

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING NEWSLETTER

12 MAY 2014

This week's edition includes:

If you need older URLs contact George at 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 CHIEF SLAMS 'SECRET SCIENCE' CLAIMS

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Gina McCarthy on Monday assailed critics who charge that the agency relies on "secret science" to support its regulations. McCarthy said science is the EPA's "North Star" and has helped to steer the country away from health risks and toward healthier communities.

"If EPA is being accused of 'secret science' because we rely on real scientists to conduct research, and independent scientists to peer review it, and scientists who've spent a lifetime studying the science to reproduce it — then so be it," McCarthy said at the National Academy of Sciences' 151st annual meeting.

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/e2-wire/204535-epa-chief-slams-secret-science-claims> and

<http://www.eenews.net/stories/1059998577>

I cannot believe the Administrator argument, when I note in the article reference to “cutting billions of tons of greenhouse gases” and “carbon emissions limits for electric utility sources” without any scientific support. GHH

B. THE EPA UNCHAINED

The next time someone says the John Roberts Supreme Court consistently blocks Obama Administration policy, be sure to recall the [ObamaCare](#) case. But right behind that you can mention Tuesday's 6-2 ruling that anoints the Environmental Protection Agency's habit of rewriting the Clean Air Act and even offers a convenient legal rationale that the EPA hadn't offered.

Chief Justice Roberts—this is becoming a habit—and Justice [Anthony Kennedy](#) joined the four liberal Justices to overturn a D.C. Circuit appellate panel and revive the EPA's 2011 cross-state

pollution rule. In *EPA v. EME Homer City Generation*, Texas and more than a dozen states and some private companies had challenged the rule for violating state prerogatives under the statute. No one disputes the EPA's authority to regulate air pollution across state lines, but for the first time the EPA imposed its standards without giving states a chance to offer their own plans. Also for the first time, the agency imposed a uniform compliance standard regardless of an individual state's contribution to cross-state pollution. This is aimed at Texas and other states that have large coal-fired electric plants and forces higher reductions in emissions than states might otherwise have to implement. It is part of the Administration's agenda of imposing via regulation what it can't get through Congress, even a Democratic Senate.

Remarkably, the majority doesn't even mention the EPA's own legal justification for its Clean Air rewrite, which hangs on the meaning of the word "significantly." (We won't torture you with the details.) Instead, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg detects what she calls a "gap" in the statute on how states should share responsibility for their share of pollution, and then proceeds to fill it with her own cost-benefit legal rationale. This cost-benefit defense of the EPA is ironically amusing because the EPA typically dismisses cost-benefit analysis unless a statute explicitly calls for it. As Justice [Antonin Scalia](#) notes in his dissent, joined by Justice [Clarence Thomas](#), the statute is relatively clear about the allocation of costs and "contains a gap only for those who blind themselves to the obvious in order to pursue a preferred policy." Even if the EPA's emissions standards are more cost-effective overall, that may not be true for every upwind state, and the EPA cannot simply ignore the federalist obligations of the Clean Air Act to impose them. The decision is a reminder of how deferential the courts usually are to executive regulation, far more than they should be in this era when the Obama Administration is broadcasting—even boasting about—its policy of govern-by-regulation. The D.C. Circuit rarely overturns a federal rule, and the Supreme Court tends to accept an appeal only when the government loses. The decision is also a reminder that in this era of the ever-growing administrative state, control of the executive is more important than ever. Congress can only do so much to check federal government encroachment on private industry and state sovereign powers. As Justice Scalia wrote, "Too many important decisions of the Federal Government are made nowadays by unelected agency officials exercising broad lawmaking authority, rather than by the people's representatives in Congress." The danger after Tuesday's ruling is that the Obama EPA will feel even less bound by legal restraints, if that's possible.

C. BOEM: PRODUCTION POTENTIAL WILL NOT DICTATE FEDS' DECISION TO DRILL IN THE ATLANTIC

The federal government's decision to explore drilling in the Atlantic Ocean will not just focus on the region's production potential but also on other factors such as safety and public perception, said Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Director Tommy Beaudreau. "There's no sort of tipping point or threshold we're looking for in terms of resource potential. It's one factor you look at to say, 'Would this even be attractive to industry?' But there are lots of other factors as well," he said.

<http://www.platts.com/latest-news/oil/washington/atlantic-drilling-decision-will-not-hinge-on-21542210>

D. FEDS: OFFSHORE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT IS AN "INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGE"

Developing the oil and natural gas resources in the Arctic and the Gulf of Mexico "is an international challenge," which is why the U.S. is working closely with foreign entities on the subject, said Christopher Smith, deputy assistant secretary for oil and natural gas at the Energy Department. "There are a lot of countries that share that one space. **As issues on climate change the way that we think about accessibility in the Arctic, it also increases the need for us to make sure we're working with all the entities that share that body of water,**" Smith said. <http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2014/04/21/us-looks-outward-to-develop-arctic-and-offshore-oil-and-gas>

E. EPA AND NORTH TEXAS REDUCE CARBON POLLUTION BY REDUCING FOOD WASTE

DALLAS – (May 2, 2014) The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the City of Dallas and AT&T Stadium, Rock and Wrap It Up! and Food Source DFW have joined together to cut the amount of food that goes to waste. During the recent NCAA Final Four activities in North Texas they diverted 2,800 pounds of leftover food from landfills by delivering food to local homeless shelters.

"EPA's Food Recovery Program partners in the Dallas-Fort Worth area have made significant contributions to reducing food waste in our communities," said EPA Regional Administrator Ron Curry. "As climate change affects our food supply, finding new ways to use all we produce will only become more important."

Diverting food waste from landfills also reduces the generation of harmful gases that contribute to climate change. When food is disposed of in a landfill, it decomposes rapidly and becomes a significant source of methane, a potent greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change. After paper, food waste comprises the greatest volume of waste going into our nation's landfills. In 2012, 36 million tons of food wastes were generated, but only 3 percent of this waste stream was diverted from landfills.

Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings credits advanced planning by the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center's operations staff and hospitality partner Centerplate for assuring the success of the city's Good Neighbor donation program. "We knew Bracket Town was going to be huge, so we test drove our food donation operations during several events in March," Rawlings said. "We took the lessons learned during Final Four and have expanded the Good Neighbor program to also include materials donations. Currently three homeless service providers receive unconsumed food and materials from events at the convention center."

The Food Recovery Challenge is part of the EPA's Sustainable Materials Management Program, which seeks to reduce the environmental impact of food and other widely-used everyday items through their entire life cycle, including how they are extracted, manufactured, distributed, used, reused, recycled, and disposed.

For more info on EPA's Food Recovery Challenge visit,

<http://www.epa.gov/foodrecoverychallenge/>

For more information contact Joe Hubbard or Jennah Durant at 214-665-2200 or

r6press@epa.gov

EDITOR'S Note: I find the above discussion totally without merit, since there is no support given by EPA demonstrating change in CO2 atmospheric concentration is associated with CO2 pollution. Since about 2000 AD the CO2 concentration has increased to 400 parts per million and the Global temperature has decreased. This demonstrates lack of direct

worrisome coupling of CO2 and atmospheric temperature. See Roy Spencer's discussions at Items C, I and L below. GHH

F. EPA PAID NEARLY \$500K IN UNAUTHORIZED BONUSES

IG report found unauthorized retention bonuses doled out between 2006 and 2013

May 2, 2014 3:36 pm

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) paid out nearly \$500,000 in unauthorized bonuses, according to a [report](#) released by the EPA Inspector General Friday.

An Inspector General (IG) investigation found that 11 EPA employees received \$481,819 in unauthorized retention bonuses between 2006 and 2013. The bonuses are meant to incentivize employees who receive other job offers.

The bonuses are supposed to be reauthorized annually, but for 10 of those EPA officials, the IG could find no evidence that their bonuses were reviewed, as required by federal regulations and EPA policies.

One EPA employee received \$77,204 in unauthorized pay over five years, even though he had only been approved for a one-year retention bonus.

Another employee received incentive pay for four years totaling nearly \$105,000, even though the bonus should have been terminated in 2009 because he was promoted.

The IG cited confusion, lack of internal controls, and failure by managers and employees to follow up on notices.

The investigation was spurred by the case of John Beale, a senior EPA official who bilked the agency out of nearly \$900,000 in fraudulent travel expenses and unauthorized retention bonuses. Beale received unauthorized retention bonuses for more than a decade. He was sentenced to 32 months in jail in December.

The IG reported in April that EPA official Beth Craig [approved](#) nearly \$200,000 in fraudulent time and travel expenses for Beale. The report found that she failed to exercise due diligence. Craig is still employed at the EPA.

According to the IG, no current EPA employees are receiving retention bonuses.

<http://freebeacon.com/issues/epa-paid-nearly-500k-in-unauthorized-bonuses/>

2. HEALTH A HEALTH A NOTHING OF INTEREST

3. SAFETY A. OIL FIELD DEATHS ON RISE

Drilling and fracking have taken especially high toll on workers in Texas

By Lise Olsen

Oil field deaths reached 545 during America's drilling and fracking frenzy from 2008 to 2012, with Texas' 216 reported fatalities leading the nation. Pennsylvania and North Dakota also are recording dramatic increases in worker deaths, according to updated workplace fatality figures released last week by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The data, released in response to a Houston Chronicle request, comes as government officials and industry leaders are deadlocked in an ongoing debate about how to plug holes in nationwide safety rules for the industry. Last year, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration formally asked for public comments on how to expand regulations of potentially hazardous workplaces, including drill and well sites, following the disastrous explosion at a fertilizer plant in West.

This article banner suggests FRACKING is causing frequent worker fatalities. However the article is silent on Fracking Fatalities. GHH Safety140512

B. INFORMATION IS CRUCIAL TO SAFETY IN GULF DRILLING

Sharing of data key to preventing future offshore disasters

By Loren Steffy

Federal regulators have a new approach for improving safety in the Gulf of Mexico: Ask the industry to cooperate. Maybe even say, "Pretty please."

The Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, part of the U.S. Department of Interior, recently unveiled a plan to meet with offshore operators and pitch them on the idea of providing the regulator with data on "near-miss" incidents. The bureau, or BSEE, wants to use the information to build a database that could show patterns for potential safety problem at offshore facilities. In other words, it wants to track telltale signs of another Macondo disaster so companies can correct problems and avert the next catastrophe.

Safety140512-1

4. TRANSPORTATION A. KEYSTONE XL LOBBYING HEATS UP AS SENATE MULLS MEASURE ON PIPELINE'S APPROVAL

Lobbying efforts from both sides of the Keystone XL battle have increased as the Senate votes this week on a measure that would give Congress the authority to approve the \$5.4 billion project. "We need congressional action since the president's only action has been excuses and delays," said American Petroleum Institute President and CEO Jack Gerard

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-05-03/keystone-lobbying-of-swing-senators-uses-home-state-ads.html>

COMMENTS:

A. THE WEEK THAT WAS: 2014-04-26 (APRIL, 26 2014)

By Ken Haapala, Executive Vice President, Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP)

Hemispheric Asymmetry: On her web site, Climate Etc., Judith Curry discusses a recent paper published in Nature Climate Change. The paper presents differences in findings of temperature trends between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres for the past 1000 years. The paper states that models built on data largely from Northern Hemisphere may have low predictive ability. The paper claims that there was no Medieval Warm Period in the ocean-dominated Southern Hemisphere. However, as previously discussed in Climate Audit and Watts Up With That, the paper may suffer from what Curry calls 'post hoc proxy selection', otherwise known as 'cherry picking'. Certainly, the 2013 report of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change shows that Medieval Warm Period was Global, but most of it occurred prior to the artificial cut-off date in the article of 1000 A.D. The global warm period was most pronounced between about 800 and 1000 A.D.

Although the paper suffers from selective reporting, it is somewhat encouraging to see a publication in a climate establishment journal that calls into question the data sets used to establish climate models and the procedures used by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Curry's use of the term "cheery picking" refers to the exclusion of data that contradicts the hypothesis. All too frequently, those engaged in hypothesis testing are accused of "cherry picking" because they may exclude the data that support hypothesis. Exclusion of data that supports the hypothesis is irrelevant. This reversal in emphasis reflects a misunderstanding of hypothesis testing. A hypothesis must withstand all relevant data sets. If it does not, the hypothesis must be rejected or changed. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy and <http://www.nipccreport.org/reports/ccr2a/pdf/Chapter-4-Temperature.pdf>, particularly Figure 4.2.2.4

IPCC Synthesis Report: On October 31, 2014, the IPCC is scheduled to produce a report synthesizing the 2013 –2014 main reports of Working Group I, The Physical Science Basis; Working Group II, Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability; and Working Group III, Mitigation of Climate Change. These documents along with the Synthesis Report (SYR) are called the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). According the SYR Scoping document, the proposed SYR will be in two parts, a Summary for Policymakers (SPM) and a longer report. The former will be up to 8 page of text, excluding tables, maps, boxes, and figures. The latter will be up to 30 pages, excluding tables, maps, boxes, and figures. The Core Writing Team will be led by IPCC Chairman, Rajendra Pachauri.

The entire process should be interesting, and, as Judith Curry writes, much needed. In her assessment: *Upon reflecting on the 3 IPCC reports, a picture is emerging of a very complex climate system linked to complex environmental issues and socioeconomic problems. True to its classic wicked messiness, there is no unambiguous way to separate natural from anthropogenic climate change, or to separate climate change impacts from other confounding factors, or to separate the solutions from the broader issues of population increase, underdevelopment, mismanagement, and corrupt governments.*

Of the three WGs, I would say that WG2 and WG3 showed maturity in attempting to deal with these issues, whereas WG1 dropped the ball with its 'extremely likely' and 'don't mention the pause'.

Apart from the obvious politics that polluted the SPM process, I am even more dismayed by public statements from the IPCC leadership that has spun the AR5 message into the usual alarmist meme.

What is now needed is sober assessment and interpretation of the assessments. Given the complexity, ambiguity and incompleteness of the evidence and understanding, multiple perspectives are not only to be expected but are desired.

Also, Curry asserts that the key findings in the Technical Summaries and the individual chapter Executive Summaries should be emphasized over the heavily politically influenced Summaries for Policymakers.

Increasingly, the press is reporting the falling-out of key authors over the political influences on the reports. The once vaunted, false consensus is no more. Richard Tol, who resigned as a Convening Lead Author of one of the chapters of WG III report wrote: *In the earlier drafts of the SPM, there was a key message that was new, snappy and relevant: Many of the more*

worrying impacts of climate change really are symptoms of mismanagement and underdevelopment.

This message does not support the political agenda for greenhouse gas emission reduction. Later drafts put more and more emphasis on the reasons for concern about climate change, a concept I had helped to develop for AR3. Raising the alarm about climate change has been tried before, many times in fact, but it has not had an appreciable effect on greenhouse gas emissions.

The international climate negotiations of 2013 in Warsaw concluded that poor countries might be entitled to compensation for the impacts of climate change. It stands to reason that the IPCC would be asked to assess the size of those impacts and hence the compensation package. This led to an undignified bidding war among delegations –my country is more vulnerable than yours –that descended into farce when landlocked countries vigorously protested that they too would suffer from sea level rise.

The SPM omits that better cultivars and improved irrigation increase crop yields. It shows the impact of sea level rise on the most vulnerable country, but does not mention the average. It emphasizes the impacts of increased heat stress but downplays reduced cold stress. It warns about poverty traps, violent conflict and mass migration without much support in the literature. The media, of course, exaggerated further.

Alarmism feeds polarization. Climate zealots want to burn heretics of global warming on a stick. Others only see incompetence and conspiracy in climate research, and nepotism in climate policy. A polarized debate is not conducive to enlightened policy in an area as complex as climate change. The IPCC missed an opportunity to restore itself as ad sober authority, accepted (perhaps only grudgingly) by most.

The IPCC does not guard itself against selection bias and group think. Academics who worry about climate change are more likely to publish about it, and more likely to get into the IPCC. Groups of like-minded people reinforce their beliefs. The environment agencies that comment on the draft IPCC report will not argue that their department is obsolete. The IPCC should therefore be taken out of the hands of the climate bureaucracy and transferred to the academic authorities.

The last sentence may be hopelessly optimistic. Academic institutions have demonstrated to be subject to the group-think, as the failures to properly investigate Climategate assertions and as acceptance of Mr. Mann's "hockey-stick" demonstrate.

Further, Curry is probably too optimistic about the SYR becoming an objective report. The political entities that fund what Tol calls the climate bureaucracy are far too committed to allow an objective report that permits skeptics, and others, to question to purpose of spending hundreds of billions of dollars for programs designed to fight global warming/climate change, even when global warming is no longer occurring. Further, the industries and banks that benefit for the unnecessary fight would be outraged to see their sources of profits disappear. See links under Questioning the Orthodoxy and Problems in the Orthodoxy.

Tough Questions: To compliment his post of Top Ten bad global warming arguments, Roy Spencer posted a list of questions to ask those who are advocating catastrophic anthropogenic (human caused) global warming (AGW).

These questions may be particularly fitting for those, including US Senators, who are repeating the slogan "If you don't believe in climate change look out the window." In a matter of a few weeks, Washington suddenly transformed from cold and snow to warmth and a bursting of

flowers and green. The climate change was obvious. In the past it was called changing seasons. See link under Challenging the Orthodoxy. Or Item O below.

Fossil Fuel Subsidies: Of the arguments used in developed Western countries to justify subsidies to unreliable wind and solar power, probably the most bluntly illogical one is current subsidies to the fossil fuel industries. BBC reported the 2012 ranking of the top ten countries subsidizing fossil fuels are stated by the International Energy Agency (IEA). The countries were, in order, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Russia, India, Venezuela, China, Indonesia, Egypt, UAE, and Iraq. Governments of these countries subsidizing fuel, or demanding state-owned companies sell to the public at below market prices has no bearing on the energy policies of countries not subsidizing fossil fuels.

Also, such articles often fail to make the distinctions between subsidies to consumers and tax deductions for production of fuels such as depreciation of equipment, which is an accounting concept to calculate the cost of production.

Similarly, in the US, and some other countries, depletion is an accounting concept used most often in mining, timber, petroleum, etc. The depletion deduction allows a company to account for the reduction of a product's reserves. Contrary to many reports in the US the depletion deduction is not permitted for the major (integrated) oil companies.

The strangest graph in the BBC report shows that, in the US, the fossil fuel subsidies amount to about 3.5% of the GDP. TWTW was unable to confirm the source of the graph although it was attributed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Assuming a GDP of \$16.5 Trillion, this works out to be about \$577 Billion, or about 100 times the highest monetary estimates from various sources reviewed. See link under Communicating Better to the Public –Make things up.

Number of the Week: 100 times or more. As explained above, the BBC overestimated the broadly defined US fossil fuel subsidies by about 100 times.

#####

<http://www.sepp.org/twtwfiles/2014/TWTW%205-3-14.pdf>

B. DOCUMENTS CONTRADICT EPA ON CLIMATE-RULE DELAY

Newly released documents are fueling GOP questions about whether EPA put politics ahead of policy by publishing a controversial climate rule so late that it will allow red-state Senate Democrats to dodge a difficult vote.

The records also contradict the congressional testimony of EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy, who [told senators](#) early this year that her agency had submitted the rule to the Federal Register “as soon as that proposal was released.”

<http://www.politico.com/story/2014/04/epa-climate-rule-delay-documents-106141.html>

C. SKEPTICAL ARGUMENTS THAT DON'T HOLD WATER

April 25th, 2014

There are some very good arguments for being skeptical of global warming predictions. But the proliferation of bad arguments is becoming almost dizzying.

I understand and appreciate that many of the things we think we know in science end up being wrong. I get that. But some of the alternative explanations I'm seeing border on the ludicrous.

So, here's my Top 10 list of stupid skeptic arguments. I'm sure there are more, and maybe I missed a couple important ones. Oh well.

My obvious goal here is not to change minds that are already made up, which is impossible (by definition), but to reach 1,000+ (mostly nasty) comments in response to this post. So, help me out here!

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/>

Roy Spencer

D. NEW SKEPTIC PUBLICATION IN NATURE CLIMATE CHANGE REBUTS ÅSTRÖM ET AL. CLAIMS OF INCREASED DEATHS DUE TO HEAT WAVES

Posted on [April 30, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

Stockholm observatory weather station, source of the temperature record

Rebuttal to Åström et al. Attributing mortality from extreme temperatures to climate change in Stockholm, Sweden., published in Nature Climate Change by Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger, Patrick J. Michaels, and Anthony Watts

Last fall, the press [pounced](#) on the results of a [new study](#) that found that global climate change was leading to an increasing frequency of heat waves and resulting in greater heat-related mortality. Finally a [scientific study showing that global warming is killing us after all!](#) See all you climate change optimists have been wrong all along, human-caused global warming *is* a threat to our health and welfare.

Not so fast.

Upon closer inspection, it turns out that the authors of that study—which examined heat-related mortality in Stockholm, Sweden—failed to include the [impacts of adaptation](#) in their analysis as well as the possibility that some of the temperature rise which has taken place in Stockholm [is not from "global" climate change](#) but rather local and regional processes not related to human greenhouse gas emissions.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/04/30/new-skeptic-publication-in-nature-climate-change-rebuts-strm-et-al-claims-of-increased-deaths-due-to-heat-waves/#more-108425>

E. BIRD CONSERVATION GROUP CHALLENGES FEDS OVER WIND FARM EAGLE DEATHS

One of the nation's leading bird conservation groups plans to sue the Obama administration over a federal regulation that allows wind energy companies to obtain 30-year permits to kill eagles without prosecution by the government.

The American Bird Conservancy on Wednesday announced its intent to file the lawsuit, arguing the Department of the Interior violated federal laws when it promulgated the regulation it says sanctions the killing of bald and golden eagles.

"The rule lacks a firm foundation in scientific justification and was generated without the benefit of a full assessment of its impacts on eagle populations," said Michael Hutchins, National Coordinator of ABC's Bird Smart Wind Energy Campaign

<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2014/05/02/bird-conservation-group-challenges-feds-over-wind-farm-eagle-deaths/>

Note arctic sea ice extent peaked lower than long term average probably due to polar vortex but seems to be recovering closer to average. There are a lot of factors that affect arctic sea ice including wind.

Don Shaw

H. NIGEL LAWSON: COOL IT

Posted on [May 1, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)
[Standpoint, May 2014](#)

This essay is based on the text of a speech given to the Institute for Sustainable Energy and the Environment at the University of Bath.

There is something odd about the global warming debate — or the climate change debate, as we are now expected to call it, since global warming has for the time being come to a halt.

I have never shied away from controversy, nor — for example, as Chancellor — worried about being unpopular if I believed that what I was saying and doing was in the public interest.

But I have never in my life experienced the extremes of personal hostility, vituperation and vilification which I — along with other dissenters, of course — have received for my views on global warming and global warming policies.

For example, according to the Climate Change Secretary, Ed Davey, the global warming dissenters are, without exception, “wilfully ignorant” and in the view of the Prince of Wales we are “headless chickens”. Not that “dissenter” is a term they use. We are regularly referred to as “climate change deniers”, a phrase deliberately designed to echo “Holocaust denier” — as if questioning present policies and forecasts of the future is equivalent to casting malign doubt about a historical fact

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/01/nigel-lawson-cool-it/>

I. AMERICAN THINKER PUBLISHES A STINKER

April 24th, 2014

I really dislike going down this road, but it’s articles like this ([Global Warming and Settled Science](#), in American Thinker) from today that confuse the global warming science debate and end up wasting my time as I get e-mails asking for comment.

Now, those familiar with my views KNOW I’m a huge critic of the climate models used to predict global warming. I believe there are serious biases in them. But most of the physics they involve are pretty good. Yet, it only takes one component (e.g. a cloud parameterization) to change a model’s response to increasing CO₂ from catastrophic warming to benign warming. So, when author Andre Lofthus throws around some radiation physics concepts and claims that the atmosphere cannot warm from more CO₂ because (basically) the CO₂ absorption bands are already 100% saturated, well, I have to respond. I’ve already done that once by e-mail this morning, but I’m sure more requests are coming, so I’m going to try to nip it in the bud here. (Awhile back a NASA story about CO₂ cooling [GASP! COOLING!] in the upper atmosphere led to a Slayer blog post that I was getting e-mails about for months after. As if we didn’t already know that CO₂ strongly cools the upper atmosphere. Geez.)

So, here we go again...

It doesn’t matter even if the CO₂ absorption bands are 100% opaque to the transmission of IR radiation from the surface to the top of the atmosphere...adding more CO₂ still causes a warming tendency in the lower atmosphere (and cooling in the upper atmosphere).

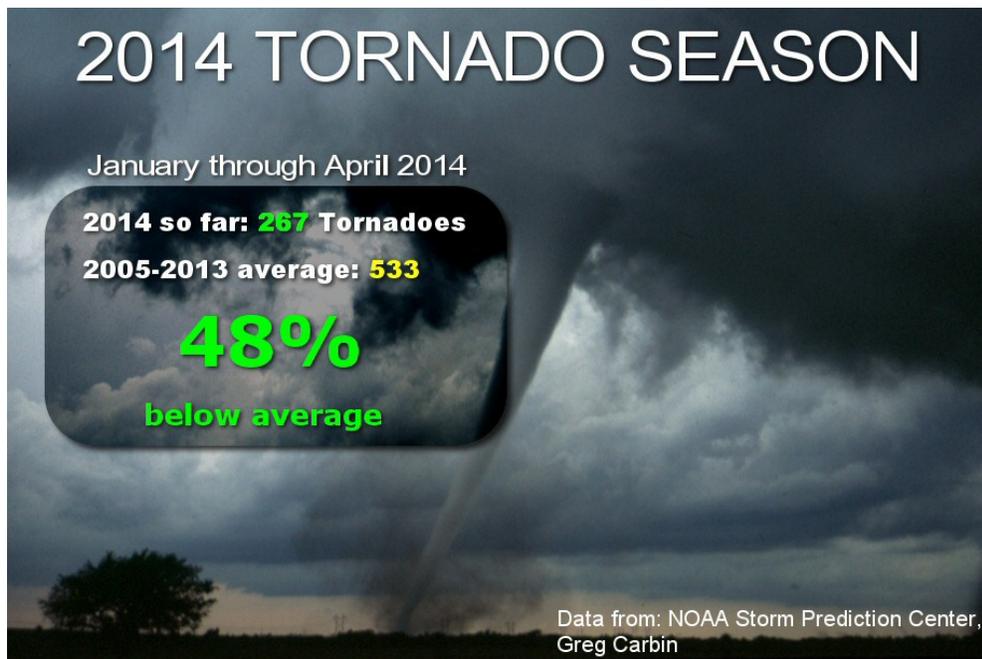
<http://www.drroyspencer.com/>

Roy Spencer

J. CLIMATE CHANGE CAUSES SEVERE WEATHER? 2014 TORNADO COUNT ABOUT HALF OF NORMAL

Posted on [May 2, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

Despite claims of “severe weather is increasing”, and even after several days of tornado activity in the Midwest and the South, 2014 is still below normal compared to recent years according to data published by Greg Carbin of the NOAA Storm Prediction Center.



Here is the data from SPC:

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/02/climate-changes-causes-severe-weather-2014-tornado-count-about-half-of-normal/#more-108535>

K. STUDY: 'WORST DROUGHT OF THIS CENTURY BARELY MAKES THE TOP 10'

Posted on [May 2, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

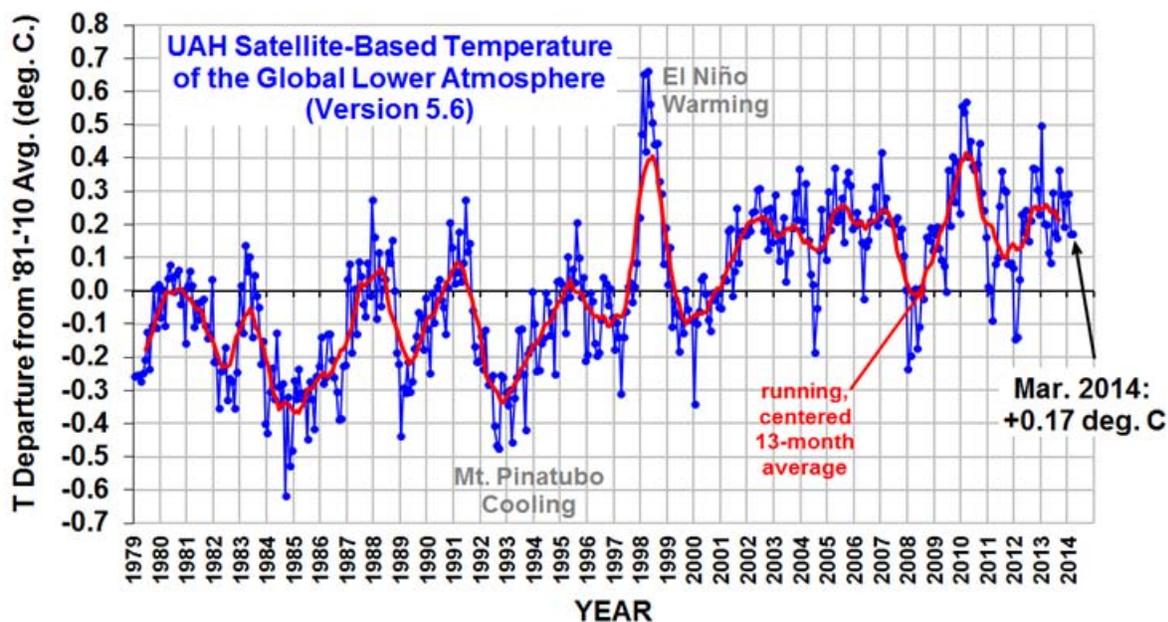
From Brigham Young University:

Tree rings reveal nightmare droughts in the West

If you think the 1930s drought that caused The Dust Bowl was rough, new research looking at tree rings in the Rocky Mountains has news for you: Things can get much worse in the West. In fact the worst drought of this century barely makes the top 10 of a study that extended Utah's climate record back to the year 1429.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/02/worst-drought-of-this-century-barely-makes-the-top-10/#more-108531>

L. LATEST GLOBAL TEMPS



Latest Global Average Tropospheric Temperatures

Since 1979, NOAA satellites have been carrying instruments which measure the natural microwave thermal emissions from oxygen in the atmosphere. The intensity of the signals these microwave radiometers measure at different microwave frequencies is directly proportional to the temperature of different, deep layers of the atmosphere. Every month, John Christy and I update global temperature datasets (see [here](#) that represent the piecing together of the temperature data from a total of fourteen instruments flying on different satellites over the years. As of June 2013, the Advanced Microwave Sounding Unit (AMSU-A) flying on NASA's Aqua satellite has been removed from the processing due to spurious warming and replaced by the average of the NOAA-15, NOAA-18, NOAA-19, and Metop-A AMSUs. The graph above represents the latest update; updates are usually made within the first week of every month. Contrary to some reports, the satellite measurements are not calibrated in any way with the global surface-based thermometer records of temperature. They instead use their own on-board precision redundant platinum resistance thermometers (PRTs) calibrated to a laboratory reference standard before launch.

Roy Spencer

M. NEW AD LINKS U.S. OIL INDUSTRY'S ANTI-BIOFUEL CAMPAIGN TO SAUDI ARABIA

The latest skirmish in the political battle over U.S. renewable fuels is playing out in new ad campaigns that begin Sunday with the appearance of one of this country's favorite energy villains: Saudi Arabia.

<http://insideclimatenews.org/carbon-copy/20140502/new-ad-links-us-oil-industrys-anti-biofuel-campaign-saudi-arabia> and

<http://insideclimatenews.org/>

David Sassoon

N. THE OCEAN ATE MY GLOBAL WARMING

Posted on [May 3, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

By Christopher Monckton of Brenchley

Willie Soon sends me a fascinating paper by Beenstock *et al.* on sea-level rise. Beenstock, famous for taking a down-to-earth approach to climate issues, asked the question how much warming the tide gauges show if one does not tamper with them.

The official sea level data are fiddled by an artifice known as the “global isostatic adjustment”. The inconvenient truth that sea level is not changing much must be concealed, so an enormous, bogus addition to the actual trend is made.

The excuse for this overblown addition, which accounts for a very large fraction of the difference between the satellite and tide-gauge records, is that the land is still rising and the sea sinking because of the transfer of miles-thick ice from the land to the oceans that ended 9000 years ago.

Therefore, the story goes, sea level would be falling were it not for global warming.

Hey presto! Sea level rise is instantly made to accelerate.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/03/the-ocean-ate-my-global-warming/#more-108577>

O. TOP TEN GOOD SKEPTICAL ARGUMENTS

May 1st, 2014 by Roy W. Spencer, Ph. D.

As suggested by a friend, I’m following up my [Top Ten bad global warming arguments list](#) with a Top Ten good arguments list. These are in no particular order, and I might have missed something important.

These ten were just off the top of my head....there’s no telling what might be lingering deeper in my brain.

I have avoided specific alternative causal mechanisms of natural climate change, because I view them individually as speculative. But taken as a whole, they represent a class of unknowns that can’t be just swept under the rug just because we don’t understand them.

For some reason, all of these ended up being phrased as questions, rather than statements.

- 1) **No Recent Warming.** If global warming science is so “settled”, why did global warming stop over 15 years ago (in most temperature datasets), contrary to all “consensus” predictions?
- 2) **Natural or Manmade?** If we don’t know how much of the warming in the longer term (say last 50 years) is natural, then how can we know how much is manmade?
- 3) **IPCC Politics and Beliefs.** Why does it take a political body (the IPCC) to tell us what scientists “believe”? And when did scientists’ “beliefs” translate into proof? And when was scientific truth determined by a vote...especially when those allowed to vote are from the Global Warming Believers Party?
- 4) **Climate Models Can’t Even Hindcast** How did climate modelers, who already knew the answer, still fail to explain the lack of a significant temperature rise over the last 30+ years? In other words, how do you botch a hindcast?
- 5) **...But We Should Believe Model Forecasts?** Why should we believe model predictions of the future, when they can’t even explain the past?
- 6) **Modelers Lie About Their “Physics”.** Why do modelers insist their models are based upon established physics, but then hide the fact that the strong warming their models produce is actually based upon very uncertain “fudge factor” tuning?

- 7) **Is Warming Even Bad?** Who decided that a small amount of warming is necessarily a bad thing?
- 8) **Is CO2 Bad?** How did carbon dioxide, necessary for life on Earth and only 4 parts in 10,000 of our atmosphere, get rebranded as some sort of dangerous gas?
- 9) **Do We Look that Stupid?** How do scientists expect to be taken seriously when their “theory” is supported by both floods AND droughts? Too much snow AND too little snow?
- 10) **Selective Pseudo-Explanations.** How can scientists claim that the Medieval Warm Period (which lasted hundreds of years), was just a regional fluke...yet claim the single-summer (2003) heat wave in Europe had global significance?
- 11) (Spinal Tap bonus) **Just How Warm is it, Really?** Why is it that every subsequent modification/adjustment to the global thermometer data leads to even more warming? What are the chances of that? Either a warmer-still present, or cooling down the past, both of which produce a greater warming trend over time. And none of the adjustments take out a gradual urban heat island (UHI) warming around thermometer sites, which likely exists at virtually all of them — because no one yet knows a good way to do that.

NOTE: I’ve been thinking about why my “bad arguments” post involved statements, but my “good arguments” post involves all questions. I think it’s because the bad arguments (I attempt to debunk) always seem to be posed as facts, which the believers seem to have complete faith in. In contrast, the “good arguments” are posed as questions because of the inherent uncertainty of the whole global warming issue...the IPCC states so many things as facts, yet there are usually alternative explanations they don’t discuss.

P. FORMER SHELL BOSS ISSUES CALL TO ARMS ON ENERGY POLICY

Hofmeister proposes creating a Fed-type agency to manage energy and environmental protection

By Collin Eaton

After retiring from a top job at one of the world’s biggest oil companies, John Hofmeister didn’t ride off into the sunset.

The former president of Shell Oil Co. — the Houston-based U.S. arm of Royal Dutch Shell — instead has spent six years cultivating an audience on Capitol Hill and across the country for his rhetorical call to arms against what he calls a four-decade failure by the federal government to set in place a working U.S. energy plan.

At the center of his proposal: An independent agency that would manage energy and environmental protection just as the Federal Reserve Bank manages the money supply.

“I’m very concerned that we have at our disposal now an incredible wealth of resources that we’re going at in a haphazard way,” Hofmeister said in an interview with the Houston Chronicle ahead of his talk Tuesday during the Offshore Technology Conference at NRG Center.

“We have no plan, no leadership, and there is so much animosity toward developing the traditional fuel that enables the economy to function and grow,” he said. “It’s up against all the aspirations of an energy system that people dream about, that people wish for. Little bits and pieces of a renewable alternative energy system are taking place, but nothing’s holistic, nothing’s comprehensive.”

Hofmeister says “a clash of civilizations” and petty squabbles reaching back to the early 1970s have stunted the nation’s energy industry at the expense of economic growth, innovation and

national progress in the 21st century. In 2008, he formed the nonprofit Citizens for Affordable Energy to spread his pro-hydrocarbon message to lawmakers, corporate power-brokers and the public square.

In the interview, Hofmeister discussed his ideas for how the nation might manage its resources efficiently and why he believes politicians should stop getting in the way of the energy industry. Edited excerpts:

Q: What's the thrust of your message?

A: We're holding back the potential growth of the U.S. economy, holding back employment and human capital development because we have a clutch of elected and appointed officials who just don't get it when it comes to this era of the 21st century. I understand why people don't like hydrocarbons. They're dirty. They're nasty. They're fossilized biomass from geological eons ago. They're waste matter.

But they contain energy. They provide the best value for the money. Technology enables us to clean it up while we continue to explore, research and develop the potential of alternatives. Quite frankly, the efficiency of alternative energy, whether it's wind or solar or biofuels, leaves a lot to be desired. And so let's work on what we've got.

Q: Why do we need a national energy plan?

A: We have enough fuel, enough energy resources to be completely independent as a continent, if you count Mexico, Canada and the U.S. We can take care of ourselves very nicely and we can do it more affordably, more efficiently and effectively — but not on the path we're on. We don't have to risk our national security, we don't have to have a mediocre economy, and we could have robust 6 percent to 7 percent gross domestic product growth by transforming our 20th century energy system into a holistic 21st century system, taking advantage of all new technologies to develop capabilities for cleaner fuels.

Q: Why do you believe the federal government has failed to enact an energy plan for so long?

A: For people who are not experts in the field, energy is difficult to get your head around. It's a combination of science and technology, it's a combination of geology and earth science, and it is a combination of environmental needs and resources. So when you get into the nuts and bolts of the industry, it's complex and difficult to comprehend. So when people who are not experts try to wrestle with all of this, they really need to lean on those who know and get good advice from across the spectrum in the industry. There are some elected officials reluctant to meet with oil and gas people, because they're reluctant to be seen with them for some reason.

Q: So what do you propose?

A: I have zero confidence in the players in Washington today. Seven presidents have made promises on energy that they failed to keep and 21 successive congresses have committed to the American people to fix our energy future, and none has. So let's do what's good for the nation by creating a statutorily approved, independent regulatory agency to manage energy and environmental protection. Get it out of politics. Woodrow Wilson and a previous Congress approved an independent regulatory agency called the Federal Reserve that manages the money supply, interest rates, and how to intervene in the economy if it's necessary. We should create a similar agency to set goals over time on energy supplies, infrastructure, environmental protection and energy efficiency through technology.

Q: You've said that market forces in the industry have "lost their way." What do you mean?

A: Every bit of what the energy industry does is licensed or regulated by government authority, either locally, at the state level or at the federal level. If the government's going to regulate everything and have to grant permission for whatever is proposed

— and I'm not opposed to that, I think it's for the safety of the American people

— but then let them lead on what it takes to supply the nation instead of always being a disabling factor in the process of bringing energy to the American people.

<http://digital.olivesoftware.com/Olive/ODE/houstonchronicle/>

Q. PRESIDENT STEPS UP HIS FOCUS ON CLIMATE

By Colleen McCain Nelson And Alicia Mundy

Updated May 6, 2014 6:18 a.m. ET: WSJ

President [Barack Obama](#) will argue this week that the effects of climate change must be confronted now, intensifying his focus on the issue a month before new and contentious rules are due out that will regulate emissions from existing power plants.

Tuesday's release of a report called the national climate assessment will kick-start the administration's push on an issue the president views as a key component of his legacy. The document, mandated by Congress and written by a federal advisory panel, will assess the impact global warming will have on specific regions of the country and sectors of the economy.

The report and a series of events in the next few days offer Mr. Obama an opportunity to reassure his liberal allies, who have long urged a more aggressive approach to climate change. Mr. Obama has told environmental leaders, including some top Democratic donors, his administration is ready to tackle the issue.

But climate change presents an election-year conundrum for the president, as global warming ranks low among the public's priorities and poses problems for Democratic candidates aligned with the energy industry.

A Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll in January found that climate change ranked last on a list of 15 issues when people were asked what the administration should make its priorities. Only 27% of respondents said addressing climate change should be an absolute priority this year, with 41% saying that it could be delayed until next year and 29% saying it shouldn't be pursued.

"The issue has ranked relatively low, because the threat is abstract," said Daniel J. Weiss, senior fellow at the liberal-leaning Center for American Progress. The White House will argue that the impacts are real and immediate, he added.

John Podesta, a top White House adviser on climate change, said there was overwhelming evidence it already is affecting people's lives. "If you...want to try to side with the polluters and argue to the American public that climate change is not happening today, tomorrow and certainly in the future, that's going to be a losing argument," he said.

But many Republicans believe the focus on climate change is wrong. "This report is part of the game the president is playing to distract Americans from his unchecked regulatory agenda that is costing our nation middle-class jobs, new economic opportunities and our ability to be energy independent," said Sen. James Inhofe (R., Okla.), criticizing what he called alarmism on global warming.

The new assessment is getting very different treatment than its predecessor, released in June 2009, with almost no fanfare. This time, the White House plans multiple events and interviews with TV meteorologists.

The report's rollout also serves as the curtain-raiser for new regulations limiting carbon emissions from existing coal-fired power plants, which will be released in early June by the Environmental Protection Agency.

GOP lawmakers and coal-state Democrats already tried to derail emission limits for new coal plants, which were released earlier this year. For months, coal-industry lawyers have been preparing maneuvers to stop rules for existing plants. The rules might prove tricky for Democratic candidates in conservative and coal-rich states. Mr. Podesta said Democrats should argue they have bolstered oil and gas production while backing clean energy. Kevin Book, managing director at analysis firm ClearView Energy Partners, said Mr. Obama's focus on climate may help red-state Democrats as an issue on which they can distance themselves from the president.

—Amy Harder

contributed to this article.

R. U.S. NATIONAL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Posted on [May 6, 2014](#) | [124 Comments](#)

by Judith Curry

Climate change, once considered a problem for the distant future, has moved firmly into the present. Climate change is already affecting the American people. – U.S. NCADAC

The U.S. National Climate Assessment Report was published Tuesday [\[link\]](#). I've read half of the chapters (at the beginning and end), skimming the ones in the middle.

My main conclusion from reading the report is this: **the phrase 'climate change' is now officially meaningless.** The report effectively implies that there is no climate change other than what is caused by humans, and that extreme weather events are equivalent to climate change.

Any increase in adverse impacts from extreme weather events or sea level rise is caused by humans. Possible scenarios of future climate change depend only on emissions scenarios that are translated into warming by climate models that produce far more warming than has recently been observed.

Some of the basic underlying climate science and impacts reported is contradictory to the recent IPCC AR5 reports. Pat Michaels and Chip Knappenberger have written a 134 page critique of a draft of the NCADAC report [\[link\]](#).

<http://judithcurry.com/2014/05/06/u-s-national-climate-assessment-report/#more-15436>

S. NATIONAL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT REPORT: ALARMISTS OFFER UNTRUE, UNRELENTING DOOM AND GLOOM

Posted on [May 6, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

Marlo Lewis writes at Fox News about the National Climate Assessment: (cue funeral dirge music)

Tuesday the U.S. Government's Global Change Research Program released its latest "National Assessment" report on climate change impacts in the United States.

As with previous editions, the new report is an alarmist document designed to scare people and build political support for unpopular policies such as carbon taxes, cap-and-trade, and EPA regulatory mandates.

Also in keeping with past practice, the latest report confuses climate risk with climate change risk.

Droughts, storms, floods, and heat waves are all part of the natural climate. Our risk of exposure to such extremes has much more to do with where we happen to live than with any gradual climate changes associated with the 1.3F – 1.9F increase in average U.S. temperature since the 1880s.

The new report is an alarmist document designed to scare people and build political support for unpopular policies such as carbon taxes, cap-and-trade, and EPA regulatory mandates.

Since even immediate and total shutdown of all carbon dioxide-emitting vehicles, power plants, and factories in the U.S. would decrease global warming by only a hypothetical and undetectable two-[tenths of a degree Celsius by 2100](#), it is misleading to imply, as the report does, that the Obama administration's climate policies can provide any measurable protection from extreme weather events.

The Assessment is flat out wrong that climate change is increasing our vulnerability to heat stress. As hot weather has become more frequent, people and communities have adapted to it, and [heat-related mortality in the U.S. has declined](#).

Cities with the most frequent hot weather such as Tampa, Florida and Phoenix, Arizona have practically zero heat-related mortality. That is the most probable future for most U.S. cities if global warming continues!

The report also foolishly predicts that climate change “intensify air pollution.” As [EPA's own data show](#), despite allegedly “unprecedented” warming, U.S. air quality has improved decade-by-decade since 1970 as emissions declined.

The report blames climate change for the Midwest drought of 2012. But the [government's own analysis](#) concluded otherwise: “Neither ocean states nor human-induced climate change, factors that can provide long-lead predictability, appeared to play significant roles in causing severe rainfall deficits over the major corn producing regions of central Great Plains.”

Complete story here: <http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2014/05/06/national-climate-assessment-report-alarmists-offer-untrue-unrelenting-doom-and/>

Don Shaw

T. '600 PAGE LITANY OF DOOM': WEATHER CHANNEL CO-FOUNDER JOHN COLEMAN SLAMS FEDERAL CLIMATE REPORT: A 'TOTAL DISTORTION OF THE DATA AND AGENDA DRIVEN, DESTRUCTIVE EPISODE OF BAD SCIENCE GONE BERSERK'

<http://www.climatedepot.com/2014/05/07/600-page-litany-of-doom-weather-channel-co-founder-john-coleman-slams-obama-climate-report-a-total-distortion-of-the-data-and-agenda-driven-destructive-episode-of-bad-science-gone-berserk/>

Bill Holliday

Regards
George