

Trump names oil billionaire to be Secretary of the Interior the agency overseeing National Parks



The future of our national parks

The Secretary of the Interior is a critical job within the U.S. government, overseeing the Bureau of Land Management, National Parks, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Geological Survey, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and much more. It is vital to the land management and preservation of federal lands. The U.S. Department of the Interior's mission is described [thusly](#):

Protecting America's Great Outdoors and Powering Our Future

The Department of the Interior protects and manages the Nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its trust responsibilities or special commitments to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated island communities.

Bucking the trend of environmentally friendly Interior leadership (current Dept. of Interior Secretary Sally Jewell is the former CEO of outdoor retailer REI), Politico is [reporting Donald Trump's has chosen an oil billionaire:](#)



Forrest Lucas, co-founder of oil products company Lucas Oil and an outspoken opponent of animal rights, is a leading contender for Interior secretary should Donald Trump win the White House, say two sources familiar with the campaign's deliberations.

The Republican businessman, 74, is well known in Indiana, where in 2006 he won the naming rights to Lucas Oil Stadium, the home of the Indianapolis Colts football team, for a [reported](#) \$121.5 million over 20 years. He and his wife have given \$50,000 to Mike Pence's gubernatorial campaigns, according to Indiana state records.

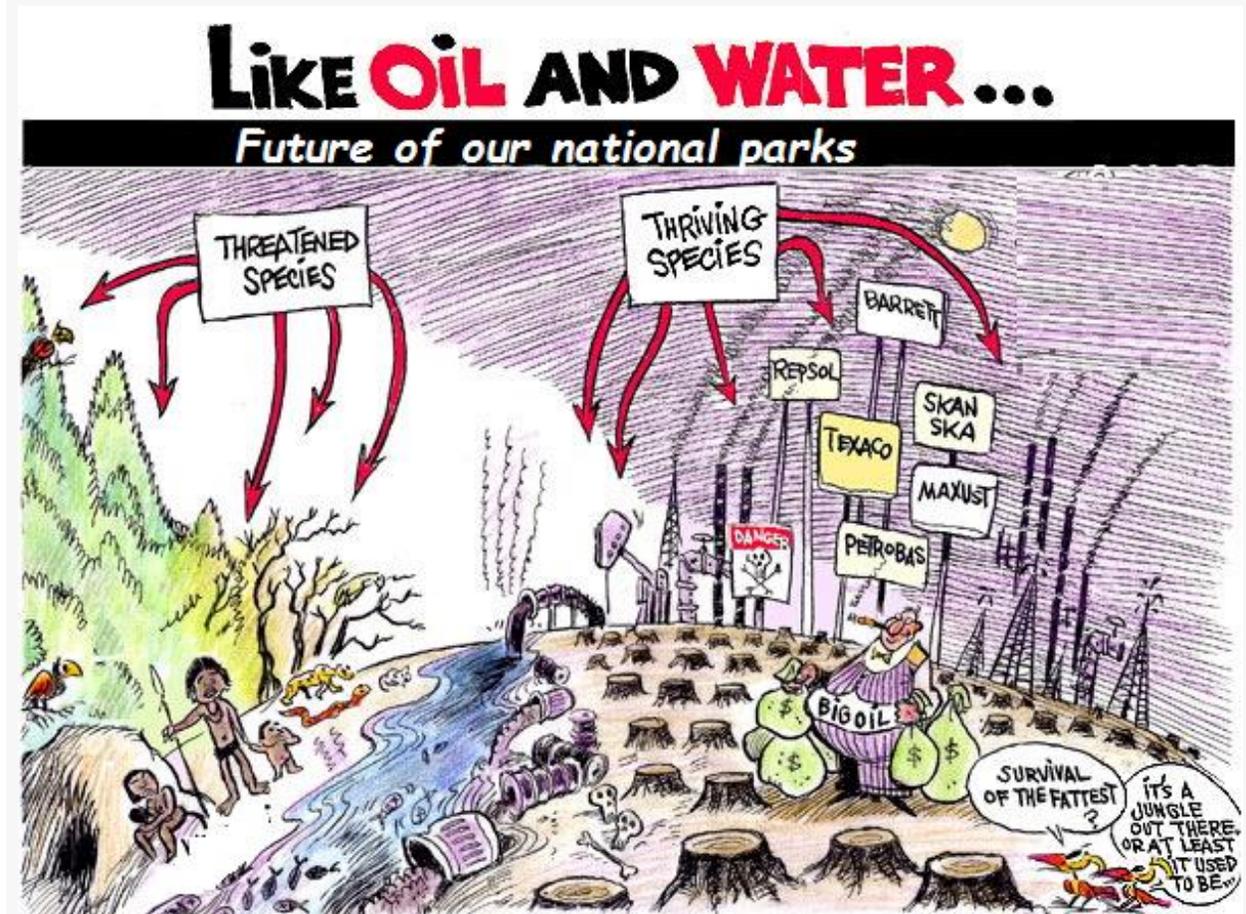
It's no coincidence oil and gas industry executives would be thrilled with the choice:

Lucas' nomination would be a coup for the oil and gas industry, which has battled President Barack Obama's Interior Department for years over everything from Endangered Species Act listings to access to federal lands for drilling. Trump has cultivated close ties to the oil industry, which was once [skeptical](#) of his campaign for president. Harold Hamm, the CEO of Oklahoma oil company Continental Resources, is seen as a [possible pick](#) for energy secretary in a Trump administration.

Is there any doubt they handpicked Lucas and handed him to the Trump campaign? As if giving away huge amounts of federal lands to oil and gas cronies isn't bad enough, the man

has financed a war against the Humane Society. Yes, the organization that helps stray cats and dogs. Why? He thinks puppy mills get an unfair shake:

Earlier this year, Lucas financed and produced a feature film called “The Dog Lover,” which portrays dog breeders and puppy mills as being unfairly targeted by animal rights groups. The movie was backed by Protect the Harvest, a nonprofit founded and chaired by Lucas, that says it’s “Keeping America Free, Fed & Fun!” In 2014, Lucas gave \$250,000 to the Protect the Harvest PAC, records show.



Of course, selling off our public lands for the benefit of billionaire oil and gas executives has long been the goal of dark money groups, many funded by the [Koch brothers](#):

A dark money group backed by Charles and David Koch is behind a well-funded effort to undermine protections at the Grand Canyon and overturn the Antiquities Act, the law President Teddy Roosevelt used to permanently [protect the area](#) in 1908. If successful, the campaign could stop a permanent ban on uranium mining near the canyon’s rim, despite support for such a ban by a vast majority of Arizonans.

“Dark money” groups can raise unlimited amounts of money from donors they do not have to disclose, thanks to two [infamous](#) Supreme Court decisions.

The Koch brothers’ anti-park effort is being run through the Arizona-based [Prosper Inc.](#) and its sister organization the [Prosper Foundation Inc.](#), which share a physical address, a logo, a staff, and a founder — Kirk Adams. Adams served as Speaker of the Arizona House of Representatives from 2009 to 2011, ran a [failed attempt](#) for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2012, and is currently the Chief of Staff to Arizona Governor Doug Ducey.

Earlier this year, Prosper [co-authored a report](#) with the Arizona Chamber of Commerce Foundation, which declared that protecting the public lands around the Grand Canyon National Park as a national monument would be a “monumental mistake” that represents “unwarranted and unwanted federal overreach” and would “undermine” the state of Arizona. It calls the Antiquities Act — which has been [used by](#) 16 out of the last 19 American presidents to protect places like the Grand Canyon, Chaco Canyon, and Arches — “the worst kind of federal overreach.”

Is there any doubt a Trump administration would sell off our precious public lands to make the extremely wealthy even wealthier?



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