

# The Indiana Law Blog

Focus is on Indiana law, and on developments in law and technology of interest not just to Indiana lawyers.

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## ENVIRONMENT - WATER, WATER, WATER

Three stories in today's Sunday [LA Times](#) about water. [This long and very interesting story](#), headed "*Bush Makes Time for 'Hook and Bullet' Set: Fishing and hunting groups have the administration's ear and are emerging as a lobbying force for environmental issues,*" talks about a meeting President Bush had last month:

The National Rifle Assn. was represented at the White House meeting; so were Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever. Altogether, President Bush spent more than an hour with the leaders of some 20 hunting and fishing groups in the room named for Theodore Roosevelt, the first conservationist president.

Top on the visitors' list of concerns at the session in December was a plan by some administration officials to rewrite the 1972 Clean Water Act in a way that could damage millions of acres of wetlands and countless miles of streams — prime habitat for the wildlife that these groups hunt and fish.

Without specifying his position on the issue, Bush assured those in the room that he understood the value of wetlands and would not let his administration do anything that would spoil them, participants in the meeting said. Just four days later, Bush killed the plan to rewrite the Clean Water Act.

The article points out that "When Christie Whitman was the Environmental Protection Agency administrator, she understood the 'hook and bullet' crowd's clout at the White House."

About six months ago, Whitman called Jim Range, chairman of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, a nonprofit advocacy group focused on issues affecting hunting and fishing, and asked if he would gather representatives of member groups to talk with her about wetlands policy. "It was her analysis that because of the importance the hunting and fishing community has always placed on wetlands, they would be the most influential people on this administration and this president," Range recalled.

Whitman, whose goal at the EPA was to protect wetlands and streams, knew that others in the administration were eager to limit the scope of the Clean Water Act. By asking



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