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[Dan](#) and [Sean](#) have already expressed their views about today's announcement that Scott Pruitt is out as EPA Administrator. I thought I'd add mine as well. Scott Pruitt was a potent symbol of corruption, the ultimate swamp creature who made laughable his boss's claim that he would come to Washington and drain the swamp. And because Pruitt's transgressions were so numerous, they kept the EPA in the limelight day after day. As Sean notes, even Pruitt's allies had begun to abandon him. At the end of the day, Pruitt helped opponents of the Trump Administration more than he helped his boss and reminded voters regularly that environmental protection was under assault by a corrupt and venal leader. Ultimately, that's [why he had to go](#), especially before the midterms in November.

Given his potency as a symbol, part of me wishes Pruitt would stay in office to keep the Trump Administration's environmental transgressions in the headlines. As Sean notes, Andrew Wheeler, the acting Administrator who is a former coal lobbyist and chief of staff to infamous climate denier James Inhofe, will continue the rollbacks that Pruitt began and may even do so more effectively (though I'm not so sure that the carelessness with which many of the rollbacks have taken place were only the work of Pruitt- expediency and speed may have been more important at the outset of the administration than care and process).

Wheeler will certainly garner less attention. The steady assault on environmental protection will take place more quietly and may do less to motivate Trump opponents to vote in November. For similar reasons, I [argued](#) last year that I was glad Trump announced he was pulling the U.S. out of the Paris Agreement: he brought much greater attention to the fact that his administration was already gutting the U.S. commitment under Paris and

motivated much more significant opposition to his retrograde climate policies.

And yet, good riddance to Scott Pruitt. It is one thing (and a very bad one) to lead a wholesale assault on environmental protection. It is quite another to abuse staff, violate ethics rules and perhaps the law, raid the public coffers for personal gain and glory, have his staff drive from Ritz Carlton to Ritz Carlton looking for his [favorite moisturizer](#), and otherwise make a mockery of public service. No governmental official deserves to remain in office after committing even half of the offenses of which Pruitt is accused. So even though I think his resignation removes a potent and corrupt symbol from public view, I am happy to see him go.