

# ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING NEWSLETTER

8 JULY. 2013

Please be aware any Newsletter URL ending in **020701.pdf** is available for downloading only during the six days following the date of the edition. If you need previous Newsletter entries contact George at [ghh@att.net](mailto:ghh@att.net).

Please Note: This newsletter contains articles that offer differing points of view regarding climate change, energy and other environmental issues. Any opinions expressed in this publication are the responses of the readers alone and do not represent the positions of the Environmental Engineering Division or the ASME.

**George Holliday**

*This week's edition includes:*

## **1) ENVIRONMENT – A. EPA: REVIEW OF FRACKING'S GROUNDWATER EFFECTS TO BE OUT BY 2016**

The Environmental Protection Agency won't finish its assessment of the effects of hydraulic fracturing on groundwater until 2016, said Jeanne Briskin, fracking research coordinator at the EPA's Office of Research and Development. However, a preliminary report could be released late next year, Briskin said.

<http://www.ohio.com/news/local/epa-study-on-fracking-threat-to-water-will-take-years-1.407046>

## **2) HEALTH – A. PLAGUE, SQUIRREL - USA (02): (CALIFORNIA), ALERT**

Three squirrels with plague have been discovered at Cedar Grove Campground and Doane Valley Campground.

San Diego County Department of Environmental Health officials urged hikers and campers to take simple precautions Wednesday [12 Jun 2013] to make sure they don't come into contact with squirrels or their fleas, which can spread plague, a disease caused by bacteria that can make people very sick and even kill them without quick treatment.

<http://www.eandp-environment.net/Health/Health020701.pdf>

## **3) SAFETY – A. Oil Hauler Incident in EFS\_photos.docx**

Below and attached describes another fatal truck collision. Driving is the greatest risk in the oilfield; we do a lot of it and the consequences can be catastrophic. Driving defensively is even more important now that “other” drivers are using cell phones and texting while driving. Our own use of cell phones and texting devices while driving makes it harder to be as aware of what is going on around you and to respond defensively.





## **B. HIGH VOLTAGE OFFSHORE POWER SYSTEMS, JULY 29 TO AUG. 1, HOUSTON**

This four-day course is designed to instruct electrical personnel in the safe working techniques for offshore and industrial high voltage applications. Topics to be covered are IEC & NEC standards for HV switching, electrical isolations and flash protection boundaries. Training will be conducted on the startup and troubleshooting of offshore power systems -- including fundamental system principles and dynamics, bus loading management, distribution to lower voltage electrical networks, HV electrical cabling and stress relief concepts and other associated electrical applications.

<http://www.api.org/events-and-training/api-u-training/api-u-calendar/2013-events/07-29-13-hv-ocs>

## **4) TRANSPORTATION. A NOTHING OF INTEREST**

### **COMMENTS:**

#### **A. THE WEEK THAT WAS: 2013-06-22 (June 22, 2013)**

*By Ken Haapala, Executive Vice President, Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP) is experiencing computer problem this week, so no presentation is available.*

**Temperature Debate:** Larry Bell's column on Forbes on-line carried a debate between Texas State Climatologist John Nielsen-Gammon of Texas A&M University and Fred Singer, former director of the U.S. Weather Satellite Service and University of Virginia Professor Emeritus. **The issue is: Has there been any global warming since 1978? Nielsen-Gammon asserts there has and Singer asserts there is no convincing evidence since that time.** One issue is that there has been warming of the northern part of the northern hemisphere, but is that really global? For example, see the data

from satellites prepared by University of Alabama, Huntsville:  
[http://nsstc.uah.edu/climate/2012/november/trend\\_Dec78\\_Nov12\\_alt.png](http://nsstc.uah.edu/climate/2012/november/trend_Dec78_Nov12_alt.png)

Please see link under Science Debate

\*\*\*\*\*

**NIPCC in China:** The editors of the two major reports by the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC) have returned from China. Unfortunately, some commentators saw the translation of the two major reports by a unit of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) as an endorsement of the reports, which it clearly was not. The press release by the CAS stated it was to open dialogue, something sorely missing in many western countries. For that reason, some of the links carried in last week's TWTW were taken down. No doubt, updates will come out this week.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Lack of Science:** The Heritage Foundation provided presentations by Patrick Michaels and Harold Doiron, with comments by Harlan Watson on the lack of science within the climate establishment and its publications. Michaels led seven person team, organized under the CATO institute, which evaluated the 2009 US government National Climate Assessment (NCA): *Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States*. The report was a principal source cited by the EPA in its finding that greenhouse gases (GHG), particularly carbon dioxide, (CO<sub>2</sub>), endanger human health and welfare. The new report, *ADDENDUM: Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States*, is laid out in a similar fashion as the earlier one, permitting side by side comparison. The report comes to significantly different conclusions than the prior one on issues such as national impacts of climate change, impacts on crop production and livestock, sea levels, life expectancy and health. On Alaska fisheries, the original report stated conclusions that are directly refuted in the original paper it cites. Harold Doiron is the leader of The Right Climate Stuff team (TRCS) comprised, mostly, of retired Apollo veterans. Doiron's background is in complex system modeling – what the climate modelers are doing. He developed the guidance software and techniques for the lunar Lander. The all-volunteer TRCS team brought in people from both sides of the issue on dangerous Anthropogenic (human caused) Global Warming (AGW) looking into the research and the data. He said that TRCS team applied the successful methodology used at NASA to find the root cause of the problem (do not assume a cause) and the use of problem definition and root causes analysis for rational decision making. The conclusions are: the science is not settled, there is no reason for alarm, and no convincing physical evidence for catastrophic AGW. The computer models need to be validated, before being used for critical decision making; and do not waste money on running models until the hard work is accomplished to show the models agree with nature.

Doiron was quite harsh on the logic used by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and on the NCA. In essence, the IPCC states that the cause of recent warming must be CO<sub>2</sub>, because its invalidated computer models cannot account for the observed warming unless it assumes strong amplifying anthropogenic warming feedback relations in the models. Doiron bluntly states this is not proof in the school of hard knocks.

To Doiron, the NCA contains a lot of good science, but it is not a valuable scientific document because it is more to push for public policy change (unsupported by validated models). For a link to the video please see Challenging the Orthodoxy. For links to the summary and the full report of TRCS team please see: <http://www.therightclimatestuff.com/SummaryPrelimReport.html> and <http://therightclimatestuff.com/AGW%20Science%20Assess%20Rpt-1.pdf>

\*\*\*\*\*

**Mean Is Meaningless Continued:** The post by Robert Brown of Duke on WUWT declaring that the mean shown in the ensemble of climate models has no meaning has caused a stir. Statistician William Briggs states that the mean of the ensemble of models, such as weather models, can have significant meaning. They may be both right, in part. Though Briggs does not discuss this, think of a US carrier fleet which is spread over a large area with airplanes operating hundreds of miles from the

fleet. According to a retired naval meteorologist, the ensemble of weather models in such a fleet are being tested and updated constantly. When asked about the longest duration a weather forecast may be reliable, he replied that, on occasion, up to 11 days, provided all the models converged. Here is a critical difference in the treatment of the models. The climate models are not being tested and updated constantly, and they certainly do not converge.

For the statistically inclined, Robert Brown has another post further dealing with the probabilities stated in the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report (AR4). Brown states that predictive modeling is difficult, and invites the authors of the Summary for Policymakers (SPM) of AR4 to "explain in detail how they derived the probability ranges that make it so easy for the policy makers to understand how likely to certain it is that we are en route to catastrophe." Will any of these authors respond? Please see links under Statistical Issues.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Missing from Models:** Judith Curry has a provocative post on what is missing in the climate models. It is based on a paper by Stevens and Bony stating that adding complexity to the climate models does not improve the fundamental deficiencies in the models. Curry's conclusions in the post bear repeating:

"However, IMO [In My Opinion] the more fundamental problems with climate models lie in the coupling of two chaotic fluids – the ocean and the atmosphere. The inability of climate models to simulate the evolution of and connections among the teleconnections [such as the Southern Oscillation] and interannual to multidecadal circulation regimes is the biggest source of problems for understanding regional climate variability.

Taking climate modeling back to basics to address the interplay between atmospheric water and the atmospheric circulation, and the complex couplings between the atmosphere and ocean, require going back to basics and looking at a hierarchy of models and a range of model structural forms. Better understanding and simulation of the climate requires that [we] improve our understanding and treatment of these processes in climate models. It is pointless to worry about aerosols, carbon cycle etc in the context of climate models until these more fundamental issues are addressed."

Curry seems to agree with Harold Doiron. We will not move forward in understanding the human influence on climate until we understand and can model the natural influences on climate. Adding fluff increases vagueness and wastes money. Please see link under Seeking a Common Ground.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Model Foolishness:** Bjørn Lomborg reminds us that 2013 is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the **Limits to Growth**, which used state of the art computer models that were not validated to predict that humanity faced a devastating collapse from the lack of food, oil, other commodities, etc. Forgetting this history, The World Bank has come out with a report, prepared by the alarmist Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and Climate Analytics, which uses state of the art computer models that are not validated to predict that humanity, faces a devastating collapse from the use of too much fossil fuels. The title, *4° Turn Down the Heat*, indicates the quality of the report. It assess the impacts of a 1.5°C, 2 °C, and 4 °C rise in temperatures above pre-industrial levels (roughly since the Little Ice Age). All the ills are here: heat extremes, rainfall changes, crashing agriculture production, sea-level rise, etc. It is becoming apparent, that by focusing on the results of computer models that are not validated, the World Bank is becoming an obstacle to alleviating world poverty.

As part of the UK Government's National Adaptation Programme, the consulting firm PWC prepared a similar report for the UK. However it was based on a modest 2 °C. The above comments concerning models apply to both reports. Please see links under Lowering Standards, Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up, and Models v. Observations.

\*\*\*\*\*

**NOAA Numbers:** NOAA issued a statement that this May was the third hottest since record keeping began in the 1880s. The claim was quickly debunked by Joseph D'Aleo and Anthony Watts. Perhaps

the measurements were influenced by the excitement in Washington over rumors that President Obama will make a major climate policy statement in July. Please see links under Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up

\*\*\*\*\*

**Agriculture Issues:** Evidence continues to mount that increased CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is a benefit for plants, the environment, and humanity.

Surprisingly, an extensive UK study showed pesticide workers have a longer life span and lower mortality rate from cancer than the general population. These findings will give the EPA and green groups major headaches. Please see links under Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine, and Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

\*\*\*\*\*

**Call for Nominations:** The Topical Group on the Physics of Climate of the American Physical Society has issued a call for nominations for three positions on the GPC Executive Committee, one Vice-Chair and 2 at large. Nominations for member at large can be submitted to

<http://www.aps.org/units/gpc/governance/nominations.cfm> and for vice chair at

[http://www.aps.org/units/gpc/governance/nominations\\_vc.cfm](http://www.aps.org/units/gpc/governance/nominations_vc.cfm)

\*\*\*\*\*

**Amplification and Corrections:** Last week TWTW reported on a debate on a proposed carbon tax. Ronald Bailey, the debate moderator, took exception to the statement: *From his questions, it quickly became evident that the moderator...* After re-reading the questions, Mr. Bailey's is correct and the statement should have read along the lines *it was the impression by at least one in the audience ...*

Reader Clyde Spencer points out that as long as the pH remains above 7, reducing the pH of an alkaline solution is not neutralizing it, but making it less alkaline. As always we appreciate those who take the time to provide amplifications and corrections.

<http://www.sepp.org/twtwfiles/2013/TWTW%206-22-13.pdf>

## **B. THE WEEK THAT WAS: 2013-06-29 (June 29, 2013)**

***By Ken Haapala, Executive Vice President, Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP) is experiencing computer problem this week, so no presentation is available.***

**The Climate Speech:** President Obama gave a long awaited speech announcing his climate plan. In an emotional appeal, he invoked the spirit of Apollo missions, apparently unaware that some of the veterans of the Apollo team formed **The Right Climate Stuff research team (TRCS) that directly challenges the claims of the official Washington science that human emissions of carbon dioxide are causing dangerous global warming.** The research team found that 1) the science that predicts the extent of Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW) is not settled; 2) there is no convincing physical evidence of Catastrophic AGW; 3) computer models need to be validated before being used in critical decision-making, 4) we have time to study global climate changes and improve our prediction accuracy, 5) the US government is over-reacting to AGW, and 6) a wider range of solution options should be studied for global warming or cooling threats from any credible cause.

The president announced sweeping new powers for the EPA, including regulating existing coal fired power plants, without bothering to ask Congress for the requisite legislation. In so doing he is claiming authoritarian powers to fight climate change which has been ongoing for hundreds of millions of years.

The president used the term carbon pollution some 20 times, demonstrating how the unfortunate Supreme Court decision that carbon dioxide is a pollutant that can be regulated under the Clean Air Act has infected official thinking in Washington. Many do not realize they are carbon based life forms and that in the act of breathing they increase the concentration of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) of the

air they use by 100 times, inhaling 4 parts per 10,000 and exhaling 400 parts per 10,000. In his speech the president lumped carbon with mercury, sulfur, and arsenic, known toxins.

The speech contained numerous scientific and factual challenges. But this is official Washington science, where un-validated computer models are used to create fear of the future, including global warming, climate change, and extreme weather events, as if they had never happened before. The official science is grossly misleading and, contrary to the models, atmospheric warming stopped a decade ago, and surface warming stopped over 15 years ago. The official science is creating fear in the public that natural variability in climate is unusual and that variability can be controlled by government.

The president presented the issue as if he was on high moral ground, equating skeptics to members of the Flat Earth Society and insisted that urgent action is needed to protect future generations. If there is any moral issue to the speech, it is misleading the public about science and public health to assert authorities control over significant components of the economy. Unfortunately, if his plan is implemented, the major burdens will become evident long after he has left office. Please see Article #2, links under President Obama's Climate Speech and <http://www.therightclimatestuff.com/SummaryPrelimReport.html>. The articles cover a wide range of opinion, and they are in no particular order. Generally, the newspapers that identify themselves a liberal supported the president's authoritarian expansion of power and did not insist on legislative action.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Carbon, Cost or Benefit?** Last week's TWTW discussed how the concept of Social Cost of Carbon, which has never been approved by Congress, therefore is an authoritarian assertion, is being manipulated by Washington bureaucrats. An article in the *Wall Street Journal*, discusses this further. TWTW will start a subheading titled the Social Benefits of Carbon. Please Article #3 and Social Benefits of Carbon.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Another Yucca Mountain?** Secretary of Energy Moniz asserted that the Administration is not waging a war on coal and that the Climate Plan has \$8 Billion for carbon capture and storage. Those who believe this will become effective and affordable would do well to review the history of the Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository, which this Administration stopped, costing the nuclear energy tens of billions on a failed government promise. In 2009, the EPA issued a rule limiting the radiation doses from Yucca Mountain for up to 1,000,000 years!

Further, the requirement under the climate plan that the EPA will issue CO2 limits for new plants and existing plants achieves the goal of stopping construction of new coal-fired power plants to replace less efficient older plants. No one would start a plant under the cloud of new regulations to be issued later. Please see link under Energy Issues – US.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Flat Earth Society:** President Obama's equating those skeptical of the Washington science that CO2 emissions cause dangerous global warming brought out a few amusing responses with the Flat Earth Society. It turns out that the president of the society believes official climate science. Luboš Motl has fun with this by suggesting a merger of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Flat Earth Society. Please see link under Questioning the Orthodoxy.

\*\*\*\*\*

**NIPCC in China:** There are further press releases covering the Chinese Academy of Sciences announcing the translation of the two major reports by the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC) and the event surrounding the announcement. The purpose translation was to promote discussion and it was not an endorsement of the report. Please see Article # 1 and links under NIPCC in China.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Model Issues:** Last week's TWTW contained a discussion on the meaning of the mean of an ensemble of models. Judith Curry presented a discussion, limited to weather models that are constantly tested and updated. For the technically inclined please see link under Model Issues.

\*\*\*\*\*

**A Political Shift:** Judith Curry suggests that the response of the Republicans to the President's climate plan may indicate a shift in policy from questioning the science to focusing on the costs of the plan. Curry endorses this approach. This approach may be easier to explain to the general public. But the quality of the science still needs to be addressed. As discussed in last week's TWTW, the FY 2012 U.S. Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) is \$2.6 Billion. This does not include the monies being spent by the 13 agencies that make up the program. The 2009 USGCRP (different name) report was misleading. The draft 2013 report was shoddy, at best. If the purpose is to learn about climate change, rather than creating illusionary models, the entire program must be turned around to first understand the natural causes of climate change – and then understand the human influence. This turn around can only be accomplished by sharp questioning of all the agencies involved. Please see link under The Political Games Continue.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Fracking Fears:** A new study by Robert Jackson, Professor of Environmental Science at Duke, confirmed that some water wells in northeastern Pennsylvania in Marcellus shale basin showed high concentrations of methane, ethane and propane. But according to Jackson, the likely cause was faulty well construction, improper sealing; (**or near surface gas, GHH**) not hydraulic fracturing. Please see link under Oil Spills, Gas Leaks & Consequences

\*\*\*\*\*

**Gas Rich Britain?** The UK Geological Survey released a study of northern England that indicates that the Bowland shale basin may contain the largest amount of shale gas in the world, up to 1300 trillion cubic feet. Of course much more exploration is necessary to determine how much is economically recoverable. The discovery will cause great consternation among the no fossil fuels politicians. Please see links under Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

\*\*\*\*\*

**Climate Science Lesson Plans:** The International Climate Science Coalition has announced lesson plans for teaching climate science in middle and high schools. SEPP has not reviewed the plans, but is familiar with the science advisor, Bob Carter, who is an editor of the NIPCC reports, and, no doubt, the program is scientifically sound. Please see link under Questioning the Orthodoxy.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Sustainable Wind Power?** Probably unintentionally, an article in the Guardian newspaper stated: "Wind turbine operators and manufacturers have been holding off on tens of billions of pounds of investment in the UK, over fears that subsidies would be cut to unsustainable levels." SEPP has long maintained that without subsidies wind and solar power are unsustainable on a commercial scale. Please see link under Subsidies and Mandates Forever.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Amplifications and Corrections:** Harold Doiron of The Right Climate Stuff Team corrected TWTW description of his work on the Apollo program. It should have read: "He developed the lunar Lander touchdown dynamics simulation for toppling stability and energy absorption used to guide design of the landing gear, develop landing techniques, and help select safe landing sites." Reader Jens Kieffer-Olsen challenges David Archibald's hypothesis that temperatures from central England indicate we are two years away from a 1740 event which was one of extreme cold following a period of warmth. Kieffer-Olsen asserts that the cause of the event was the 1739 eruption of Mt. Hekla in Iceland which killed about 20% of the population. An internet search, including one by Anthony Watts failed to uncover such an eruption. Kieffer-Olsen provided an account written in

1914, but it is in Swedish. The google translations is poor but it does state the eruption killed 9,238 people and significant livestock. <http://runeberg.org/univers/0476.html>  
In two years we can test Archibald's hypothesis.  
<http://www.sepp.org/twtwfiles/2013/TWTW%206-29-13.pdf>

## **B. CRITICS DECRY FEDERAL RULES ON NATURAL GAS EXPORTS**



A planned LNG export terminal to be built by Exxon Mobil Corp. and Qatar Petroleum International at the Sabine Pass is one of the projects being held up by federal rules governing the permitting process.

By **Jennifer A. Dlouhy**  
June 19, 2013

WASHINGTON - Lawmakers and energy industry representatives were critical of the Obama administration's approach to natural gas exports on Tuesday, with at least one trade group accusing the government of violating federal law in reviewing applications to sell the fossil fuel overseas.

At issue is the Energy Department's December decision to give priority to companies that had already launched pre-filing processes with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as part of their bids to build export facilities for liquefied natural gas.

The Energy Department vets the export applications individually, while the commission evaluates the physical facilities. Companies need both approvals to build the export terminals and sell gas to countries that don't have free trade agreements with the U.S. So far, just one company - Houston-based Cheniere Energy - has cleared both hurdles, for its Sabine Pass liquefaction project in Louisiana.

The Energy Department wanted a process "that was fair and that helped push projects that were more viable to the front of the queue," Christopher Smith, the assistant secretary for fossil energy, said Tuesday during testimony before a House subcommittee.

The Energy Department chose to use pre-filing with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission as a kind of litmus test for the validity and viability of the export applications. It costs just \$50 to file a natural gas export application with the Energy Department. By contrast, Smith noted, the commission's permitting process is where companies "start spending real money."

But Bill Cooper, head of the Center for Liquefied Natural Gas, said the approach violates administrative law, because the Energy Department didn't first publish its plans to create a review process or ask public comment - and then it applied the change retroactively.

"The failure to provide notice and comment renders the queue void," Cooper said. "After 15 applicants reasonably relied upon the only rules the Department of Energy had published, DOE changed those rules by predicating when it would consider each application, not based on when those applications were filed with DOE but based on when those applications were filed with another agency ... after the fact."

Cooper said his group did not plan a lawsuit against the Energy Department, but his accusation highlighted the risk of legal challenges facing the Energy Department as it delves into the issue.

## **C. WHAT PRICE POLLUTION? ABOUT \$270,000 A TON**

**By Matthew Tresaugue**

Economic growth remains slow by historical standards, and millions of Americans still are looking for work. But the pollution business is booming in Houston.

The price to pollute is at a record high, with traders recently paying \$270,000 for the right to emit 1 ton of volatile organic compounds, a key ingredient in ozone, or smog. That's up from \$4,500 per ton in January 2011.

The soaring price of smog credits — each equal to 1 ton of pollution — means the market is doing its job: prodding industry to reduce emissions. The allowances have become so valuable that for the first time since the system began nearly a decade ago, companies are looking for ways to cut emissions in order to sell their excess credits as a bottom-line booster, traders said.

"As the market price has significantly increased over the past two years, it has sent signals to companies to make reductions in emissions" of volatile organic compounds, said Mike Taylor, who manages the emissions trading desk at Houston-based Element Markets. The brokerage firm assisted the city of Houston in the record sale, which was reported last week to Texas regulators.

The market for these state-issued allowances, officially called Emission Reduction Credits, appears to be driven by chemical makers, who are looking to expand in the Houston area after years in the doldrums.

Violating federal limits

The eight-county region is in violation of federal smog limits. So to build or expand a large industrial facility here, companies must obtain credits for their projected emissions of volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. The chemicals, when cooked in sunlight, form ozone, a harmful pollutant linked to lung damage, asthma episodes and death.

The credits come from companies which have reduced emissions below permitted levels, either by using cleaner-burning fuels, upgrading pollution controls or completely shutting down plants.

With each trade, a number of credits are retired, a requirement designed to lower the cap of allowable emissions. Houston's air quality has improved since the system began because in part industry has retired credits for about 450 tons a year of volatile organic compounds, according to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

"The program has been positive," said Neil Car-man, an air quality expert with the Sierra Club's Lone Star chapter. "It gives an incentive to a company or in this case, a city, to reduce emissions, and it still allows some expansion."

The record sale involved the city of Houston, which had 14.3 credits for volatile organic compounds to sell after upgrading equipment at its Almeda Sims sewage treatment plant. The city also sold credits for 12.4 tons of nitrogen oxides, another ingredient in ozone, for \$151,000 per ton to Amerex Brokers, a Sugar Land-based firm.

The city may use the \$5.7 million payday to reduce energy costs at its wastewater treatment plants, said Janice Evans, spokeswoman for Mayor Annise Parker.

"Obviously, we are very pleased with the outcome," she said, "but we don't exactly know the reason why other than the market is really good right now."

Traders worry

Despite the bull market, traders are worried about liquidity — the ease with which the allowances can be traded. There are so few available credits in greater Houston that NRG Energy has asked regulators to let it buy some from the Dallas-Fort Worth area to cancel out emissions of volatile organic compounds at its coal-fired power plant in Fort Bend County. The state environmental quality commission, however, has not allowed trades that are not in the same region.

The Houston area had an ample supply of credits for volatile organic compounds as recently as 2011, when prices were as low as \$4,500 per ton.

The market run began as Chevron Phillips Chemical Co., Celanese Corp. and other chemical makers started making plans to expand because of cheap and abundant natural gas.

What's more, the credits will become even more scarce if the federal government, as expected, introduces stricter smog limits in the next two years.

**"Companies will be looking wherever they can for credits,"** said Larry Soward, a former state environmental commissioner who now works as a consultant. **"They will only become more valuable."** [matthew.tresaugue@chron.com](mailto:matthew.tresaugue@chron.com) [twitter.com/mtresaugue](https://twitter.com/mtresaugue)

## **D. THE "ENSEMBLE" OF MODELS IS COMPLETELY MEANINGLESS, STATISTICALLY**

Posted on [June 18, 2013](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

*rgbatduke* says:

[June 13, 2013 at 7:20 am](#)

*Saying that we need to wait for a certain interval in order to conclude that "the models are wrong" is dangerous and incorrect for two reasons. First — and this is a point that is stunningly ignored — there are a lot of different models out there, all supposedly built on top of physics, and yet no two of them give anywhere near the same results!*

*This is reflected in the graphs Monckton publishes above, where the AR5 trend line is the average over all of these models and in spite of the number of contributors the variance of the models is huge. It is also clearly evident if one publishes a "spaghetti graph" of the individual*

*model projections (as Roy Spencer recently did in another thread) — it looks like the frayed end of a rope, not like a coherent spread around some physics supported result.*

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/author/wattsupwiththat/>

## **E. OBAMA TO RENEW EMISSIONS PUSH**

By KEITH JOHNSON

The Obama administration is set to renew its push to restrict greenhouse-gas emissions, including delayed measures on coal-fired power plants, at a time when price swings have spurred electric utilities to turn back to coal as an energy source.

On Wednesday, White House energy and climate adviser Heather Zichal said President Barack Obama would soon announce measures to tackle climate change, which she said include a focus "on the power plants piece of the equation." The administration is already months behind schedule in finishing emissions rules, first proposed last year, that would effectively ban new coal-fired plants using current technology.

Associated Press

White House adviser Heather Zichal announced new climate measures.

In the first quarter of the year, coal use for power generation jumped almost 13% while natural-gas use for power generation fell 8%, according to U.S. government figures. It was a sharp reversal from last year, when a flood of inexpensive natural gas led to the highest-ever use of that fuel for electricity generation while coal-fired electricity fell to its lowest level in a quarter-century.

In March, natural-gas prices reached \$3.95 per million British thermal units, or 78% higher than March 2012, according to the Energy Information Administration, the statistics branch of the Department of Energy. Prices continued to creep higher in April, meaning that month's data on electricity generation, to be released Friday, likely will show a continued move toward coal.

"As natural gas moves up to \$3.50 or \$3.75, you'll see fuel switching occur," said Nick Akins, chief executive of [American Electric Power Co.](#) [AEP -2.42%](#) In the first quarter, AEP saw natural-gas generation fall 30%, while coal-fired electricity generation rose 9%, from a year earlier.

Because burning natural gas for power, rather than burning coal, emits fewer greenhouse gases, the growth of natural gas through 2012 took the U.S. partway toward the Obama administration's climate goals. Last year, energy-sector greenhouse-gas emissions fell to their lowest levels since the early 1990s, nudged along by administration-led environmental rules.

Now, the EIA says carbon-dioxide emissions from fossil fuels are expected to jump 2.6% this year, largely because of coal's resurgence, after falling 3.9% last year. That could revive calls for the Obama administration's move to effectively rule out new coal-fired plants using current technology. That plan was proposed last year and originally set to be finished by April.

"Once you get into the perception that environmental gains are being lost, I do think it's going to have a political impact particularly persuasive to the White House and the Environmental Protection Agency," said Kevin Book, managing director at Clearview Energy Partners, an energy consultancy in Washington.

Ms. Zichal said the White House will announce in a matter of weeks a climate package that will focus on power plants, energy efficiency and renewable energy. She didn't specifically discuss existing power plants, but the EPA also has authority to regulate them.

In his State of the Union address in February, Mr. Obama signaled his intent to tackle existing plants, saying that if Congress didn't act on climate change, he would direct his cabinet to come up with executive actions he could take. In a speech in Berlin on Wednesday, he reiterated that he sees climate change as "the global threat of our time" and said, "We will do more."

"Nobody expected that cheap gas to last forever, and we didn't expect last year's emissions trends to continue without standards to ensure continued emissions reductions," said Dan Lashof of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Of course, the revival of coal may turn out to be temporary, especially as some older coal-fired plants go offline in coming years, and some executives say they continue to see natural gas as a key fuel of the future. In the first part of this year, [Southern Co.](#) [SO](#) -2.71% as a whole burned slightly more natural gas and used slightly less coal compared with year-earlier levels, according to company filings.

—Ryan Tracy contributed to this article.

Write to Keith Johnson at [keith.johnson@wsj.com](mailto:keith.johnson@wsj.com)

*A version of this article appeared June 20, 2013, on page A6 in the U.S. edition of The Wall Street Journal, with the headline: Obama to Renew Emissions Push.*

## **F. Getting 'Cooked' by Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Global Warming**

Posted on [June 23, 2013](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)



**Human shadow etched in stone from Hiroshima Atomic blast.** These stone steps led up to the entrance to the Sumitomo Bank Hiroshima Branch, 260 meters from the hypocenter. The intense atomic heat rays turned the surface of the stone white, except for a part in the middle where someone was sitting. The person sitting on the steps waiting for the bank to open

received the full force of the heat rays directly from the front and undoubtedly died on the spot.

The building was used for a time after the war. When it was rebuilt in 1971, these steps were removed and brought to the museum. Source: [Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum](#)

*Why comparing global warming to the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb is ridiculous*

Some days, you just have to laugh. That's what we'll have to do today after reading the latest ridiculous scare story from cartoonist turned pseudo-psychologist now elevated to 'climate scientist' John Cook from the antithetically named 'Skeptical Science' website.

He'd like people to think the effect of global warming is as powerful as the effect of an atomic bomb, but as we'll see, it is another one of those scare by scale stories where you grab some iconic image from the public consciousness and use it to make your issue seem bigger than it really is. For example, in 2010 normally calving glacier ice was compared to Manhattan Island to give it scale: [Oh no! Greenland glacier calves island 4 times the size of Manhattan](#)  
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/06/23/getting-cooked-by-hiroshima-atomic-bomb-global-warming/>

## **G. Obama says he'll unveil climate plan in Tuesday speech 'for the sake of our children'**

By Associated Press, Published: June 22

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama is preparing to unveil his long-awaited national plan to combat climate change in a major speech, he announced on Saturday.

"There's no single step that can reverse the effects of climate change," Obama said in an online video released by the White House. "But when it comes to the world we leave our children, we owe it to them to do what we can."

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/obama-says-hell-unveil-climate-plan-in-tuesday-speech-for-the-sake-of-our-children/2013/06/22/e56f06f6-db70-11e2-b418-9dfa095e125d\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/obama-says-hell-unveil-climate-plan-in-tuesday-speech-for-the-sake-of-our-children/2013/06/22/e56f06f6-db70-11e2-b418-9dfa095e125d_story.html)

## **H. Issue #96 Climate Scientist Christy Presents Data Showing No Crisis**

Climate scientist John Christy presented a series of charts and data at a global warming conference showing warming is proceeding at a modest pace and not causing significant harm. Christy, a climate scientist at the University of Alabama at Huntsville who oversees NASA's satellite instruments measuring global temperatures, presented records debunking many of the most frequently asserted global warming myths. In his first chart, Christy presented National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) data documenting a long-term decline in powerful tornadoes. Data during the past 50 years show tornado activity peaked in the early 1970s and has been in gradual decline for the past 40 years. In his second chart, Christy presented tropical storm data since 1970 showing a gradual decline in tropical storm and hurricane activity. In his third chart, Christy presented Northern Hemisphere snow cover data showing no trend in snow cover for the past 45 years. Next, Christy presented NOAA data

<http://news.heartland.org/climate-change-weekly>

## **I. EPA ABANDONS INVESTIGATION ON GAS DRILLING IMPACTS IN WYO.**

By RYAN TRACY

The Environmental Protection Agency said Thursday that it would drop an investigation that had linked contaminated water to natural-gas drilling in Wyoming, in a boost for Encana Corp. ECA.T\_+0.79% and other firms that practice the drilling technique known as hydraulic fracturing.

The EPA will allow the state of Wyoming to continue the investigation but doesn't "plan to rely upon the conclusions" of its previous study, the state and the agency said in a joint statement. In late 2011, the agency released a draft report suggesting water samples near Encana gas wells in Pavillion, Wyo., contained chemicals consistent with hydraulic fracturing and present in amounts above safe drinking-water standards. The findings were among the first by the government to link water contamination with "fracking"—injecting water, sand and chemicals to dislodge natural gas or oil. Last October, the EPA said another round of tests had turned up similar results.

Encana had said the EPA's results were based on faulty testing.

"We're pleased that EPA has agreed to discontinue its investigation," company spokesman Doug Hock said Thursday. "And, we applaud the fact that further efforts in Pavillion will focus on the few specific complaints about perceived changes in domestic water well quality."

Wyoming regulators will evaluate 14 water wells in the Pavillion area for "water quality and palatability concerns," the state press release said. EPA said it would support Wyoming but focus on its own nationwide study of the relationship between hydraulic fracturing and drinking water, due in late 2014.

**Write to** Ryan Tracy at [ryan.tracy@dowjones.com](mailto:ryan.tracy@dowjones.com)

*A version of this article appeared June 21, 2013, on page A2 in the U.S. edition of The Wall Street Journal, with the headline: EPA Drops Investigation Of Fracking.*

## **J. SUPREME COURT'S REFUSAL TO HEAR E15 APPEAL DISAPPOINTS INDUSTRY**

The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal from industry groups against the Environmental Protection Agency's program to allow the sale of gasoline with higher blends of ethanol. The "court decision is a big loss for consumers, for safety and for our environment," said Harry Ng, vice president and general counsel at the American Petroleum Institute. "EPA approved E15 before vehicle testing was complete, and we now know the fuel may cause significant mechanical problems in millions of cars on the road today."

<http://www.ogj.com/articles/2013/06/us-supreme-court-refuses-to-hear-challenge-to-epa-s-e15-rollout.html>

**Regards**  
**George**