

# **ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING**

## **NEWSLETTER**

### **5 JAN. 2015**

**This week's edition includes:**

If you need older URLs contact George at [ghh@att.net](mailto:ghh@att.net).

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

**George Holliday**

This week's edition includes:

#### **ENVIRONMENT: A. WATCH OUT FOR THAT PUDDLE, SOON IT COULD BE FEDERALLY REGULATED - THE EPA WANTS TO REDEFINE 'THE WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES' TO MEAN VIRTUALLY ANY WET SPOT IN THE COUNTRY.**

Earlier this year the Environmental Protection Agency and Army Corps of Engineers proposed a [rule](#) redefining the “waters of the United States” that are subject to regulation under the Clean Water Act. The two agencies recently finished collecting public comments on their draft rule and are deciding how to proceed. Their best course is to abandon the rule or anything like it. Here’s why:

EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy [wrote](#) in Huffington Post in March that the draft rule would clarify the meaning of the relevant terms in the law without expanding federal jurisdiction and promised it would “save us time, keep money in our pockets, cut red tape, [and] give certainty to business.” None of this is true.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/m-reed-hopper-and-todd-f-gaziano-watch-out-for-that-puddle-soon-it-could-be-federally-regulated-1417990935>

Roger Zygmunt

#### **B. STUDY TIES OUTSIZE METHANE EMISSIONS TO SOME OILFIELD EQUIPMENT**

Posted on **December 9, 2014 at 12:01 am** by [Jennifer A. Dlouhy](#) in [Politics/Policy](#)

WASHINGTON — As federal regulators mull new mandates to curb methane leaks from the oil sector, new research suggests two major sources are techniques to dislodge fluid from wells and the pneumatic devices used to control valves at the sites.

The research from the University of Texas at Austin, with support from the Environmental Defense Fund and 10 natural gas companies, reveals that a large portion of methane emissions from oil and gas production can be traced to small subset of outlier wells and equipment.

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2014/12/09/study-ties-outsize-methane-emissions-to-some-oilfield-equipment/>

Roger Zygmunt

### **C. FEDS DELAY DECISION ON METHANE MANDATES**

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency is waiting to make a decision on whether — and how — to boost regulation of methane emissions from the oil and gas sector until the new year.

The agency had been working under a Dec. 21 deadline under the Obama administration's methane strategy, which tasked the agency with deciding how best to reduce methane pollution from the sector this fall.

But an EPA official speaking on background said the agency was delaying the announcement until after the holidays.

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2014/12/18/feds-delay-decision-on-methane-mandates/>

Roger Zygmunt

### **D. NATURAL WEATHER PATTERNS, NOT MAN-MADE GLOBAL WARMING, ARE CAUSING THE HISTORIC DROUGHT PARCHING CALIFORNIA, SAYS A STUDY OUT MONDAY FROM FEDERAL SCIENTISTS.**

"It's important to note that California's drought, while extreme, is not an uncommon occurrence for the state," said Richard Seager, the report's lead author and professor with Columbia University's Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory. The report was sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The report did not appear in a peer-reviewed journal but was reviewed by other NOAA scientists.

"In fact, multiyear droughts appear regularly in the state's climate record, and it's a safe bet that a similar event will happen again," he said."

Note that several of the so called scientists who advocate the climate change mantra have rejected the NOAA report. One of those is Dr Mann who developed the now debunked hockey stick based on cherry picking tree rings and mixing 2 different types of data sets to claim a recent dramatic rise in temperature.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/08/21/ipcc-throws-manns-hockey-stick-under-the-bus/>

See below:

"The authors of the new report would really have us believe that is merely a coincidence and has nothing to do with the impact of human-caused climate change?" Penn State meteorologist Michael Mann wrote Monday in *The Huffington Post*. "Frankly, I don't find that even remotely plausible."

"Mann said the NOAA report focuses primarily on the lack of precipitation, not the unusually high temperatures measured in the oceans as well as across California."

"This study completely fails to consider what climate change is doing to water in California," wrote Kevin Trenberth, head of climate analysis at the National Center for Atmospheric Research. He said the work "completely misses" how hotter air increases drying by evaporating more of it from the ground. "

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/weather/2014/12/08/california-drought-cause-noaa/20095869/>

Don Shaw

## **E. EPA APPROVES MAGELLAN'S CORPUS CHRISTI SPLITTER PROJECT**

HOUSTON, Dec. 12

12/12/2014

[By OGJ editors](#)

The US [Environmental Protection Agency](#) has issued a final [greenhouse gas](#) prevention of significant deterioration construction permit to Magellan Processing LP, a wholly owned subsidiary of [Magellan Midstream Partners LP](#), for a \$400 million condensate splitter project to be located at the company's existing bulk petroleum storage terminal in Corpus Christi, Tex. The permit allows Magellan to build, in two phases, a 100,000-b/d splitting plant consisting of two 50,000-b/d trains that will process hydrocarbon condensate material to obtain propoare, butanes, light naphtha, heavy naphtha, kerosene, [distillate](#), and resid, EPA said.

Each 50,000-b/d train will include a natural gas-fired hot oil heater, a natural gas-fired fractionators-heater, storage tanks, and other associated equipment, which will require a total estimated capital cost of about \$400-450 million, EPA said.

While the approval covers an entire 100,000-b/d proposed plant, Magellan currently intends to proceed with only Phase 1 of the project, which includes the first 50,000-b/d train in accordance with plans the company announced earlier this year ([OGJ Online, Apr. 1, 2014](#)).

<http://www.ogj.com/articles/2014/12/epa-approves-magellan-s-corpus-christi-splitter-project.html>

Roger Zygmunt

## **F. EPA ANNOUNCES 2014 ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT RESULTS**

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) today released its annual enforcement and compliance results reflecting a focus on large cases driving industry compliance and that have a high impact on protecting public health and the environment.

“By taking on large, high impact enforcement cases, EPA is helping to level the playing field for companies that play by the rules, while maximizing our ability to protect the communities we serve across the country,” said Cynthia Giles, Assistant Administrator for EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. “Despite challenges posed by budget cuts and a government shutdown, we secured major settlements in key industry sectors and brought criminal violators to justice. This work resulted in critical investments in advanced technologies and innovative approaches to reduce pollution and improve compliance.”

In fiscal year 2014, EPA enforcement actions required companies to invest more than \$9.7 billion in actions and equipment to control pollution and clean up contaminated sites. EPA's cases resulted in \$163 million in combined federal administrative, civil judicial penalties, and criminal fines. Other results include:

- Reductions of an estimated 141 million pounds of air pollutants, including 6.7 million pounds of air toxics.
- Reductions of approximately 337 million pounds of water pollutants.
- Clean up of an estimated 856 million cubic yards of contaminated water/aquifers.

EPA pursues high impact cases that drive compliance across industries:

Roger Zygmunt

## **COMMENTS:**

### **A. THE WEEK THAT WAS: 2014-12-27 (DEC. 27, 2014)**

There is not presentation this week.

### **B. DESPITE POSITED 'THREATS OF EXTINCTIONS CAUSED BY GLOBAL WARMING', 221 NEW SPECIES DESCRIBED BY THE CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES IN 2014**

One recent article claimed that: Humans are turning the Earth into a 'lonely and very dangerous planet', ecologist warns – but the bottom line is that the more we look, the more we find no evidence of this being related to global warming. This goes hand in hand with what we reported back in March:...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/12/29/despite-posed-threats-of-extinctions-caused-by-global-warming-221-new-species-described-by-the-california-academy-of-sciences-in-2014/>

### **C. THREE SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE OF NASA'S ORBITING CARBON OBSERVATORY**

Guest essay by Ronald D Voisin A Cynical Engineer: There are three scenarios for the future of NASA's Orbiting Carbon Observatory: 1) NASA will continue to report transparent scientific results that will quickly and stunningly turn CAGW upside down. We will all realize that global CO2 emissions are not at all as taught, preached or...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/12/29/three-scenarios-for-the-future-of-nasas-orbiting-carbon-observatory/>

### **D. FUEL PRICES GOING UP AS GREENHOUSE REGULATIONS HIT GAS, DIESEL FUELS**

By Josh Richman San Jose Mercury News 12/29/14 07:18 PM After months of seeing gas prices sink ever lower, Californians will ring in 2015 by paying more at the pump as a result of the state's landmark greenhouse-gas emissions law. But how much more we'll pay, and whether it's worth it, remains bitterly debated among...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/12/30/fuel-prices-going-up-as-greenhouse-regulations-hit-gas-diesel-fuels/>

## **E. COLD LOGIC ON CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY**

Posted on December 26, 2014 | 553 comments

by **Judith Curry**

*Politically correct climate change orthodoxy has completely destroyed our ability to think rationally about the environment.* – **Richard Tol**

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/12/29/2014-year-of-futility-in-the-fight-against-climate-change/>  
<http://judithcurry.com/2014/12/26/cold-logic-on-climate-change-policy/#more-17462>

## **F BYE BYE LIMA – ROLL ON PARIS**

[Paul Homewood](#) / [2 hours ago](#) [December 30, 2014](#)

By Paul Homewood

h/t Joe Public

	<b>United Nations</b>	<b>FCCC/CP/2014/INF.2</b>
	Framework Convention on Climate Change	Distr.: General 12 December 2014
English/French/Spanish only		

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**Conference of the Parties**  
Twentieth session  
Lima, 1–12 December 2014

**List of participants**

The attached list of participants attending the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties and the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, as well as the forty-first sessions of the subsidiary bodies, has been prepared on the basis of information received by the secretariat as at Wednesday, 10 December 2014.

<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2014/cop20/eng/inf02.pdf>

What do the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, World Association of Girl Guides, the Solar Energy Industries Association, the Maryknoll Sisters of Dominic, Women in Europe for a Common Future and the University of East Anglia have in common? They've all just come back from a beano in Peru!

Along, that is, with 1342 other organisations.

<b>Participation statistics</b>		
	<i>States/organizations</i>	<i>Participants</i>
Parties	186	6 291
Observer States	2	5
<b>Total Parties + observer States</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>6 296</b>
United Nations Secretariat units and bodies	30	245
Specialized agencies and related organizations	19	197
Intergovernmental organizations	53	439
Non-governmental organizations	624	3 104
<b>Total observer organizations</b>	<b>726</b>	<b>3 985</b>
Media	434	904
<b>Total participation</b>		<b>11 185</b>

The UK Government sent 36 delegates, while British universities managed 32 more. Even the Buddhists managed to send 10, including their Weather Risk Specialist, Mr Ming Peng. Greenpeace, WWF, Christian Aid, FOE and Oxfam together despatched 148 people. Has nobody told them about duplication of effort? Are those who donate to such charities really happy to see their money lavished on nonsense like this?

Even the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (!) thought it worth sending 7 delegates. I thought they were not bothered about earthly affairs!

The list goes on. (Well I expect you guessed that already!).

Wait for it – the Bianca Jagger Human Rights Foundation sent their Chair, yes, Bianca, along with her research assistant.

As well as sending journalists, the BBC also sent 2 staff from [BBC Media Action](#), described as the *BBC's international development charity*. (More on them later).

At a conservative estimate of £5000 per head, the cost of participating must have been in the region of £50 million. Heaven knows what the carbon footprint was.

Well, I suppose it's better than working. See you all in Paris next year!

## **H. ANOTHER YEAR OF NOT LIVING DANGEROUSLY IN SPIRE OF 'GLOBAL WARMING'**

[Anthony Watts / 8 hours ago December 30, 2014](#)

While at AGU14 they were still pushing [the failed film Years of Living Dangerously](#), weather disasters supposedly exacerbated by global warming fail to materialize for the second straight year.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/12/30/another-year-of-not-living-dangerously-in-spite-of-global-warming/>

## **I. UNDERSTANDING ADJUSTMENTS TO TEMPERATURE DATA**

Posted on July 7, 2014 | [2,044 Comments](#)

By Zeke Hausfather

There has been much discussion of temperature adjustment of late in both climate blogs and in the media, but not much background on what specific adjustments are being made, why they are being made, and what effects they have. Adjustments have a big effect on temperature trends in the U.S., and a modest effect on global land trends. The large contribution of adjustments to century-scale U.S. temperature trends lends itself to an unfortunate narrative that “government bureaucrats are cooking the books”.

<http://judithcurry.com/2014/07/07/understanding-adjustments-to-temperature-data/>

Judith Curry

## **J. SPINNING THE ‘WARMEST YEAR’**

Pick one:

- a) Warming since 1950 is predominantly (more than 50%) caused by humans.
- b) Warming since 1950 is predominantly caused by natural processes.

When faced with a choice between a) and b), I respond: ‘I can’t choose, since i think the most likely split between natural and anthropogenic causes to recent global warming is about 50-50’. Gavin thinks I’m ‘making things up’, so I promised yet another post on this topic.

<http://judithcurry.com/?s=Overconfidence+in+IPCC%27s+detection+and+attribution.+Part>

Judith Curry

## **K. HAS NOAA ONCE AGAIN TRIED TO ADJUST DATA TO MATCH CLIMATE MODELS?**

Guest Post by Bob Tisdale The topic of discussion is their new sea surface temperature dataset, ERSST.v4. Based on a breakpoint analysis recently promoted by RealClimate, NOAA appears to have reduced the early 20th Century warming rate to agree with the climate models used by the IPCC. PRELIMINARY NOTES NOAA introduced its new and improved...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/01/01/has-noaa-once-again-tried-to-adjust-data-to-match-climate-models/>

## **L. NEW LAW MEANS PENNSYLVANIA CO2 REGULATIONS WILL REQUIRE LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL**

Pennsylvania law now requires state legislature approval of any state-developed carbon-dioxide reduction plan before it is submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under its proposed Clean Power Plan rule

<http://news.heartland.org/newspaper-article/2014/12/24/new-law-means-pennsylvania-co2-regulations-will-require-legislative-app>

## **M. FOR THOSE WHO ARE "DATA WONKS", HERE IS THE BEST COLLECTION OF TEMPERATURE/CLIMATE DATA THAT I HAVE SEEN ALL AT ONE URL.**

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/reference-pages/global-weather-climate/global-temperature/>

Don Shaw

Regards  
George