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The Monthly Newspaper For Common-Sense Environmentalists

Environment & Climate News

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Cancun Climate Talks Fizzle, But U.S. Agrees to Pricey New Program

Children visit the Climate Change Village during the international climate talks in Cancun.



By James M. Taylor

With China, India, and other developing nations refusing to accept binding restrictions on their carbon dioxide emissions, international climate talks in Cancun, Mexico ended without any significant agreement.

Nevertheless, Obama administration delegates promised the U.S. would participate in a costly wealth transfer to developing nations that

CONFERENCE, P. 3

Ohio, Wisconsin Governors Reject High-Speed Rail Funds



John Kasich (left) and Scott Walker are new governors rejecting high-speed rail projects.

By Bonner R. Cohen

Newly elected Republican governors John Kasich of Ohio and Scott Walker of Wisconsin have kept their campaign pledges, reasserting they will remove their states from the Obama administration's ambitious high-speed rail project.

In declining to accept the federal funds, the two gave up nearly \$1.2 bil-

lion in stimulus funds the federal government had made available for high-speed rail projects in their states.

Despite the stimulus funds, the states would have been on the hook for millions of dollars in annual operating costs. Economic analyses indicated few passengers would ride the trains.

RAIL, P. 2

HOT TOPICS

Butterflies Extend Range

Warming temperatures in Canada are causing butterfly species to extend, rather than contract, their geographical range, according to a study published in *Environmental Entomology*.

Page 2

Massachusetts Bans BPA

The Massachusetts Public Health Council has banned bisphenol-A from being used in baby bottles and sipping cups. California and the U.S. Senate rejected similar proposed bans.

Page 5

NY Reps Protest EPA Restrictions

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's imposition of new restrictions on nutrient and sediment runoff into the Chesapeake Bay watershed is causing a storm of protest in New York's Congressional delegation.

Page 8

Mining in Colorado Parks?

Dwindling funding for state parks and deep budget cuts have led Colorado's Parks Board to consider allowing oil and gas drilling in state parks.

Page 10

Activists Target Fla. Phosphate

Environmental activist groups are trying to block the mining of phosphate, an important fertilizer for global crop production, in a central Florida location from which most of the nation's phosphate is produced.

Page 14

MONTHLY UPDATE
NASA SATELLITE GLOBAL
TEMPERATURE READINGS



P. 20

Canadian Butterflies Expand Range as Climate Warms

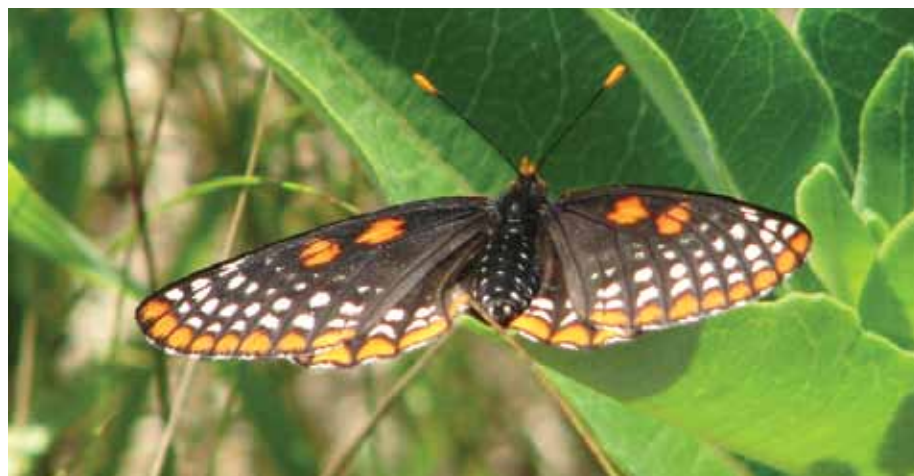
By Craig D. Idso

Warming temperatures in Canada are causing butterfly species to extend, rather than contract, their geographical range, according to a study published in *Environmental Entomology* by University of Winnipeg Associate Professor of Biology Richard Westwood and his colleague David Blair.

The University of Winnipeg scientists measured the responses of 19 common butterfly species of the boreal forests of Manitoba, Canada to temperature changes experienced there over the period 1971-2004, focusing on each species' date of first appearance, week of peak abundance, and length of flight period.

The two Canadian researchers report "the early autumn and winter months warmed significantly" while spring and summer temperatures were little changed over the course of the research period. Consequently, "adult butterfly response was variable for spring and summer months."

However, "13 of 19 species showed a significant increase in flight period extending longer into the autumn" when



Junonia coenia (right) and *Euphydryas phaton* (above) are two butterfly species that are extending their range.

"flight period extensions increased by 31.5 ± 13.9 days over the study period." In this regard, they note "two species, *Junonia coenia* and *Euphydryas phaton*, increased their northerly ranges by ~ 150 and 70 km, respectively."

"Warmer autumns and winters may be providing opportunities for range extensions of more southerly butterfly



species held at bay by past climatic conditions," Westwood and Blair explain.

In other words, the southern range

of Canadian butterflies is essentially unchanged, and their northern range is expanding.

The scientists note other investigators have obtained similar positive results, stating "northward expansions in butterfly species range correlating with northward shifts in isotherms have been documented in both Europe and North America," while "in Canada, the Gorgone checkerspot (*Chlosyne gorgone*, Hubner) and the Delaware skipper (*Anatryone logan*, W.H. Edwards) have recently expanded their northern ranges significantly (Kerr, 2001)."

Warming temperatures appear to be beneficial to the Canadian butterflies.

Craig D. Idso, Ph.D. (cidso@co2science.org) is lead author of *Climate Change Reconsidered*, published by the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC). An earlier version of this article appeared on the NIPCC Web site. Subscriptions to the NIPCC email distribution list are free of charge and can be ordered at <http://www.nipccreport.org/about/email-signupform.html>.

New Ohio and Wisconsin Governors Reject High-Speed Rail Funds

Continued from page 1

In Wisconsin, for example, a round-trip fare between Madison and Milwaukee would have cost roughly \$50 per person, even though the cities are less than 80 miles apart along Interstate 94. With a round trip between the two cities by automobile requiring only about six gallons of gasoline, depending on vehicle type, a high-speed rail ticket would cost a solo traveler at least twice as much as what the traveler would pay in gasoline driving between the two cities.

For a family of four, rail would be at least eight times as expensive as the cost of gasoline.

The Milwaukee-Madison line would have connected with an envisioned circuit connecting Chicago with Minneapolis/St. Paul.

As a candidate, Walker called the \$810 million his state was to receive for the project a waste of taxpayer money, and he even set up a Web site—Notrain.com—highlighting his objections to the expenditure. Specifically, Walker said

"While I would have preferred to have the \$810 million reallocated to repair our crumbling roads and bridges, I am glad that the [state] transportation fund will not be on the hook for a minimum of \$7.5 million of operating subsidies every year."

SCOTT WALKER, GOVERNOR - WISCONSIN

he did not want to commit the state to the required annual operating subsidies once the rail line was in operation.

Feds Reject Alternate Uses

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has since redistributed the money for the Wisconsin and Ohio passenger-rail projects to other states. Walker and Kasich had asked that the funds instead be used for roads and bridges in their states, but LaHood denied their request and sent the money elsewhere.

"While I would have preferred to have the \$810 million reallocated to repair

our crumbling roads and bridges, I am glad that the [state] transportation fund will not be on the hook for a minimum of \$7.5 million of operating subsidies every year," Walker told *The Wall Street Journal* for a December 10, 2010 story.

High Speed in Name Only

Ohio's Kasich likewise objected to what he saw as an endless stream of subsidies his financially hard-pressed state would have to cough up.

In addition, the Ohio train project would have been "high speed" in name only. The \$385 million Ohio was to

receive for a line connecting Cincinnati, Columbus, and Cleveland would have produced a rail system with a top speed of only 79 mph.

Marc Scribner, a land-use and transportation policy analyst at the Washington-based Competitive Enterprise Institute, sees politics at play regarding the federal reallocation of funds. "The Obama administration was essentially reacting to governors-elect Walker and Kasich's campaign platform," he said.

"The claims that either of these low-density corridors would ever break even, let alone turn a profit, are completely absurd," Scribner added.

Florida could be next. Gov. Rick Scott (R), who, like Walker and Kasich, was elected in November, campaigned against spending state funds to help pay for a controversial 84-mile passenger-rail line connecting Tampa and Orlando.

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.

Environment & Climate News



THE HEARTLAND INSTITUTE

The Heartland Institute

19 South LaSalle Street #903

Chicago, Illinois 60603

312/377-4000 voice • 312/377-5000 fax

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PUBLISHER

Joseph L. Bast

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Nikki Comerford

EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Diane Carol Bast

SENIOR EDITOR

S.T. Karnick

GRAPHICS EDITOR

Kevin Fitzgerald

MANAGING EDITOR

James M. Taylor

jtaylor@heartland.org

SCIENCE DIRECTOR

Jay Lehr Ph.D.

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Chris Whitehead

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Nikki Comerford

CIRCULATION MANAGER

Tonya Houston

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS

Dennis Avery, Sterling Burnett

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Climate Talks Fizzle, But U.S. OKs Program

Continued from page 1

could cost the average U.S. household \$160 a year.

As the talks began on November 29, Jun Arima, deputy director general for environmental affairs at Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry, stunned global warming activists by telling reporters Japan would not sign an extension of the Kyoto Protocol and would not sign a new climate treaty unless all major emitters, including developing nations such as China and India, agreed to carbon dioxide restrictions.

Although Japan signed the Kyoto Protocol, which expires in 2012, Japanese officials have expressed concern the nation has hamstrung its economy with carbon dioxide restrictions and put itself at a competitive disadvantage with regional economic competitors such as China and India who refuse to restrict their emissions.

Globally, China emits more carbon dioxide than any other nation, and India ranks fourth. Both nations emit more carbon dioxide than Japan, which ranks fifth.

China, India, and other developing nations that cumulatively are responsible for a majority of global carbon dioxide emissions have repeatedly insisted the United States and other Western democracies, which produce less than half of global carbon dioxide emissions, should dramatically cut their own emissions first, and then developing nations will consider trimming their emissions if the developed countries provide them sufficient financial compensation for doing so.

Developing Nations Demand Money

As Japan announced it would no longer agree to emissions restrictions so long as China and India refused to accept similar mandates, the impasse between developed nations and developing nations grew more entrenched with a series of papers submitted to U.N. officials at Cancun.

Most notably, Professor Kevin Andersen of the U.K.'s Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research submitted a paper arguing "rich" nations such as the U.S. should completely halt economic growth over the next 20 years while allowing developing nations such as China and India to continue their economic growth and emissions growth.

His paper advocated enforcement of economic growth restrictions in nations such as the United States by World War II-style rationing.

"The Second World War and the concept of rationing is something we need to seriously consider if we are able to address the scale of the problem we face," wrote Anderson.

While Japan's refusal to accept one-sided carbon dioxide restrictions and developing nations' monetary demands introduced a blast of proverbial cold air on the climate talks, Mother Nature directed more tangible cold air on the talks. As U.N. bureaucrats and environmental activist groups gathered at tropical beachside resorts in the Caribbean coastal town, temperatures in Cancun dropped to the low 50s, setting record lows for several consecutive days.

Meanwhile, much of the United States and Western Europe experienced record cold and snow during the Cancun talks, leading many to wonder where all the global warming was.

"As U.N. bureaucrats and environmental activist groups gathered at tropical beachside resorts, ... temperatures in Cancun dropped to the low 50s, setting record lows for several consecutive days."

Last-Day Agreements

Attempting to devise something to justify all the pomp, expense, and carbon dioxide emissions associated with such a large-scale conference, attendees announced two final-day agreements that accomplished little of substance.

First, attendees agreed to establish a Green Climate Fund, by which developed nations such as the United States would make available \$100 billion to developing nations, ostensibly to adapt to global warming and develop renewable power. Assuming the United States would get stuck with half the tab, this would require taxing each U.S. household an average of \$160 to pay for the gift.

Second, attendees agreed to strive toward an 80 percent cut in global carbon dioxide emissions. While representatives from all but one of the nations in

attendance agreed to the plan (Bolivia was the exception), the agreement was merely symbolic: No accord was reached regarding which nations would bear the brunt of the burden, and no structure was put into place for implementing or enforcing the emission cuts.

Developing nations and environmental activist groups were seeking much more than the \$160 tax per U.S. household. In the days leading up to the Cancun climate talks a coalition of developing nations called for Western democracies to hand over 1 percent of their gross domestic product per year to developing nations, ostensibly to help them pay for reducing their carbon dioxide emissions and adapt to global warming.

That would have required the average U.S. household to pay \$1,400 in new taxes every year.

No New Agreements

"I think the talks were the 'same-old-same-old,' demonstrating yet again that global warming is more about taking money from the successful world and giving it to the unsuccessful one, than it is about climate change," said Patrick Michaels, distinguished senior fellow in the School of Public Policy at George Mason University and senior fellow in environmental studies at the Cato Institute.

"Cancun ended more or less as expected," agreed S. Fred Singer, founder and president of the Science and Environmental Policy Project. "The Kyoto Protocol will not be extended, and there will be no new agreements at least until the next U.N. Conference of the Parties in December 2011 in South Africa."

"This is the nearly inescapable consequence of the failed model, frozen in amber since U.N. climate talks first began. Wealth-donor states are being extorted by wealth-donee states, with any change in classification for the wealth-donee states coming at the price of a heavy bribe—which continues to haunt the enterprise," said Chris Horner, senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

"Some say Cancun was a beacon of 'hope.' I can only think this means that the unsuccessful continue to 'hope' that we will 'change' and send them our largesse," added Michaels.

James M. Taylor (jtaylor@heartland.org) is managing editor of Environment & Climate News.

China Cuts Rare-Earth Exports, Hitting Wind, Solar Power

By Bonner R. Cohen

China is substantially cutting back its rare-earth export quotas to Western nations, a move that will drive up prices and further reduce the feasibility of renewable energy production in the United States.

Long known to geologists for their unique properties, rare earths, unevenly deposited around the world, have become essential to today's high-tech industries. The minerals are a group of 17 metals vital to the production of certain high-technology electronics that have become indispensable to the renewable-energy industry, where they are used to make wind turbines and solar panels.

China Flexes its Muscles

In slowing its exports of rare earths, China is both flexing its economic muscles to the rest of the world and ensuring its own booming economy retains an adequate supply of the precious metals.

China currently produces 97 percent of the world's rare earths, even though the country has only 37 percent of known



California's Mountain Pass Mine was once a leading producer of rare earths, but it has been out of operation since 2002.

global reserves of the metals. With its low wages, minimal environmental regulations, and keen understanding of the vital role natural resources play in its quest to become a great power, China has obtained a near-monopoly on the rare-earths market.

The geopolitical implications of Beijing's aggressive pursuit of dominance in rare-earth production are only now being fully appreciated.

The United States was once the

world's top producer of rare earths, with California's Mountain Pass Mine leading the way. But an industrial accident at the mine, coupled with years of low prices for rare earths, caused the facility to close in 2002. For all practical purposes the United States has not been an active player in rare-earths production for nearly a decade.

Twenty percent of the world's known commercially available non-Chinese rare-earth reserves are concentrated in the United States. Although the Chinese decision to cut back its exports has other nations scrambling to increase their domestic production, it will likely take years before the requisite infrastructure is in place for U.S. rare earths to reach their true potential. The Mountain Pass Mine is scheduled to reopen later this year, but even then, prices will rise as inexpensive Chinese rare earths are replaced by more costly ones produced in the United States.

In the interim, the United States will remain heavily dependent on China, which is primarily interested in meeting its own domestic needs. Russia is the world's second-largest supplier of rare earths, with about 19 percent of known global reserves. But political experts point out there are sound strategic reasons for not becoming too dependent on that country for anything as crucial as rare earths.

Obama Pushing Wind Power

The Obama administration has continued to promote wind and solar energy despite the rare-earth problem. On November 23, Interior Secretary Ken Salazar unveiled a scheme, called "Smart from the Start," that will identify sites along the Atlantic Outer Continental Shelf considered suitable for offshore wind farms. The goal is to speed up the approval process for ocean-borne wind

"Rare-earth elements ... are not uncommon in the Earth's crust, [but] they rarely occur in large concentrations, and only the Chinese were smart enough to develop major mining operations ..."

JAY LEHR, PH.D., SCIENCE DIRECTOR
THE HEARTLAND INSTITUTE

projects and avoid the delays that have plagued the Cape Wind project in Nantucket Sound.

The hundreds or thousands of offshore wind turbines that may result from the initiative will put further strains on the nation's supply of rare earths.

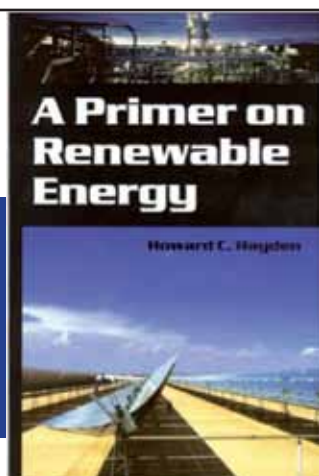
"Rare-earth elements have rare electrical and chemical properties that enhance the operation of special magnets and batteries used in many high-tech pieces of equipment," explained Jay Lehr, Ph.D., science director of the Chicago-based Heartland Institute, which publishes *Environment & Climate News*. "While they are not uncommon in the Earth's crust, they rarely occur in large concentrations, and only the Chinese were smart enough to develop major mining operations that would place them in a controlling position as technology advanced around the world."

This has enabled the Chinese to become "the largest supplier of wind turbines in the world, even though these turbines produce little or no useful energy, as they must be backed up with near 100 percent spinning reserve for when the wind does not blow," Lehr noted.

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.



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Hype

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Marine Life Rebounds in Wake of Gulf Oil Spill

By Bonner R. Cohen

When the Deepwater Horizon oil rig blew up last April, killing 11 workers and spewing millions of barrels of oil into the Gulf of Mexico, dire predictions about the accident's effect on marine life abounded.

Yet as costly as the BP accident was, there are signs the gulf's marine life has come through in remarkably good shape.

Turtles, Fish Abundant

From Louisiana to Florida, marine biologists report a variety of sea creatures are flourishing.

On Florida's beaches, for example,

the number of loggerhead turtle nests is above the 10-year average. Similarly, nests of green turtles and leatherback turtles along Florida's 800 miles of coastline have reached near-record numbers. In the case of the loggerhead turtles, the spike in the number of nests reversed a 10-year decline that had concerned marine biologists.

There is even more encouraging news from the nutrient-rich waters off Alabama and Mississippi. In the aftermath of the BP oil spill, the Obama administration, to the consternation of the region's seafood industry, banned shrimping in the affected area of the

gulf. Since the ban was lifted August 16, commercial and recreational fishermen report no trouble in landing sizeable catches.

"Despite the terrible visuals and acute damage that accompany a spill, oil is, after all, an organic substance. Conceived with solar power in the form of biomass or other life forms, this concentrated organic material has been naturally seeping into the environment for millions of years, and nature has developed effective antibodies which feed upon it," explained Dan Kish, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research.

Economics Will Deter Repeat

Kish said economic incentives will assist regulatory reforms in reducing the likelihood of future spills.

"The economic inducement alone should suffice to lower the likelihood of future spills," said Kish. "The estimated 5 million barrels spilled would have sold for \$350 to \$400 million. BP estimates its eventual cleanup cost at an additional \$400 billion."

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.

Mass. Enacts, Calif. Rejects, BPA Ban

By Alyssa Carducci

The Massachusetts Public Health Council has approved a ban of bisphenol-A, which gives strength and flexibility to plastic products, prohibiting the chemical from use in baby bottles and sipping cups.

Massachusetts is the eighth state to impose restrictions on bisphenol-A (BPA).

Studies performed by university researchers, the U.S. federal government, and the European Union have found BPA poses no documented risk to public health.

As a result of the Public Health Council's December 15 vote, retailers in Massachusetts will have until July 1 to remove from their shelves all baby bottles and sipping cups containing BPA.

In Maine, the Board of Environmental Protection voted on December 16 to approve a similar ban on BPA from baby bottles and sipping cups. The ban will not take effect, however, unless approved by the legislature.

California, U.S. Senate Reject

While state agencies in Maine and Massachusetts moved to restrict BPA, federal and state elected representatives rejected such bans. The California Senate ended its 2010 session with a 19-18 vote against a ban on BPA in children's products.

Similarly, the U.S. Senate twice defeated attempts by Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) to impose a federal ban on BPA in children's products. Feinstein attempted to attach the BPA ban to legislation during the Senate's autumn session and then during the lame duck session following the November elections. Her efforts were rejected each time.

Safety Thoroughly Tested

Elizabeth Whelan, president and founder of the American Council on Science and Health, says BPA has been used in plastics for more than 60 years, and studies show it does not endanger the health of children or adults.

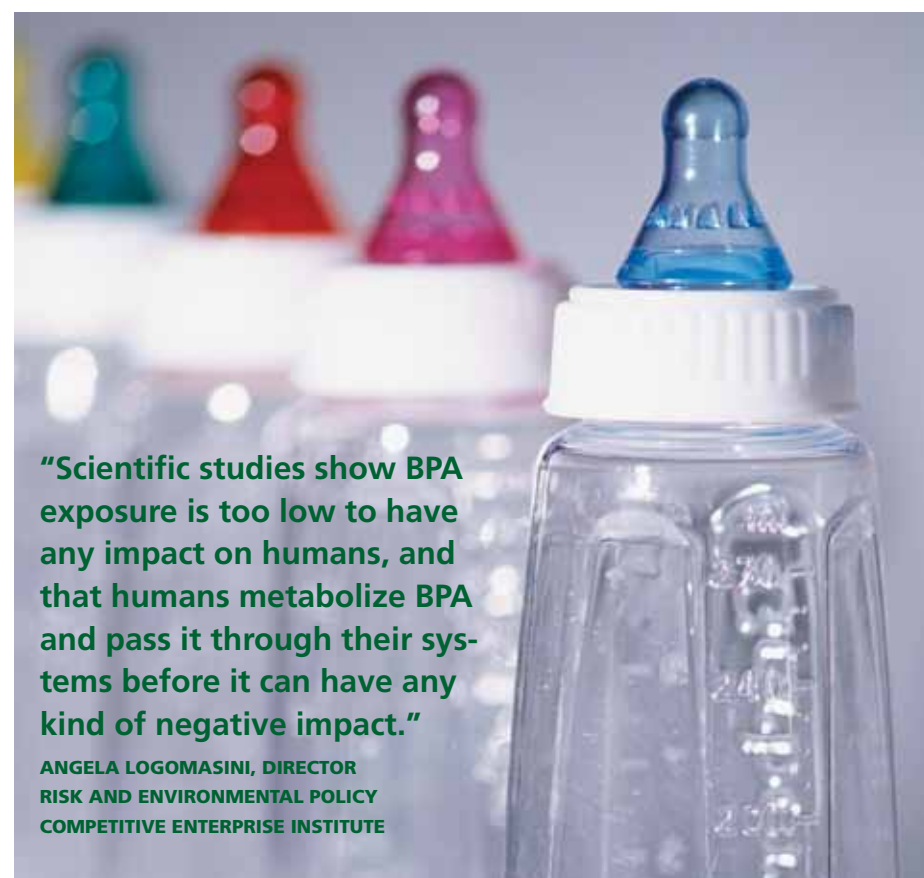
"The Senate should not be involved with BPA at all. There are plenty of public health problems to address, but BPA is not one of them," said Whelan.

"Volumes of research have been conducted on this chemical, and overwhelming, com-

elling evidence is that we're not finding any problems," agreed Angela Logomasini, director of risk and environmental policy at the Competitive Enterprise Institute. "Scientific studies show BPA exposure is too low to have any impact on humans, and that humans metabolize BPA and pass it through their systems before it can have any kind of negative impact."

Comparing Apples and Oranges

Referring to studies showing rodents develop health problems when subjected to massive doses of BPA, Logomasini said rodents do not metabolize BPA as quickly as humans and chemicals are



"Scientific studies show BPA exposure is too low to have any impact on humans, and that humans metabolize BPA and pass it through their systems before it can have any kind of negative impact."

**ANGELA LOGOMASINI, DIRECTOR
RISK AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY
COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE**

often harmful to one species without being harmful to another.

"Just like a dog can't eat chocolate, but humans can," Logomasini said, "biological differences have been demonstrated" between rats and humans regarding BPA.

Logomasini said environmental activist groups frequently cite rodent studies or poorly conducted human studies to cast doubt on the comprehensive scientific studies conducted by EPA, the European Union, and university researchers showing no human health risks from BPA.

"That's why we're having a big political battle," Logomasini said. "Getting rid of BPA based on questionable—and really unfounded—science is a terrible precedent that promotes dangerous policy."

"Where does it end?" asked Logomasini. "When you start removing products for no good scientific justification in the marketplace you're in a dangerous position, because it's not just that one product. The question becomes, what will be banned next?"

Alyssa Carducci (ad.carducci@gmail.com) writes from Tampa, Florida.

ECN 2/11

Exelon Assailed for Dismantling Nuclear Power Plant

By James M. Taylor

In the face of widespread agreement on the need for more energy production, Exelon Corp.—one of the nation's largest electric utilities—is paying \$1 billion to dismantle its 2,100 megawatt Zion nuclear power plant in northern Illinois.

The firm has given varying answers for its decision, but Nancy Thorner, who lives a proverbial stone's throw away from the Zion plant, is on a one-woman crusade to inform the public the planned shutdown would keep electricity prices artificially high.

Customers Financed Plant

In 1998, when energy prices were much lower than today, Commonwealth Edison, which in 2000 merged with PECO Energy and Unicom to form Exelon, made a business decision to shut down the Zion plant rather than pay \$435 million for a necessary replacement of steam generators. With electricity prices relatively low and forecast to trend even lower in future years, ComEd could not profitably recoup the costs for the steam generators, the utility explained at the time.

ComEd made the decision even though it had obtained funding for the Zion plant by requiring customers to pay higher power bills in advance of the station being built. The justification asserted for making customers pay in advance was that Zion would thereafter deliver affordable, reliable electricity that would justify the up-front costs.

"Commonwealth Edison paid prices set by a regulator based on covering the utility company's cost for building the facilities required to supply reliable electricity plus a guaranteed profit," Rod Adams, editor of the Atomic Insights blog, explained there on December 11. "The customers had no choice about paying—the only alternative available for them was doing without electricity. The balancing part of those protected monopoly agreements on the part of the profit-making utility company for this rather sweet deal was that they promised to make prudent decisions and undertook an obligation to serve their customers."

Electricity Prices Have Risen

Although ComEd forecast in 1998 that electricity prices would decline, they

have in fact risen dramatically, undercutting the initial rationale for closing the plant.

Adams, Thorner, and Illinois state Sen. Chris Lauzen (R-Aurora) say they suspect Exelon's decision to shutter the plant despite the higher-than-projected price of electricity may be motivated by a desire to keep electricity prices artificially high.

In November Lauzen sent Exelon a letter inquiring about its decision to shut down Zion, but the company has yet to reply.

"A thoughtful consideration of the facts surrounding the Zion/Exelon controversy suggests that a restart of Zion by Exelon would lower electric rates in its service area and reduce the profits from Exelon's other units," said Thorner.

Cheaper than Alternatives

Thorner wonders what legitimate motive Exelon could have for spending \$1 billion to dismantle the plant. Even if it were to cost \$2 billion to restart the plant, \$2 billion is a relatively small investment to produce 2,100 megawatts of emissions-free power, especially when it is only \$1 billion more than the cost of dismantling the unit at a time when there is a strong national will to produce more energy, and particularly emissions-free energy.

The net cost of \$500,000 per megawatt to produce emissions-free nuclear power at Zion rather than dismantling the plant pales in comparison to the \$6 million per megawatt Exelon is paying to produce 60 megawatts of solar power in Chicago and the \$1.2 million per megawatt the company recently paid to purchase 1,000 megawatts of wind power from Deere & Co.

Gaming Renewable Power

Thorner points out Exelon has close ties with the Obama administration and is pushing hard for renewable power mandates and carbon dioxide reduction credits to be given to utilities that have invested in wind and solar power.

"Illinois is spending a fortune on



Exelon Corp. is dismantling its Zion nuclear power plant.

expensive wind and solar power that costs three times as much and blights our landscape, with little power to show for it, based on the claim that man is causing global warming and that CO2 is the culprit. This makes the closing of Zion even more suspect, because nuclear

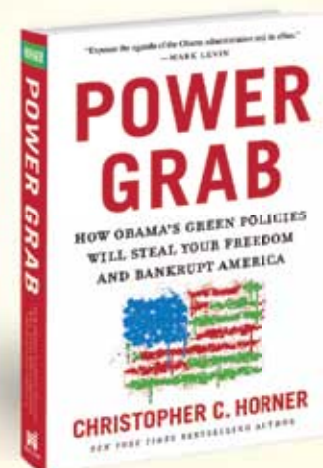
power is emissions-free energy and gives the biggest bang for the buck," Thorner said.

James M. Taylor (jtaylor@heartland.org) is managing editor of Environment & Climate News.



Chris Lauzen
State Senator - IL

Chris Horner blew the whistle
ON GLOBAL WARMING....
Then he blew the whistle on
THE LEFT'S RED HOT LIES....
Now he is blowing the whistle
ON OBAMA.



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NY Delegation Challenges EPA's Chesapeake Bay Rules

By Kenneth Artz

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's imposition of new restrictions on nutrient and sediment runoff into the Chesapeake Bay watershed is causing a storm of protest among New York's primarily Democratic Congressional delegation.

New York Sens. Charles Schumer (D) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D), along with Reps. Michael Arcuri (D), Maurice Hinchey (D), Christopher Lee (R), Daniel Maffei (D), Scott Murphy (D), Bill Owens (D), and Paul Tonko (D), sent a letter to EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson protesting the agency's draft Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), which would set new limits on nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment runoff into the watershed.

Economy in Jeopardy

"We write today to share our grave concerns with the draft Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) allocations that were recently issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)," wrote the New York delegation.

"We are all strongly committed to the goal of restoring and ensuring the long-term health of the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem," the letter continued. "The Bay and its tributaries are national treasures that are suffering from desperately poor conditions and in need of significant restoration and protection. However, we believe that the draft TMDL allocations released by EPA will not achieve the goal of cleaning up the Bay because they place unattainable pollution reductions on New York and other headwater states, according to state and local officials. In addition, the drastic reductions that would be required to attain these draft allocations, if finalized, will jeopardize the economic well-being of communities within New York's Bay Watershed and the agricultural industry on which the entire state relies."

The Congressmen also stated EPA's TMDL would impose an unfair burden on New York, which is far upstream from the Chesapeake Bay. Instead, they argued, states that border the bay and thus receive the greatest environmental benefit from nutrient and sediment restrictions should shoulder a greater share of those restrictions.

Costly New Regulations

The draft TMDL would impose new and



1. Schumer 2. Gillibrand 3. Arcuri 4. Hinchey 5. Lee 6. Maffei

7. Murphy 8. Owens 9. Tonko

"[T]he drastic reductions that would be required to attain these draft allocations, if finalized, will jeopardize the economic well-being of communities within New York's Bay Watershed and the agricultural industry on which the entire state relies."

LETTER TO USEPA FROM NEW YORK CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

These members of New York's congressional delegation signed a letter to the EPA last fall: 1. Charles Schumer; 2. Kirsten Gillibrand; 3. Michael Arcuri; 4. Maurice Hinchey; 5. Christopher Lee; 6. Daniel Maffei; 7. Scott Murphy; 8. Bill Owens; 9. Paul Tonko. Arcuri, Maffei, and Murphy lost their seats in the November election.

costly federal regulations on approximately 19 New York counties, 650,000 New York residents, and 2,000 New York family farms within the Susquehanna River portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed area. New York officials say the project could cost the state as much as \$250 million over the next 15 years and may not accomplish EPA's water quality goals.

"The bottom line is there is a way to clean up the Chesapeake and protect our economy, but the EPA's new proposal isn't it," said Schumer in an October 13 press statement. "It would unfairly penalize small business owners, family farmers, and local governments who would pass the cost on to taxpayers. Protecting New York's water quality and the Chesapeake Bay is important, but should not be done at the expense of local communities. In tough economic times like these we need to do everything we can to create jobs, not drive them away. The EPA needs to go back to the drawing board and come up with a proposal that strikes the right balance."

"The draft EPA regulations will harm local New York economies and our critical agriculture sector," said Lee in the October 13 press statement. "I share my colleagues' commitment to protecting the Chesapeake Bay and echo their con-

cerns with the EPA's policy, which New York State and local officials both say is not feasible."

Punished for Progress

New York's Congressional delegation argued strongly EPA did not adequately take into consideration the state's prior reductions in nutrient and sediment runoff.

"If the entire Chesapeake Bay watershed had the same water quality that the New York portion of the watershed currently has, the Bay would not be impaired. But rather than using New York's past successes—especially those with farmers to voluntarily adopt prescribed grazing, precision feeding and nutrient management plans—EPA's TMDL seeks to require additional, unattainable reductions that would be punitive to New York's farmers, taxpayers and communities," wrote Arcuri in the October 13 press statement.

Environmental Overreach

EPA's new restrictions are just one more example of the Obama administration's executive overreach, says H. Sterling Burnett, a senior fellow for environment policy at the National Center for Policy Analysis.

"The administration seems to have

a 'damn the consequences, full speed ahead' attitude when it comes to environmental regulations," regardless of the economic costs, said Burnett.

Burnett noted, "the Obama administration habitually takes the side of stricter rules supported by the environmental lobby" even when they are opposed by state governments and consumer groups. "Whether it's greenhouse gas regulations, revisions of the ozone standards and clean air permitting decisions, endangered species listings and delistings, offshore oil and gas production, or clean water regulations concerning total maximum daily loads, in every instance the Obama administration pays off the environmental lobby at the expense of sound science and the economy," said Burnett.

"While the president says job creation and getting the economy back on track is job one, his actions say just the opposite. Each of these regulations and increased standards are job killers with little or no demonstrable environmental or public health benefit. Rarely has an administration been so dedicated to environmental activist orthodoxy even when it flies in the face of state needs and economic progress," Burnett explained.

Kenneth Artz (iamkenartz@hotmail.com) writes from Texas.

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Colorado Considers Mining in State Parks

By Cheryl K. Chumley

Dwindling funding and deep budget cuts have led Colorado's Parks Board to consider opening its doors to oil and gas drilling in state parks.

Revenue Not Meeting Costs

Records show 12 million people visited Colorado state parks in 2009, but visitor fees do not cover the costs of operation, and state funding has been cut back as the legislature struggles to tame budget deficits. In 2010 lawmakers trimmed state park funds to \$2.6 million, down from \$6.7 million in 2009.

To keep the parks operating in the wake of the funding cuts, the Parks Board has recommended selling leases for oil and gas production at some of its parks.

"We're just like any other entity," State Parks spokeswoman Deb Frazier told the *Colorado Daily News*. "We are looking at other ways to help with our income."

The proposal is part of the Parks Board's five-year plan, which also includes recommendations to remove four parks from the 42-park system and to cut salaries. The Parks Board manages nearly 226,000 acres of Colorado's lands.

Bridging the Gap

If approved, the plan could go far toward bridging the state's parks budget for the upcoming year.

"I am in favor of this," said Don Marostica, a former Colorado state legislator who now directs the state's Office of Economic Development and International Trade.

"With the 2011-12 Colorado state budget \$1.2 billion in the hole and the 2012-13 budget going to be about the same, we are going to have to look at every way possible to support what is important to the citizens of Colorado. State Parks are citizen-owned assets, and revenues from mineral production are a way to support keeping them open. Otherwise, [the state should] sell the assets," said Marostica.



"We're very short on cash right now. To me, it's a time of prioritizing. We have nice parks, but honestly, they're not the top of the budget right now."

KEVIN LUNDBERG
STATE SENATOR
BERTHOUD, COLORADO

State Budget Priorities

State Sen. Kevin Lundberg (R-Berthoud) says he's intrigued by the lease idea and sees the potential to solve a budget crisis in at least one agency.

"We're very short on cash right now," Lundberg said. "To me, it's a time of prioritizing. We have nice parks, but honestly, they're not the top of the budget right now."

"I'm not against parks," Lundberg emphasized. "I just recognize that there are a lot of other issues that are budgetary priorities."

Cheryl K. Chumley (ckchumley@aol.com) writes from Virginia.



Russia's Gazprom Plans Oil Drilling Near Florida

By Bonner R. Cohen

The competition for dominance in the oil-rich Gulf of Mexico heated up in mid-December with Russian energy giant Gazprom announcing plans to drill off the coast of Cuba near Florida.

Under an agreement with the Malaysian state-owned company Petronas, Gazprom Neft, the oil arm of Gazprom, will assist in operating offshore drilling platforms. Geologists believe the waters off Cuba's northern coast could hold plentiful reserves.

Petronas reached an agreement with the Cuban government in 2007 to drill for oil and natural gas, and Gazprom will be the Malaysian company's new partner. Gazprom bought a 30 percent stake in four offshore oil exploration blocks that Petronas has leased from the government in Havana. Drilling is expected to get underway in 2011.

New Challenge for Gazprom

For the Russians, drilling in the Gulf of Mexico will be unlike anything they have done before. The Russians are used to drilling for oil on land in Siberia. Working on offshore rigs, with their unique safety issues, will present challenges. Working with Petronas is one way the Russians can obtain offshore drilling experience.

Estimates of the amount of oil in Cuban waters vary widely. The U.S. Geological survey puts the figure at 4.6 billion barrels; the Cuban government says there are as many as 20 billion barrels off the island's coast.

CNN.com reports Cuba has divided its share of the gulf into 59 blocks, and foreign oil companies have leased 21 of them. Seven exploratory offshore wells are expected to be in operation by 2014.

Other Nations Prepare to Drill

In their rush to drill for oil off Cuba's coast, Gazprom and Petronas are joined by companies from Brazil, India, Norway, Spain, Venezuela, and Vietnam.

The Chinese also are getting in on the act by constructing a drilling platform for a Spanish company that plans to operate just 50 miles from Key West, Florida.

Obama Shuts Down U.S. Production

Growing interest in Cuba's offshore oil reserves contrasts sharply with the Obama administration's policy toward oil drilling in U.S. waters. The White House recently announced it is keeping both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts and the entire eastern Gulf off-limits to drilling. In addition, new safety guidelines imposed in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon accident have all but ended deepwater drilling in the U.S. portion of the Gulf of Mexico.

"The Obama administration appears to be allergic to domestic energy production," said Dan Simmons, director of state policy at the Institute for Energy Research. "This is tragic because energy production creates real jobs, jobs that so many Americans desperately need."

"What further makes this a tragedy," said Simmons, "is that other countries like Cuba and Brazil are going full speed ahead on offshore energy production. One could only hope that the administration would step up and allow new offshore oil exploration and job creation."

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.

Congress Extends Subsidies, Special Favors for Ethanol

By Cheryl K. Chumley

Congress has voted to extend taxpayer subsidies for domestically produced ethanol and extend tariffs on imported ethanol, in a move analysts say will drive up food costs and harm the U.S. economy.

Taxpayer Dollars Given Away

In mid-December, Congress passed a one-year extension of a 45-cents-per-gallon tax credit on domestic ethanol production and a 54-cents-per-gallon ethanol import tariff, as well as a \$1-per-gallon blenders' tax credit for biodiesel. The \$1 tax credit had expired in 2009, and the other two were due to expire at the end of 2010. All three are now extended through 2011.

The special-interest subsidies were approved as part of a tax package signed into law by President Barack Obama.

Consumer groups and advocates for the poor say the tariff and subsidies drive up food costs.

"Congress has decided to waste billions of dollars by extending taxpayer handouts to Big Corn," said Daniel Simmons, director of state affairs for the Institute for Energy Research. "In the words of Jean Ziegler, the United Nations special rapporteur on the right to food, biofuels are a 'crime against humanity' because they reduce the availability of food."

Currently, 40 percent of the U.S. corn crop is diverted to ethanol production.

Multiple Concerns

"The problem with the tax credit is three

things," said Harry de Gorter, a professor at Cornell University and a visiting fellow at the Cato Institute in Washington, DC. "First, it's the costs. It costs taxpayers billions and billions of dollars, about \$6 billion a year.

"The second problem," said de Gorter, "is it's redundant. When you have a mandate, a tax credit is not needed. You already get the requisite ethanol [level]."

And the third problem, according to de Gorter?

"The third is it's worse than redundant. ... It contradicts all your environmental goals."

Politicians are starting to grasp those concepts, de Gorter said. A bipartisan group of 17 senators sent a letter to congressional leadership in the days before the tax bill passed, requesting an end to ethanol subsidies and biofuel tax credits. The credits are unnecessary, the Democrat and Republican senators wrote, because the Renewable Fuels Standard under the 2005 U.S. Energy Policy Act already mandates the production of almost 14 billion gallons of ethanol by 2011.

"So my prediction is [the subsidies will be] gone next year," de Gorter said. "But the question is, if the subsidies are not extended, will Congress similarly eliminate ethanol mandates?"

Those debates still need to take place, de Gorter said.

Cheryl K. Chumley (ckchumley@aol.com) writes from northern Virginia.



"Congress has decided to waste billions of dollars by extending taxpayer handouts to Big Corn."

**DANIEL SIMMONS
DIRECTOR OF STATE AFFAIRS
INSTITUTE FOR ENERGY RESEARCH**



San Jose, Los Angeles County Ban Plastic Shopping Bags

By Alyssa Carducci

In the wake of the State of California enacting a plastic shopping bag recycling program while rejecting an outright ban on the bags, Los Angeles County and the City of San Jose have imposed their own bans on the convenient and lightweight shopping bags.

The San Jose City Council voted 10-1 on December 14 to ban retailers from distributing plastic shopping bags, effective January 1, 2012. Retailers will be permitted to distribute paper bags, but only those made from at least 40 percent recycled materials. In addition, customers will have to pay 10 cents for each paper shopping bag through 2013, after which they will have to pay 25 cents for each one.

The San Jose ban followed on the heels of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors enacting their own plastic shopping bag ban. By a 3-1 vote, the Board of Supervisors prohibited retailers from distributing plastic shopping bags in unincorporated areas of the county. Retailers can distribute paper bags but must charge a 10 cent fee for each paper bag distributed.

Environmental Benefits Doubted

Although proponents of plastic shopping bag bans argue the bans will benefit the environment, the Environmental Literacy Council reports plastic bags are better for air quality than paper bags because they weigh less and are more compact, requiring one-seventh the number of trucks to ship the same number of bags. Fewer truck trips carrying lighter loads means less oil consumption and less pollution.

The council also reports plastic bags are more environmentally benign in landfills because they require only a fraction of the landfill space taken by the same number of paper bags.



"I voted 'no' on the ban based on the facts that

it is not sound public policy. ... Telling residents what bags they can use, cannot use, and how much they will be charged is Big Brother at its worst."

**MIKE ANTONOVICH
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

Higher Consumer Costs

Mike Antonovich, the lone dissenter in the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors vote, says the fees represent an unacceptable new tax.

"I voted 'no' on the ban based on the facts that it is not sound public policy and it also only increases costs and regulations on the 1.5 million residents and the businesses residing in the county's unincorporated areas—and not the county's 88 cities. The mandated 10-cent-per-bag charge represents a new tax on the consumer," explained Antonovich.

"Telling residents what bags they can use, cannot use, and how much they will be charged is Big Brother at its worst," Antonovich added.

The San Jose ban and tax are the most stringent anti-shopping bag prohibitions in California. Los Angeles County is the largest local unit of government in the nation to ban plastic bags.

Alyssa Carducci (ad.carducci@gmail.com) writes from Tampa, Florida.

N.J. Senator to Hold Hearings on Weatherization Money

By Cheryl K. Chumley

New Jersey state Sen. Barbara Buono (D) has announced she will hold Senate hearings investigating the spending of federal stimulus dollars aimed at weatherizing homes and helping low-income earners cut their energy bills.

"This program has been fraught with problems for a long time," Buono told NewJersey.com. "Now that there's an infusion of funds, it's important that we take a second look at it. Any delay in drawing down funds will not only put vulnerable families in jeopardy but also lose an opportunity to put people back to work."

Millions Reportedly Wasted

New Jersey was allocated nearly \$119 million to weatherize more than 13,000 homes by 2012, with half the

money withheld until state officials could prove the money had been put to good use. The money was supposed to pay contractors to perform weatherization work and to fund programs to cut greenhouse gas emissions and energy bills by installing insulation in homes.

Currently, only 2,157 homes have received a total of \$11.3 million in weatherization improvements.

One question Buono says she wants answered in her hearings is why the state has spent more than \$1 million of the federal dollars to train 225 people to work in the home weatherization field but only seven have actually found jobs. Another question: Why is the state paying \$27 for light bulbs that cost \$1.50?

A recent state audit uncovered this charge, along with others deemed similarly unreasonable.



Barbara Buono
State Senator - NJ

Numerous Overcharges

Of \$613,600 in charges from contractors who were paid with weatherization funds, only \$54,000—just under 9 percent—were rated as reasonable by the state auditor. In addition to \$27 light bulbs, the auditor found charges of \$75 for carbon-monoxide detectors that actually cost \$22 and \$1,499 for two GPS systems that should have cost a total of \$400.

State Auditor Stephen Eells also reported \$32,700 in fees for services that couldn't be verified and \$69,000 in construction costs on jobs that couldn't be confirmed.

"They should hold these hearings," said Steve Lonegan, director of the New Jersey chapter of Americans for Prosperity. "We're supposed to have this fiscally responsible [Obama] administration. But now we're seeing this."

Private Businesses Squeezed Out

Another pitfall of the weatherization program has been its effect in under-

cutting private-sector contractors' businesses.

"About a year ago, [the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection] decided to bring the program in-house ... and use their own guys to compete with the private sector to weatherize homes," Lonegan noted. "It is really kind of sad. Contractors who have performed these weatherization projects before are now being undersold by the government. They can't compete."

Lonegan says he's hopeful but not necessarily confident the hearings will end the wasteful spending and the program's biases against private enterprise.

"Will the hearings lead to action?" asked Lonegan. "At the worst, it brings public scrutiny to the issue. At the best, it ends all these [government environmental] programs. But maybe there's a medium in between that turns it back over to the private sector to accomplish."

Cheryl K. Chumley (ckchumley@aol.com) writes from northern Virginia.

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ANALYSIS

Electric Cars Still Show Little Promise

By Donn Dears

A new paper examining the viability of electric cars concludes, "Without subsidies and political pressure, it is doubtful that there would be much demand, except by the wealthy early adopters who want to make an environmental statement."

In "Electric Cars: Not Ready for Prime Time," George C. Marshall Institute CEO William O'Keefe points out government subsidies and interference in the market have a poor record of teasing commercial viability out of their adherents' preferred technologies.

Misguided Motives

O'Keefe's paper notes government support for electric vehicles of all kinds is based largely on the threat of climate change and energy independence concerns. O'Keefe demonstrates, however, that achieving carbon dioxide reductions through programs such as electric car subsidies and mandates is economically destructive.

O'Keefe also establishes that attempting to achieve independence from foreign oil is a delusion, first because the world economy relies more on oil imports than the United States does, and second, because our Strategic Petroleum Reserve helps protect against a sudden disruption of oil supplies. In addition, most U.S. oil imports come from the friendly nations of Canada and Mexico.

Importantly, O'Keefe uses an array of facts, with supporting documentation, to validate his summation of the climate change and oil independence issues.

Economic Losers

Tackling economic issues, O'Keefe presents an interesting analogy to demonstrate promoting electric vehicles will not create "green" jobs and, more importantly, does not result in the creation of the most productive jobs with the highest economic value. O'Keefe notes paying people to plant trees with a tablespoon would create jobs, but it would be far better to use machinery to do the planting.

Similarly, he observes, promoting electric vehicles may indeed create some "green" jobs in the electric car industry, but their economic and job-creation impact is as stunted as a government



PHOTO COURTESY CHARLOTTE GILHOOLEY/Flickr.COM

program to plant trees with tablespoons would be.

Hybrids More Promising

After explaining the economics, O'Keefe provides detailed information on electric vehicle specifications. This section can be a little confusing in places and could benefit from some data updates. For example, the paper intermingles plug-in electric vehicles (PHEVs) with electric vehicles (EVs). O'Keefe's treatment of the issue can be excused, however, because many research firms also intermingle various types of electric vehicles, which makes it difficult to determine which categories are being included in sales forecasts.

PHEVs use a battery to power the vehicle for approximately 40 miles (depending on the type of PHEV) and then rely on an internal combustion engine to power the vehicle for greater distances, either directly or by recharging the battery. An EV relies entirely on a battery to power the vehicle, with the Nissan Leaf, for example, limited to only 100 miles before running out of power.

Hybrids such as the Toyota Prius, by contrast, rely on an internal combustion

engine as the primary source for powering the vehicle. The battery is used to improve overall efficiency but is not the primary source of power for the vehicle.

Sales forecasts that group hybrids and PHEVs together don't establish how many PHEVs are in the forecast. That can suggest large numbers of PHEVs will be sold when in fact their market potential is severely limited. O'Keefe correctly establishes PHEVs and EVs will remain a niche product. The total number of these vehicles in 2020 will remain a small percentage of the total fleet of light vehicles, even if all the wild sales projections are realized.

Upfront and Hidden Costs

Whatever the percentage of upcoming PHEVs and EVs, O'Keefe quantifies the very high costs for purchasing, operating, and maintaining the vehicles.

Data from the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) establish the battery pack for the Volt (a PHEV) will cost \$18,000. GM has subsequently stated the battery pack will be rated at 16 kWh at a cost of \$650 per kWh, for a cost of around \$10,000. Whether the battery costs \$18,000 or \$10,000, PHEVs will

"Without government subsidies, it is questionable many people would buy [an electric vehicle], especially when they can purchase a comparably sized internal combustion vehicle ... for at least \$10,000 less."

cost much more than a standard internal combustion vehicle, even after fuel savings are factored in. The battery pack on an EV will be even more expensive.

O'Keefe then notes the large additional infrastructure costs, such as for charging stations and for building new power plants to provide the electricity needed for charging batteries. He does not, however, mention the hidden cost of replacing distribution and substation transformers as they become overloaded, which will add even more to the social costs of PHEVs and EVs. (Four articles, beginning November 15, 2010, on Power America at <http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/> establish the hidden cost of PHEVs and EVs.)

O'Keefe concludes by pointing out using tax dollars to push PHEVs and EVs is a misallocation of resources. Without government subsidies, it is questionable many people would buy a PHEV or EV, especially when they can purchase a comparably sized internal combustion vehicle that doesn't include the hassle of recharging the battery every day, for at least \$10,000 less.

Another important point O'Keefe makes: Government has a poor track record picking winning technologies. And picking the wrong technology in this case could be the greatest government blunder of all, because other technologies may otherwise emerge that are superior to PHEVs and EVs.

Donn Dears (dddusmma@gmail.com), a former General Electric executive, is president of TSAugust and administrator of the Power America Web site, <http://dddusmma.wordpress.com>.

INTERNET INFO

"Electric Cars: Not Ready for Prime Time," William O'Keefe, George C. Marshall Institute: <http://www.environmentandclimate-news.org/article/29133>



PHOTOS COURTESY SUSAN DRACKETT/FILICR.COM



In Florida's "Bone Valley," Mosaic Co. operates a phosphate mine. The state provides 75 percent of the phosphorous used by U.S. farmers and accounts for 25 percent of global production.

Activists Target Important Agricultural Fertilizer

By Bonner R. Cohen

Environmental activist groups are seeking to block the mining of phosphate, an important fertilizer for global crop production, in a central Florida location in which most of the nation's phosphate is produced.

Environmental Impact Debated

The Sierra Club and other environmental activist groups argue plans by Mosaic Co. to expand its current mining operations in Hardee County would harm the area's water supply. The groups succeeded last July in getting a federal court to issue an injunction blocking the proposed mining expansion. Mosaic has appealed the decision.

The opposing groups are now battling over phosphate mining in the court of public opinion.

"We're trying to ensure that it's done more responsibly in the future," Percy Angelo, chairwoman of the Sierra Club's phosphate committee in Florida, told *The Wall Street Journal* for a November 30 article.

The proposed mining project, known as the South Fort Meade extension, would extend Mosaic's phosphate mine in central Florida's fabled Bone Valley to include an additional 11,000 acres. Minnesota-based Mosaic, the world's largest producer of phosphate fertilizer, points out the project has been reviewed and approved by 14 different federal, state, and local agencies since 2003.

Key to Florida Economy

Phosphate mining has been an integral part of central Florida's economy since the first deposits were extracted by pick and shovel in 1883. In the ensuing 127 years, phosphate mining has become increasingly sophisticated.

Today, giant cranes, known as draglines, scoop out the phosphate ore, which lies 15 to 50 feet below the ground. A multiphase process separates the mix of

"[G]reen manures and animal manures produce runoff and groundwater-leaching at rates similar to mined fertilizers, and they're vastly more expensive for farmers to use, which drives up food costs for consumers."

GREG CONKO, SENIOR FELLOW
COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE INSTITUTE

sand, clay, and phosphate rock, and then the phosphate is treated with sulfuric acid at a chemical plant to produce fertilizer.

Under a Florida law enacted in 1975, phosphate companies are required to reclaim each acre of land they mine and replace wetlands. Mosaic says approximately 95 percent of the 30,000 acres it has reclaimed in the past decade has been converted to pasture land for more than 4,500 head of cattle.

Supplies Much of World's Phosphate

The area where the phosphate is being mined is called "Bone Valley" for a reason. The nutrient-rich fossil bed was once home to mastodons, saber-tooth cats, 40-foot sharks, and other long-extinct creatures. In addition to fertilizer, Florida's phosphates are used in making animal food supplements, toothpaste, soft drinks, and metal coatings.

Florida provides 75 percent of the phosphorous used by U.S. farmers and accounts for 25 percent of global production. China and Morocco control more than half of the world's phosphate reserves outside the United States.

The delay in extending the Mosaic mine couldn't

have come at a worse time for the hard-pressed residents of central Florida. Phosphate mining provides about 4,000 direct jobs in the four counties where mines are in operation, and the miners' wages are among the highest in the area. With an unemployment rate of 15 percent, Hardee County would likely suffer further economic dislocation if phosphate mining is curtailed.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is undertaking a review of phosphate mining in central Florida, and the results are expected in 18 months. Given the pivotal role phosphate mining plays in growing crops to feed people around the world, and the industry's contribution to the local economy, EPA's review and the ongoing court battle are being followed closely.

'Lifblood' of Ag Production

"Nitrogen, phosphorous, and potassium fertilizers are the lifblood of production agriculture wherever it's practiced. Growing plants need to draw those nutrients out of the soil, not only to thrive but merely to live," said Greg Conko, a senior fellow at the Competitive Enterprise Institute and cofounder of the AgBioWorld Foundation. "If those nutrients are not replenished, crop yields would decline rapidly and eventually disappear."

This, Conko says, raises the question of the viability of alternatives to phosphate fertilizers.

"Fertilizer opponents argue that we should get by with animal manures and so-called 'green manures,' nitrogen-fixing plants like clover that get plowed into the soil instead of being harvested," Conko explained. "But green manures and animal manures produce runoff and groundwater-leaching at rates similar to mined fertilizers, and they're vastly more expensive for farmers to use, which drives up food costs for consumers."

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.

Children's Book Counters Environmental Propaganda

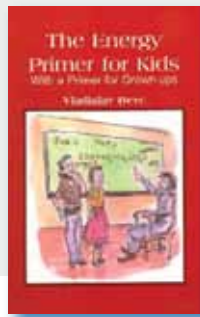
BOOK REVIEW

The Energy Primer for Kids: With a Primer for Grown-ups

By Vladislav Bevc

Eloquent Books, 2010, 58 pages

ISBN-13: 978-1609115982



Review By Jay Lehr

Children these days are bombarded by nonstop propaganda claiming Western nations and market economies are destroying the Earth. Not often do children encounter a book that encourages critical thinking about such emotional environmental claims and the inevitable prescription of expensive renewable energy to solve the fictitious problem.

Vladislav Bevc's book *The Energy Primer for Kids: With a Primer for Grown-ups* is a superb exception: an informative and important 57-page paperback that cuts through alarmist environmental propaganda in a manner children will find

interesting and memorable.

Addressing proposed environmental "solutions" such as electric cars, solar and wind power, and renewable fuels, *The Energy Primer for Kids* shows why certain alternatives may be technologically feasible but economically undesirable. Children and their parents are shown how to spot the flaws in the deluge of propaganda and make informed energy and environmental decisions as citizens and voters.

In the process of cutting through anti-market environmental propaganda, *The Energy Primer for Kids* explains mathematical models for school kids better than

almost any other source you will find.

The book also explains the importance of the scientific method, whereby scientists respond to new theories by actively encouraging counter-theories and counter-research that may prove the proposed theory wrong. Only through such rigorous testing of proposed theories does the truth ultimately emerge.

This time-tested method of truth-seeking unfortunately has been subjected to extreme hostility by global warming alarmists who demonize all who would question their speculative theories.

Bevc's book also explains the fallacy of deriving experimental results with a primary goal of keeping government money flowing rather than seeking the truth and nothing but the truth. The author runs some fascinating calculations for children, such as one estimating all the wind power available over the conterminous United States would not equal the energy available from 12 conventional 1000 megawatt power plants.

In addition, Bevc shows the corn required to produce enough ethanol to

fill a single 20-gallon automobile fuel tank equals the amount of corn a single American eats in a year.

The Energy Primer for Kids treats young readers to wonderful bits of philosophical wisdom such as the following quote:

"The main problem humanity has is men who want to dominate us all. Such men appear time and again claiming that they can solve problems most people do not understand. They tell the people that if they only followed them and did everything they command, the problem would go away. History shows that nothing has ever been solved by such men and that they have invariably caused great misfortune to humanity."

This statement precedes an excellent explanation of the global warming fraud.

This book would make a great addition to your child's birthday, Valentine's Day, or Easter gift list.

Jay Lehr, Ph.D. (jlehr@heartland.org) is science director of The Heartland Institute.

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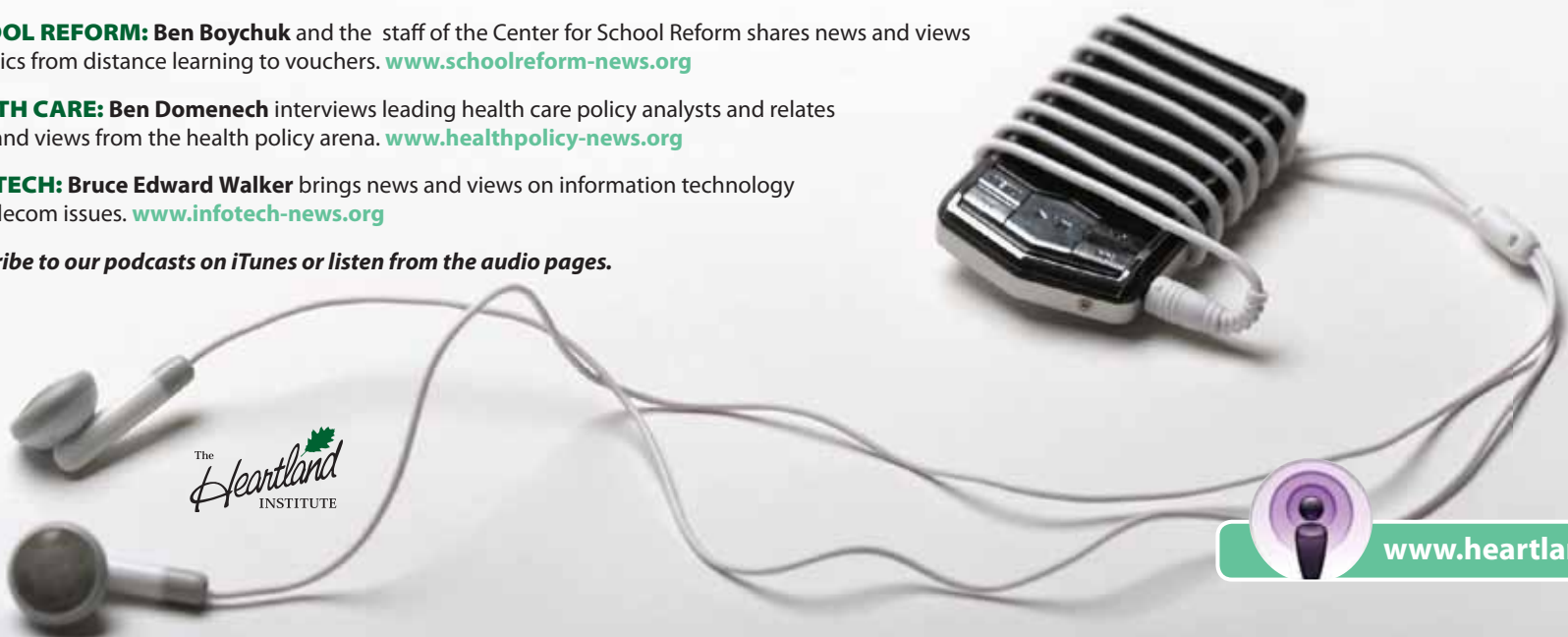
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COMMENTARY

Global Warming in 2010: The Heat Came from Politics, Not Mother Nature

By Roger Cohen

It's time to review the year's happenings in the hurly-burly world of global warming. But before we go further, readers should know that global warming has morphed again.

Dissatisfied with the earlier attempt to replace "global warming" with the hummer "climate change," Presidential Science Advisor John Holdren has relabeled it "climate disruption." The switch better enables claims that any nasty weather event can be ascribed to driving your SUV.

El Niño Reappears

The year 2010 will come in slightly warmer than recent norms, insignifi-

"In general, [2010 was] a year of broad retreat by those pushing for worldwide government control of energy production and use."

cantly different from the peak year of 1998. Advocates of climate alarmism will crow accordingly, just as skeptics crowded over the unusually cold 2008.

Both are meaningless: 2010 brought a strongly warming El Niño event, whereas 2008 had a strongly cooling La Niña. These are natural cycles, and the trend over the past 10 to 15 years remains flat.

But get ready for loud squawks from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration about a hot year.

Skeptics' Ranks Augmented

Nevertheless, the year was dominated by human events, not science. Some of it was dramatic.

Preeminent Georgia Tech climatologist Judith Curry "defected" from the dogma and became a vocal critic of the IPCC and ardent spokesperson for science accountability.

Then my friend and colleague in physics, Hal Lewis, became an instant folk hero when he issued his public letter resigning from the American Physical Society. Hal was chairman of the

Defense Science Board Panel on Nuclear Winter and chaired the APS Reactor Safety Study. The letter contained scathing indictments of the bogus science and moneyed interests driving the politics.

The event was hailed by skeptics and sent alarmism advocates scurrying to muster their character assassination techniques.

Alarmists in Retreat

In general, it has been a year of broad retreat by those pushing for worldwide government control of energy production and use.

The retreat began with the Climategate scandal, which one blogger wryly likened to "discovering that professional wrestling is rigged."

For readers who missed out on the saga, Andrew Montford's *The Hockey Stick Illusion: ClimateGate and the Corruption of Science* is a rewarding read.

The failure of the U.N. Climate Conference in Copenhagen came soon afterward and was widely linked to the Climategate revelations. This is probably exaggerated; the reluctance of developing countries such as China to commit economic suicide was another critical factor.

Similarly, despite a convocation soliciting benevolent intervention from a Mayan goddess, the recent Cancun climate séance was jolted by an unusually blunt Japanese announcement: "Japan will not inscribe its target under the Kyoto protocol on any conditions or under any circumstances." No binding agreement is in sight.

IPCC Under Increasing Fire

The IPCC itself came in for strong criticism from the international scientific elite. The InterAcademy Council, an organization of the world's science academies, called for major reforms. Among these was what amounted to a recommendation that the U.N. replace the IPCC's buffoonish chairman, Rajendra Pachauri.

In typical U.N. fashion, the calls for



resignation were disregarded.

Perhaps most significant was the movement by some scientific societies toward a more moderate stance on the issue. The prestigious U.K. Royal Society, the world's oldest scientific society, substantially moderated its previous alarmist position on global warming. It now enumerates the key scientific uncertainties and no longer calls for precipitous government action.

Alarmist Outlook Dims

Europe continued to back away from its public commitments to reduce emissions, as huge debt and a poor economic outlook drove home the realization the E.U. can ill afford expensive energy controls with no climate impact. Spain's 21 percent unemployment was ascribed largely to the high economic cost of publicly subsidized renewable energy.

At home in the United States, the midterm elections further dimmed prospects for draconian legislation, so the Obama administration will use executive action to increase control of energy generation and use. This may be short-lived because executive action can be reversed at the next change of the guard.

The Chicago Climate Exchange closed down for lack of interest. It was to have been the mechanism for trillions of dollars to change hands in the trading of government permission to emit carbon dioxide, the by-product of breathing and

feedstock of the plant world. It would have further enriched clever hedge fund managers and, yes, Al Gore.

Only errant California bucked the trend, paving the way for its accelerated economic decline and ultimate failure, which all of us will pay for, one way or another.

Public Skepticism Continues

Finally, running ahead of its elected leaders, the American public became yet more skeptical about global warming despite the 20-year media fear barrage. A recent *Scientific American* poll of its presumably scientifically literate readers found 78 percent think climate change is caused by solar variation or natural processes, and 69 percent think we should do nothing about climate change. According to Pew Research, among 21 social and economic issues confronting Americans, global warming ranks last in importance.

It is now safe to say the skeptic community has sealed the fate of the old climate dogma. The dogmatists still defend themselves with increasing shrillness, but that only serves to further isolate it and erode its credibility.

Roger W. Cohen (rogerwcohen@comcast.net) is a fellow of the American Physical Society. A longer version of this article first appeared in the *Durango Herald*. Reprinted with permission.



Secondhand Smoke, Lung Cancer, and the Global Warming Debate

By S. Fred Singer

In 1993 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published a report claiming secondhand smoke (SHS—also sometimes known as environmental tobacco smoke or ETS) causes 3,000 deaths from lung cancer every year in the United States. Anyone doubting this claim has been subject to attack and depicted as a toady of the tobacco lobby.

The tobacco smoking issue also has become a favorite tool for discrediting climate skeptics. A prime example is the book *Merchants of Doubt*, by Naomi Oreskes and Eric Conway, which attacks several well-known senior physicists, including the late Dr. Fred Seitz, a former president of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, the American Physical Society, and (most recently) Rockefeller University.

Vast Tobacco Conspiracy

No matter what the environmental issue—ozone depletion, acid rain, pesticides, etc.—any and all scientific opposition based on objective facts is blamed on an imagined involvement with tobacco companies. None of this is true, of course. Oreskes and Conway claim to be academic historians, yet they have consistently ignored factual information, have not bothered to consult primary sources, have never interviewed any of the scientists they try to smear, and generally have operated in a completely unprofessional way.

The ultimate aim of these attacks has been to discredit skeptics of similarly unsupported global warming fears. I am a nonsmoker, find SHS to be an irritant and unpleasant, have certainly not been paid by Philip Morris or the tobacco lobby, and have never joined any of their front organizations. I serve on the advisory board of an anti-smoking organization.

“The corruption of science in a worthy cause is still corruption, and it has led to its further corruption in an unworthy cause—the ideologically driven claim of anthropogenic global warming.”

My father, who was a heavy smoker, died of emphysema while relatively young. I personally believe that SHS, in addition to being objectionable, cannot possibly be healthy. Yet people like Oreskes and Conway repeatedly try to divert attention from scientific facts by claiming I and other scientists who disagree with them on global warming are mere shills for tobacco companies.

EPA's Flawed Science

So what is the truth about SHS and lung cancer? EPA fudged its analysis to reach a predetermined conclusion, using thoroughly dishonest procedures. EPA “scientists” made three major errors: (1) They ignored “publication bias.” (2) They arbitrarily shifted the statistical “confidence intervals.” (3) They drew unjustified conclusions from a risk ratio that was barely greater than 1.0.

Since none of the epidemiological studies provided the clear answer they wanted, EPA carried out a “meta-analysis,” lumping together a selected group of studies. Unfortunately, this approach ignores publication bias, the tendency for investigators not to publish their studies if they do not find a positive result.

EPA, in order to calculate a positive risk ratio, relaxed the confidence inter-

vals from the generally accepted 95 percent standard to 90 percent—and admitted this openly.

Even so, its “risk ratio” was just a little above 1.0—whereas careful epidemiologists, because of the presence of confounding factors, generally ignore any result unless the risk ratio exceeds 2.0.

To sum up this somewhat technical discussion, I can state with some assurance that the EPA analysis—to paraphrase my former teacher, Nobel Prize-winning physicist Wolfgang Pauli—is “not only wrong, but worthless.”

Many Studies Cast Doubt

My assessments are independently confirmed by the Congressional Research Service (in report CRS-95-1115) and by a lengthy judicial analysis in 1998 by Judge William Osteen, each of which is available on the Internet. Science journalist Michael Fumento presented, in 1993, a well-researched and eminently readable account in *Investor's Business Daily*.

In the largest (in terms of statistical power), most detailed (in terms of results presented), and most transparent (in terms of information about its conduct) epidemiologic paper on SHS and mortality ever published in a major medical journal (in the May 17, 2003 issue of the *British Medical Journal*), UCLA Prof. James Enstrom found no significant relationship between secondhand smoke and lung cancer.

It is worth noting also that the World Health Organization, in a just-completed study reported in the British medical journal *Lancet*, gives a lung-cancer death rate for the United States, Canada, and Cuba of barely 600 per year, which is only a fraction of the number of deaths the politicized EPA claims occur in the U.S. alone.

An independent study, published in *BioMed Central* in 2010 and supported by the Canadian National Cancer Institute and Canada's Cancer Society, found no noticeable lung-cancer effect from SHS in nonsmokers. Instead, the study found a significant effect from welding, use of paint thinners and solvents, and exposure to diesel exhaust, soot, and smoke from sources other than tobacco.

Afraid of Discussing Science

So what does this all mean? Wielding of the “tobacco weapon” regarding global warming or other scientific issues bespeaks the desperation of those who don't have any valid scientific arguments and wish to avoid public debate.

The other issue is the conduct of science and the integrity of the science process. The corruption of science in a worthy cause is still corruption, and it has led to its further corruption in an unworthy cause—the ideologically driven claim of anthropogenic global warming.

Atmospheric physicist S. Fred Singer (singer@sepp.org) is professor emeritus of environmental sciences at the University of Virginia, founding director of the U.S. Weather Satellite Service, and a senior fellow at The Heartland Institute. A longer version of this article first appeared in The American Thinker. Published with author's permission.

INTERNET INFO

Many of the studies cited here are available through PolicyBot, The Heartland Institute's online research database, at www.policybot.org.

Cap-and-Trade Averted, but More Mandates Loom

By Jay Lehr

Although Congress has rejected proposed legislation to impose cap-and-trade restrictions on the U.S. economy, mandates are still being pressed.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and various state governments are seeking to restrict carbon dioxide emissions. Moreover, federal and state renewable power mandates would impose the same economy-killing mandates under a different name.

No Supporting Rationale

Larry Bell, author of the outstanding book *Climate of Corruption* (reviewed in the December 2010 issue of *Environment & Climate News*), has persuasively documented the flaws in cap-and-trade schemes. Bell opened his chapter on cap-and-trade with this statement:

“Cap and trade legislation, a major Obama administration priority, has no defensible purpose without a supporting global warming crisis rationale. It also makes no sense from an economic standpoint. It will place onerous cost burdens upon energy consumers, continue to drive business overseas, and offer no real climate or environmental benefits whatsoever.”

The same statements apply to EPA regulations designed to make an end-run around defeated legislation, as well as renewable power mandates that are essentially cap-and-trade restrictions minus the trading mechanisms.

Alarmists' Premises Critiqued

Bell points out government restrictions on carbon dioxide emissions are promoted on the errant and deceptive argument that restrictions: (1) will help protect our planet from dangerous climate change and pollution; (2) are needed to wean the United States and the world away from excessive energy consumption; and (3) will incentivize energy technology and conservation innovations that will lead to independence from foreign oil.

Bell notes the initial premise is wrong on two counts. First, there is no real evidence of any human-caused climate crisis, and second, there is no evidence that reducing our carbon dioxide emissions will have any significant impact on global temperatures.

Regarding the second premise, that carbon dioxide restrictions are necessary to reduce energy consumption, Bell chronicles how the push to reduce



“By forcing consumers to purchase higher-priced energy, whether through a carbon tax, cap-and-trade scheme, or renewable power mandates, U.S. households would have to spend a higher portion of their family budget on power ...”

energy consumption has its roots in ideological agendas that are hostile to Western democracies. Energy consumption restrictions are proposed as a means of driving up costs for free-market economies that produce far more goods and services—and thus consume far more energy—than command-and-control governments and economies that dominate Third World nations. Driving up costs in currently free markets would eliminate the economic disparity between economic freedom and economic oppression.

The third premise, that carbon penalties will incentivize alternate energy innovations, is absurd, Bell writes. Governments' attempts to tilt the playing field by picking winners and losers deter technological and economic innovation instead of encouraging it. Moreover, the United States has enormous quantities of the very coal, natural gas, and oil that are targeted by carbon dioxide restrictions. Of these three fuel sources, only oil is imported in relatively large quanti-

ties, and this is so primarily because the advocates of carbon dioxide restrictions have rendered most of our oil reserves off-limits for economic development.

Prone to Fraud

A close look at cap-and-trade schemes reveals how susceptible they are to cheating and fraud. After the European Union imposed cap-and-trade restrictions, the European Criminal Intelligence Agency reported as much as 90 percent of Europe's carbon trades involved fraudulent activity, with such schemes totaling nearly \$7 billion U.S. dollars in 2009 alone.

Among the fraudulent cap-and-trade schemes were claims of tree-planting that never occurred, claims of foregone deforestation that never would have occurred anyway, and entities drawing up frivolous plans to build high-emitting factories or power plants and then pocketing emission-reduction credits for not building them after all.

Crony Capitalism

The most disappointing aspect of cap-and-trade politics is the manner in which many American corporations have supported a scheme that would boost their corporate profits while harming the nation as a whole. For example, more than 30 large corporations formed the U.S. Climate Action Partnership to lobby for cap-and-trade restrictions because they stood to make money off of forcing Americans to pay more for their energy.

The likes of Duke Energy, Alcoa, General Electric, Dupont, and a host of others recognize cap-and-trade would be a cash cow for them. Government action to restrict markets and raise energy costs—thereby reducing consumers' living standards—for a corporate bloc that stands to make money off of the scheme is crony capitalism at its worst.

Corporations that did not stand to gain directly from cap-and-trade eventually capitulated in the belief such restrictions were inevitable. Winston Churchill once described this strategy as “one who feeds the crocodile in hopes that it will eat him last.”

Punishing the Economy

Regardless of which businesses would or would not be on the government's cap-and-trade dinner menu, U.S. consumers would certainly be the main course. By forcing consumers to purchase higher-priced energy, whether through a carbon tax, cap-and-trade scheme, or renewable power mandates, U.S. households would have to spend a higher portion of their family budget on power, which would force reductions in the amount of money available for housing, clothes, education, food, health care, environmental programs, and durable consumer goods.

The Heritage Foundation's Center for Data Analysis estimated the Waxman-Markey climate change legislation that nearly became law in 2009 would have cost \$161 billion annually by the year 2020. That translates to \$500 per U.S. household per year by the year 2020, and most of the restrictions and most of the costs would actually kick in after 2020.

Jay Lehr, Ph.D. (jlehr@heartland.org) is science director of The Heartland Institute.

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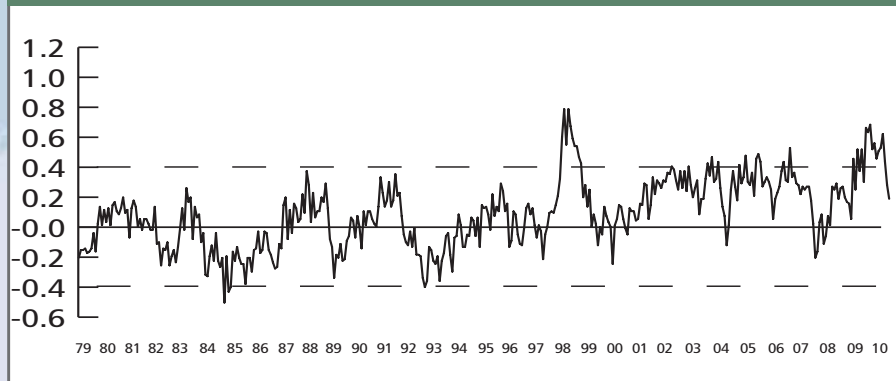
GLOBAL SATELLITE TEMPERATURES

HOW MUCH GLOBAL WARMING?

Each month, *Environment & Climate News* updates the global averaged satellite measurements of the Earth's temperature. These numbers are important because they are real—not projections, forecasts, or guesses. Global satellite measurements are made from a series of orbiting platforms that sense the average temperature in various atmospheric layers. Here, we present the lowest level, which climate models say should be warming. The satellite measurements are considered accurate to within 0.01°C. The data used to create these graphs can be found on the Internet at <http://vortex.nsstc.uah.edu/data/msu/t2lt/uahncdc.lt>

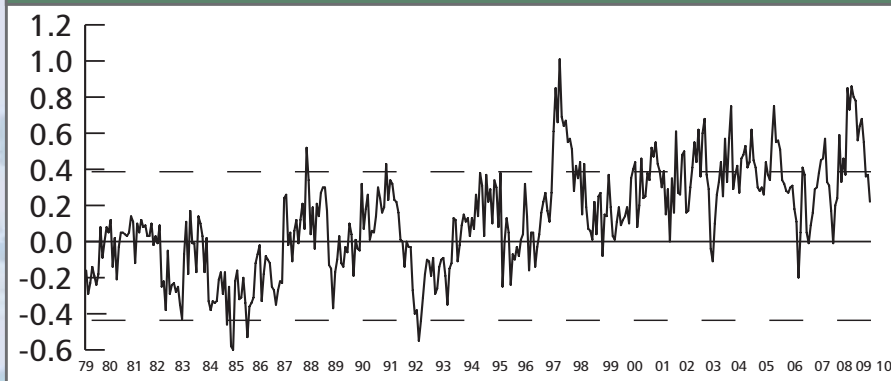
DECEMBER 2010

GLOBAL AVERAGE



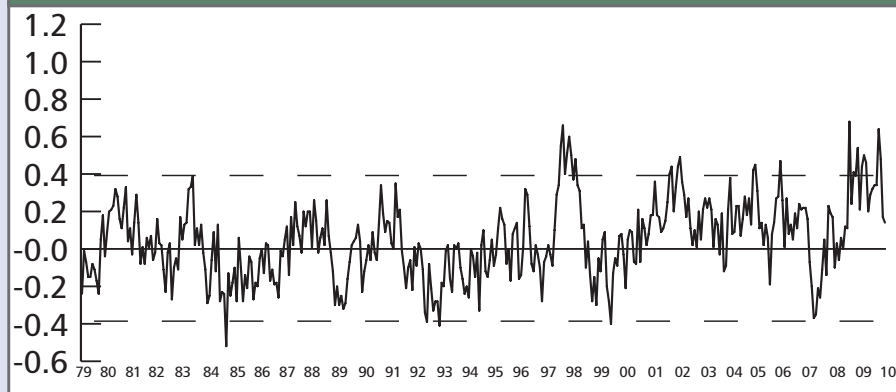
The global average temperature for December was 0.18°C above normal.

NORTHERN HEMISPHERE



The Northern Hemisphere's temperature was 0.22°C above normal.

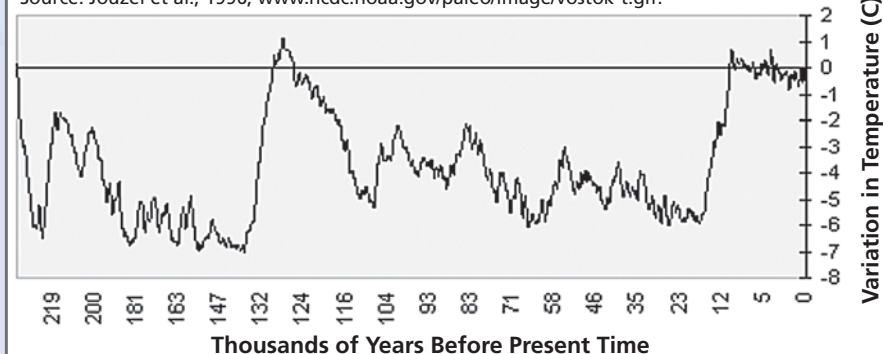
SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE



The Southern Hemisphere's temperature was 0.14°C above normal.

219,000 years of Temperature Variation

Source: Jouzel et al., 1996, www.ncdc.noaa.gov/paleo/image/vostok-t.gif.



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