaken the impact of the Endangered Species Act (ESA).¹³⁴ During their two terms, the Bush administration changed and issued new interpretations of the act, de-listed animals which environmental organizations still considered to be endangered, and drastically reduced the number of new listings. Compared to Clinton who listed 521 new species during his presidency, Bush had by 2008 protected 58 species.¹³⁵ Bush's rule changes and de-listings generated numerous lawsuits, efforts which often were led by groups such as the National Resources Defense Council, the Center for Biological Diversity and Earthjustice.¹³⁶ One of the most controversial episodes was the administration's implementation in December 2008 of last-minute changes that reduced the scope of the ESA. By convention, it is required that government-employed scientists consider questions over whether actions that are approved or carried out by federal agencies will endanger species that are protected under the ESA. However, Bush introduced regulatory measures to make this procedure optional.¹³⁷

The new regulations were partly intertwined with the administration's decision during the spring of 2008 to list the polar bear as threatened under the ESA. Since the largest threat to the polar bear's survival is the melting of the polar ice, the administration was afraid that the ESA could—as a consequence of the listing—be used to institute greenhouse gas emission standards.¹³⁸ Thus, the administration implemented a final set of regulations to avoid this development. The polar bear listing, moreover, did not add any further protection to polar bears from oil or gas development in Alaska. Polar Bears have long been safeguarded under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and keeping the MMPA as the dominant law would, according to the Department of the Interior “ensure the protection of the bear while allowing us to continue to develop our natural resources in the arctic region in an environmentally sound way.”¹³⁹ The administration reasoned that the polar bear received the best possible protection under the MMPA. Environmental organizations, on the other hand, argued that the administration's interpretation of the existing law was flawed, and that it was

careless to continue to protect the polar bear under the MMPA only.¹⁴⁰ Hence, at the same time as the administration chose to list the polar bear, Bush appears to have been equally concerned with not institutionalizing any new restrictions on future industrial activity, in either Alaska as a whole or as regards the ANWR in particular.

Bush's overall approach to the Endangered Species Act—which was instituted to protect ecological values—was, to all appearances, largely based on anthropocentric incentives. The aftermath of the abovementioned December rewriting of regulatory procedure, aptly illustrates the opposition that Bush's management of the ESA created. In late December 2008, the State of California decided to sue the Bush administration on the grounds that it had dismissed the scientific aspect of the ESA, and finally, in March, 2009, President Obama revoked Bush's decision and ordered the Department of the Interior to immediately return to the former practice while the rule was being reviewed.¹⁴¹ Bush received some positive reviews for his environmental policy, most notably for the designation of large marine national monuments off the coast of Hawaii in 2006, and in the Northwestern part of the Pacific Ocean in 2009. The creation of the marine monuments, except from some opposition voiced by and on behalf of local fishing industries, generated little commercial or political controversy.¹⁴² Most of Bush's environmental policy initiatives, including his approach to the ANWR, however, appear to have been reactionary.

5.9. Conclusion

In a time in which global climate change has raised awareness about the negative effects that large amounts of man-made pollution have on land, air, and water, the policies of the Bush administration focused instead on more immediate, economic concerns, rather than establish long-term solutions with the intent to significantly mitigate contemporary and future environmental problems. Clearly, the Bush administration failed to provide environmental leadership from the executive branch. However, in light of Dennis L. Soden's and Brent S. Steel's historical analysis of the environment as a presidential concern, Bush's industry-friendly policies were not wholly uncharacteristic of executive branch actors. Steel and Soden conclude—as has likewise been observed throughout this thesis in relation to the ANWR—that, due to overshadowing policy topics like the economy and national security, the environment has frequently become in the White House a “second-tier” issue. Succinctly put, “For the president, the economic dog has wagged the environmental political tail in most

cases.”¹⁴³ This appears, in regard to Bush more so than the other American presidents, to have been the case.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1. Presidential Power and Influence

For over three decades, exploring for oil in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) has remained a controversial subject, and without exception the presidents of the period, from Jimmy Carter through to George W. Bush, have made an impact on the ANWR debate. Executive participation has usually eventuated either because a president has initiated policies concerning use of the coastal plain, or because other political actors or circumstances have spurred the president into action. The participation in the matter by the various presidents, has revealed demonstrably that the executive branch is both an integral actor in the debate, and that under some circumstances it can be directly decisive for the management of the ANWR's ecological and hydrocarbon resources.

Carter's participation in the negotiation of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) was the first significant presidential involvement affecting management of the coastal plain. The passage of an encompassing Alaska lands bill was a high priority for the administration. Carter's decision to use the Antiquities Act and other laws pertaining to the executive branch to set aside almost 100 million acres in Alaska was a strong display of presidential power. The appropriation of the land to federal control, according to Daniel Nelson, "changed the dynamics" of the Alaska lands bill negotiations. Progress had been slow towards the end of the 95th Congress, and the designation enabled the passage of a bill that more strongly reflected the views of persons who harbored ecological sentiments.¹ Thus, Carter used the Antiquities Act which originally had been created to protect significantly smaller areas, to decisively alter the policy course of a major bill. Carter's action, moreover, can justifiably be interpreted as evidence that elements of the concept of the "imperial presidency" also exist in the environmental policy sector. The fact that the ANILCA placed strict limits on future use of the Antiquities Act in Alaska supports the impression that the president's decision was on the outer limits of what Congress considered acceptable use of executive power.

The ANILCA expanded the ANWR and placed large portions of the refuge under wilderness protection. However, Carter was not able to secure such protection for the coastal plain. The ANILCA was an encompassing bill and Carter, along with other preservationists,

was forced to leave the coastal plain outside wilderness protection in order to ensure the passage of the bill. Thus, the Antiquities Act had helped facilitate expansion of the refuge, but there were no presidential legislative powers that could trump the support for oil development that existed in Congress, especially from the Alaska congressional delegation.

Reagan's victory in the 1980 election reoriented the manner in which the powers of the executive branch affected the ANWR debate. Reagan strongly supported opening the ANWR to industrial activity; the official position of the administration was manifested in the 1987 *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment*. This study—carried out by the administration in accordance with stipulations in the ANILCA—recommended that the coastal plain should be opened to industrial development, even if the report recognized that such activities could have major effects on the local wildlife. Thus, Reagan had most influence on the ANWR debate through his administrative powers. He selected subordinates, such as James Watt and Donald P. Hodel, who agreed with his pro-development approach to natural resources, and was consequently able to direct the recommendations of the report. Irrespective of the report's conclusions, however, the decision to open the ANWR ultimately lay with Congress. In this sense, the report had no direct legislative impact. Then again, if Reagan had recommended that the coastal plain should be protected—as a president who adhered to ecological views similar to those espoused by Carter might have—it would have established an executive precedent that endorsed preservation rather than development. Such a decision might have increased the political cost of pursuing drilling in the coastal plain, and, as a consequence, deterred pro-development advocates in Congress. Instead, the report's conclusion validated the views of those who favored exploration, and set a national policy agenda that emphasized extraction over preservation.

George H. W. Bush followed the same exploration-oriented ideology on the question of drilling in the ANWR, as established during the Reagan presidency. The ANWR debate in Congress took form following the publication of the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment* during the late 1980s. However, the administration's chances for passing an ANWR bill were greatly diminished by the Exxon Valdez accident. The disaster generated strong environmentalist sentiments and placed focus on security issues surrounding oil development in the Arctic region. On divisive matters which also have a broad demographic impact, such as the ANWR issue, the national mood is a critical factor in presidential politics.² The accident was, hence, one of the primary reasons why Bush was unable to open the coastal plain. In the aftermath of the Gulf War, President Bush tried to capitalize on his high approval ratings by introducing an ANWR drilling provision in a comprehensive energy bill. He was

heavily involved in the energy bill policy process. Prior to presenting the bill, he personally met—in the White House—with representatives and senators who had pro-development interests, to discuss opening the ANWR for oil drilling. The attempt met with strong resistance in the Democratic-controlled Congress, and the ANWR stipulation was eventually removed from the energy bill. Bush was able to use his influence as “chief legislator” to place the ANWR on the agenda, nevertheless the effect of divided government and more environmentally-oriented Democrats was overwhelming.

The 1992 election of Bill Clinton—who opposed opening the coastal plain—yet again altered the conditions between the executive branch and the legislative branch over the ANWR. The high-point of the ANWR debate during the 1990s was the Republican’s attempt in 1995 to use the budget reconciliation process to force a pro-development bill through Congress. The 1994 election had left the Republican Party in control of Congress and relevant committees, they were therefore able to procure passing votes for the budget bill including a provision for drilling in the refuge, in both the House and the Senate. However, Clinton vetoed the entire budget, citing the ANWR provision as one of the main objections. Clinton’s veto is the most influential and decisive action ever taken by a president in relation to the use of the coastal plain.

The constitutional veto power has generally been recognized as the president’s most momentous legislative tool; this accords with the manner in which the veto has been interpreted as impacting upon the ANWR debate—not only historically but also regarding its potential future use. In Clinton’s situation, the veto was valuable to environmentalists in terms of enabling the rejection, and future determent, of legislative attempts to open the coastal plain. However, during periods in which the executive branch is led by presidents in favor of exploration, the knowledge that an ANWR drilling bill will not be subject to an executive veto functions as a strong incentive for congressional movement on a pro-development agenda, as it removes a major legislative hindrance.

The effect of the presidential veto in the ANWR debate has been intrinsically connected to the fact that the number of Democrats and Republicans in the House and the Senate has remained relatively balanced, and that voting patterns on the question of drilling for oil in the coastal plain have tended to follow party lines. If either of the two parties were to come close to or gain veto-proof two-thirds majorities in both houses, the presidential power to either veto or approve a pro-development or conservationist bill would be severely limited.

However, veto-proof majorities over the ANWR issue have yet to occur, and unless the conditions which have characterized the debate over the last three decades are significantly altered, the presidential veto will remain a determining factor in the debate.

George W. Bush was an archetypal pro-development president, and his actions manifested both the powers and the limitations of the executive branch in the ANWR debate. In the period 2001-2009 the Bush administration raised the profile of the ANWR debate significantly. Based on newspaper articles and other literature analyzed throughout this thesis, it is clear that President Bush—and to a large extent Vice President Dick Cheney—came to epitomize the pro-development side of the debate.³ Bush Jr. largely continued the executive legislative effort that Reagan and Bush Sr. had initiated, and, like his father, he made the ANWR a vital part of an all-encompassing, energy policy. However, the Bush administration's failure to open the ANWR, either through the energy policy bill or the budget reconciliation process in 2005, highlights the ultimate limitations to the executive branch's role. Like Reagan and Bush Sr. before him, Bush Jr. was able to generate considerable legislative activity, but the presidents' rhetorical skills were not sufficient to sway either public opinion, or, subsequently, the attitudes of policymakers in Congress.

The ideological conflicts existing over the question of allowing industrial activity in a high-profile wilderness refuge, have been too disparate for the presidents to affect the national mood in a manner which, for example, would have resulted in the passage of a pro-development ANWR bill. The opposition from Democrats in Congress has been too robust, and combined with the extent to which the relationship between the executive branch and the legislative branch has—since the 1980s—been characterized by divided government; an impasse has thus existed for Republican pro-development maneuverings. The filibuster in the Senate has blocked the passage of pro-development ANWR bills through the normal legislative process. Moreover, in order to open the coastal plain by way of the budget reconciliation process, the entire budget bill—with the ANWR provision included—has to be acceptable simultaneously to a majority of the members of the House and the Senate, and the president. These are conditions which not have materialized yet. As seen in 2005, Republican Party control of both houses of Congress and the executive branch does not automatically generate conditions allowing the passage of a bill that sanctions drilling in the refuge, especially if the margins are too small to either counter the filibuster or a minor fraction of legislators who might decide to vote against the party majority perspective.

By contrast, control over administrative appointments, the Antiquities Act, and in particular over the legislative veto, are representative of presidential authority directly shaping

the management of the ANWR and the coastal plain. These powers, the president can use according to personal inclination, and largely irrespective of outside forces. The president has the opportunity to “go public” in order to generate support for legislative initiatives; however, the impact of such actions is dependent on factors like the president’s approval ratings and rhetorical skills, and the actual political effect can be difficult to predict. In actuality, not one president has been able to adequately convince the American people that drilling in the coastal plain would be the right policy for the nation. The decisive influence which the president has had on the ANWR debate through the use of executive powers is in agreement with work presented by Christopher Klyza and David Sousa. In *American Environmental Policy, 1990-2006*, Klyza and Sousa conclude that presidents have had a profoundly important impact on environmental politics. Klyza and Sousa argue that, through the use of administrative powers such as appointments, rulemaking, agency control, and the Antiquities Act; the president has—especially since the two-party political system has “gridlocked” environmental politics in Congress since 1990—often determined whether U.S. environmental politics has an anthropocentric or more ecological profile.⁴ In *The Environmental Presidency*, Dennis L. Soden and Brent S. Steel also conclude that in relation to environmental politics the presidents have been most influential through their use of executive powers. Thus, the ways in which the presidents have made an impact upon the ANWR debate, correlates with the general influence the executive branch has had on U.S. environmental politics, according to these recent studies.

6.2. Motivational Factors

The actions of the various presidents have been motivated by a range of influences, but essentially, it appears that decisions regarding the ANWR have primarily been grounded in strong personal values. Out of all the presidents, Carter appears to have been the one most invested and active in the subject. While in office, Carter adamantly supported protection and, since his presidency he has spoken and written extensively in favor of the preservation of the coastal plain. With regard to the caribou, Carter strongly endorsed the scientific importance of protecting the coastal plain. He furthermore adopted a religious sense of protection of the area—as a symbol of God’s creation—that was reminiscent of the sentiments of David Thoreau and John Muir. Carter has also been the only president showing apparent concern with the indigenous Alaskans’ perspectives in the ANWR debate. He supported the Gwich’in Indians effort to protect the caribou on human rights grounds.

The extent to which Carter actually has been the fore figure in the effort to preserve the ANWR, can be deducted from his post-presidential activities. Thomas F. Schaller and Thomas W. Williams argue that the impact of ex-presidents grew considerably during the latter half of the twentieth century, and that one of the elements that emerged as a result was the “ex-bully pulpit.”⁵ Carter generally receives very positive assessments for his ex-presidential performance and, according to Schaller and Williams, Carter “pioneered” the use of the “ex-bully pulpit.”⁶ This observation is indeed substantiated by Carter’s approach to the ANWR debate since his presidency. The editorials and books over the last three decades which Carter has written and contributed to—with the intention of increasing support for the protection of the ANWR—are illustrative of “ex-bully pulpit” behavior.

The concepts of stewardship and bequest were central for how Carter and Clinton reasoned with regard to the coastal plain. Carter adapted strongly to Theodore Roosevelt’s stewardship theory and his approach to nature preservation. Clinton also saw his work in relation to Roosevelt’s philosophy, although perhaps not to the same extent as Carter. Both Carter and Clinton were clearly also inspired by how Roosevelt had utilized the powers of the presidency to set aside protected areas, and how the early president considered the chief executive to have a special governmental responsibility to be farsighted on issues pertaining to preservation. The degree to which the executive branch can affect issues relating to land management depends largely on how such subjects are prioritized by the president. As seen with Carter in relation to the Alaska lands bill, and with Clinton regarding the ANWR veto and other issues (such as the Utah Monument and the 55 million acres forest protection rule); when presidents are engaged in a matter they have vast powers at their disposal. At the core, the two Democrats seem to have been motivated by a genuine desire to preserve ecological sanctuaries, such as the ANWR, wholly undisturbed for the enjoyment of future generations.

Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr. espoused lucid and almost identical pro-development policies on the ANWR. The presidents’ extraction-oriented values are traced back to their backgrounds. Both Bush Sr. and Bush Jr. had worked in the Texas oil industry prior to their political careers, whereas Reagan had adhered to a strong free-market ideology since his time at General Electric. These presidents appear to have largely appointed persons to their administrations who adhered to the same pro-development principles. Hence, the advice which Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr. received from their subordinates on the environment, seemingly reinforced each president’s personal view. Bush Jr.’s selection of Dick Cheney—a former oil executive—and the way in which the vice president led the administration’s energy policy group underscores this observation. The group listened primarily to the energy industry

and the oil industry in particular, while environmental organizations were largely ignored. The Republican presidents have, more so than Carter and Clinton, also supported and worked with the Alaska congressional delegation.

In contrast to the Republican presidents, Carter and Clinton were affected by more ecological-oriented influences. Carter and especially Clinton—through the appointments of Al Gore, Bruce Babbitt, and Carol Browner—surrounded themselves with advisors who advocated ecological viewpoints. With these appointments, Clinton also “opened the door” for environmental organizations to the executive branch. Furthermore, the fact that more Democrats tend to support full protection of the coastal plain than Republicans, certainly affected Carter’s and Clinton’s policies on the ANWR. The Democratic Party generally advocates more environmentally-friendly values than the Republican Party, and Carter’s and Clinton’s decisions became definitive representatives for many Democrats’ approach to environmental politics. Likewise, Reagan’s, Bush Sr.’s, and Bush Jr.’s staunch pro-development positions epitomized strong business-oriented viewpoints supported by a majority of Republicans. Thus, even if the Democratic and Republican presidents’ ANWR policies were grounded in personal beliefs, they were also exposed to strong outside influences that colored their working environments.

Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr. generally advocated the exploration of the ANWR on identical, national security, grounds. These presidents seldom emphasized the state perspective as did the Alaska congressional delegation, and they addressed the ANWR even less in terms of the indigenous inhabitants context. In essence, the national security argument presented by the three Republican presidents contends that the nation’s growing dependency on foreign oil from nations that exhibit hostile attitudes toward the U.S. poses a great security threat, and thus it is necessary to explore in areas such as the ANWR to mitigate the situation. The argument in itself has developed little since the Reagan administration published the *Coastal Plain Resource Assessment* in the late 1980s. The presidents’ reasoning highlighted an authentic concern about the domestic energy situation. However, in relation to the ANWR, the national security rationale has been rebutted as irrelevant, and the Republican presidents haven’t been able to develop the argument in a way that has convinced a sufficient amount of the populace of the justifiability of exploring the ANWR.

6.3. Usefulness of Presidential Models and Theories

Models and theories pertaining to the study of the presidency have helped place this analysis of the ANWR issue in a broader context of executive branch politics. The debate over how to manage the ANWR has over the last three decades encouraged presidents to take decisive action, and shown how the use and influence of executive powers depend on the policy priorities of a particular administration. Presidential theories and models have been applicable in examination of the ANWR debate both in respect of the individual and administrative levels.

On the personal level, the stewardship theory proved to be central for analyzing presidential involvement in the ANWR debate. The theory elucidated the historical lineage on presidential land management that stretches from Theodore Roosevelt to Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton. Hence, the ANWR issue has raised land-management questions that have been pertinent to the executive branch since the beginning of the twentieth century. The stewardship theory, furthermore, shed light on the constitutional aspect of Carter's and Clinton's land protection decisions. Both Carter and Clinton adhered to a broad stewardship-inspired interpretation of presidential rights and responsibilities over land protection. This was most visible in the way in which both presidents favored extensive use of the Antiquities Act, also in contentious cases when the employment of the act generated considerable opposition in Congress. The concept of presidential stewardship was also apt for demonstrating how Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr. approached the ANWR debate. The three Republican presidents espoused the notion that opening up the ANWR would be critical to the public good, and in extension of this premise, framed it as their executive responsibility to pursue such a policy.

It is evident from reflecting on the five presidents' involvements and actions in the ANWR debate in the light of the stewardship theory, that the presidents both actively assume, and that the public expects, energy and environmental policy leadership from the executive branch. In relation to the question of drilling for oil in the ANWR, it can be argued that the Republican presidents followed a "weak sustainability" model to executive environmental stewardship: Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr. were all more inclined to accept technological advances as sufficient environmental protection and to dismiss any other negative effects as negligible. Carter and Clinton, by contrast, practiced "strong sustainability" stewardship by protecting the wildlife and biological qualities of the refuge. Clearly, Douglas Booth's writings on the concept of sustainability are a suitable supplement to the stewardship theory.

Moreover, theories which conceptualize how presidents are first and foremost concerned with economic growth as reflective of the public's primary concern, seemed to best capture how Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr. approached the ANWR issue and environmental politics in general. Carter and Clinton were of course equally concerned with the prosperity of the United States, but the two Democrats did not let it dominate their environmental stewardship to the same extent as the Republican presidents.

James Barber's presidential character model has clarified Carter's and Clinton's approaches to environmental politics. Both classified as active-positives, this character description proved to fit with their seemingly positive outlook on environmental protection. Carter and Clinton exhibited through their writings and actions authentic ambitions to use the powers of the executive office to improve environmental conditions for coming generations. Bush Sr. has also been classified as an active-positive and he too seemed concerned with long-term environmental protection. To a greater degree than the Democratic presidents, however, Bush Senior's environmental policy decisions—on issues such as global warming as well as the ANWR—contradicted his proclaimed ecological concerns. The character analyses have been useful, but even more so than the specific parameters of the model, Barber's encompassing idea that “personality shapes performance” and the consequent significance of exploring each president's personal opinions to better understand their policy choices, is especially rewarding in terms of environmental policy.⁷ Since how people view and adapt to the concept of environmentalism depends largely on individual interpretation—as observed in the discussion over anthropocentric and biocentric values—it is critical to consider the presidents' subjective stances in view of the extensive powers associated with the executive branch.

On the administrative level, presidential models and theories which address how the policy agenda of the executive branch develops have been useful for comprehending how Carter, Reagan, Bush Sr., Clinton, and Bush Jr. approached the ANWR issue. For instance, in light of John Kingdon's “stream model,” the Exxon Valdez disaster appeared to be a prototypical political “focusing event,” thwarting Bush Sr.'s effort to open the coastal plain. Bush Jr., on the other hand, actively tried to create a favorable national mood by consistently advocating oil production in the ANWR. The Bush (Jr.) administration's pro-development position became particularly visible during periods when there existed a real possibility that Congress could pass a pro-development ANWR bill, as occurred for instance during 2005. As discussed in previous chapters, legislative leadership has become a core element of the presidency, and the Bush Jr. administration's incorporation of drilling in the refuge into an

encompassing energy policy, and the explicit effort to lead Congress by appealing to the public, was in accordance with Fred I. Greenstein's modern presidency model. All three Republican presidents exhibited federal-level, legislative leadership in their attempts to open the ANWR—although this was most visible during the presidency of Bush Jr.

Regarding the executive-congressional relationship, the theory of divided government accentuated several critical aspects of the dynamics of the ANWR debate. A consequence of the strong party differences existing over the question of drilling in the ANWR, reveals that the chances of approval of oil development on the coastal plain are considerably lower during periods when the Democratic Party controls the White House or one of the houses in Congress, especially the Senate. In the most basic sense, theories and models pertaining to the American presidency have directed this study. These conceptualizations elucidated different aspects of the executive branch which were necessary to examine in order to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the ANWR as a presidential topic.

6.4. The ANWR and Larger, Environmental and Energy-Related Policy Themes

The question over whether to drill for oil in the ANWR coastal plain has, over the last thirty years, consistently been representative of larger policy themes in the United States. In an effort spearheaded by Reagan, Bush Sr., and Bush Jr. the ANWR has become an integral part of the energy debate. America's growing energy consumption along with increasing dependence on foreign oil is the primary motivation for why most pro-development politicians push for oil exploration in the ANWR. However, there have been political opportunities to redress the development, particularly in terms of conservation. In *Strategic Energy Policy*, an independent task-force observes: "Demand management has in recent years [1980s and 1990s] been the rhetorical step-child of national energy policy."⁸ As noted throughout the thesis, there has been too little emphasis on efficiency, through the CAFE standards, for instance; and, furthermore, the focus on alternative sources of energy has been inconsistent. The task force implicitly argues—by pointing to other countries which have reduced consumption by more directly controlling the oil price through taxation—that the U.S. should consider more federal control of the oil price to lessen the use of oil and protect against disruptions. Controls that produce higher oil prices could significantly reduce consumption, and thus lessen the attention on ecologically significant areas such as the ANWR.

Drilling in the ANWR, moreover, is a question of principle both for pro-developers and environmentalists. Reagan and Bush Jr.—arguably the two modern American presidents with the greatest sympathies towards development—strongly supported opening the entire outer continental shelf to industrial activity. Reagan, above all, and to a large degree Bush Sr. and Bush Jr. also, characterized the anthropocentric-oriented development values associated with dominant social paradigm theory.⁹ Hence, the ANWR issue only constitutes one element in a predominantly industry-friendly ideological environment which prevailed in all the Republican administrations. Bush Sr. and Jr. exhibited the same business-minded attitudes in relation to the establishment of global warming emission standards. In essence, Bush Sr. and Bush Jr.’s dismissal of binding international greenhouse gas standards was an imprudent, myopic rejection of collective environmental responsibility: in relation to the ANWR, the two Republicans were unwilling to accept any significant economic costs in order to preserve the environment for future generations.

For actors ultimately concerned with land protection such as Carter and Clinton, the ANWR was an opportunity to “draw the line” on environmental protection. Faced with strong opposition from political and market forces, Carter and Clinton were willing to set aside parts of the natural environment even if it meant the loss of immediate, material gains. By preserving the ANWR, they represented an ecological approach to nature that had previously been espoused by prominent environmentalists such as John Muir, Theodore Roosevelt, and Olaus Murie. Carter and Clinton safeguarded the fundamental principles designated in the establishment of the ANWR, as set forth by Olaus Murie who during the 1950s led the movement to establish the refuge. Murie argued that the ANWR was to be “a little portion of our planet left alone,” where people would be able to come and experience the solitude and the wildlife, while leaving the area unmarked by human presence.¹⁰ Hence, drilling in the coastal plain would contravene the essential principle behind the establishment of the ANWR—regardless of how much adverse effects can be curtailed. Pro-development advocates often argue that development would take place under “the most stringent” environmental protection standards.¹¹ However, strong legal requirements are inadequate in terms of preserving the refuge fully intact. In the event that oil exploration causes a major accident—for instance similar to the Exxon Valdez disaster—in or around the ANWR, previously established stipulations would be irrelevant. The effects of the recurrence of such an incident would be equally damaging and the ecological values of the refuge would be blighted both scientifically and aesthetically.

Professor of Law, Robert L. Fischman, moreover argues that the premise upon which drilling in the ANWR has been proposed over the last thirty years, would damage the whole National Wildlife Refuge System (NWRS). According to Fischman, pro-development advocates should not focus on the economic benefits that drilling can provide and the degree to which impact can be minimized. They must, rather, clarify how development can advance “the conservation mission” of the NWRS system, or how that the ANWR—as a unit— should be excluded entirely from the system.¹² Based on his article, Fischman apparently endorses full protection of the refuge, thus the alternatives mentioned above are only rhetorically advanced objectives, highlighting how oil development on the coastal would break with the ecological premises of the NWRS. In a similar fashion to Fischman, the Natural Resources Defense Council argues that allowing oil development in the ANWR would set a “dangerous precedent” potentially facilitating the opening of protected areas to industrial activity.¹³ Although the environment as a policy issue currently ranks low amongst the American public by comparison to, for instance, the economy, attention around climate change has grown considerably during the last years.¹⁴ The effects of global warming have become more visible with the melting of the polar ice cap; thus, allowing oil exploration in the ANWR—a protected area in the Arctic region—would send the wrong political signal. There is already extensive oil industry activity in the Arctic, and sanctioning development on the coastal plain would stand as a political rejection of the ecological values of the region.

Based on the research done for this thesis, it appears that the powers associated with the executive branch have historically both contributed to and damaged the health of the American environment. The most important factor explaining the irregular effect of the executive branch is how the various presidents and administrations have differed in their prioritization of environmental policy. The ability to provide effective leadership—one of the fundamental qualities of the executive branch—is arguably the preeminent way in which the president can have a positive influence on environmental politics.¹⁵ Historians and archeologists David Harmon, Francis P. McManamon, and Dwight T. Pitcaithley reason that the capability of the president to rise above congressional partisanship and state-level reluctance has in terms of land preservation been overwhelmingly positive.¹⁶ Harmon, McManamon, and Pitcaithley are in their analysis primarily concerned with the Antiquities Act; however it is evident that the same logic is transferable to other areas of executive environmental policymaking such as appointments and legislative proposals. By investing political capital in decisions related to environmental politics—as T. Roosevelt, Carter and Clinton did—presidents have, unequivocally, a positive effect on the sustainability of the

American environment. In addition, it seems plausible to argue that as environmental problems in the twenty-first century need to be addressed globally, as well as nationally, the presidency can potentially provide quick and effective leadership that also benefits the international community.

In contrast, the effect of Reagan's policies stands as the most prolific example of how the executive branch can have a negative influence on the U.S. natural environment. The president has vast administrative powers over the federal bureaucracy, and it is an area—as Reagan proved—where the president can have a harmful impact on environmental politics. By slashing funding for the Environmental Protection Agency and hiring officials who favored less enforcement Reagan damaged the effectiveness of the agency,¹⁷ a process which subsequently reduced the amount of environmental protection that the federal government offered to the American people. As regards the continuous protection of the environment, it would be favorable if these types of radical developments are avoided in the future. However, it appears that Congress and the American people provide the most important responses to such reactionary policies. In relation to Reagan's policies, Congress responded by raising the budget of the EPA during the latter half of the 1980s, and environmental organizations experienced a significant increase in membership.¹⁸ Therefore, given the fact that Congress and the American populace seem prone to check the president's policies if and when they become overly anthropocentric, the extensive powers associated with the executive branch appear, on the whole, to contribute to a healthier environment both in terms of preservation and urban protection.

It is difficult to predict whether oil development will eventually be allowed on the coastal plain. One observable tendency may indicate in the negative: what Klyza and Sousa describe as the “green drift” of American environmental politics. Klyza and Sousa argue that although American politics in general has moved markedly to the right since the 1970s, environmentalist sentiments have strengthened. Despite the stalemate between Democrats and Republicans in Congress over environmental issues—as discussed in chapter two—various circumstances have contributed to the “green drift.” On Klyza and Sousa's reading, two critical developments are the growing strength of environmental interest groups, and the effects of environmental laws established during the 1970s. Legislation, such as the Clean Air Act and the Endangered Species Act, constitutes the base of environmental protection in the U.S. and interest groups have effectively used the statutes both to hinder regressive decisions and to enforce stricter standards. This situation is, as Klyza and Sousa note, enforced by the general public's increasing tendency to endorse environmental protection more strongly.¹⁹

Throughout the thesis it has been observed that, over the last thirty years, the American populace has repeatedly shown a basis of support for environmental protection in the U.S. The most recent evidence that this tendency is still evolving, is President Barack Obama's commencement to overturn several of the Bush administration's more controversial environmental decisions.²⁰ In light of these developments, it seems reasonable to infer that support for preserving the ANWR fully intact is likely to increase, which in turn will impede efforts to open the coastal plain to oil drilling.

With respect to the Obama administration's ANWR policy, there appears to be little hope for pro-development advocates. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar stated in March 2009 that sub-surface directional drilling from outside the boundaries of the refuge was—as a result of new technological improvements—an issue “that could be discussed.”²¹ However, the secretary noted that even this was an approach that he most likely would oppose on ecological grounds. Salazar added that the administration still was unequivocal in their policy of not allowing any physical oil activity within the limits of the refuge.²² As late as November 2007, both Salazar and Obama, co-sponsored legislation in the Senate that would have designated the coastal plain as wilderness, and during the 2008 election campaign President Obama stated that “I strongly reject drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge because it would irreversibly damage a protected national wildlife refuge.”²³ How future presidents view the question over drilling in the ANWR will be a critical matter for the region. The president sets the tone for the debate, and is, furthermore, a key actor in determining whether industrial activity will be allowed on the coastal plain under the auspices of the designated legislative powers of the executive branch. Future presidents, by contrast to their predecessors, should work more rapidly to implement a diverse and long term energy policy that defuses the political pressure to drill for oil on the coastal plain of the ANWR.

Notes

Chapter One: Introduction

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5. Carolyn Merchant, *American Environmental History: An Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 68-71.
6. Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 86.
7. Henry D. Thoreau, *Walden and Resistance to Civil Government: Authoritative Texts: Thoreau's Journal: Reviews and Essays in Criticism*, ed. William Rossi, 2nd ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1992), 212.
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12. Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 194-195.
13. Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac, and Sketches Here and There*, special Commemorative edition, introduction by Robert Finch (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

14. Roger Kaye, *Last Great Wilderness: The Campaign to Establish the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 2006), 9-11. The quote is located on page 11.

15. Kaye, *Last Great Wilderness*, 28, 65-76; Jonathan Waterman, *Where Mountains are Nameless: Passion and Politics in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge: Including the Story of Olaus and Mardy Murie* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2005), 114.

16. The bill did not emerge from the Senate Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce. Senator Bartlett was a member of the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce which held hearings on the Arctic Range bill. Roger Kaye notes that Bartlett's opposition was the main reason why the bill was not voted on in the Senate. See Kaye, *Last Great Wilderness*, 170, 202.

17. Kaye, *Last Great Wilderness*, 157, 170.

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22. Strohmeier, *Extreme Conditions*, 82-85. The quote is located on page 84.

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26. For more on the Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 see Chris J. Dolan, John Frendreis, and Raymond Tatalovich, *The Presidency and Economic Policy* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2008), 107-108.

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29. Pika and Maltese, *The Politics of the Presidency*, 21.

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30. Pika and Maltese, *The Politics of the Presidency*, 129.
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Chapter Two: The Deep Context of the ANWR Debate

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2. John Strohmeier, *Extreme Conditions: Big Oil and the Transformation of Alaska* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993), 69-71.
3. Oran R. Young and Gail Osherenko, *The Age of the Arctic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 78.
4. Richard S. Jones, "Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 (Public Law 92-203): History and Analysis Together With Subsequent Amendments" (Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, June 1, 1981), http://www.alaskool.org/projects/ANCSA/reports/rsjones1981/ANCSA_History71.htm (accessed March 25, 2009).
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document. Throughout the process Francis reported to the Mayor of Kaktovik and the city council, which reviewed both the content and the wording of the report to confirm that it captured the essence of the city's position. The report was written in 1991, however, George Tagarook—a member of the City Council in Kaktovik—confirmed in 2003 that the document still was representative for the city. In a legislative field hearing in Kaktovik carried out by the House Committee on Resources, Tagarook stated that the city council had “recently reviewed” the Kaktovik Papers and that they still were “current and consistent with their original objectives.” He recommended that those how wished to understand the position of Kaktovik on the ANWR should read the Kaktovik Papers. The hearing was carried out in connection with H.R. 39, Arctic Coastal Plain Domestic Security Act of 2003, and H.R. 770, Morris K. Udall Arctic Wilderness Act. For Tagarook's statement see House Committee on Resources, *Legislative Field Hearing on H.R. 39, Arctic Coastal Plain Domestic Energy Security Act of 2003; & H.R. 770, Morris K. Udall Arctic Wilderness Act*, 108th Cong., 1st sess. (April 5, 2003): 47-48, <http://bulk.resource.org/gpo.gov/hearings/108h/86329.pdf> (accessed March 25, 2009).

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