

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY DIVISION

NEWSLETTER

28 SEPT. 2015

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 unidentified EED Review Committee alone, which represents the positions of the Environmental and Energy Division (EED) and ASME.

This week's edition includes a discussion of a portion of the EED Executive meeting:

A. ENVIRONMENT 1. SALVAGING A LESSON FROM THE ANIMAS RIVER SPILL

The EPA employees at fault won't face criminal charges. Neither should companies that make similar mistakes.

By Bill Wehrum

Sept. 9, 2015 7:33 p.m. ET

The Animas River disaster in Colorado is looking worse and worse for the Environmental Protection Agency. On Wednesday, EPA officials faced grilling from a congressional [committee](#) for the agency's Aug. 5 spill of three million gallons of toxic wastewater into a tributary of the Animas during the cleanup of an abandoned mine near Silverton, Colo. On Aug. 24, the agency released the [findings](#) of an internal investigation that found its staff had failed to accurately gauge the water pressure within the mine, thus increasing the chances for a "blowout" like the one that occurred.

All this came after reports that the EPA had known for more than a year that cleaning up the mine was highly risky. As Rep. Lamar Smith (R., Texas), chairman of the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology, asked in Wednesday's hearing: "Why did the EPA ignore these obvious warnings?" Such revelations have intensified criticism of the EPA's handling of the spill. High-profile politicians, including former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, have even called for criminal charges against the agency and the employees at fault. Yet federal law protects them from any such action. America will have to settle for EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy's statement that she is "absolutely, deeply sorry this ever happened."

As a former EPA official, I believe the agency and the individuals responsible shouldn't be prosecuted for the accident. But I also believe this episode brings needed attention to a serious problem with how the EPA conducts business: The agency often criminalizes actions that are nothing more than accidents, many far less damaging to the environment than the Animas River disaster. Such treatment is unjust. There are many examples. Consider last year's Elk River chemical spill. In January 2014, a Freedom Industries Inc. facility in Charleston, W. Va., accidentally spilled roughly 7,500 gallons of toxic chemicals into the local waterway. The EPA's recent discharge of toxic water in Colorado was many times larger. Yet the agency went after the company with everything it had.

The EPA quickly dispatched an agent from its Criminal Investigation Division to West Virginia. Working with the FBI and a local U.S. attorney, the EPA built a case that resulted in criminal indictments for Freedom Industries and six of its employees. All pleaded guilty in connection with negligent discharge under the Clean Water Act and currently await sentencing, which could involve varying prison sentences.

Companies and employees who willfully commit a crime should be prosecuted. But criminal liability for negligence isn't appropriate because, by definition, a negligent act isn't done with intent. That doesn't mean that negligent acts should go unpunished. There is ample authority for fines and other appropriate relief to be imposed under civil law. Criminal liability should be reserved for those who intend to break the law.

Yet under the Clean Water Act and numerous other laws enforced by the EPA, accidents like the Elk River chemical spill are criminally punishable. In that sense many environmental laws and regulations with criminal penalties suffer from a problem common in the rest of criminal code—a lack of intent requirement.

There is no indication that any of Freedom Industries' employees intended to cause the spill. The company declared bankruptcy within days of the accident, 11 months before the federal government announced its criminal prosecution. (One employee is being criminally prosecuted for bankruptcy fraud, which isn't related to the spill.) The company also suffered from civil lawsuits from area residents, the costs associated with the post-spill cleanup, and the inevitable public-relations disaster that accompanies such debacles.

In other words, the criminal charges related to the spill added insult to an already debilitating injury. They satisfied calls for vengeance but failed to serve the cause of justice.

Criminal prosecutions aren't restricted to major, headline-grabbing disasters. Take the 1999 prosecution of Edward Hanousek. He oversaw a quarrying project for Pacific & Arctic Railway and Navigation Company in Alaska where a backhoe accidentally struck a pipeline, sending up to 1,500 gallons of oil gushing into nearby Skagway River. Though Hanousek was off-duty and wasn't operating the backhoe, he was criminally charged and sentenced to six months in prison because his contract said he was responsible for safety at the site.

There is also the 2011 prosecution of Lawrence Lewis. Upon finding sewage flooding a military retirement home in the Washington, D.C., metro area, he diverted the flow into a storm drain that—unknown to him—discharged into the Potomac River. He was charged and pleaded guilty to a crime under the Clean Water Act.

The list goes on. The lesson is clear: People can have their lives ruined for something that, in Gina McCarthy's words, they are "absolutely, deeply sorry" for and never meant to do.

The EPA accidentally released three million gallons of toxic water into one of America's most scenic river systems. Thanks to federal law, the employees at fault will never face criminal prosecution or jail time for their mistake—nor should they. But neither should the companies and individuals who make similar mistakes during their work. What's just for the EPA surely is just for those it regulates.

2. GLOBAL TEMPERATURE REPORT: AUGUST 2015

[Anthony Watts / 2 hours ago September 11, 2015](#)

In the tropics, warmest August in the satellite temperature record

Global climate trend since Nov. 16, 1978: +0.11 C per decade

August temperatures (preliminary)

Global composite temp.: +0.28 C (about 0.50 degrees Fahrenheit) above 30-year average for August.

Northern Hemisphere: +0.25 C (about 0.45 degrees Fahrenheit) above 30-year average for August.

Southern Hemisphere: +0.31 C (about 0.56 degrees Fahrenheit) above 30-year average for August.

Tropics: +0.52 C (about 0.94 degrees Fahrenheit) above 30-year average for August.

July temperatures (revised):

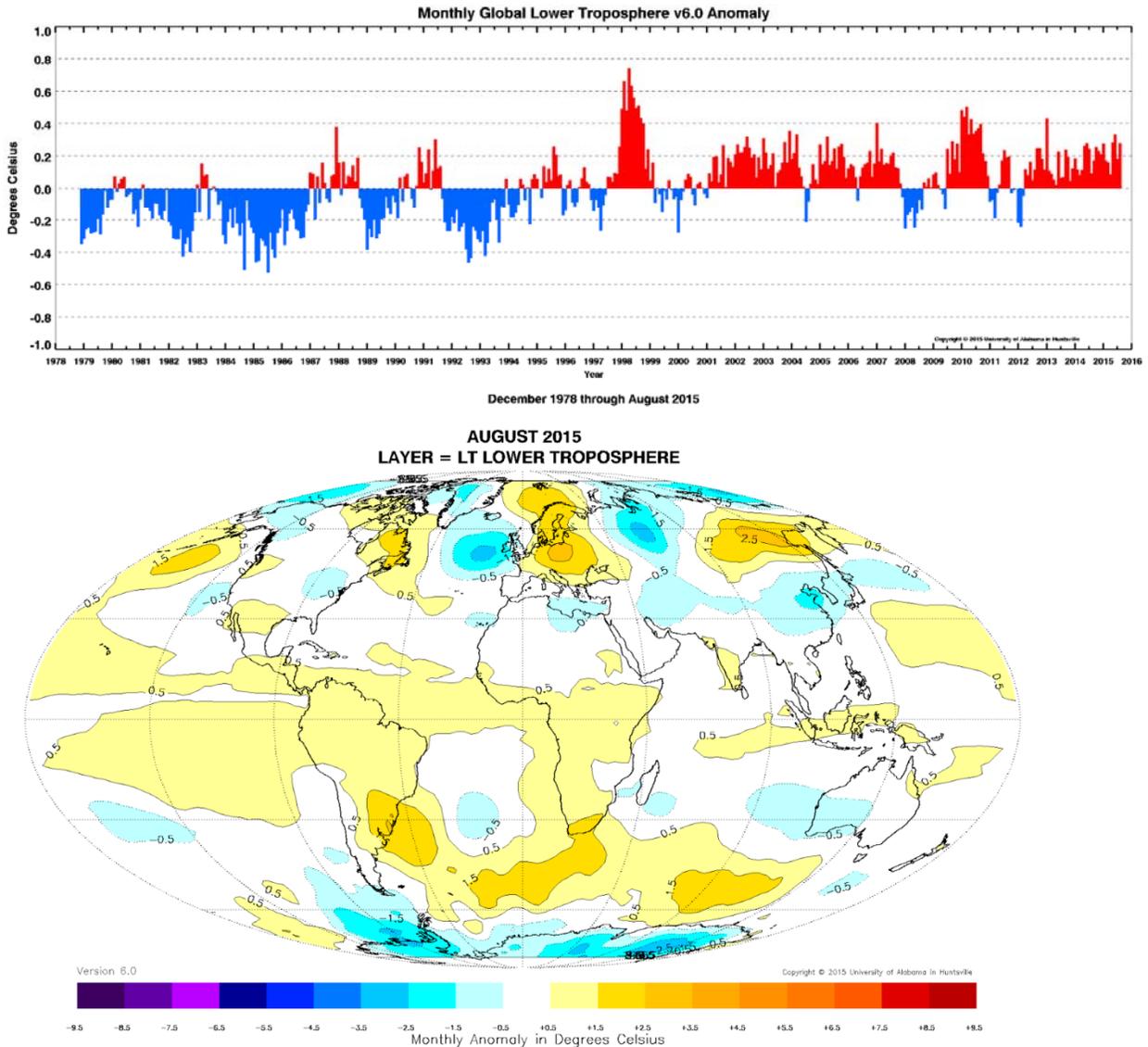
Global Composite: +0.18 C above 30-year average

Northern Hemisphere: +0.33 C above 30-year average

Southern Hemisphere: +0.03 C below 30-year average

Tropics: +0.48 C above 30-year average

(All temperature anomalies are based on a 30-year average (1981-2010) for the month reported.)



Broken lines outline areas that were cooler than seasonal norms; solid lines outline areas that were warmer than seasonal norms. Each contour represents one degree Celsius, starting at -0.5 and $+0.5$ degrees C.

Notes on data released Sept. 8, 2015:

Driven by a growing El Niño Pacific Ocean warming event, temperatures around the globe continued to rise through August, setting a new August record in the tropics for the satellite record, said Dr. John Christy, director of the Earth System Science Center at The University of Alabama in Huntsville.

Temperatures in the tropics averaged 0.52 C (about 0.94° F) warmer than seasonal norms in August, surpassing the previous record of $+0.46$ C set in August 1998.

Globally it was the third warmest August in the satellite record, trailing only August 1998 and August 2010. It was also the third warmest August in the Southern Hemisphere, behind August 1998 and August 2002. Compared to global temperature anomalies from all months, August 2015 tied as the 32nd warmest month since the satellite record began in December 1978. It was tied with five other months, all since October 2005. In the tropics, August 2015 tied with September 2009 as the 17th warmest month, when

compared to seasonal norms for all months.

Compared to seasonal norms, the warmest average temperature anomaly on Earth in August was in eastern Russia, near the town of Aldan. The August temperature there averaged 3.01 C (about 5.42 degrees F) warmer than seasonal norms. Compared to seasonal norms, the coolest average temperature on Earth in August was in East Antarctica Concordia Station, where the average August 2015 temperature was 3.35 C (about 6.03 degrees F) cooler than normal.

The complete version 6 beta lower troposphere dataset is available here:

http://vortex.nsstc.uah.edu/data/msu/v6.0beta/tlt/uahncdc_lt_6.0beta3

Archived color maps of local temperature anomalies are available on-line at:

<http://nsstc.uah.edu/climate/>

As part of an ongoing joint project between UAHuntsville, NOAA and NASA, Christy and Dr. Roy Spencer, an ESSC principal scientist, use data gathered by advanced microwave sounding units on NOAA and NASA satellites to get accurate temperature readings for almost all regions of the Earth. This includes remote desert, ocean and rain forest areas where reliable climate data are not otherwise available. The satellite-based instruments measure the temperature of the atmosphere from the surface up to an altitude of about eight kilometers above sea level. Once the monthly temperature data is collected and processed, it is placed in a "public" computer file for immediate access by atmospheric scientists in the U.S. and abroad.

Neither Christy nor Spencer receives any research support or funding from oil, coal or industrial companies or organizations, or from any private or special interest groups. All of their climate research funding comes from federal and state grants or contracts.

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/09/11/global-temperature-report-august-2015/>

3. FORECAST: APPROXIMATELY 95% CHANCE THAT EL NIÑO WILL CONTINUE THROUGH NORTHERN HEMISPHERE WINTER 2015-16

EL NIÑO/SOUTHERN OSCILLATION (ENSO) DIAGNOSTIC DISCUSSION issued by CLIMATE PREDICTION CENTER/NCEP/NWS and the International Research Institute for Climate and Society 10 September 2015 ENSO Alert System Status: El Niño Advisory Synopsis: There is an approximately 95% chance that El Niño will continue through Northern Hemisphere winter 2015-16, gradually weakening through spring 2016. During August, sea...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/09/10/forecast-approximately-95-chance-that-el-nino-will-continue-through-northern-hemisphere-winter-2015-16/>

4. STUDY REVERSES CLIMATE SCIENCE POSITION THAT THE 'SOUTHERN OCEAN CARBON DIOXIDE SINK WAS WEAKENING'

From the AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION and the department of "cold water increases CO2 solubility" comes this bit of good news, which reverses previous climate science assertions. Southern Ocean removing carbon dioxide from atmosphere more efficiently Scientists compile densest carbon data set in Antarctic waters WASHINGTON, D.C. – Since 2002, the Southern Ocean has been removing...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/09/10/study-reverses-climate-science-position-that-the-southern-ocean-carbon-dioxide-sink-was-weakening/>

5. QUOTE OF THE WEEK: CLIMATE AWARENESS ONE OF THE 'GREATEST HUMAN ACHIEVEMENTS'

Argh. You often wonder how weapons grade hubris can be come to be. For example, we shake our head at the hubris of people like Michael Mann and James Hansen, whom I'm convinced, are simply victims of noble cause corruption in their quest to "save the planet". Well it seems NPR reporter Adam Frank has...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/09/10/quote-of-the-week-22/>

COMMENTS

A. THE WEEK THAT WAS: 2015-00-19 (SEPT. 19, 2015)

BY KEN HAAPALA, PRESIDENT, SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY PROJECT (SEPP)

RICO: For years, some advocates of the position that human emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming have also falsely claimed that the science is settled. Included in these claims are highly questionable claims that 97% of the scientists concur with this view. Now, twenty climate scientists have written to the President and the US Attorney General requesting legal prosecution of those who publically disagree with their views. The legal actions they are proposing fall under **Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act**, known as RICO. The act was designed to combat organized crime and makes a person who instructs criminal action taken by others guilty of the crime. In short, the individuals who wrote the letter are stating that anyone who does not agree with their views is guilty of a crime – racketeering. This action is a clear display of the illogical thinking by some of those in the largely, publically financed Climate Establishment whose vanity exceeds the rigor of their work. Rather than producing compelling physical evidence that human emissions of CO2 are causing dangerous global warming, they will compel others to publically think as they do by legal action. In effect, they are undermining their own position and their action illustrates that simply because some people trained as scientists believe X that does not make belief in X scientific. The evidence these individuals cite demonstrates their lack of critical thinking. For example, they cite the Merchants of Doubt, a book with extensive accusations against four distinguished scientists, but little documented evidence. The authors present no documented evidence that those accused took money from tobacco companies in exchange for suppressing evidence that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer. This lack of evidence by the authors, Oreskes and Conway, who claim to be historians of science, can be easily seen in other imaginative claims, such as everyone was aware of the economic weakness of the Soviet Union long before it fell. The authors fail to note a major controversy in US economics profession during the 60s, 70s, and 80s was the economic strength of the Soviet Union. Nobel Laureate Paul Samuelson, author of the highly influential textbook, Economics, later joined by William Nordhaus, argued that the military and space accomplishments of the Soviet Union were compelling evidence that the Soviet economy was comparable to that of the United States, and an example of the success of a centrally planned economy. Others disagreed, claiming that the Soviet military was strong, but the economy was weak. To maintain a strong military, the Soviet Union required far greater government spending in relation to the gross national product than the US. President Reagan accepted the second position, and sought to build up the US military to confront the economic weakness of the Soviet Union, which would try to match it. The issue was not the military strength, but the economic strength to maintain a strong military. In Merchants of Doubt, Oreskes and Conway distort the issue, falsely claiming that three of the four scientists accused in the book exaggerated the military strength of the Soviet Union, which was not the issue at all. A simple check of the economics textbooks of the period show Oreskes and Conway misrepresent the issue. The absurdity of the **RICO** accusations by the 20 individuals with scientific training (the 20) is increased by their citing political support by Sheldon Whitehouse, a

senator from Rhode Island. Rhode Island and the Providence Plantations were founded by Roger Williams, who left England for the Massachusetts Bay Colony to seek religious freedom. Massachusetts, the “American Experiment” was considered to be founded on the idea of religious freedom. However, Williams was tried for his independent thinking in Salem, Massachusetts, and was banished. Apparently, Senator Whitehouse wishes to continue the concept of “freedom of thought for me, but not for thee.” http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/colonial/jb_colonial_williams_1.html

Last week, TWTW quoted Freeman Dyson stating global climate models used by the Climate Establishment are full of “fudge factors” that adjust to whatever data is feed into them. As the data changes, the fudge factors change, but that does not give the models predictive power, skill. Dyson has other significant criticisms of the models and of the Climate Establishment. Are “the 20” proposing prosecuting this eminent, 91 year-old theoretical physicist for racketeering because he dares to think differently than they do? See links under Suppressing Scientific Inquiry – The Witch Hunt and Suppressing Scientific Inquiry – The Witch Hunt – Push-Back.

The Sun: Increasingly we are seeing more papers asserting that the sun is a major factor in climate change. Yet, in its Summaries for Policy Makers, the government-funded, UN, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) largely dismisses it as an important influence on recent climate global warming/climate change. The total energy emitted by the sun drives the climate systems in the solar system, including the earth. Yet, according to the IPCC, and the group of 20 (above) minor changes in total energy emitted, including solar wind and magnetism are far less important in determining changing climate those human additions of CO2 into the atmosphere. See links under Science: Is the Sun Rising? and 100+ Papers – Sun Drives Climate

EPA Endangerment Finding: With many new publications, the supposed scientific basis of the EPA’s finding that human greenhouse gas emissions, particularly CO2, endanger human health and welfare continues to implode. Yet, some US climate “experts” are trying to suppress those who rely on empirical research and solid data. Since 1993, US has spent over \$40 billion on what government bureaucracies classify as “climate science”, and over \$165 Billion on other climate activities including subsidies for solar and wind - - more than on the Apollo program. **[SEPP has been unable to find a solid accounting produced by government agencies on expenditures in fiscal year 2014 and fiscal year 2015, which ends September 30.]** The one thing being endangered is this flow of funds. In FY 2013, it was 78% greater than National Institutes of Health reported as expenditures on all categories of clinical research on known threats to human health. No wonder, “the 20” are trying to suppress those who think independently. See “Climate Fears and Finance”

http://www.sepp.org/key_issues/ClimateFearsandFinance6-6.pdf

Pope’s Visit: Starting Tuesday, the Pope is visiting Washington, New York City, and Philadelphia. Except for linking to articles discussing the Pope’s views on western economic systems, TWTW has not discussed them. These systems can be termed as based on capitalism, private enterprise, or free enterprise. In the last, the meaning of free is from undue government control. Many of those who strongly oppose western economic systems focus on the writings of Adam Smith, particularly The Wealth of Nations (1776). They correctly state that this book is largely devoid of human traits, especially of compassion. Unfortunately, these critics and too many exuberant followers of Smith ignore his prior work, The Theory of Moral Sentiments (1759), which provides the ethical and philosophical foundations to Smith’s later work. In it, Smith discusses some important human characteristics such as sympathy, propriety, virtues, unsocial passions, etc. Understanding Smith’s economic work requires understanding The Theory of Moral Sentiments. See links under Expanding the Orthodoxy – The Pope – Loyal

Opposition and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Theory_of_Moral_Sentiments

Delay in Regulations: During a hearing before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on a different subject, Environmental Protection Agency administrator Gina McCarthy was unable to explain why the EPA has failed to publish in the Federal Register its rules under the so-called Clean Power Plan (CCP). Delay in publishing rules has become part of the operating procedures of the Administration and the EPA. Announcing forthcoming rules prevents utilities from beginning the planning and construction of facilities that may run afoul of the rules (a process that may take six to eight years). Not publishing the announced rules prevents the utilities and states affected from suing the EPA and the Administration, because the courts will dismiss such litigation as “**not ripe**”, premature until the final rules are published. During the delay, the EPA and the Administration can boost what it is doing to “fight” climate change without incurring the need to defend their actions. See Article # 1 and links under The Administration’s Plan – Push-Back

Clinging to Fat Tails: Mr. Mann of hockey-stick repute has an op-ed in the Huff Post emphasizing the “fat tail” of IPCC climate change risk, a risk that is largely imaginary. According to Mr. Mann, the “fat tails” indicate a “greater likelihood of warming that is well in excess of the average amount of warming predicted by climate models.” Mr. Mann ignores that fact that the climate models, in general, greatly over-estimate current warming of the atmosphere, where the greenhouse effect takes place. Without “fat tails” the flow of funds to the alarmists in the Climate Establishment would be jeopardized. Further, in discussing “existential threats” Mr. Mann ignores the threat of global cooling. Given the history of the earth over the past 2.5 million years, and its CO2 concentrations, cooling is a greater threat to humanity than warming. See link under Oh Mann.

California Snowpack: The bountiful farms of the southern Central Valley of California depend upon moisture from the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Whether the moisture falls as snow or rain is not as important as the extensive reservoir system that is designed to capture it. The current drought in California is disturbing; but, historically, not unprecedented. The headlines based on a letter published in Nature claimed the Sierra Nevada snowpack is at a 500 year low. The headline writers did not bother reading the graphs accompanying the letter or the text. The graph was based on instrument data dating to 1930, with measurements taken April 1. Prior data are based on proxy data from tree rings. The error range for the instrument data shows that the current low point was approximated in 1977. In the proxy data, there are about 11 years when the value was equaled or below the current value. See links under Changing Cryosphere.

Wildfire Risk: Much is being made of wildfires occurring in the West, particularly in California. (Note the change in language from forest fires.). California Governor Brown blames these on global warming caused by CO2 emissions. He ignores the change in Federal and state government policies of suppressing fires by removing underbrush and creating fire breaks. This change in policy became intense after a controlled burn went out of control in Yellowstone in 1988. See Article # 3.

A Tribute: On his web site, Roy Spencer gives a tribute to S Fred Singer, founder of the Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP) and the Non-governmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC). The first director of the National Weather Satellite Service, Singer was a pioneer on remote sensing by satellites. Spencer and his colleagues at the National Space Science & Technology Center at University of Alabama in Huntsville also deserve a tribute for demonstrating how government-financed research should be conducted in-spite-of political whims and politicalized views of editors of once distinguished journals in science. See link under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Number of the Week: 23. Writing on his web site, No Tricks Zone, Pierre Gosselin states that thus far this year he has counted 23 different papers that challenge the IPCC's claim that the solar influence on the earth's climate is minor. Of course, such papers undermine the credibility of the IPCC's claim that human emissions of CO2 dominate the earth's climate. Also, they further weaken the EPA's claim that CO2 emissions endanger public health and welfare. See links under Commentary: Is the Sun Rising?

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<http://www.sepp.org/twtwfiles/2015/TWTW%209-19-15.pdf>

B CLAIM: CLIMATE CHANGE MIGHT CAUSE ROBOTS TO TAKE OVER

Guest essay by Eric Worrall

Start with interesting scientific paper which explores the dynamics of mass extinction, and weave it into a climate horror story full of scary robots, climate catastrophe and the end of mankind. According to the Washington Post; the strange link between global climate change and the rise of the robots We've...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/09/10/claim-climate-change-might-cause-robots-to-take-over/>

C. TORNADO OF 5 MILLION DEGREE PLASMA ON THE SUN IS BIGGER THAN THE EARTH

NASA's Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO) watched the Sun's magnetic forces twist and turn enormous plumes of superheated plasma in a tornado that is larger than the Earth. The particles observed by SDO – mostly partly iron – were measured at a blazing 5 million degrees. (2.8 million degrees C.) A small, but complex mass of plasma...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/09/10/tornado-of-5-million-degree-plasma-on-the-sun-is-bigger-than-the-earth/>

D. LET'S LEARN FROM MISTAKES

Filed under:

- [Climate Science](#)
- [Scientific practice](#)
- [skeptics](#)

— rasmus @ 23 August 2015

The publication '[Learning from mistakes in climate research](#)' is the result of a long-winded story with a number of surprises, At least to me.

I have decided to share this story with our readers, since it in some aspects is closely linked with RealClimate.

<http://www.realclimate.org/index.php/archives/2015/08/lets-learn-from-mistakes/#more-18658>

E. CALIFORNIA'S CLIMATE CHANGE REVOLT

Democrats reject green schemes that raise energy costs for the non-rich.

The environmental lobby has tried to turn climate change into a social justice issue even though its anticarbon policies disproportionately harm the poor. Honest Democrats are starting to admit this, as we saw in this week's stunning revolt in the California legislature.

Jerry Brown doesn't have much to show for his second turn in Sacramento, and of late he has focused his legacy attention on reducing carbon emissions. The Governor hailed California as a model of green

virtue at the Vatican this summer and had hoped to flaunt sweeping new anticarbon regulations at the U.N.'s climate-change summit in Paris this year.

But now his party has mutinied. Democrats hold near supermajorities in both legislative chambers with 52 of 80 seats in the Assembly. Yet this week 21 Democratic Assembly members representing middle- and low-income communities—including 11 blacks and Latinos—joined Republicans to kill a bill mandating a cut in state greenhouse gas emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050.

Democrats also forced Mr. Brown to scrap a measure that would have given the California Air Resources Board plenary authority to reduce statewide oil consumption in vehicles by half by 2030. Imagine the EPA without the accountability. "One of the implications probably would have been higher gas prices," noted Democratic Assemblyman Jim Cooper. "Who does it impact the most? The middle class and low-income folks."

Many Democrats demanded that the legislature get an up-or-down vote on the board's proposed regulations before they take effect. Yet the Governor and Senate liberals wouldn't abide constraints on the board's powers.

The defeat is all the more striking for the failure of appeals to green moral superiority. Liberal groups targeted Catholic Democrats with ads featuring [Pope Francis](#). Mr. Brown demonized oil companies for selling a "highly destructive" product.

The most morally destructive product in California these days is green government. Take the 33% renewable electricity mandate. Since 2011 solar energy has increased more than 10-fold while wind has nearly doubled. But during this period electricity rates have jumped 2.18 cents per kilowatt hour—four times the national average. Inland residents and energy-intensive businesses have been walloped the most.

California's cap-and-trade program has also hurt manufacturers, power plants and oil refiners, which are required to purchase permits to emit carbon. Between 2011 and 2014, California's manufacturing employment increased by 2% compared to 6% nationwide, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Cap and trade has also raised fuel costs, though its effect is hard to isolate from other environmental mandates. The Western States Petroleum Association last year projected that cap and trade would add 16 to 76 cents per gallon to the retail price of gas based on data from the Air Resources Board.

In 2006 Californians paid about 23 cents more per gallon than the national average due to higher gas taxes and the state's reformulated fuel regulations. The price premium increased to 41 cents last year and spiked to \$1.14 in May after several in-state refineries experienced problems. The average gas price in California is now \$3.22 and \$3.41 in the Los Angeles metro region (where a couple of refineries are undergoing maintenance) compared to \$2.36 nationwide.

California's low-carbon fuel standard will jack up gas prices even more. This anticarbon policy requires refiners to cut their fuel's "lifecycle" carbon emissions including transport to market by 10% by 2020.

The goal is to boost California biofuels. However, there aren't enough commercially available "advanced" biofuels to meet the targets, so fuel blenders will have to buy regulatory credits.

The chief beneficiaries of the Golden State's green government have been the well-to-do, while low- and middle-income Californians have borne most of the regulatory costs. The Bay Area and Los Angeles regions account for 80% of the state's electric car rebates compared to the San Joaquin Valley's 2%.

Liberals in Sacramento have promised to spend cap-and-trade revenues on car-sharing programs, low-emissions public transit and electric-car charging stations in low-income communities. But then they sock it to these drivers with regulations that raise gasoline prices.

Meantime, while job growth in the Bay Area is booming, unemployment remains high in the rest of the state. The unemployment rate is 3.8% in San Francisco and 2.9% in Palo Alto. It's 10.4% in Fresno, 8.8% in San Bernardino and 9.6% in the refining hub of Carson—nearly four percentage points higher than in December 2007.

After this week's defeat, Mr. Brown vowed to use regulation to end-run the legislature. "We don't have a declaration in statute, but we have absolutely the same authority," he declared. President Obama has taught him well. "We're going forward. The only thing different is my zeal has been intensified to a maximum degree." Vengeance is his, and the Governor will make hard-up Californians pay for their sins of emission.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/californias-climate-change-revolt-1442014369>

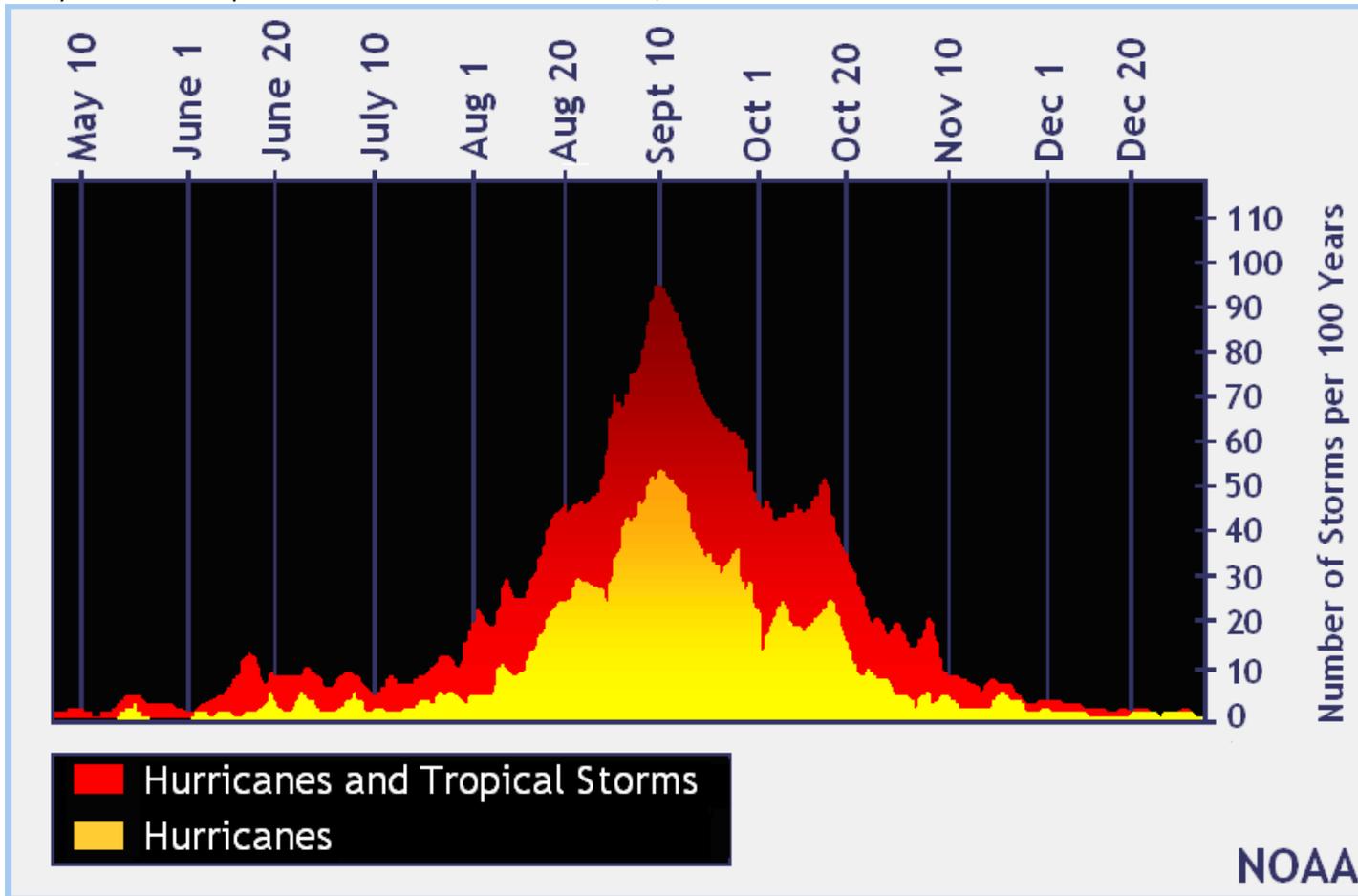
F. SEPTEMBER 11 WAS THE PEAK OF THE HURRICANE SEASON, AND GUESS WHAT...

[Guest Blogger / 1 hour ago September 12, 2015](#)

There are no tropical storm, depressions, or hurricanes anywhere on Earth.

Guest essay by Dr. Richard Keen

Today is the normal peak of the Atlantic Hurricane season,



Number of Tropical Cyclones per 100 Years (NOAA/NHC)

Source: <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/climo/images/peakofseason.gif>

So far, the 2015 Atlantic hurricane season has been a dud. For the past few days Tropical Storm Henri has churned, or at least ruffled, the waters of the central Atlantic. But a few hours ago our friends at the National Hurricane Center

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/> issued this sad news:

Remnants of HENRI ...HENRI DISSIPATES... ...THIS IS THE LAST ADVISORY...

Bye bye Henri.

Meanwhile, in the Eastern Pacific, NHC says:

Tropical cyclone activity is not expected during the next 48 hours.

In Honolulu, the Central Pacific Hurricane Center says:

No tropical cyclones are expected through Sunday evening.

But it's a big planet, so out in the seas of typhoons and Bengal cyclones, the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) chimes in:

There are no active tropical warnings in the Northwest Pacific/North Indian Ocean, Central/Eastern Pacific, or Southern Hemisphere at this time.

Today there are no storms in the Southern Hemisphere, or in all of the ocean basins of the Northern Hemisphere (barring an undetected tropical storm over the Arctic Ocean).

Putting it all together...

It's the peak of the hurricane season, and guess what...

There are no hurricanes, tropical storms, or even tropical depressions anywhere on Planet Earth.

I'm not sure how common this is, but to paraphrase Al Gore, Michio Kaku, and other experts, is this the new normal?

For posterity, here's a screen shot of the NHC front page this evening:

<http://i60.tinypic.com/vsf9me.png>

And the JTWC page:

<http://i60.tinypic.com/11qq0dc.png>

UPDATE: Dr. Philip Klotzbach agrees. In a [tweet today](#) he says:

The globe remains TC (>=35 kts) free today. The last time that September 12 was TC-free around the globe was 1977.

G. FOSSIL FUEL ECONOMIES GROWING AT A TORRID PACE IN STATES

"Robust oil and gas activity helped several states grow their economies in 2014, with the fastest growing states all heavy energy industry players, according to Commerce Department data released Wednesday. The Texas economy grew the second most among the states last year after it saw its gross domestic product increase 5.2 percent, making it one of a handful of states to outpace the U.S. economy overall. Only North Dakota was ahead of Texas last year after its GDP grew 6.3 percent. Wyoming, West Virginia and Colorado rounded out the top five.

The steep fall in the price of U.S. crude oil, which only really caught the attention of market watchers by late Oct. 2014, had yet to take a big toll on energy companies across the country. The Texas economy grew nearly 5 percent in the fourth quarter of that year, and North Dakota saw a 5.5 percent jump. Most of 2014 was very good to the oil and gas industry. Texas and North Dakota saw their mining sector, which includes the oil and gas industry in the Commerce Department data; increase GDP by 9.2 percent and 16.3 percent, respectively. For both states, mining was among their three fastest growing industries. In Colorado, GDP for the oil and gas industry grew more than 23.3 percent. In West Virginia, a state long dominated by the coal industry but which is now taking advantage of its position on the southern end of the Marcellus Shale formation, saw its mining sector grow 38.3 percent

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2015/09/02/texas-and-north-dakota-grew-at-a-torrid-pace-in-2014-before-crude-busted/#34823101=1>

Don Shaw

H. THE URGENDA RULING IN THE NETHERLANDS

Posted on [September 9, 2015](#) | [235 comments](#)

by Lukas Bergkamp

The Dutch government has decided to appeal the widely publicised “Urgenda” ruling from the district court in The Hague, ordering the Netherlands to step up its climate change actions. There are good reasons why we should hope that the court of appeals will overturn the ruling — it sets a dangerous precedent for judicial activism, is inconsistent with European law and will even undermine international climate negotiations.

<http://judithcurry.com/2015/09/09/the-urgenda-ruling-in-the-netherlands/#more-19887>

Editor’s Note. This a difficult read, but interesting.

I. ANOTHER CLIMATE CONFERENCE, ANOTHER EMPTY AGREEMENT?

Where do we stand on “climate progress?” Global coal use is rising, government support for renewable energy sources is declining, and, in violation of an agreement reached in Peru in December 2014, only 28 nations have submitted to the United Nations a schedule for, and target level of, emissions reductions. More than 190 countries had agreed to do so.

Nations yet to propose emission cuts include fast-growing countries such as Brazil, India, Indonesia, and members of the Russian Federation. Even among the countries that have offered carbon dioxide emission targets, some – including China, the world’s largest greenhouse gas emitter – have submitted only emission peaking goals. In other words, they expect their emissions to continue to grow between now and 2030 (at a minimum) by which time, their emissions are expected to peak. There is no mention in their “targets” of future reductions.

It is difficult to see how the EU block will meet its aggressive emission targets since its carbon markets have collapsed, in part due to fraud. EU countries are rapidly scaling back their renewable energy subsidies and are expanding their use of coal and/or intend to pursue fracking to increase their use of natural gas in place of nuclear power and renewables. Each of these policies is sound if a country’s goal is to reduce energy prices and thus help consumers and improve economic growth – but using more fossil fuels increases, not decreases, carbon dioxide emissions.

With all this as a backdrop, it is no wonder environmentalists and climate negotiators are pulling out their hair at the lack of progress in recent climate talks. In Bonn, Germany, international climate negotiators struggling to shape the draft text of an international climate pact to be signed in Paris in December once again kicked the can down the road.

On September 9, negotiators gave up and requested the joint chairmen of the UN meeting, Algeria’s Ahmed Djoghlaif and Daniel Reifsnyder of the United States, to cut the current text into a more manageable format before the next round talks October 19–23 in Bonn. The October Bonn meeting is the final scheduled five days of official negotiations before the much-anticipated November 30–December 11 talks in Paris.

The current draft is a mish-mash of various countries’ conflicting proposals, ideas, and rough frameworks for how to shape a proposal. It lacks concrete details. Before abandoning the latest round of negotiations in Bonn, “diplomats lamented the ‘snail’s pace’ of this week’s five-day haggle, accusing one another of rehashing well-rehearsed positions and holding up the real work of point-by-point text bartering.”

Environmentalists bemoan the lack of progress and fear any deal reached will be minimal or insufficient. In the words of Li Shuo, a Chinese Greenpeace activist, “Our concern is that we will end up with a lowest common denominator, where everybody just agrees on the least ambitious options.”

More than anything, 2015’s treaty negotiations resemble the pace and back-and-forth sniping that resulted in a hollow declaration rather than a concrete emissions reduction treaty in the Copenhagen round of negotiations in 2009.

For me, a failure in Paris would be a resounding success for climate and energy realism. From a moral perspective, putting people first – raising the more than 1 billion people worldwide still living in poverty out of penury and allowing economies to flourish, thus improving the lot of the world's other six billion people – should be governments' main concern. A strong agreement to reduce carbon dioxide emissions would undermine this goal.

-- H. Sterling Burnett

J. FRIDAY NOT SO FUNNY – EPA'S EPIC GOLD KING MINE BLUNDER ON VIDEO, COMPLETE WITH A WTF MOMENT

Readers may recall that the EPA disappeared photos of the Gold King mine disaster from their web page. Perhaps they got just a bit burnt from the public backlash to that. From YouTube, (h/t to Ryan Maue) EPA releases Gold King Mine blowout footage. Gotta love the comments from the audio such as: 'Get outta...

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/09/11/friday-not-so-funny-epas-epic-gold-king-mine-blunder-on-video-complete-with-a-wtf-moment/>

K. ARCTIC SEA ICE MELT MAY HAVE TURNED THE CORNER

We haven't spent much time looking at Arctic Sea Ice this year, partly because I've rather lost interest in it as any sort of climatic indicator. This year's melt seems similar to 2011 according to the comparison graph provided by Japan's National Institute of Polar Research.

Source: <https://ads.nipr.ac.jp/vishop/vishop-extent.html?N>

L. THE SHRINKING MENDENHALL GLACIER

Posted: Friday, January 05, 2001

By Cathy Connor and Roman Motyka

For the JUNEAU EMPIRE

Mendenhall Glacier is shrinking and scientists want to know why.

While George Washington rowed around ice floes on the Delaware River and Hans Brinker skated toward Amsterdam on the frozen canals of Holland, the Mendenhall Glacier was beginning its retreat from its furthest forward position, known as its Little Ice Age Maximum.

Between 1767 and 1909, as the world was thawing out from the Little Ice Age, the glacier's terminus retreated nearly a mile, leaving behind a terminal moraine ridge, composed of rocks, sand and silt at the southern end of River Road.

Successive recessional east-west trending moraines were deposited in places like Mendenhall River School, along Taku Boulevard, and across the Loop Road near Threadneedle and Garnet Streets. Melt water pooled behind the moraines and formed Dredge Lakes. Subdivisions, roads, campgrounds and a visitors' center now occupy sites that were covered by 500 to 1,000 feet of ice merely 100 to 200 years ago. We live in a unique community that has a glacier flowing into its own backyard!

A U.S. Geological Survey map made in 1909 shows a small pond at the edge of the glacier, south of the present Skaters Cabin. The basin that was to become Mendenhall Lake was still occupied entirely by ice, and both Duck and Jordan Creeks received a steady supply of glacier melt water.

Glacier retreat accelerated in the decades that followed, receding another one-half mile by 1931, and Mendenhall Lake was born.

While the world struggled with the Great Depression and World War II between 1931 and 1949, Mendenhall Glacier retreat was wreaking havoc on rivers and water flow in Mendenhall Valley.

A large, abandoned riverbed and delta north of Loop Road marks the old runoff channel for glacier melt water and Steep Creek. Flowing water, which for decades had emerged from the east side of the glacier, switched to the west side and now drained directly into Mendenhall River as the glacier receded into the lake basin.

By 1949, the glacier had receded another one-half mile and the terminus stretched across a one-mile-wide lake filled with icebergs. Today, after retreating another three-quarters of a mile, only the northeast corner of the terminus calves into the lake, and the erosion-resistant ridge uncovered to the west has become a popular breeding ground for gulls and arctic terns.

During the last 52 years, the glacier has lost an average of 110 million cubic meters of ice per year. This is equal to about twice the volume of Mendenhall Lake in 2000.

The excess ice melt contributes about 13 percent of the water annually discharged from Mendenhall Lake and is about 19,000 times the annual fresh water usage of the Juneau community. The glacier has retreated 2.6 km (1.6 miles) in the 20th century and its ice has thinned considerably. Its lower end ice currently loses 8 meters (26 feet) in thickness annually.

What is causing this dramatic shrinking of the glacier?

Global warming is certainly a culprit: Most alpine glaciers in the world have been retreating for some time, some completely disappearing.

Does it seem like Juneau has been getting warmer and wetter? Well, it has.

The average annual temperature at the Juneau Airport has risen nearly 3 degrees Fahrenheit (1.6 degrees Celsius) since 1943, while the average annual precipitation has increased by 6 inches (15 centimeters). But iceberg calving has also taken its toll on the Mendenhall Glacier by speeding up the recession process. Thus, climatic warming coupled with ice loss through iceberg calving are the reasons the Mendenhall Glacier is retreating and shrinking.

Mendenhall Lake is 70 meters (220 feet) deep along the present ice terminus. Behind the Mendenhall Glacier terminus, the basin drops to 110 meters (360 feet) and extends up the valley another one-half kilometer (0.3 miles).

Icebergs will continue to calve into the lake for another 10 to 15 years and then, if present climate conditions persist, the glacier will recede out of the lake and look more like Herbert Glacier.

The lake has become an important habitat for juvenile salmon and other fish species. Spawning sockeye salmon in Steep Creek are a popular visitor attraction. The lake has also become a recreational mecca for outdoor enthusiasts, with kayaking and rafting in the summer, and excellent skating and cross-country skiing in the winter. However, users should be cautious of ice conditions, particularly near the terminus where glacier movement can buckle lake ice and the glacier can calve, even in the winter.

It is important to remember that the glacier ice continues to flow down the valley slopes even while the terminus position retreats up the valley. Glacial speed on the Mendenhall can be as fast as 160 meters per year at the 700 meter (2,296 foot) elevation, where the ice is 630 meters (2,100 feet) deep.

This velocity would be the equivalent of motoring along the Egan Highway at a rate of 1.4 feet per day or taking 93 years to reach downtown Juneau from the Mendenhall Mall; a lifetime for a person but not bad for a glacier.

Cathy Connor is an Assistant Professor of Geology and coordinator of the Environmental Science Program at the University of Alaska Southeast. Roman Motyka is a University of Alaska Research Professor with the University of Alaska Fairbanks Geophysical Institute and a Faculty Affiliate at UAS. Laurie Craig Ferguson will speak on her "Wetland Watch" project on the airport dike trail at the Juneau Audubon Society's monthly meeting at 7:30 p.m. Thursday at Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School.

M. ANOTHER FAILING GOVERNMENT-BACKED GREEN ENERGY COMPANY

Abengoa, a Spanish renewable energy company, is on the brink of failure. Few in the United States might care except for the fact the Obama administration showered Abengoa with more than \$2.9 billion in federal grants and loan guarantees: If Abengoa goes belly up, taxpayers will be on the hook for a bankruptcy that makes Solyndra's look small by comparison.

As part of the president's climate change efforts, the Department of Energy supported Abengoa's solar projects in Arizona and California and the construction of a cellulosic ethanol plant in Kansas. With subsidies for solar in Europe, where most of Abengoa's operations are based, being sharply curtailed, the firm's financial health has declined, leading the brokerage firm BNP Paribas to downgrade Abengoa's rating on August 3 from "Neutral" to "Underperform" after the company's shares dropped 31.76 percent in three months. The company's stock price on NASDAQ fell from \$29.32 on September 2, 2014 to \$5.62 on September 1, 2015.

SOURCE: [Fox News](#)

N. OBAMA REBUFFED AS SUPERPOWERS REFUSE TO SIGN ARCTIC CLIMATE AGREEMENT

Strange, I did not here about the rebuff of the President by other superpowers from the MSM, did they fail to report that fact?

Also note the presidential claim that temperatures are expected to rise between 6 and 12 degrees by the end of the century, don't know if that is Centigrade or Fahrenheit. In any event the outrageous claim is not supported by science or any respectable scientist including the IPCC. Think the MSM will correct the error?

In addition he visited the edge of a glacier that has been receding since 1815 and blamed it on CO 2 from "man". I am unaware of the "fact" that the industrial revolution started in 1815. That melting normally happens in an Inter-glacial which fortunately we happen to be living in at this time.

Don Shaw

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2015/09/02/quote-of-the-week-obamas-climate-claim-in-alaska/>

Obama Rebuffed As Superpowers Refuse To Sign Arctic Climate Agreement

On Sunday and Monday, foreign ministers and other international leaders met in Anchorage, Alaska to attend the Conference on Global Leadership in the Arctic. As a sign of the importance the United States placed on the Alaska forum, President Barack Obama attended. He used the conference as a platform for urging swifter action to combat climate change. After the conference, the representatives of the Arctic Council members signed a joint statement affirming "our commitment to take urgent action to slow the pace of warming in the Arctic." China said that it needed more time to review the document before signing. But *RT* had a different take, saying that China and India "opted not to sign the document" because "reducing emissions entails huge expenditure and loss of economic effectiveness." The failure to come to an agreement at the GLACIER conference sends a troubling signal for the Paris Summit, and for U.S.-China cooperation in general. —Shannon Tiezzi, [The Diplomat, 1 September 2015](#)

The US-led GLACIER environmental conference in Anchorage ended with a joint declaration calling for more international action to tackle climate change. But Russia (the world's leading oil and gas producer), China (the world largest producer of goods), and India with its huge emerging economy opted not to sign the document, however nonbinding it might appear. For China and India reducing emissions entails huge expenditure and loss of economic effectiveness, and for Russia the upcoming environmental deal brings additional costs to the oil and gas extraction industries. Moscow is boosting Russia's presence in the Arctic, including militarily, for at least two reasons: future hydrocarbons extraction and the Northern

Sea Route, a much shorter way from Asia to Europe, which could soon be operable year-around because of less ice in the Arctic Ocean. —

[Russia Today, 1 September 2015](#)

While visiting Alaska and becoming the first American president to enter the Arctic Circle, President Obama announced Tuesday he would speed up the acquisition of icebreakers to help the U.S. Coast Guard navigate an area that Russia and China increasingly see as a new frontier. The announcement is the latest power play in the Arctic north, where melting ice has led to a race for resources and access. Forty percent of the world's oil and natural gas reserves lie under the Arctic. Melting ice also would lead to new shipping routes, and Russia wants to establish a kind of Suez Canal which it controls. More than a Cold War, Russia may be preparing for an Ice War, and the Pentagon is taking note. —Jennifer Griffin, [Fox News, 2 September 2015](#)

The quote from Obama:

"If we do nothing, Alaskan temperatures are projected to rise between six and twelve degrees by the end of the century."

Don Shaw

O. STATE, ENVIRONMENTALISTS CLASH OVER \$225M EXXON SETTLEMENT

By Josh Cornfield And Michael Catalini Associated Press

POSTED: 08/25/2015 01:08:38 PM EDT [0 COMMENTS](#) | UPDATED: 18 DAYS AGO

TRENTON, N.J. (AP) — After originally seeking \$8.9 billion, New Jersey's \$225 million settlement with ExxonMobil over dozens of polluted sites is a reasonable compromise considering the substantial legal risks the state faced, a judge ruled Tuesday in approving a deal that Gov. Chris Christie's administration called historic and opponents called a sell-out.

The settlement ending an 11-year legal battle that spanned both Democratic and Republican governors is "fair, reasonable, in the public interest, and consistent with the goals of the Spill Compensation and Control Act," Superior Court Judge Michael Hogan wrote. He noted that the settlement is on top of Exxon's responsibility to clean up the sites, which include two oil refineries in Bayonne and Linden and retail gas stations across New Jersey.

New Jersey sued ExxonMobil in 2004 for pollution dating back decades. The idea was to hold the company responsible not only for cleaning up polluted areas but to compensate the public for the alleged harm to groundwater, surface water and other ecological resources.

"This is an important settlement for the citizens of New Jersey and for our environment, one which came about because this administration aggressively pushed the case to trial," Acting Attorney General John Hoffman said.

Christie, a Republican running for his party's presidential nomination, has hailed the deal as the nation's second-largest of its kind against a corporate polluter, but the deal has been slammed by environmental groups and Democratic lawmakers who say the settlement is just a fraction of the billions of dollars New Jersey should have recovered.

Advertisement

"Today's decision by the court sadly rubber-stamps the Christie administration's sell-out settlement," said Doug O'Malley, director of Environment New Jersey. "This settlement still stinks."

The deal covered properties such as the gas stations that were not part of the lawsuit. It calls for the oil company to pay for environmental remediation at the sites for an as-yet-unknown cost.

Hogan opens his 81-page ruling with a quote from a previous, unrelated case: "Nearly any consent decree can be viewed simultaneously as 'a crackdown or a sellout.'"

Hogan presided during 66 days of trial from January 2014 to September 2014 that included dueling damage estimates from experts hired by the state and Exxon. He said he was just beginning to work on a ruling when he received notice that the state and Exxon had reached a settlement in February 2015. His decision to approve came after a 60-day public comment period, in which the vast majority of more than 16,000 public comments opposed the settlement, Hogan wrote.

He goes into detail in the ruling breaking down negotiations between Exxon and the state — New Jersey had asked for about \$550 million under Democratic Gov. Jon Corzine in 2008, Exxon started with an offer of \$0 — and cites the more than \$257 million in remediation work that an Exxon project manager said the company had done at the sites from 1991 through December 2014.

Democratic State Sen. Raymond Lesniak dismissed that work, which opponents point out was part of separate court orders from 1991.

"It's not significant," said Lesniak, a likely 2017 gubernatorial candidate who represents the area around the Bayonne and Bayway sites. "They've been polluting that site for over a century."

Lesniak and environmental groups said they plan to appeal, although the environmental groups will first need an appeals court to grant them permission to intervene in the case. New Jersey Sierra Club director Jeff Tittel says the groups plan an additional, separate appeal of the ruling.

Under law, about \$50 million of the settlement will go toward site remediation. Another roughly \$50 million will go toward the state's private legal costs. The rest is slated to go into the state's general fund. Todd Spittler, a spokesman for Exxon, said the settlement brings the case to a "fair and reasonable conclusion."

"Both parties will now have the benefit of the certainty and finality that comes from this settlement," he said.

Roger Zygmunt

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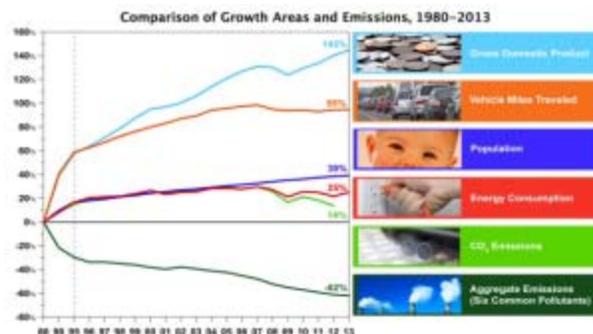
P. REMARKABLE AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS

AUGUST 28, 2015

tags: [Clean Air Act](#), [CO2](#), [CPP](#), [energy](#), [EPA](#), [Fossil Fuels](#)

The administration's promotion of its Clean Power Plan (CPP) relies heavily, in addition to an over emphasis on disasters supposedly attributable to CO2 emissions, on the possible health benefits of the plan.

This is to be expected since the CPP is being implemented, probably illegally, under the auspices of the clean air act.



From EPA Website

This chart from the EPA shows the progress in air quality made since 1980, but the real measure of progress should be the improvements made since the 1950s when the air quality was at its worst.

Even so, the progress in air quality improvement since 1980 has been remarkable: The population has increased by 92 million people, with the concomitant increase in automobile usage, and the GDP has increased by 145%.

But these measurements are for after 1980.

Other data, such as from the AEI Air Quality in America report, shows that air quality in general had already been improved by about 50% between 1960 and 1980. Taking this into consideration, air pollution has been cut by roughly 90% since its peak.

And that is remarkable.

Every engineer and scientist is aware of the law of diminishing returns.

There reaches a point where spending additional money achieves smaller and smaller benefits.

- The cost-benefit curve is asymptotic, where benefits never achieve perfection while costs increase.

It's very possible we have reached that point with air quality, where it's senseless to spend more money to make infinitesimal improvements.

The bureaucracy will never admit to this, as it means they are out of a job.

The claims made by the EPA of massive health benefits from the CPP are clearly bogus. They are bogus for two reasons.

1. Air quality improvements have probably reached the point of diminishing returns. Any future benefits don't warrant the investment.
2. Some of the medical health claims are not valid. For example: Particulates, PM 2.5, and ozone do not kill people. See, *Ozone and 2.5 Particulates are [Not Killing People](#)*.

Reported increases in asthma cases are not related to air quality, but are the result of more intense reporting and other factors, such as its possible linkage to cockroaches and over sanitization.

There is no reason to believe that the CPP will result in improved health benefits.

The idea that future generations won't be able to breathe clean air if fossil fuels are used is bogus.

People reiterating this claim are ignoring the facts, and it is hoped they will do more research and accept that the air we breathe is clean and safe.

The improvements in air quality since the 1960s proves that fossil fuels can be used without fear.

The CPP does not improve the health of Americans, and will, instead, make living conditions for most Americans worse. See, *[Dictatorial Powers](#)*.

Don Shaw

Q. A DETAILED REVIEW OF THE BOOK: 'A DISGRACE TO THE PROFESSION', BY MARK STEYN

[Anthony Watts](#) / [2 days ago](#)

Book review by Andy May

Mark Steyn has written a wonderful new [book](#) on Dr. Michael Mann's hockey stick and the controversy surrounding it. It is difficult to overstate the significance or impact of Mann's Hockey Stick (Mann, Bradley, Hughes (23 April 1998), "[Global-scale temperature patterns and climate forcing over the past six centuries](#)" (PDF), *Nature* **392** (6678): 779–787, Figure 5, the paper is often abbreviated as "MBH"). The Hockey Stick appeared in Figure 1 of the [Summary for Policymakers](#) of the third IPCC Assessment Report (called "TAR" published in 2001) and it was prominently displayed in Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth." As the book clearly shows, both the graph and the movie have been thoroughly discredited by hundreds of scientists who have attempted and failed to reproduce Michael Mann's hockey stick using his data and other proxy data. Further, MBH attempts to overturn hundreds of papers that describe a world-wide Medieval Warm Period from around 900 AD to 1300 AD. The chapter devoted to [Dr. Deming](#) discusses this, for more information see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

[Professor Jonathon Jones](#) of Oxford University:

“The hockey stick is an extraordinary claim which requires extraordinary evidence...the evidence is extraordinarily weak...its defenders were desperate to hide this fact...I’d always had an interest in pathological science, and it looked like I might have stumbled across a really good modern example...The Hockey Stick is obviously wrong. Everybody knows it is obviously wrong.”

As 1973 Nobel Prize winner [Professor Ivar Giaever](#) said “Global Warming has become a new religion – because you can’t discuss it and that is not right.”

Steyn’s book documents the problems with the hockey stick, its use by the IPCC without proper peer review or validation, and the attempt to cover up its problems. It does this artfully using the words of the scientists, both “alarmists” and “deniers” and those in between. The list of quoted scientists is huge and includes Mann’s co-authors and others who supported him even after the paper and his hockey stick were shown to be wrong and perhaps, fraudulent.

The hockey stick told us that the recent warming period (1950 to 1998) was unusual in the last thousand years and that this sort of sudden warming had (supposedly) never happened before and that man’s CO2 emissions were (presumably) the cause. After all, what else was unusual about that time period? Yet, all of these suppositions were wrong and the hockey stick was wrong. Carbon Dioxide is a greenhouse gas and it does cause warming of the atmosphere by trapping heat radiated from the ground and oceans, no one who has studied the issue disputes that. But, the graph appeared to show that this Carbon Dioxide based warming was much more dominant in our climate than traditional paleoclimate studies, physics or chemistry would suggest. As noted above it was an extraordinary claim, yet it was accepted instantly without checking it. This had the effect of destroying the credibility of the IPCC and the previously respected publication [Nature](#).

At the time that Michael Mann’s hockey stick was chosen to be Figure 1 of the TAR summary for policy makers, Mann had just received his PhD. As many in the book note, the ink was not yet dry on his diploma. Yet, in addition, he was made one of the lead authors of the very [section](#) of TAR that presented his hockey stick (see [figure 2.20](#)). As a result it was up to him to validate his own work. In the words of [Dr. Rob Van Dorland](#), an IPCC lead author:

“It is strange that the climate reconstruction of Mann passed both peer review rounds of the IPCC without anyone ever really having checked it.”

The hockey stick was never validated, yet it became so famous that it was taught to young children all over the world in elementary schools. Many years later, in 2005, it was thoroughly debunked by [Steve McIntyre and Ross McKittrick](#) (often abbreviated M&M). They showed that using the statistical technique invented by Michael Mann even random number series (persistent trendless red noise, see M&M Figure 1) will generate a hockey stick. Basically, Mann had mined many series of numbers looking for hockey stick shapes and gave each series that had the shape he wanted a much higher weight, up to a weighting factor of 392! This was truly a case of selecting a desired conclusion and then molding the data to fit it. Prominent statisticians [Peter Bloomfield](#), [Dr. Edward Wegman](#) and [Professor David Hand](#) said Michael Mann’s method of using principle components analysis was inappropriate and misleading and exaggerated the effect of recent global warming.

Mann’s notorious statistical exercise was not sufficient to build the entire hockey stick. Unfortunately for him, if his model was carried to the present day, it peaked in the 1940’s and then declined in temperature. So, he simply spliced actual estimated global temperatures to his proxy reconstruction and didn’t mention it in the article, this is the notorious and poorly understood “[Mike’s Nature Trick](#)” scandal. More on the fraudulent parts of the hockey stick, including the Briffa “hide the decline” trick can be found [here](#). These two links on “hide the decline” and “Mike’s nature trick” are the most balanced and informative I know of, one is by Professor Curry and the other by Steve McIntyre.

As you can see in the book many prominent scientists in the IPCC knew the hockey stick was “crap” to quote [Professor Simon Tett](#), Chair of Earth System Dynamics, University of Edinburgh, formerly with Met

Offices [Hadley Climate Research Unit or CRU](#). And they knew it as early as 2001, but no one said anything. And, as we know from "[climategate](#)" emails, even though they knew it was "crap" they colluded to block Steve McIntyre and Ross McKittrick's paper challenging the hockey stick. For years Dr. Michael Mann and [Dr. Phil Jones](#) (Hadley CRU) kept the supporting data for the hockey stick secret as well as the computer algorithms they used to generate the hockey stick. This very act would normally have invalidated their work and the hockey stick, but it was accepted by [Nature](#) and the IPCC anyway. A very sad period of time for science.

[Dr. Kevin Vranes](#) in 2005 said "Your [Dr. Mann's] job is not to prevent your critics from checking your work; your job is to continue to publish..." "Why did the IPCC so quickly and uncritically accept the hockey stick?" asks [Dr. Roy Spencer](#), "Because they wanted to believe it." They needed it as a PR tool, they didn't check it in any way they just ran with it.

One of the best critiques in the book is from Oxford Professor [Jerome Ravetz](#):

"[The climate community] propounded as a proven fact, Anthropogenic Carbon-based Global Warming. There is little room for uncertainty in this thesis; it effectively needs hockey stick behavior in all indicators of global temperature, so that it is all due to industrialization. [This proposed "fact"] relied totally on a small set of deeply uncertain tree-ring data for the medieval period, to refute the historical evidence of a warming then; but it needed to discard that sort of data for recent decades, as they showed a sudden cooling from the 1960's onwards!"

The problems encountered publishing the valid criticisms of Dr. Mann's hockey stick are a serious indictment of the current peer review system, especially the systems at [Nature](#) and at the IPCC. [Professor Hans Van Storch](#) (University of Hamburg) went so far as to say "Scientists like Mike Mann, Phil Jones and others should no longer participate in the peer-review process." Reform is needed and some suggestions by Professor Ross McKittrick are made [here](#). The current peer review process can and has been used to suppress valid and important papers. This is why I applaud the internet and scientific blogs, they prevent self-serving and arrogant scientists from blocking the truth. One thing we have seen since the time of Copernicus and Galileo, no deception of this magnitude lasts forever.

Contrary to the [myth that 97% of climate scientists](#) believe we are headed toward a man-made climate doom, the truth is that a very small group of second rate climate scientists have captured the attention of some prominent political and media figures. They have also isolated themselves from the rest of the scientific community and suffer because of it. To quote [Professor the Lord Oxburgh of Liverpool](#):

"We cannot help remarking that it is very surprising that research in an area that depends so heavily on statistical methods has not been carried out in close collaboration with professional statisticians. Indeed there would be mutual benefit if there were closer collaboration and interaction between [CRU](#) and a much wider scientific group outside the relatively small international circle of temperature specialists."

So, the following question is from [Professor Mike Kelly \(Cambridge\)](#) and it was directed to [Dr. Keith Briffa](#), but could easily have been directed to Mike Mann or any of the alarmists:

"Given that the outputs of your work are being used to promote the largest revolution mankind has every contemplated, do you have any sense of the extent to which the quality control and rigour of approach must be of the highest standards in clear expectation of deep scrutiny?"

At this point, it is fair to ask what Dr. Mann and his colleagues have to say about all of this. The book does go there in some detail. Dr. Mann claims that his hockey stick has been replicated by others and this is true. But, they not only used the same data or similar data, but they used the same statistical techniques that have been shown to be critically flawed. One case in point is fairly typical of the others. [Karoly and Gergis, in 2012](#), published their own hockey stick to rave reviews in the public media, especially in Australia. It claimed 95% certainty that the recent decades in Australasia were the warmest in 1000 years. They used similar proxies as Dr. Mann and used the same statistical techniques. Steven McIntyre went to work and blew it up in less than three weeks. He sent his statistical analysis to the authors. Dr. Karoly and Dr. Gergis, to their credit, recognized their error and withdrew their paper, even

after the mainstream media praise. As Joanne Nova wrote, [“In May it was all over the papers, in June it was shown to be badly flawed. By October, it quietly gets withdrawn.”](#)

Just as Karoly and Gergis’s paleoclimate reconstruction disappeared, Mann’s seems to be disappearing as well. [Professor Philippe De Larminat](#) noted in 2014:

“The hockey stick curve, which ignores large climatic events, seems to have come straight from another world... This Chapter 5 [in the Fifth and latest IPCC report] in question does not make the slightest mention of the famous publication from Mann et al ... neither in the text nor among the some 1,000 specific bibliographical references in this chapter. Given the extensive use that the IPCC made of it in the past (cited six times in the Third Assessment Report), and the controversy it still causes, this absence is peculiar.”

Let’s hope that hockey stick fiction goes away like the 97% consensus fiction has.

[Professor Ian Plimer](#) notes:

“In the next IPCC report, the Medieval Warming and Little Ice Age mysteriously reappeared. This suggests that the IPCC knew that the “hockey stick” was invalid. This is a withering condemnation of the IPCC. The “hockey stick” was used as the backdrop for announcements about human-induced climate change, it is still used by Al Gore, and it is still used in talks, on websites and in publications by those claiming that the world is getting warmer due to human activities. Were any of those people who view this graphic told that the data before 1421 AD was based on just one lonely alpine pine tree?”

So, the book shows that the hockey stick is dead to all scientists on all sides of the climate debate. What is the impact of this appalling chapter in the history of science? I think that [Professor Judith Curry](#) says it best:

“With regards to climate science, IMO the key issue regarding academic freedom is this: no scientist should have to fall on their sword to follow the science where they see it leading or to challenge the consensus. I’ve fallen on my dagger (not the full sword), in that my challenge to the consensus has precluded any further professional recognition and a career as a university administrator. That said, I have tenure, and am senior enough to be able retire if things genuinely were to get awful for me. I am very very worried about younger scientists, and I hear from a number of them that have these concerns.”
This is an outstanding and important book and I highly recommend it.

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Don Shaw

Regards,
George