

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING NEWSLETTER

19 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 PENTAGON PAID \$150 PER GALLON FOR GREEN JET FUEL

GAO report notes exorbitant prices act as de facto subsidy for biofuel firms.

BY: [Lachlan Markay](#)

May 7, 2014 3:26 pm

The Department of Defense (DOD) paid \$150 per gallon for alternative jet fuel made from algae, more than 64 times the current market price for standard carbon-based fuels, according to a report released on Wednesday.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) noted in its [report](#) that a Pentagon official reported paying “about \$150 per gallon for 1,500 gallons of alternative jet fuel derived from algal oil.”

GAO’s report examined the financial challenges facing increased purchases and use of alternative jet fuels by federal agencies. “Currently, the price for alternative jet fuels exceeds that of conventional jet fuel,” the report noted.

The price for conventional jet fuel is [currently](#) \$2.88 per gallon. GAO’s report reveals that federal agencies have paid significantly higher prices in an effort to promote biofuels in commercial and military aviation.

<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/report-pentagon-paid-150-per-gallon-for-green-jet-fuel/>

B. WORKING HARD OR HARDLY WORKING AT THE EPA

An Environmental Protection Agency employee who spent two to six hours a day perusing pornography websites such as “Sadism is Beautiful” received performance bonuses for his hard work, investigators told Congress Thursday. 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.

<http://freebeacon.com/issues/working-hard-or-hardly-working-at-the-epa/>

C. EPA WEIGHS DEMANDING DISCLOSURE OF FRACKING CHEMICALS

Agency Asks for Comments from Energy Industry, Public, Health Groups on Hydraulic Fracturing

By Alicia Mundy

Updated May 9, 2014 11:18 a.m. ET

WASHINGTON—The Environmental Protection Agency took a first step Friday toward possibly requiring disclosure of the chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. The agency [said it is soliciting comment](#) on whether companies should publicly list the chemicals in the fluid used to extract oil and gas from rock formations deep underground. Obama administration officials said the announcement is preliminary and that the EPA isn't committing to new regulations.

Rather, they said, it is seeking feedback from the energy industry, the public, health-care organizations, states and environmental groups about whether such a rule is needed and what should be disclosed, including unpublished health and safety studies on the chemicals. Some communities and environmental groups say the chemicals may contain toxic substances that could pollute groundwater.

The EPA said it is open to a voluntary system of chemical disclosure in fracking fluid, and it will consider keeping some information from reaching the public. Some companies have said that forcing them to reveal the chemicals would amount to giving up proprietary formulas that could benefit their competitors.

The EPA said it wouldn't duplicate actions at other agencies. The Interior Department last year proposed draft rules that would, among other things, require disclosure of fracking fluids of companies drilling on public lands. Oil and gas wells on federal lands account for 11% of the nation's natural-gas supply and 5% of its oil, according to the Interior Department's Bureau of Land Management. The Interior Department hasn't said when it expects to adopt this rule. Jason Hutt, a Washington attorney who represents companies involved in fracking, predicted energy firms would respond cautiously. "I don't know that industry would voice significant opposition at this early stage," he said, adding that some companies are posting fracking chemical lists online.

But the American Petroleum Institute, which lobbies for oil and gas producers, criticized the agency. "A new EPA rule-making on this subject is unnecessary and duplicative," API spokesman Zachary Cikanek said in a statement. "Robust chemical information is already available to EPA, as well as to state regulators that are the primary regulators for oil and gas operations."

Fracking is regulated by state agencies, but many states have protections in place allowing companies to withhold some information as trade secrets to protect proprietary formulas.

—Alison Sider and Amy Harder contributed to this article.

WSJ 9 may 2014

D. OBAMA LAYS OUT PROPOSALS ON CUTTING CARBON POLLUTION

President Focuses on Clean-Energy Objectives He Can Accomplish Without Congress's Help

By Colleen McCain Nelson

Updated May 9, 2014 3:09 p.m. ET

A solar-power generation system in the Mojave Desert in Nevada. President Obama on Friday unveiled pledges from more than 300 companies to expand solar-energy use. *Bloomberg News* President [Barack Obama](#) on Friday trumpeted new executive actions and public- and private-sector commitments aimed at cutting carbon pollution and improving energy efficiency, saying that climate change is real and must be addressed now.

In a speech at a Wal-Mart store in Mountain View, Calif., the president laid out a list of clean-energy objectives he can accomplish without Congress's help and touted corporate pledges to expand the deployment of solar power. He lamented the lack of cooperation from lawmakers on clean-energy issues but said he would make sure the federal government does its part.

"Unfortunately, Congress has not always been as visionary on these issues as we would like. It can be a little frustrating," said Mr. Obama, who was flanked by an assortment of Wal-Mart clothing and kitchen wares.

Wal-Mart, the nation's largest retailer, pledged Friday to double the number of solar-power generation projects at its stores and facilities by 2020.

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WSJ 9May2014

E. ON MAY 9, 2014 THE U.S. COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA CIRCUIT UPHELD EPA'S DECISION TO TIGHTEN THE AIR QUALITY STANDARD FOR FINE PARTICULATE MATTER (NAT'L ASS'N OF MFRS. V. EPA, D.C. CIR., NO. 13-1069).

The court, in an opinion authored by Judge Brett Kavanaugh, rejected arguments that EPA acted unlawfully in lowering the small particulate standard from 15 µg/m³ to 12 µg/m³. A coalition of industry groups had challenged the new standard, arguing that EPA prejudged the outcome of the rulemaking and did not consider all available scientific evidence. The court found that EPA offered "reasoned explanations" for how it weighed scientific evidence and why the evidence supported the revised standards.

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Roger Zygmunt

F. FACT SHEET: WHAT CLIMATE CHANGE MEANS FOR REGIONS ACROSS AMERICA AND MAJOR SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY

"...Science, accumulated and reviewed over decades, tells us that our planet is changing in ways that will have profound impacts on all of humankind...those who are already feeling the effects of climate change don't have time to deny it—they're busy dealing with it."

-- President Barack Obama, Remarks at Georgetown University, June 25, 2013.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/05/06/fact-sheet-what-climate-change-means-regions-across-america-and-major-se>

Editors Note: I fail to find any facts in the above Fact Sheet. GHH

G. EXPOSING THE EPA

Documents reveal a lawless attempt to block an Alaska mine project.

A basic precept of American democracy is that petitioners before their government receive a full and fair hearing. The Obama Environmental Protection Agency is in urgent need of that remedial civics lesson.

The EPA inspector general's office last week announced it will investigate the agency's February decision to commence a pre-emptive veto of the Pebble Mine project, a jobs-rich proposal to develop America's largest U.S. copper and gold mine in southwest Alaska. EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy says her decision to strike down Pebble *before* it received a hearing shouldn't worry other developers because Pebble is a "unique" threat. She needs to say this because the truth might chill billions of dollars in investment in the U.S.

The IG is looking into internal EPA documents that we've also obtained that show agency officials were maneuvering to kill Pebble more than five years ago, and that EPA's main concern was building a façade of science and procedure to justify it.

This story goes back to the debate over the 1972 Clean Water Act, which gave the Army Corps of Engineers the power to evaluate projects and issue permits. Congress gave EPA only a secondary role of reviewing and potentially vetoing projects (with cause) under Section 404c. EPA has long chafed at this secondary role, which has made it harder to nix projects approved by the Corps.

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WSJ 13 May 2014

2. HEALTH A THE QUESTIONABLE LINK BETWEEN SATURATED FAT AND HEART DISEASE"

By Nina Teicholz

Updated May 6, 2014 10:25 a.m. ET

"Saturated fat does not cause heart disease"—or so concluded a big study published in March in the journal *Annals of Internal Medicine*. How could this be? The very cornerstone of dietary advice for generations has been that the saturated fats in butter, cheese and red meat should be avoided because they clog our arteries. For many diet-conscious Americans, it is simply second nature to opt for chicken over sirloin, canola oil over butter.

The new study's conclusion shouldn't surprise anyone familiar with modern nutritional science, however. The fact is, there has never been solid evidence for the idea that these fats cause disease. We only believe this to be the case because nutrition policy has been derailed over the past half-century by a mixture of personal ambition, bad science, politics and bias.

Our distrust of saturated fat can be traced back to the 1950s, to a man named Ancel Benjamin Keys, a scientist at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Keys was formidably persuasive and, through sheer force of will, rose to the top of the nutrition world—even gracing the cover of *Time* magazine—for relentlessly championing the idea that saturated fats raise cholesterol and, as a result, cause heart attacks.

Health140519

WSJ 2 May 2014

3. SAFETY A HUMAN ERRORS START AT THE TOP, OFFSHORE PANEL TOLD

Energy leader says corporate executives must act to ensure ‘a culture of safety’

By Collin Eaton

More offshore oil companies must make safety a cornerstone of their corporate cultures if the industry hopes to curb human errors, which cause four-fifths of all offshore accidents, an Anadarko Petroleum Corp. executive said Monday.

It’s not enough for oil companies to file 1,000-page reports to offshore regulators and call it a day. Some companies fail to take action in setting up safety management systems that run from the simplest procedures up to the highest C-suites. That’s why mechanical and structural failures account for only one in every five offshore accidents, said Jim Raney, director of engineering and technology at Anadarko.

The only way for oil companies to curtail their workers’ lapses is to infuse safety into the fabric of the organizations, Raney said during an offshore safety panel at Monday’s inaugural event of the Ocean Energy Safety Institute.

Env140519-5

Houston Chronicle 13 May 2014

TRANSPORTATION A. AGENCY LAX IN OVERSEEING SAFETY OF FUEL PIPELINES, WATCHDOG FINDS

By Joan Lowy ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The federal agency responsible for making sure states effectively oversee the safety of natural gas and other pipelines is failing to do its job, a government watchdog said in a report released Friday.

The federal effort is so riddled with weaknesses that it’s not possible to ensure states are enforcing pipeline safety, the report by the Transportation Department’s Office of Inspector General said.

Poor state inspections

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration isn’t ensuring key state inspectors are properly trained, inspections are being conducted frequently enough and inspections target the most risky pipelines, it said.

The findings come more than three years after a gas pipeline explosion and fire killed eight people, injured 58 and destroyed much of a subdivision in San Bruno, Calif., a suburb of San Francisco. Accident investigators cited weak state and federal oversight.

The nation’s network of about 2.5 million miles of pipelines moves millions of gallons of hazardous liquids and 55 billion cubic feet of natural gas every day. Eighty-five percent of these pipelines are under state authority. The report doesn’t address the safety administration’s oversight of interstate pipelines like the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline.

Cynthia Quarterman, head of the safety administration, defended her agency’s record, pointing to a two-thirds decline in the number of accidents and incidents involving gas distribution pipelines over the past 30 years.

There were 21 serious incidents on distribution pipelines in 2013 and 24 incidents in 2012, “which were the lowest number of serious incidents on record for the past 30 years,” she said in response to the inspector general’s findings included in the report.

Among the weaknesses cited in the report is that the safety administration is using an outdated formula to calculate the minimum number of inspectors states need. More inspectors may be needed to carry out new inspection methods and responsibilities since the formula was developed in the 1990s.

Old infrastructure

More than 20 percent of the nation's total gas distribution pipelines are more than 50 years old or composed of material such as cast iron or bare steel that are more susceptible to failure than newer pipelines. However, the safety administration's staffing formula also doesn't take into account whether more personnel are needed to inspect these riskier pipelines, the report said.

The agency also hasn't set minimum qualifications for state inspectors who lead inspection teams, the report said.

A fire from a ruptured pipeline roars through a neighborhood in San Bruno, Calif., in 2010. Airport by the U.S. Department of Transportation's inspector general says the agency responsible for safety is falling down on the job.

The Durango Herald-May 9, 2014

COMMENTS:

A. THE WEEK THAT WAS: 2014-05-10 (MAY, 10 2014)

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

NCA: On May 6, the Administration released the anticipated third National Climate Assessment (NCA), *Climate Change Impacts in the United States*. The cover letter to Congress is signed by John P. Holdren, Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and by Kathryn D. Sullivan, Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, NOAA Administrator. The report is the product of the US Global Change Research Program with 13 government agencies participating: Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Energy, Health and Human Services, Interior, State, Transportation as well as the Agency for International Development (USAID), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), National Science Foundation (NSF), and Smithsonian Institution. The report is a slick marketing piece and the web site is very effective as such. The NCA claims that the nation is being damaged by global warming/climate change and it divides the nation into regions to discuss the harms occurring.

Apparently, the Administration has declared war on global warming/climate change/climate disruption, etc. As such, it appears the Administration has taken Churchill's admonition to heart. [Quote of the Week]. A student of war-time propaganda may identify this report as such. The report relies heavily on projections from defective, biased climate models and selective ignorance of climate history of the United States. On his web site, Roy Spencer presents a brief rebuttal to each of the 12 major points. In his December 11, 2013 testimony to the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, John Christy presented evidence contradicting many of the claims in this report. The testimony discussed the defects in the climate models, and the strong warming bias they have. **Defective global models are an inappropriate basis for estimating regional impact.**

The section of the report on global sea level rise illustrates the lack of scientific rigor in the report (pp 44 & 45). It states that since 1880, when reliable record keeping began, sea levels have risen by about 8 inches. Then goes on to state that: The future scenarios range from 0.66 feet (8 inches, 20 cm) to 6.6 feet (79 inches, 201 cm) by 2100. "These scenarios are not based on

climate model simulations, but rather reflect the range of possible scenarios based on other scientific studies.” [These studies are not discussed in that section.] “In particular, the high end of these scenarios may be useful for decision-makers with a low tolerance for risk.” The report states the more likely range of sea level rise is 1 to 4 feet by 2100 (30 to 122 cm). The report attributes the broad range of values to the uncertainty of the science. Others may attribute the broad range of values to an effort to alarm the general population and give justification to bureaucrats to impose punitive taxes and regulations.

This report may be the most misleading document published by the executive branch of government in a time of peace. For a broad range of comments see links under Challenging the Orthodoxy, Defending the Orthodoxy –The NCA, and Questioning The NCA.

For Only \$7.5 Billion: According to the cover letter, the National Climate Assessment (NCA) is the result of a three-year analytical effort by a team of over 300 experts, overseen by a broadly constituted Federal Advisory Committee of 60 members. Other reports stated that the NCA was 4 or 5 years in the making. Three years is sufficient to establish an estimate of how much the NCA costs. The NCA is the justification for the US Global Change Research Program (USGCRP) and it is the program’s principal product. According to reports from the White House, the USGCRP spent about \$7.469 Billion in fiscal years 2011, 2012, and 2013 (fiscal years end on September 30). Yet, the USGCRP cannot estimate sea level rise 86 years hence within one foot! See links under Questioning The

NCA <http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/FY12-climate-fs.pdf> and http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/legislative_reports/fcce-report-to-congress.pdf

Realistic Sea Level Rise: Willem P. de Lange and Robert Carter have produced a report of sea level rise that is more realistic and, no doubt, less expensive than the NCA. They suggest a policy for addressing sea level rise that is far less expensive than government policies that may come from the fears promoted in NCA.

A group of scientists using the name Randolph Glacier Inventory have compiled an inventory of all the earth’s glaciers. Several studies calculate that if all the glaciers melt, sea levels will rise by about 35 to 47 cm (13.8 to 18.5 inches). This is far less than the 30 to 122 cm (12 to 48 inches) estimate in the NCA. (Note, the rise does not include possible expansion of the oceans due to warming or possible melting of the extremely cold Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets. See links under Questioning the Orthodoxy and Changing Cryosphere –Land / Sea Ice

Prolepsis: How we know they know we know they are trying to deceive us? Prolepsis is an argumentative (debate) technique whereby the advocate of a particular position begins by admitting certain weaknesses in order to deflect more severe criticism and/or gain sympathy from the audience. It can work very well, but it alerts others that the advocate is aware of some of the weaknesses in the position. Although not a quote from one of the authors of the NCA, an article discussing NCA in the *Wall Street Journal* gave an excellent example.

*To predict local impacts of climate change, the researchers combined and averaged several different kinds of physical and statistical computer models for the report. Every computer climate simulation has its shortcomings, experts say, **but taken together they can provide a plausible range of possibilities.*** [Boldface added.]

As John Christy illustrated in his testimony, the climate models have a warming bias, ranging from moderate to severe. Any statistic derived from a collection of biased models is also biased. In Christy's graph, the mean of the models clearly shows this bias. Further, any range of values from the biased models is also biased. The use of these procedures create major defects in the NCA. In WUWT, Robert Brown discusses the problem of using biased models in some length. See Article # 1, Challenging the Orthodoxy, and Model Issues.

Northwest US: On his web site, Cliff Mass discusses some of the shortcomings in the NCA in its regional analysis of the Northwest US. Mass is not a global warming skeptic, but he endeavors to be objective. See link under Seeking a Common Ground.

Motivation: Some may ask what motivates the Administration to issue a biased report. It is impossible to determine. However, a quote provided by Howard (Cork) Hayden, may provide some insight.

Paul Ehrlich and John Holdren wrote: "Individual rights must be balanced against the power of the government to control human reproduction. Some people have viewed the right to have children as a fundamental and inalienable right. Yet neither the Declaration of Independence nor the Constitution mentions a right to reproduce." *Ecoscience* (1977). *2Population, Resources, Environment*(1970).

The statement totally misrepresents the Constitution as advocated by the Founding Fathers, for example, James Madison. To them, the powers of the central government are few, defined, and limited. The rights of the individuals are broad and not delimited.

Litigation Issues: The Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit (one step down from the Supreme Court) upheld the EPA's newest limits on airborne particles (soot). "Under the arbitrary and capricious standard, we exercise great deference when we evaluate claims about competing bodies of scientific research," the court wrote. "Petitioners simply have not identified any way in which EPA jumped the rails of reasonableness in examining the science."

The EPA made many unsubstantiated claims as to the health benefits of the new rules. Some of these claims are based on a "science" that has not been disclosed to the public and which members of Congress have been requesting for years. This decision illustrates that the Federal court system is highly biased towards government agencies and will not protect the public from zealous bureaucrats who claim onerous regulations are based on science.

We can fully expect the EPA to use the new NCA as the basis for insisting regulations of carbon dioxide (CO₂) are necessary to protect the public. Already, the EPA and the Department of Energy are falsely asserting that carbon capture and sequestration (CCS) are commercially viable. On May 6, Sweden's Vattenfall, a large state-owned power company with a capacity of 11,300 megawatt in 14 plants in Germany, Denmark, and the Netherlands announced it is dropping its bold, and expensive, program of researching and developing CCS. See links under Litigation Issues and Carbon Schemes

Asthma: On his web site, Number Watch, statistical pioneer John Brignell discusses the callous disregard bureaucrats in England (and the EPA) have for those who actually suffer from childhood asthma. As the air is becoming cleaner, childhood asthma continues to rise. Yet, bureaucrats make false claims regarding the need to make the air ever cleaner. In so doing, they

mislead the public and divert resources from understanding and possibly preventing or curing the disease. See link under Communicating Better to the Public –Make things up.

El Niño: A warming of parts of the tropical Pacific indicates that an El Niño may be building. Although largely ignored by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), El Niños and the opposite La Niñas apparently have a significant impact on global temperatures, hence global warming. Strong El Niños warm, La Niñas cool. The great temperature spike in 1998 was from a super El Niño. Physicist Donn Rapp has a lucid historical explanation on Climate Etc. Some alarmists are calling for a strong El Niño, as it would restart global warming. Based on the historic data, Joe Bastardi of WeatherBELL Analytics asserts that if it materializes, it will not be strong.

Saturated Fat: For about 50 years, “experts” have been claiming that a healthy diet should not include saturated fats. The claim has become part of the diet program recommended by US health authorities. Recent studies failed to find the supposed link between eating animal fat and heart disease or high cholesterol. Writing in the *Wall Street Journal*, Nina Teicholz exposes the poor quality of the original research. Whether or not saturated fats are an important part of a healthy diet is not the issue here. The issue is how poor research can become generally accepted research for decades. See Article # 4 and Other News that May Be of Interest.

Number of the Week: \$150 per Gallon. According to reports, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found the US Navy paid up to \$150 per gallon for a biofuel jet fuel made from algae. The report stated that currently regular jet fuel costs about \$2.88 per gallon. [Exxon would be continuing its algae program, if it could sell for so high a price.] No doubt, the Navy will dismiss this issue because the amount was only 1,500 gallons.

However, near the end of the report, the GAO brought up three market factors that expose major deficiencies in the entire biofuel program (pp 35 & 36).

Favorable Economics for Competing End Products:

“...currently, end-use products or co-products (such as diesel fuel, naphtha, cosmetics, and plastics) from the same production processes used to produce alternative jet fuels are often cheaper and easier to produce and therefore more profitable as compared to alternative jet fuels.”

Dependence on Commodity Markets:

“Because some alternative jet fuels are made from tradable commodities, the cost of jet fuel production depends on prices in commodity markets. As noted earlier, the price of soybean oil—an input to alternative fuels—has historically exceeded the price of conventional jet fuel.”

Cost of Conventional Jet Fuels:

“Increases in the supply of conventional jet fuels would make it harder for alternative fuels to compete based on price alone.”

In its efforts to make America more energy secure, and ignoring the shale revolution, the Navy is making America, and the world, less food secure. See links under

<http://www.sepp.org/twtwfiles/2014/TWTW%205-10-14%20%20Final.pdf>

B. CLAIM: AS CO2 LEVELS RISE, SOME CROP NUTRIENTS WILL FALL

Posted on [May 7, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

From the [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#)

Free Air Concentration Enrichment (FACE) systems, like this one at the University of Illinois, allow researchers to simulate future atmospheric conditions to determine their effects on plants. CHAMPAIGN, Ill. — Researchers have some bad news for future farmers and eaters: As carbon dioxide levels rise this century, some grains and legumes will become significantly less nutritious than they are today.

The new findings are reported in the journal *Nature*. Eight institutions, from Australia, Israel, Japan and the United States, contributed to the analysis.

The researchers looked at multiple varieties of wheat, rice, field peas, soybeans, maize and sorghum grown in fields with atmospheric carbon dioxide levels like those expected in the middle of this century. (Atmospheric CO₂ concentrations are currently approaching 400 parts per million, and are expected to rise to 550 ppm by 2050.)

Editor's Note: Why was the temperature not raised, increased CO2 is said to be accompanied by increase in temperature? GHH

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/07/claim-as-co2-levels-rise-some-crop-nutrients-will-fall/>

C. OBAMA'S CLIMATE BOMB

He's flogging disaster scenarios to promote his political agenda.

May 8, 2014 7:25 p.m. ET

Supervising the Earth's climate—or at least believing humanity can achieve such miracles—may be the only political project grandiose enough for President Obama. So it shouldn't surprise that after reforming health care and raising taxes, the White House is now getting the global-warming band back together, though it is still merely playing the old classics of unscientific panic.

On Wednesday the White House released the quadrennial National Climate Assessment, an 829-page report. The theme is that "this is not some distant problem of the future. This is a problem that is affecting Americans right now," as Mr. Obama told lovable weather personality Al Roker. His "Today Show" interview was one of eight hits with television meteorologists to promote the report, part of a coordinated political campaign to scare Americans into supporting his anticarbon tax-and-regulation agenda. The report is designed to dramatize the supposed immediacy of climate change by concentrating on droughts, floods, heat waves, torrential rains, wildfires, polar-vortex winters and other indicia of the end of days. Everybody "gets" the weather.

But as a marketing exercise, the report has the feel of that infomercial footage of the people who can't crack an egg or perform routine household tasks until they acquire this or that as-seen-on-TV product. The cautious findings of serious empirical climate literature are so obviously exaggerated and colored that the document is best understood as a political tract with a few scientific footnotes.

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D. THE LATEST STORM OF CLIMATE ALARMISM

The National Climate Assessment is not nearly as dire as its cheerleaders suggest.

By Steven F. Hayward

May 8, 2014 6:55 p.m. ET

The third National Climate Assessment, released Tuesday by the White House, may not do anything to protect Americans from the effects of climate change, but it has done its primary

job—generating alarming headlines in the media and setting the stage for a renewed push by the Obama administration for its climate-policy agenda.

Coming barely six weeks after the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's most recent alarmist report—also duly trumpeted in the media—we have now reached the junkie's-craving phase of the climate-change story, where bigger and more frequent fixes are necessary to keep alive the euphoria of saving the world. Confronted with polls and surveys finding that the public is tuning out climate change as a matter of vital concern, the climate campaign seemingly persists in thinking that one more report will turn the tide in its favor.

At 829 pages—plus a separate 137-page "highlights" summary—the National Climate Assessment is yet another behemoth report that few will entirely read, let alone fully comprehend or be able to judge. It can, however, be summarized by a sentence from the online introduction to the report: "Climate change, once considered an issue for a distant future, has moved firmly into the present."

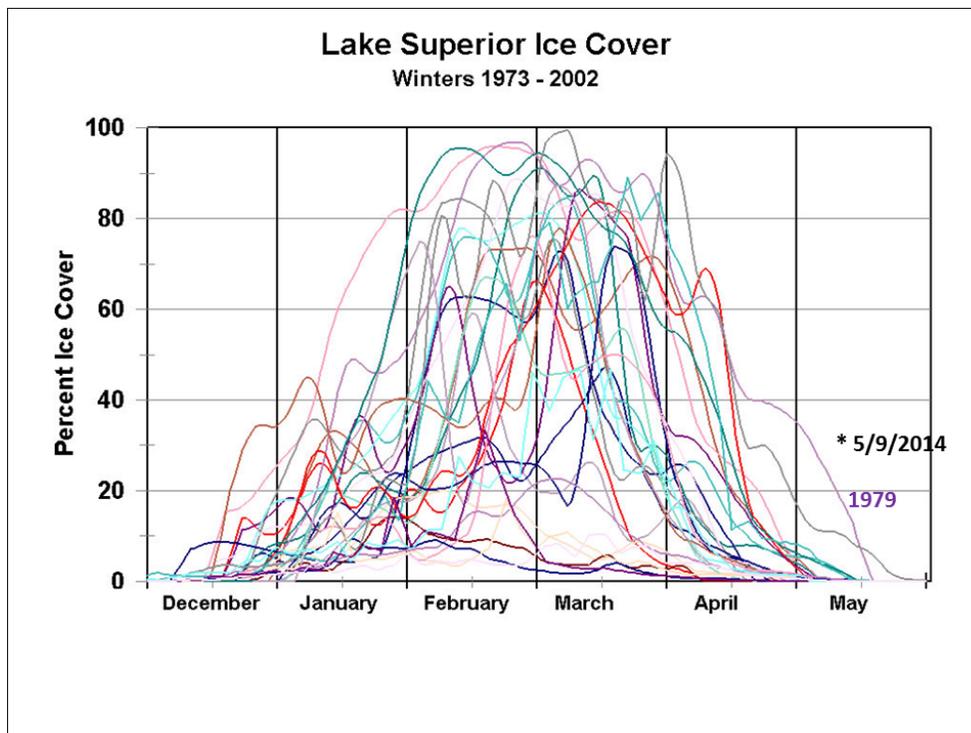
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E. RECORD LAKE SUPERIOR ICE COVER STILL 31%

May 9th, 2014

With [31% ice coverage today](#) (May 9, 2014), Lake Superior now has more ice than after the epic cold winter of 1978-79, which had everyone in a tizzy over the coming Ice Age. Here's a plot of how the various winters played out between 1973 and 2002, and where Superior ice cover stands today...it shows that by today's date in most years, the ice was long gone:



Good ice records only began in 1973 because that was the first year we had high-resolution satellite imagery, from the first Landsat satellite. It will be very interesting to see if there is still some ice left in early June.

In the 1970s, cold winters were a sign of a cold climate. Of course, now we know that cold winters are a sign of a hot climate. Scientists can be so silly at times.

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

Roy Spencer

F. U.S. SNOWFALL TO DECREASE BY 50% IN 50 YEARS!

May 8th, 2014

Following the release of the latest U.S. National Climate Assessment report, a new climate forecast visualization widget has just gone live today.

The [National Climate Change Viewer](#) (NCCV) allows you to visualize how climate models forecast temperature and precipitation to change over the next 50 years or so. You can examine either individual model's projections, or the average of all of the models' projections.

I just started playing with it, and the first thing that really caught my eye was the dramatic decrease in total snowfall: a 50% decrease over the next 50 years, pretty much independent of calendar month. Here's the graphic (click for larger versions of images):

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

Roy Spencer

G. MY INITIAL COMMENTS ON THE NATIONAL CLIMATE ASSESSMENT

May 7th, 2014

There will be many comments from others, I'm sure, but these are my initial thoughts on the 12 major findings from the latest National Climate Assessment, which reports to tell us how the global climate change anticipated by the IPCC on a global basis will impact us here at home.

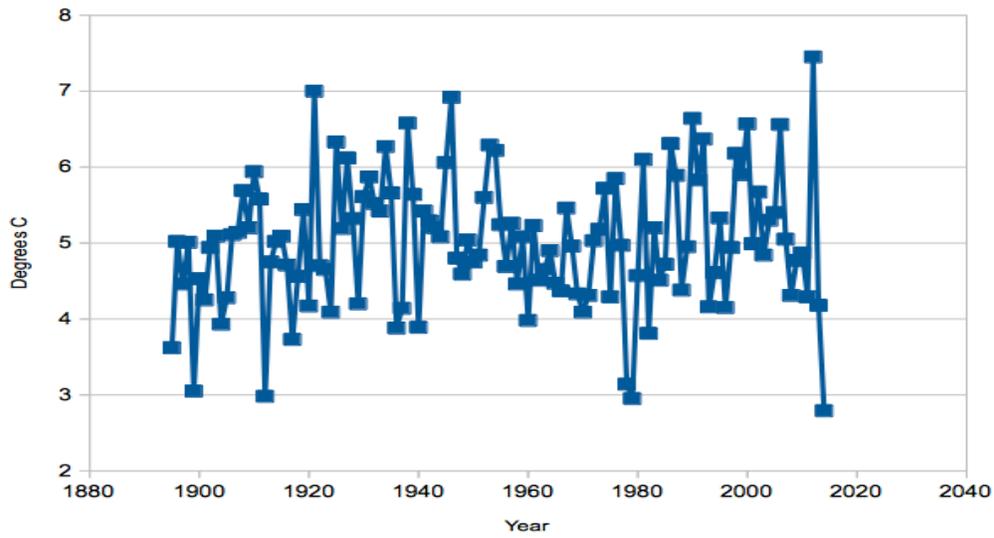
The report findings are in bold and italics. My comments follow each finding.

Roy Spencer

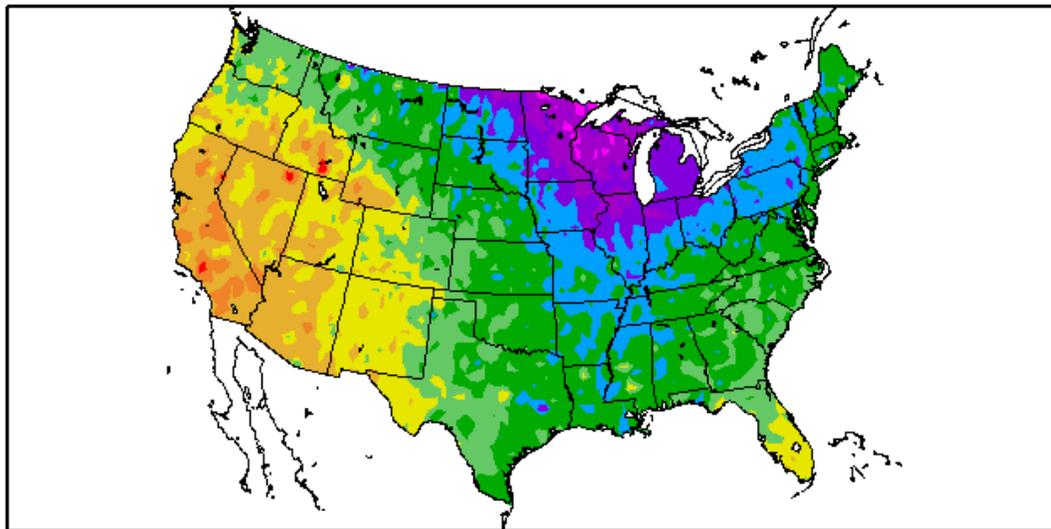
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H. COLDEST YEAR ON RECORD SO FAR IN THE US

US Temperature Through May 6 At All HCN Stations



Departure from Normal Temperature (F)
1/1/2014 - 5/7/2014



Generated 5/8/2014 at HPRCC using provisional data.
Don Shaw

Regional Climate Centers

I. MELTING BY 2035? HARDLY! NEW STUDY SHOWS MOST HIMALAYAN GLACIERS ARE STABLE AND IN A STEADY STATE

Posted on [May 10, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

WUWT readers may recall that the [IPCC famously claimed](#) (using [fake data](#)) that Himalayan glaciers would melt by 2035. That date later turned out to be a [blunder of epic proportions](#), requiring [a retraction](#). Now, the results of a new study show that most of the two thousand Himalayan glaciers monitored are in a steady state compared to the results of other studies carried out for the period prior to 2001.

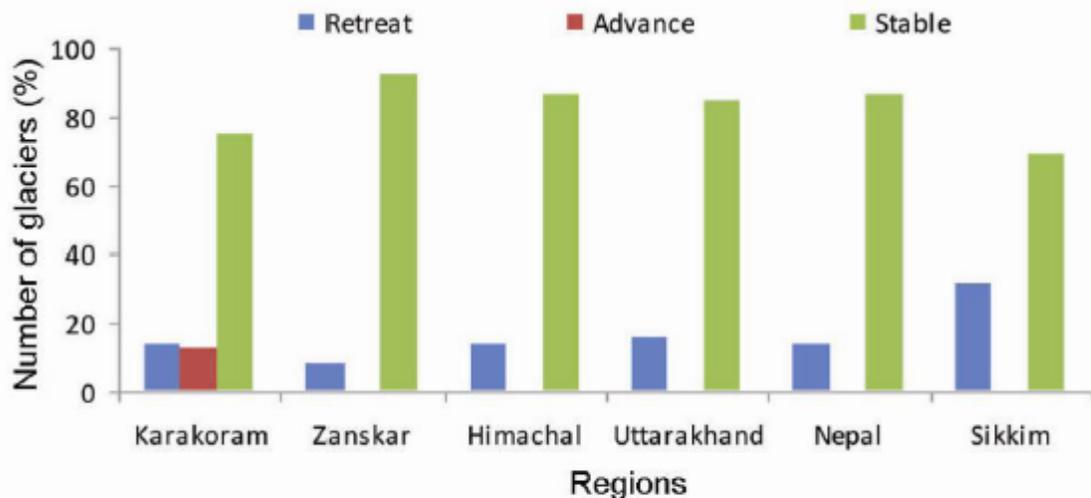


Figure 2. Number of glaciers showing retreat, advance or stability during 2000/01/02–2010/11.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/10/melting-by-2035-hardly-new-study-shows-most-himalayan-glaciers-are-stable-and-in-a-steady-state/#more-108944>

J. MANN AND MISREPRESENTATIONS

Posted on [May 9, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

Steve McIntyre writes: in *Mann Misrepresents the EPA – Part 1*:

In today's post, I will return to my series on false claims in Mann's lawsuit about supposed "exonerations". (For previous articles, see here ^). One of the most important misconduct allegations against Mann – the "amputation" of the Briffa reconstruction in IPCC TAR – was [discussed](#) recently by Judy Curry, who, in turn, covered [Congressional testimony](#) on the incident by John Christy, who had been a Lead Author of the same IPCC TAR chapter and whose recollections of the incident were both first-hand and vivid.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/09/108939/#more-108939>

K. YES, BEN ADLER, THERE ARE LIBERAL EQUIVALENTS TO CLIMATE CHANGE DENIAL

May 9th, 2014

Honestly...these are supposed to be the smartest people in the room?

Ben Adler at Grist has an article entitled "[Why there is no liberal equivalent to climate change denial](#)". He builds upon arguments from Paul Krugman that conservatives have a way of denying facts that liberals don't when it comes to supporting their ideological beliefs.

It's a clever argument, and I'm sure it will convince many weak minds. I have to wonder whether Adler and Krugman are also convinced of what they write.

What they have done is basically redefined the term "fact" to be anything that Liberals *believe* is an established fact.

I'm going to set aside their examples of creation-vs-evolution, or the optimum marginal tax rate, or whether conservatives only want smaller government but liberals want improved social welfare. Instead, I'll just get to Adler's central claim that there is no liberal equivalent to "climate change denial".

Of course there are liberal equivalents. For example, here are seven that immediately come to mind:

- 1) natural climate change denial
- 2) denial that coal and petroleum work better than unicorn farts as fuels,
- 3) denial that a small amount of warming is better than killing millions of poor people by restricting access to inexpensive energy,
- 4) denial that the human-induced component of climate change is anything but catastrophic and an emergency,
- 5) denial that an increasing number of scientists are becoming skeptics,
- 6) denial that IPCC scientists were caught red-handed trying to silence the opposition and "hide the decline",
- 7) denial of the observations, which show much less warming than any of the climate models can explain over the last 30+ years.

I'm sure I could think of more, but I don't like to waste any more time than necessary answering such silly claims.

For supposedly being able to understand nuances, these guys can't admit that most conservatives really do believe that humans have *some* influence on climate. We just don't think the scientific and economic evidence supports spreading more misery around the globe than liberal policies have already created.

<http://grist.org/politics/why-there-is-no-liberal-equivalent-to-climate-change-denial/>

Roy Spencer

L. NEW PAPER FINDS TRANSIENT CLIMATE SENSITIVITY TO CO2 IS ~35% LESS THAN IPCC CLAIMS

Posted on [May 8, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

From [The Hockey Schtick](#):

A paper under discussion for Earth System Dynamics finds the transient climate response [TCR] to CO2 is 1.3°C per doubling of CO2 levels, about 35% less than claimed by the IPCC mean estimate and the same as determined by another recent paper by [Otto et al finding a TCR of 1.3°C](#).

The authors say:

"assess the origin of these differences [between the IPCC high TCR estimates and lower estimates from this paper and others] and highlight the inverse relation between the derived anthropogenic temperature trend of the past 30 years and the weight given to the [natural]

Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO) as an explanatory factor in the multiple linear regression (MLR) tool that is usually employed. We highlight that robust MLR outcomes require a better understanding of the AMO in general and more specifically its characterization. Our results indicate that both the high- and low end of the anthropogenic trend over the past 30 years found in previous studies are unlikely and that a transient climate response with best estimates centred around 1.3°C per CO2 doubling best captures the historic instrumental temperature record.”

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/08/new-paper-finds-transient-climate-sensitivity-to-co2-is-35-less-than-ipcc-claims/#more-108825>

M. FT: ‘NO ONE TRUSTS WASHINGTON ON CLIMATE CHANGE’

Posted on [May 11, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

The 841-page National Climate Assessment released by the US government last week has been described as “sobering”, but Americans do not appear sobered.

No one trusts Washington on climate change



By Christopher Caldwell

In the age of the Iraq war and Obamacare, the government is hardly a trustworthy body

Story submitted by Eric Worrall

The Financial Times, a major international business newspaper, the main competitor to the Wall Street Journal, has just published an article, highlighting the insignificance of the impact Obama’s National Climate Assessment has had, on American public opinion.

According to the FT,

“Americans have been receiving such warnings for a decade. None has managed to rouse the country from its seeming indifference.”

“... the authors seem to have forgotten that weather is not the same thing as the climate.”

“Former US ambassador to China Jon Huntsman wrote recently of having watched a debate at which “all the Republican candidates chuckled at a question on climate change – as if they had been asked about their belief in the Tooth Fairy””

The Wall street Journal summed it up this way:

Obama’s Climate Bomb

He’s flogging disaster scenarios to promote his political agenda.

May 8, 2014 7:25 p.m. ET

Supervising the Earth’s climate—or at least believing humanity can achieve such miracles—may be the only political project grandiose enough for President Obama. So it shouldn’t surprise that after reforming health care and raising taxes, the White House is now getting the global-warming band back together, though it is still merely playing the old classics of unscientific panic.

On Wednesday the White House released the quadrennial National Climate Assessment, an 829-page report.

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304885404579548453104239932>

Don Shaw

N. OPEN THREAD WEEKEND – MANN OVERBOARD! EDITION JOHN COOK’S 97% CONSENSUS CLAIM IS ABOUT TO GO ‘PEAR-SHAPED’

Posted on [May 10, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

Analysis of raters in Cook’s 97% paper by Shollenberger

pear shaped (slang)

*A British expression used to indicate that something has gone horribly wrong with a person’s plans, most commonly in the phrase “It’s all gone pear shaped.” The OED cites its origin as within the Royal Air Force; as of 2003 the earliest citation there is a quote in the 1983 book *Air War South Atlantic*. Others date it to the RAF in the 1940s, from pilots attempting to perform aerial manoeuvres such as loops. These are difficult to form perfectly, and are usually noticeably distorted—i.e., pear-shaped.*

Dr. Richard Tol writes about a new revelation coming from an analysis of Cook’s climate publications volunteer raters, conducted by Brandon Shollenberger:

My comment on Cook’s [consensus](#) paper has at last been accepted. It was rejected by three journals — twice by Environmental Research Letters and once by two other journals for being out of scope. Fifth time lucky.

As these things go, my comment is out of date before it is published.

One of my main concerns was the partial release of data. The data that was available suggests that all sorts of weird things were going on, but without the full data it was hard to pinpoint what went on. Cook’s resistance to release the data, abetted by the editor, the publisher and the University of Queensland, suggested that he may have something to hide.

Brandon Shollenberger has now found part of the missing data.

Unfortunately, time stamps are still missing. These would allow us to check whether fatigue may have affected the raters, and whether all raters were indeed human.

Rater IDs are available now. I hope Shollenberger will release the data in good time. For now, we have to do with his tests and graphs.

His [comment of May 10, 1:16 am](#) shows that individual raters systematically differed in their assessment of the literature. This is illustrated by this [figure](#); the circles are aligned if the raters are the same.

*This undermines Cook’s paper. **Theirs was not a survey of the literature. Rather, it was a survey of the raters.***

Source: <http://richardtol.blogspot.co.uk/2014/05/the-97-consensus.html>

Of note is the comment “Brandon Shollenberger has now found part of the missing data.”. While I don’t know for sure, it seems that the SkS kidz have left another gaping security hole wide open which allowed Shollenberger (and likely anyone, as we’ve [seen before](#) with their forum fiascos) to have a look at that rater’s data. Cook has been resisting requests to provide it. Shollenberger writes in [comments](#) at his blog:

I've sent John Cook an e-mail alerting him to what material I have, offering him an opportunity to give me reasons I should refrain from releasing it or particular parts of it. I figure a day or two to address any potential privacy concerns should be enough.

His response will determine how much information I provide. No obligations were placed upon me regarding any of the material I have, but I don't see any compelling reason to provide information about how I got it either. I'd need a better reason than just satisfying people's curiosity.

But we'll see what (if anything) Cook says. I said I'd give him the weekend. If I don't hear anything tonight, I'll try contacting him via Twitter/Skeptical Science. I may try having someone else from SkS get his attention for me. I don't want him to simply overlook the e-mail I sent. By the way, there is some value in associating ids and names. We have comments from many of the people who participated in the study. It could be useful to try to match up biases in the ratings with people's stated views.

O. THE DUBIOUS BENEFITS OF FURTHER OZONE REDUCTIONS

The proposed EPA standard is very close to levels that are found naturally in some regions of the country.

By Julie E. Goodman And Sonia Sax

May 11, 2014 5:21 p.m. ET

Over the past several decades the U.S. has achieved remarkable success in reducing air pollution. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the country has reduced six common air pollutants by 72% since 1970. These reductions are credited with achieving meaningful public-health benefits, from improved respiratory health to increased life expectancy.

Yet with this success we now face a critical question: Will further decreases in air pollution to levels that approach those that occur naturally necessarily result in additional public-health benefits? This question gets to the heart of the EPA's current evaluation of whether the existing National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ozone is sufficient to protect public health. Ozone is a colorless, odorless gas that is not directly emitted into air, but is formed when sunlight reacts with two other pollutants: volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides. These come from many natural sources (plants, forest fires) as well as human-made sources (cars, industrial facilities, power plants).

The Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee, a panel of scientists and public-health experts charged by Congress with advising the EPA, met in March to discuss the agency's evaluation of the link between ozone and respiratory illnesses such as asthma and other health issues. The hope is that, with robust public input, the EPA and the committee will arrive at conclusions that accurately reflect the current state of scientific research on ozone. The stakes are significant: The EPA itself estimates that more-stringent standards could cost businesses up to \$90 billion annually.

Currently the EPA standard for ozone in the air is 75 parts per billion, the strictest level since the standard was established in 1971. In 2008 the EPA determined, and a federal court agreed, that this standard protects public health. But now the EPA says that 75 ppb is not protective enough and is recommending a change to between 60 ppb and 70 ppb. Meanwhile, the overwhelming body of scientific evidence indicates lowering the current ozone standard will not provide added health benefits beyond those achieved with the current standard.

There have been hundreds of scientific studies on ozone exposure and possible health effects, and the EPA has reviewed most of them. However, the EPA has not evaluated them in systematic fashion, by considering study strengths and limitations in a consistent manner from study to study. This type of analysis is called a "weight-of-evidence" evaluation, and it can help prevent the cherry-picking of studies—which can occur when scientists focus on studies or evaluate data that confirm their position, or when the scientists place less emphasis on studies that do not.

Most studies examining connections between ozone and health effects do not adequately account for smoking or other factors such as diet and exercise that could contribute to diseases attributed to ozone. By not fully considering these other factors, the EPA assumes that ozone causes more health effects than what the science supports.

The EPA also has interpreted some studies to indicate that ozone is more harmful than it likely is. For example, Dr. William C. Adams, professor emeritus at the University of California, Davis, published a peer-reviewed paper in 2006 concluding that 60 ppb ozone exposures to people exercising for six hours did not lead to harmful respiratory effects. The EPA "reanalyzed" his data and determined that it did. Dr. Adams later said, on the EPA Docket for public comment, that the "EPA has misinterpreted the statistics contained in my published, peer-reviewed paper."

This kind of discrepancy should give the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee pause as it evaluates the health effects of ozone.

The EPA considers worst-case scenarios arguably to protect the most sensitive people in a population. However, in its ozone health-risk and exposure assessment, the EPA makes many "worst-case" assumptions that could not all occur at one time, leading to an unrealistic scenario that overestimates risks.

The lowered standard that the EPA is proposing (between 60 and 70 ppb) is very close to levels of ozone that are found naturally in some regions of the country. For example, the ozone level at Big Bend National Park in southwest Texas, where there are no industrial facilities, is 71 ppb. Significantly, the EPA's models have shown that decreasing human-made sources of ozone could actually lead to increased natural ozone in some areas. This happens because ozone formation is complex, and nitrogen oxides both form and destroy ozone. By controlling human sources of nitrogen dioxide to achieve lower ozone levels, many parts of the country will not be able to meet current ozone standards solely because of naturally formed ozone.

We all want appropriate standards to ensure that our air is clean. But the EPA shouldn't lower the ozone standard unless there is solid evidence that doing so would result in measurable improvements in health or reductions in the diseases associated with air pollution.

Drs. Goodman and Sax consult for business and government on issues relating to the EPA's air-pollution standards. Dr. Goodman also is an adjunct faculty member of the Harvard School of Public Health.

WSJ 11 May 2014

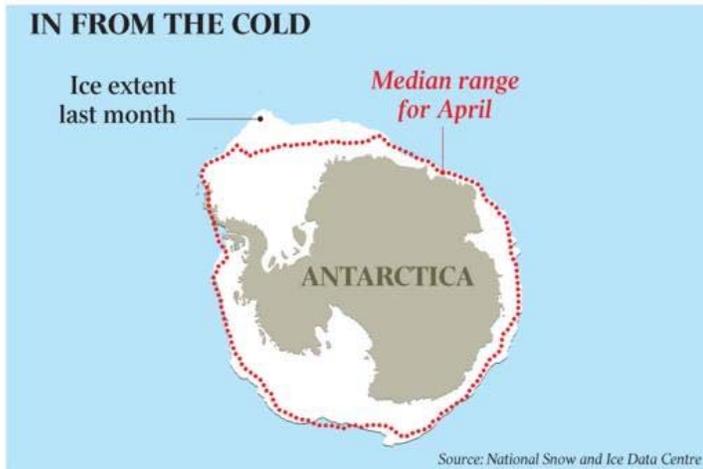
P. ANTARCTIC SEA ICE AT RECORD LEVELS

Posted on [May 12, 2014](#) by [Anthony Watts](#)

From [The Australian, 12 May 2014](#)

Graham Lloyd

Antarctic sea ice has expanded to record levels for April, increasing by more than 110,000sq km a day last month to nine million square kilometres.



The National Snow and Ice Data Centre said the rapid expansion had continued into May and the seasonal cover was now bigger than the record “by a significant margin”.

“This exceeds the past record for the satellite era by about 320,000sq km, which was set in April 2008,” the centre said.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/05/12/antarctic-sea-ice-at-record-levels/>

OR?

Q. SCIENTISTS WARN OF MELTING ICE SHEET, RISING SEA LEVEL

Melt Happening Faster Than Expected; Researchers Point to Broad Climate Change as Cause

Six rapidly melting glaciers in Antarctica are destabilizing one of the world's largest ice sheets, a process which, if unchecked, could release enough water to raise sea levels world-wide significantly in centuries to come, two groups of scientists said Monday.

On the basis of decades of satellite measurements and aircraft observations, researchers at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Jet Propulsion Laboratory and the University of California at Irvine calculated that the glaciers' retreat may have already "reached the point of no return."

An ice sheet is part of a vast, continent-size ice cap—often miles thick—that is drained by flowing glaciers the way a lake is drained by streams.

By themselves, the Antarctic coastal glaciers already contribute as much to sea-level rise every year as, for example, the melting Greenland ice sheet in the Arctic. All told, melt water from the Antarctic glaciers could raise sea level by four feet, the researchers said at a news conference held by NASA. Their findings have been accepted for publication in *Geophysical Research Letters*.

Env140519-5

WSJ 12 May 2014

Regards,
George