

Greenwire

THE DAILY EXECUTIVE BRIEFING ON THE ENVIRONMENT

— Monday — February 14, 1994 — Vol. 3 — No. 192 —

282 North Washington Street, Falls Church, VA (703) 237-5130

WHISTLEBLOWERS: LABOR SECRETARY REINSTATES EPA SCIENTIST

A decision in an EPA whistleblower case has established that federal employees discriminated against for raising environmental concerns can file suit under federal enviro laws. Previously, only private citizens had been able to sue for damages under federal enviro statutes. Stephen Kohn, attorney for William Marcus and chairman of the National Whistleblower Center: "This is a major, landmark decision." On 2/7, Labor Sec'y Robert Reich issued a decision ordering EPA to reinstate Marcus. EPA fired Marcus in 5/92, citing inspector general reports that he improperly used agency information for outside employment that posed a conflict of interest. Marcus said the scrutiny intensified after he publicly criticized EPA's policy on fluoride in drinking water (Ruth Larson, WASH. TIMES, 2/11).

The Labor Dept. also granted Marcus \$50,000 in compensatory damages, a record award under the whistleblower-protection sections of six major federal enviro laws. The EPA was found guilty of falsifying employment records, discrimination, and retaliation against a whistleblower (National Whistleblower Center release, 1/10).