

# George W. Bush's Healthy Forests

Jacqueline Vaughn and Hanna J. Cortner



GEORGE W. BUSH'S HEALTHY FORESTS  
REFRAMING THE ENVIRONMENTAL DEBATE

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Jacqueline Vaughn and Hanna J. Corts detail how the Bush administration, by changing the terms and processes of debate, side-stepped opposition and put in place policies that restrict public and scientific involvement in environmental decisions. Their groundbreaking study analyses the context and legal effects of the Healthy Forests Initiative, the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, and related regulatory changes. The authors show how the administration used news events such as wildfires to propel legislation through Congress. Focusing blame for wildfires on environmentalists' use of appeals to challenge fuel-reduction projects, the administration restricted opportunities for environmental analysis, administrative appeals, and litigation. The authors argue that these tools have a history of use by diverse interests and have long protected Americans' right to question government decisions. This readable study identifies the players, events, and strategies that expedited the policy shift and contextualises it in the president's career and in legislative and administrative history. Revealing a policy change with major implications for the future of public lands and public process, "George W. Bush's Healthy Forests" will fascinate readers interested in the environment, politics, the Bush administration, and current affairs.

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