

I'm sure that Scott Pruitt has his good side. Probably he loves dogs. But his bad traits are, well, pretty hard to overlook. Here are some of the main characteristics of the man who is now charged by statute with protecting our environment:

Paranoia. As [Grist](#) says, "in just his first year, he has reportedly expanded his around-the-clock security detail at a cost of at least \$2 million annually. He spent [\\$25,000](#) on a secure phone booth inside his office." And he has spent far more than that to fly first-class out of fear of what the peasants in economy might say or do.

Industry bias. According to the [NY Times](#), Pruitt has relied more heavily on industry lobbyists than on EPA staff in making decisions. Rather than obtaining expert input from staff, he "has outsourced crucial work to a network of lawyers, lobbyists, and other allies, especially Republican state attorneys general." His appointment calendars for a six-month period [showed](#) that:

"Pruitt hears overwhelmingly from industry. He was scheduled to meet 154 times during the period with officials from companies such as ExxonMobil and trade associations such as the American Petroleum Institute.... Those same calendars indicate he saw only three groups representing environmental or public-health interests, though an EPA press release says he met with two others".

Egoism. In Pruitt's first days in office, 90% of the agency's tweets were about him. He used government money to hire a Republican media firm to produce a [report](#) about the first year of his term, which mentions his name 214 times and includes him in 20 out of 24 photos.

Rejection of science. Pruitt doesn't accept the scientific consensus that human activities are the primary cause of climate change. He told CNBC:

"I think that measuring with precision human activity on the climate is something very challenging to do and there's tremendous disagreement about the degree of impact, so no, I would not agree that it's a primary contributor to the global warming that we see."

Pruitt has pushed hard to have a public debate between scientists and climate deniers, which has been [blocked](#) so far by the White House Chief of Staff.

He's also skeptical of the theory of evolution, which scientists have accepted since around the time Grover Cleveland was president. As Pruitt [said](#) in a radio interview: "There aren't sufficient scientific facts to establish the theory of evolution, and it deals with the origins of man, which is more from a philosophical standpoint than a scientific standpoint."

Belief that oil and gas are godly. "True environmentalism," he said, is using natural resources that God has blessed us with." He followed up with an unusual metaphor to explain why it would be wrong to prevent mining and drilling in environmentally sensitive areas. I'm not sure I can paraphrase this, so here's the quote:

"It's like having a beautiful apple orchard that could feed the world, but the environmentalists put up a fence around the apple orchard and say do not touch the apple orchard because it may spoil the apple orchard. Instead of, what, cultivating and using the apple orchard and exporting that fruit to feed the world. We as a country feed the world. We as a country power the world."

Sycophancy. When it's time to ladle out praise for his boss, no one is second to Pruitt. Here's what he told the Heartland Institute, for instance, about what it's like working for Trump:

"It's been wonderful. As I shared with you earlier, the president is full of courage and he's full of action. He wants results. That's what the American people want..."

I seek every day, and I mean this sincerely, to bless him. I want to bless him and the decisions he's making."

Spooning it on a bit heavy, I'd say.

Ambition. Being Administrator of EPA apparently isn't good enough for Pruitt. He has long been rumored to be aiming to replace Inhofe, who is likely to retire in 2020, and his travel schedule is [arranged](#) to expose him to potential donors in many Republican states. There have been a flurry of press reports that he's currently campaigning to replace Jeff Sessions as Attorney General.

I could probably go on, but this exercise is starting to get depressing. Not as depressing, however, as what Pruitt is likely to do in his remaining time at EPA. Or the thought of what

he might do as Attorney General.