

The Week That Was: 2016-02-27 (February 27, 2016)
Brought to You by SEPP (www.SEPP.org)
The Science and Environmental Policy Project

#####

Quote of the Week: *“Theories crumble, but good observations never fade.”*— Harlow Shapley.
[H/t Jon Boone]

#####

Number of the Week: 169

#####

THIS WEEK:

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

Power Plan; Science Argument: SEPP Chairman Fred Singer and Vice President Tom Sheahen joined eleven other distinguished scientists in filing a “Brief of Amici Curiae Scientists in Support of Petitioners Supporting Reversal” in the case of State of West Virginia, State of Texas, et al. v. EPA. This is the case in which the Supreme Court issued a stay on the Administration’s plan, called the Clean Power Plan, to control how electricity is generated in the United States primarily by regulating carbon dioxide emissions. The unusual judicial stay stops the implementation of the Administration’s plan until it has undergone judicial review, which will take several years. The stay was discussed in the February 13 TWTW.

As of now, the steps appear to be first a hearing before a three judge panel of the US Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. The oral arguments are scheduled for June 2, 2016, with a decision to be announced some time thereafter. Whichever party loses that round will probably appeal for an “en banc” hearing by the entire court, which results in a further delay.

Whichever party loses that round will probably appeal for a ruling by the Supreme Court, which may accept, deny, or delay the case – another delay. If it passes judicial review, the Administration’s power plan, which some call the unreliable electricity plan because it promotes wind and solar at the expense of reliable forms of electricity generation, will not take effect until well after Mr. Obama has left office. Because the power plan is only a regulatory action of the executive branch, it could be changed or reversed by a future president. To the extent possible within the confines of legal appeal, the above mentioned brief addresses three deficient lines of evidence that EPA used to justify its finding that human greenhouse gas emissions, mainly carbon dioxide (CO₂), endanger human health and welfare (Endangerment Finding).

First, the brief asserts the “Empirical Data Show EPA’s Tropical Hot Spot Theory to Be Invalid.” As explained in previous TWTWs, the EPA claimed the tropical hot spot (an atmospheric warming trend centered at about 33,000 feet, 10KM, with more pronounced warming than surface warming) is the distinct human fingerprint. [EPA’s claim itself is false, such a hot spot should exist regardless of the source of the warming.] The brief presents tropical atmospheric data at 12 km (39,400 feet) from balloons, and surface to 18 km (59,000 feet) from satellites. No statistically significant trends, positive or negative, exist between 1979 to 2011. The Hot Spot cannot be found.

[Note: According to historian Bernie Lewin, the hot spot was invented, without empirical support, at the 1995 UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) scientific conference in Madrid by Benjamin Santer and promoted by IPCC Chairman John Houghton. This became a

turning point for IPCC.

<https://enthusiasmcepticismscience.wordpress.com/2015/11/21/remembering-madrid-95-a-meeting-that-changed-the-world-2/#more-1838>]

Second, the brief asserts that “Empirical Data Show EPA’s Record Setting, Global Warming Claim to Be Invalid.” According to the brief, the warming has been regional, not global. The most significant warming of the lower troposphere has been in the Northern Hemisphere, north of 20 deg. north latitude. The Arctic has warmed but the Antarctic has cooled, slightly. Further, the tropical oceans have not warmed. Further, there has been no statistically significant warming north of 20 deg. north since 1998.

Third, the brief asserts that “Empirical Data Invalidate EPA’s Claim That Cited Climate Models May Be Relied Upon for its Policy Analysis Purposes.” The brief compares models used in IPCC’s Fourth Assessment Report (AR-4, 2007) with the HadCRUT4 2000-2014 trends which shows the forecasts greatly overestimated surface temperature trends. Even the model “Commit-Stop CO2” scenario which assumes draconian curtailment of CO2 emissions to 1992 levels overestimates the surface temperature trends.

The brief states that the lines of evidence the EPA relied on are invalid. Further, the brief asserts that “Ongoing and Biased Data Manipulation Have Made the Instrumental Surface Data (1850 to Date) No Longer Credible.

In the view of TWTW, without the EPA’s endangerment finding, the Administration has no logical or empirical justification for imposing a power plan that will destroy an industry that has delivered reliable electricity, however imperfectly, since 1882, over 130 years. The general health issues of coal-fired power plants have been solved in the US. Health issues in India, China, etc. do not apply. Proper disposal of coal-ash is needed. Modern coal-fired plants, such as the ultra-supercritical plants, promise greater efficiencies with fewer general-recognized pollutants. However, the Administration opposes them. The Administration is fighting a battle already passed. Further, until electricity storage is available on an affordable, commercial scale, wind and solar, promoted in the Administration’s power plan, will remain expensive, unreliable, and unsuitable for a modern civilization. See link under Litigation Issues, particularly Appendices 1, 2, and 3 of the Scientists’ brief.

Power Plan; Separation of Powers Argument: Two other briefs in the case against the Administration’s power plan merit additional comment. The presenters of the brief by Peabody Energy, a coal company, included Laurence Tribe, a professor of constitutional Law at Harvard Law School who was a judicial adviser in Mr. Obama’s 2008 presidential campaign. Mr. Tribe is the author of a highly influential textbook, “American Constitutional Law.” The second brief is by the Southeastern Legal Foundation, a Georgia-based, independent public interest law firm, which advocates human rights and limited government.

Both briefs asserted that the Administration’s power plan violated the Constitutional doctrine of separation of powers. The doctrine can be viewed from several levels. At the Federal level, the issue is that the powers of Congress (legislative) are different from the powers of the President (executive). The briefs assert that the EPA (the executive) does not have the legal authority (granted by the legislative) to implement the Administration’s power plan.

Another level of viewing the doctrine of separation of powers is distinguishing between the powers granted to the Federal Government in the Constitution and those reserved for the States, or to the people. This doctrine is particularly found in the Tenth Amendment of the Constitution and is embodied in the concept of Federalism. [Note that the powers of government are different from the rights of the people, which are the subject of the Ninth Amendment.]

In what promises to be a long engagement, observers will be treated to what may become an important lesson in Constitutional Law and the formation of the Federal Government. See links under Litigation Issues

Justice Scalia: Adding to the complexity of the issue, Associate Justice Antonin Scalia died suddenly on February 13. There has been a great deal of speculation on what will happen to the Administration's power plan and other measures. This speculation has been accompanied by considerable misinformation, such as that the judicial process will be paralyzed until his seat is filled. Legal scholars have pointed out that since World War II, there have been 15 periods when the court had only eight justices, yet the system did not falter. The longest period was between May 1945 and October 1946, when Justice Jackson served as chief prosecutor at the Nuremberg Tribunals.

Further, those who give political labels to justices call Justice Scalia a conservative, which may be correct. However legal scholars offer numerous counterexamples. He "joined with liberals to demand due process for Guantanamo detainees, to protect flag-burning (and cross-burning), to give new teeth to procedural protections for criminal defendants." In short, he was not dogmatic. But he greatly influenced the court. "Today, the entire court—even the liberal justices—have adopted Justice Scalia's style: close attention to text, awareness of history, analytical rigor." See Articles # 3 and # 4.

A New Form of Modeling? Climate models are performing poorly when compared with observations. Economic forecasting did the same when they were based on complex macroeconomic models. Writing for the Global Warming Policy Foundation, Terence Mills, an eminent British Economics Professor, has proposed using statistical time-series forecasting methods to improve climate forecasting.

Economist Ross McKittrick, one of the two who demolished Mann's hockey-stick, wrote the foreword to the proposal. In terms of policy issues, it may have merit because it can serve as an independent check on projections from climate models.

However, electronic measurement pioneer John Brignell offers a note of caution. "Statistical methods, from simple line fitting to elaborate analyses, tell you nothing about mechanisms and causality, though they can sometimes provide hints that prompt further investigation."

"Any form of statistical analysis is inherently sensitive to the quality of data and its generation. There are many reasons for avoiding 'traditional' surface temperature data as a source. The sensors are badly distributed and often poorly sited. There is massive evidence that the data have been corrupted by human intervention throughout the gathering process and then subjected to questionable *post hoc* 'adjustments'."

The major issue is that the proposed process does not lead to understanding of natural drivers of climate variability – particularly the sun.

“As with the physical models, apart from the usual dubieties, there is always the haunting presence of the dominant driver; **The Sun**. Virtually ignoring this has been a rather outrageous feature of physical models. The cross-correlation between solar radiation and alleged global temperature would suggest itself as a proper starting point for any statistical approach.”

One may expand the cross-correlation to include total solar energy (solar wind and magnetism) to be calculated along with atmospheric temperatures. See links under Model Issues.

Pause – No Pause? A group of researchers from the Climate Establishment, including Michael Mann and Benjamin Santer, mentioned above, have a paper in *Nature* arguing that the Tom Karl, et al. June 2014 paper in *Science* was biased. The Karl, et al. paper argues there was no hiatus (pause) in surface temperature trends. Writing in *Reason*, Ron Bailey brings together the apparent contradictions between *Nature* and *Science*, or between Mann and Karl. Let the fun begin. See links under Measurement Issues – Surface.

Consensus – No Consensus? Pierre Gosselin of No Tricks Zone presents two lists of peer reviewed papers which he states cast doubts on the claim that human emissions of greenhouse gases, namely CO₂, are causing significant global warming/climate change. One list is for 2015, the second for 2016. TWTW has not reviewed listed papers and cannot comment on the extent to which these papers refute the “orthodox science” of the IPCC and its followers. However, such lists call into question surveys that are used to frequently claim that “97% of climate scientists ...” The surveys reviewed by TWTW show that the claims are more based on opinions of the surveyors than on objective polling, which requires that the opinions of the surveyors do not influence the results of the survey.

Sea Level Rise: Rising sea levels are a major concern. In the past, sea level rise has eliminated cultures along the Persian Gulf and facilities around the Mediterranean Sea. Unfortunately, some scientists play on this concern by exaggerating the threat. There is a prevailing issue in measurement. Tidal gages indicate a rise of about 2 mm per year for most of the 20th century. More recent measurements by satellites and buoys indicate a rise of 3 mm per year.

The differences from types of measurements do not mean that the rise is accelerating. It may mean that the two systems are not fully calibrated and need to be adjusted accordingly. Thus, recent headlines that sea level rise is accelerating may not be correct.

None of this justifies statements from certain entities of NOAA (updated on Nov 4, 2015) that asserted: “In 2012, at the request of the U.S. Climate Change Science Program, NOAA scientists conducted a review of the research on global sea level rise projections, and concluded that there is **very high confidence (greater than 90% chance) that global mean sea level will rise at least 8 inches (0.2 meter) but no more than 6.6 feet (2.0 meters) by 2100.**” [Boldface added.] If this is the best NOAA can do, it is an embarrassment to government scientific work! See links under Changing Seas.

TWTW in Transition: At the suggestion of physicist Donald Rapp, and others, TWTW will be preparing an index of scientific issues discussed. Beginning in this TWTW and evolving in the future, TWTW will present topics such as Measurement Issues by type: Surface, Atmospheric, Tropics, Missing Heat, Energy Flow, CO₂ and Temperatures. Further it will have topics such as

Other Climate Change Drivers, Climate Sensitivity, and Climate Change – Cultures and Civilizations. These changes will promote searching topics on the SEPP web site.

Number of the Week: 169. Bjørn Lomborg writes that the UN has 169 new Sustainable Development Goals. Is this an example when too much of something becomes nothing? See link under Questioning the Orthodoxy.

#####

ARTICLES: The Articles section is now at the bottom of TWTW.

#####

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Science: Is the Sun Rising?

Journal Of Solar-Terrestrial Physics Presents Findings: “Significant Relation” Between Sunspots And El Niño Southern Oscillation!

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 19, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/02/19/journal-of-solar-terrestrial-physics-presents-findings-significant-relation-between-sunspots-and-el-nino-southern-oscillation/#sthash.PTDaywTt.dpbs>

Link to paper: Sunspots and ENSO relationship using Markov method

By Hassan, et al. Journal of Atmospheric and Solar-Terrestrial Physics, Jan 2016

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1364682615300985>

Climategate Continued

Disappearing the MWP at Icefields, Alberta

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Feb 15, 2016

<http://climateaudit.org/2016/02/15/disappearing-the-mwp-at-icefields-alberta/>

“However, the analysis of today’s post was impossible until recently because coauthor Luckman withheld relevant measurement data for over a decade. One of the retorts to the present analysis will undoubtedly be that I’m wasting my time dissecting a decade-old paper, because the field has “moved on” (all too often to still unarchived data (e.g. most of the component series of Wilson et al. 2016) which, if the past is any guide, may not be available for another decade.”

New Light on Gulf of Alaska

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Feb 14, 2016

<http://climateaudit.org/2016/02/14/new-light-on-gulf-of-alaska/#more-21804>

Challenging the Orthodoxy -- NIPCC

Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming

The NIPCC Report on the Scientific Consensus

By Craig D. Idso, Robert M. Carter, and S. Fred Singer, NIPCC, Nov 23, 2015

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/>

Download with no charge

<https://www.heartland.org/policy-documents/why-scientists-disagree-about-global-warming>

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Physical Science

Idso, Carter, and Singer, Lead Authors/Editors, 2013

<https://www.heartland.org/media-library/pdfs/CCR-II/CCR-II-Full.pdf>

Summary: <http://www.nipccreport.org/reports/ccr2a/pdf/Summary-for-Policymakers.pdf>

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts

Idso, Idso, Carter, and Singer, Lead Authors/Editors, 2014

<http://www.nipccreport.org/reports/ccr2b/pdf/Full-Report.pdf>

Summary: <https://www.heartland.org/media-library/pdfs/CCR-IIb/Summary-for-Policymakers.pdf>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Global Warming and the Irrelevance of Science

Guest essay by Richard S. Lindzen, Delivered Aug 20, 2015, Energy Matters, Feb 17, 2016

<http://euanmearns.com/global-warming-and-the-irrelevance-of-science/#more-12591>

Impossible To Ignore ...In 2015 Alone Massive 250 Peer-Reviewed Scientific Papers Cast Doubt On Climate Science!

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 16, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/02/16/impossible-to-ignore-in-2015-alone-massive-250-peer-reviewed-scientific-papers-cast-doubt-on-climate-science/#sthash.nrZQPEbb.dpbs>

Link to list: 250 papers from 2015 show climate science is not settled

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, No Date

<http://notrickszone.com/250-skeptic-papers-from-2015/#sthash.ukq4tPzX.DmW37HCA.dpbs>

2016: Already Almost 50 New Peer-Reviewed Papers Refuting Alarmist CO2 Science ...Show Natural Cycles Indisputable!

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 23, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/02/23/2016-already-almost-50-new-peer-reviewed-papers-refuting-alarmist-co2-science-show-natural-cycles-indisputable/#sthash.5z7bww1I.dpbs>

Ten dire polar bear predictions that have failed as global population hits 20-31k

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Feb 25, 2016

<https://polarbearscience.com/2016/02/25/ten-dire-polar-bear-predictions-that-have-failed-as-global-population-hits-20-31k/>

“Conclusion: Polar bears are not fragile canaries in an Arctic climate-change coal mine but resilient and adaptable predators remarkably suited to their highly variable habitat.”

Defending the Orthodoxy

Will We Ever Stop Using Fossil Fuels?

By Covert, Greenstone and Knittel, Journal of Economic Perspectives, American Economic Association, Winter, 2016

<https://www.aeaweb.org/articles.php?doi=10.1257/jep.30.1.117>

[SEPP Comment: Note the vague use of “Scientists believe” rather than the more correct phrase “Some scientists believe, other scientists dispute...” The assertion of “market-failure” is as solid as “scientist believe.”]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Only the gullible still buying ‘polar bear died of climate change’ nonsense

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Feb 18, 2016

<https://polarbearscience.com/2016/02/18/only-the-gullible-still-buying-polar-bear-died-of-climate-change-nonsense/>

The Law, Lawsuits, And Climate Change

Guest Opinion: Dr. Tim Ball, WUWT, Feb 13, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/13/the-law-lawsuits-and-climate-change/>

When is Fighting Corruption Worth It?

By Bjørn Lomborg, Project Syndicate, Feb 15, 2016

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/sustainable-development-goals-corruption-targets-by-bj-rn-lomborg-2016-02>

After Paris!

The Paris climate deal won't even dent global warming

By Bjorn Lomborg, New York Post, Feb 22, 2016

<http://nypost.com/2016/02/22/the-paris-climate-deal-wont-even-dent-global-warming/>

WH looks to defend Paris deal after carbon rule halt

By Devin Henry, The Hill, Feb 10, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/268952-wh-look-to-defend-paris-deal-after-power-plan-stay-order>

A New Kellogg-Briand Pact

We Can Already See How Toothless the Paris Climate Treaty Is

By Staff Writers, The American Interest, Feb 21, 2016

<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2016/02/21/we-can-already-see-how-toothless-the-paris-climate-treaty-is/>

[Chief US negotiator Todd] “Stern is trying to paint a menacing picture of ominous “consequences” if the U.S. doesn’t follow through on what it agreed upon in Paris, but already we’re seeing just how toothless this treaty was. The UN isn’t going to sanction the U.S. if the Clean Power Plan is binned, and this lack of an enforceability mechanism is one of the key problems with any international approach to climate change.

Japan environment ministry's coal plant reversal casts doubt on CO2 pledge

By Yuka Obayashi, Reuters, Planet Ark, Feb 24, 2016 [H/t GWPF]

<http://planetark.org/wen/74183>

The Administration's Plan – Independent Analysis

The Total Unreality of Substituting Wind and Solar for Fossil Fuel Electricity

By Alan Carlin, Carlin Economics and Science, Feb 26, 2016

<http://www.carlineconomics.com/archives/2565>

The Administration's Plan – Push-Back

Mr. President, you owe America an apology. We did drill our way to \$2 gas

By Marita Noon, Oil Pro, Feb 24, 2016

<http://oilpro.com/post/22611/mr-president-you-owe-america-apology-we-did-drill-our-way-to-2-ga>

“‘We can’t just drill our way to lower gas prices,’ President Obama told an audience four years ago at the University of Miami.

“‘Later in his speech, he added: ‘anybody who tells you that we can drill our way out of this problem doesn’t know what they’re talking about, or just isn’t telling you the truth.’”

A last chance for coal

States can take advantage of the Clean Power Plan’s delay

By Tom Harris, Washington Times, Feb 16, 2016

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2016/feb/16/tom-harris-clean-power-plan-delay-offers-last-chan/>

America's Energy Outlook Is Bright – and Obama Hates It

By Jeffrey Folks, American Thinker, Feb 12, 2016 [H/t Timothy Wise]

http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2016/02/americas_energy_outlook_is_bright_and_obama_hates_it.html

Top Court Blocks Epic EPA Power Play

By Larry Bell, Newsmax, Feb 16, 2016

<http://www.newsmax.com/LarryBell/epa-supreme-court-scalia/2016/02/16/id/714622/>

Obama climate rule is 'breathtaking expansion' of power, opponents say

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Feb 22, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/270246-obama-climate-rule-is-breathtaking-expansion-of-authority-opponents>

[SEPP Comment: The reporter missed a step, after the decision by the three judge panel, the loser can request a hearing by the entire court, as discussed above.]

Social Benefits of Carbon

Enhanced levels of carbon dioxide are likely cause of global dryland greening, study says

By Staff Writers, Science Daily, Feb 16, 2016

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/02/160216123447.htm>

Link to paper: Elevated CO₂ as a driver of global dryland greening

By Xuefei Lu, Lixin Wang & Matthew F. McCabe, Scientific Reports, Feb 12, 2016

<http://www.nature.com/articles/srep20716>

Salt and CO₂ Better for Tomatoes, Now for Lettuce, Too

By Craig D. Idso and Patrick J. Michaels, Cato, Feb 18, 2016

<http://www.cato.org/blog/salt-co2-better-tomatoes-now-lettuce-too>

Seeking a Common Ground

On Scientific Method: Comment on Hawkins

By Jon Boone, Master Resource, Feb 24, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/advocacy-in-science/on-scientific-method-comment-on-hawkins/>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by CO₂ Science

The Mass Balance of Antarctica's Dronning Maud Land Ice Sheet

Callens, D., Thonnard, N., Lenaerts, J.T.M., Van Wessem, J.M., Van De Berg, W.J., Matsuoka, K. and Pattyn, F. 2015. Mass balance of the Sor Rondane glacial system, East Antarctica. *Annals of Glaciology* 56: 63-69. Feb 19, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/feb/a12.php>

“These efforts ultimately revealed that this particular part of Antarctica has recently been *gaining* about 3.15 billion tons of new ice *each year*, which phenomenon obviously tends to temper the current rate of sea level rise.”

Rice Production in India and Its Relationship to Drought Severity

Birthal, P.S., Negi, D.S., Khan, M.T. and Agrawal, S. 2015. Is Indian agriculture becoming resilient to droughts? Evidence from rice production systems. *Food Policy* 56: 1-12.

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/feb/a11.php>

[SEPP Comment: Frequency of drought, up, production up? Changes in irrigation, varieties, and CO2 enrichment increase production.]

N Fixation and Growth of Cyanobacteria in CO2-Enriched Sea Water

Hutchins, D.A., Walworth, N.G., Webb, E.A., Saito, M.A., Moran, D., McIlvin, M.R., Gale, J. and Fu, F.-X. 2015. Irreversibly increased nitrogen fixation in *Trichodesmium* experimentally adapted to elevated carbon dioxide. *Nature Communications*: 10.1038/ncomms9155. Feb 16, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/feb/a10.php>

"experimental evolution under extended selection at projected future elevated CO2 levels results in irreversible, large increases in nitrogen fixation and growth rates, even after being moved back to lower present-day CO2 levels for hundreds of generations."

Climate Change in Northern Europe as per CMIP2, 3 and 5 Models

Raisanen, J. and Ylhaisi, J.S. 2015. CO2-induced climate change in northern Europe: CMIP2 versus CMIP3 versus CMIP5. *Climate Dynamics* 45: 1877-1897. Feb 15, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/feb/a9.php>

"The two researchers from Finland's University of Helsinki report that (1) 'control simulations in the three ensembles share similar biases,' which generally include (2) 'colder-than-observed temperatures' and (3) 'an underestimated north-south pressure gradient across northern Europe.'

"In light of these unfortunate findings, they thus write that 'the manpower and other resources dedicated to model development in the past 10-15 years seem to have had little effect on the end product that ultimately matters the most for users of climate model data.'

A 2000-Year SST History of the Northeastern Arabian Sea

Munz, P.M., Siccha, M., Luckge, A., Boll, A., Kucera, M. and Schulz, H. 2015. Decadal-resolution record of winter monsoon intensity over the last two millennia from planktic foraminiferal assemblages in the northeastern Arabian Sea. *The Holocene* 25: 1756-1771., Feb 26, 2016

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/feb/a16.php>

"The significance of these observations lies primarily in the fact that they provide yet another demonstration of the existence of two multi-century periods of time -- the Medieval and Roman Warm Periods -- when the earth was significantly warmer than it is currently, and at times when the atmosphere's CO2 concentration was significantly less than what it is today."

"winter temperatures were more than 1.5°C warmer than today," prior to 100 AD

A Thousand-Year Drought History of China's Qilian Mountains

Gou, X., Deng, Y., Gao, L., Chen, F., Cook, E., Yang, M. and Zhang, F. 2015. Millennium tree-ring reconstruction of drought variability in the eastern Qilian Mountains, northwest China. *Climate Dynamics* 45: 1761-1770.

<http://www.co2science.org/articles/V19/feb/a15.php>

"Consequently, and in consideration of the findings of all of the studies cited above, it can safely be concluded that the preponderance of real-world evidence from the noted locations in Asia does *not* support the climate-alarmist claim that global warming leads to the occurrence of either more frequent or more severe *droughts*. In fact -- and in near unanimity -- just the opposite is found to be the case: warming tends to lead to *less* frequent and *less* severe drought conditions."

Models v. Observations

Climate Models Are NOT Simulating Earth's Climate – Part 2

Guest Post by Bob Tisdale, WUWT, Feb 12, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/12/climate-models-are-not-simulating-earths-climate-part-2/>

Model Issues

Two worlds collide

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Feb 23, 2016

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2016/2/23/two-worlds-collide.html>

Link to full paper: Statistical Forecasting; How fast will future warming be?

By Terence Mills, GWPF, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.org/content/uploads/2016/02/Forecasting-3.pdf>

That paper

By John Brignell, Number Watch, Feb 26, 2016

<http://www.numberwatch.co.uk/2016%20February.htm#paper>

Rainfall Forecasts Should be Benchmarked [AU]

By Jennifer Marohasy, Her Blog, Feb 23, 2016 [H/t Jo Nova]

<http://jennifermarohasy.com/2016/02/rainfall-forecasts-should-be-benchmarked/>

The Bureau of Meteorology increasingly use their weather and climate forecasts to warn of looming catastrophe. This use of 'forecasts' to advance an agenda is common in politics, but it's not something the Bureau should be engaged in.

A key Bureau goal should be the best possible rainfall forecast for the public.

[SEPP Comment: In business, benchmarking can be defined as comparing one's performance with those of competitors by using selected numerical measurements. In climate science, it can be used to determine which models perform best against observations – in general it is not used.]

Climate Models Botch Another Prediction

By Tom Hartsfield, Real Clear Science, Feb 17, 2016

http://www.realclearscience.com/blog/2016/02/climate_models_botch_another_prediction.html

Finally, a study that shows unreliable models are the root of overwrought 'extreme weather' events

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 22, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/22/finally-a-study-that-shows-unreliable-models-are-the-root-of-overwrought-extreme-weather-events/>

Link to paper: Unreliable climate simulations overestimate attributable risk of extreme weather and climate events†

By Bellprat and Doblas-Reyes, Geophysical Research Letters, Feb 19, 2016

http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2015GL067189/abstract?utm_source=Daily+Carbon+Briefing&utm_campaign=48b659ab46-cb_daily&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_876aab4fd7-48b659ab46-303449629

From the abstract: "The framework illustrates that unreliable climate simulations are prone to overestimate the attributable risk to climate change. Climate model ensembles tend to be overconfident in their representation of the climate variability which leads to systematic increase in the attributable risk to an extreme event."

Measurement Issues -- Surface

Global Warming "Hiatus" Debate Flares Up Again

Researchers now argue that the warming slowdown was real
By Jeff Tollefson, from Nature, Scientific American, Feb 24, 2016 [H/t Anne Debeil]
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/global-warming-hiatus-debate-flares-up-again/>

Nature: Making sense of the early 2000s warming slowdown

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Feb 24, 2016
<https://judithcurry.com/2016/02/24/nature-making-sense-of-the-early-2000s-warming-slowdown/#more-21204>

Global Warming Hiatus Is Real

The rate of temperature increase has been dramatically slower than predicted, says Nature Climate Change.

By Ronald Bailey, Reason, Feb 24, 2016
<http://reason.com/blog/2016/02/24/global-warming-hiatus-is-real>

Link to NOAA article referencing the June 2015 article in Science: Science publishes new NOAA analysis: Data show no recent slowdown in global warming

By Staff Writers, NOAA, June 4, 2015
<http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2015/noaa-analysis-journal-science-no-slowdown-in-global-warming-in-recent-years.html>

New paper shows there was a global warming hiatus this century

By Thomas Richard, ICECAP, Feb 26, 2016
http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/new_paper_shows_there_was_a_global_warming_hiatus_this_century/
“Gavin Schmidt, a climate activist and a director at NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies, said it’s a ‘tired discussion and nothing more than academic bickering.’”

Did Global Warming Slow Down in the 2000s, or Not?

Scientists clarify the recent confusion
By Gayathri Vaidyanathan, Scientific American, Feb 25, 2016
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/did-global-warming-slow-down-in-the-2000s-or-not/>
[SEPP Comment: With stock propaganda photo of something out of a chimney blackening the sky.]

Comments on Riser et al (2016) – An Infomercial about the ARGO Program

By Bob Tisdale, WUWT, Feb 22, 2016
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/22/comments-on-riser-et-al-2016-an-infomercial-about-the-argo-program/>

From the abstract: “More than 90% of the heat energy accumulation in the climate system between 1971 and the present has been in the ocean.”
[SEPP Comment: Tisdale points out the disparity between NODC showing a warming in the Northern Hemisphere (20-60 deg North) and the ARGO data showing a slight heat loss.]

Measurement Issues -- Atmosphere

UAH V6 Global Temperature Update for January, 2016: +0.54 deg C

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Feb 1, 2016
<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2016/02/uah-v6-global-temperature-update-for-january-2016-0-54-deg-c/>

Clouds reveal new particle formation process

By Staff Writers, Science Daily, Feb 15, 2016

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/02/160215101228.htm>

Link to paper: Secondary organic aerosol formation from isoprene photooxidation during cloud condensation–evaporation cycles

By Brégonzio-Rozier, et al. Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics, Feb 15, 2016

<http://www.atmos-chem-phys.net/16/1747/2016/>

Measurement Issues – CO₂ and Temperatures

Analysis of the Relationship Between Land Air Temperatures and Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide Concentrations

Guest essay by Clyde H. Spencer, WUWT, Feb 26, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/26/analysis-of-the-relationship-between-land-air-temperatures-and-atmospheric-carbon-dioxide-concentrations/>

Making Sense of CO₂

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Feb 26, 2016

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/02/26/making-sense-of-co2/>

[SEPP Comment: No direct relationship between CO₂ and Temperatures.]

Changing Weather

NASA sees a different kind of El Niño

By Staff Writers, Greenbelt MD (SPX), Feb 26, 2016

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/NASA_sees_a_different_kind_of_El_Niño_999.html

Link to video: El Niño Rainfall and Ocean Temperature Visualizations (video)

EurekaAlert!, AAAS, NASA/Goddard, Jan 1, 2015 to Feb 14, 2016

<http://www.eurekaalert.org/multimedia/pub/109908.php>

[SEPP Comment: Finally seeing the light!]

As Winter Reaches Its Zenith Record Cold, Heavy Snow Bring Chaos, Death Over Northern Hemisphere

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 14, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/02/14/as-winter-reaches-its-zenith-record-cold-heavy-snow-bring-chaos-death-over-northern-hemisphere/#sthash.8za1D5S4.dpbs>

NASA confirms the Pacific ‘warm blob’ has disappeared

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 16, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/16/nasa-confirms-the-pacific-warm-blob-has-disappeared/>

New NOAA forecast suggests current El Niño will fade fast, and be replaced by a strong cooling La Niña this year

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 19, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/19/new-noaa-forecast-suggests-current-el-niño-will-fade-fast-and-be-replaced-by-a-strong-cooling-la-niña-this-year/>

Changing Seas

Sea level rise

Climate Change: Global Sea Level

By Rebecca Lindsey, NOAA, Aug 30, 2009, Updated Nov 4, 2015

<https://www.climate.gov/news-features/understanding-climate/climate-change-global-sea-level>

Is sea level rise accelerating?

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Feb 23, 2016

<https://judithcurry.com/2016/02/23/is-sea-level-rise-accelerating/#more-19769>

[SEPP Comment: One of the authors of the paper proclaiming major acceleration has previously estimated massive increase.]

Did AGW slow Sea Level Rise?

Guest essay by Rud Istvan, WUWT, Feb 12, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/12/did-agw-slow-sea-level-rise/>

Link to paper: A decade of sea level rise slowed by climate-driven hydrology

By Reager, et al. Science, Feb 12, 2016

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/351/6274/699>

[SEPP Comment: Seems to be several major issues: 1) Why would groundwater storage increase in areas that regularly receive rain and 2) Ice mass on the bulk of Antarctica, East Antarctica, is increasing. Could it be that sea level rise was overestimated rather than slowing down due to groundwater storage?]

Marine virus outbreaks linked to coral bleaching

By Staff Writers, Houston TX (SPX), Feb 18, 2016

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Marine_virus_outbreaks_linked_to_coral_bleaching_999.html

Andes Have Seen No Warming Over The Past 65 Years! Powerful Natural PDO Cycle Dominates

No warming in Andes Mountains since 1950

By Dr. Sebastian Lüning and Prof. Fritz Vahrenholt, (German translated by P Gosselin), No Tricks Zone, Feb 26, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/02/26/andes-have-seen-no-warming-over-the-past-65-years-powerful-natural-pdo-cycle-dominates/#sthash.HIrc6Ep.dpbs>

Big Rise In Sea Levels During Roman Times

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 24, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/02/24/big-rise-in-sea-levels-during-roman-times/#more-20648>

Global sea levels rose faster in the 20th century than at any time in the past 3,000 years – And, Surprise, It’s Your Fault

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 23, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/02/23/global-sea-levels-rose-faster-in-the-20th-century-than-at-any-time-in-the-past-3000-years-and-surprise-its-your-fault/#more-20634>

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Arctic winter sea ice puzzle

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Feb 22, 2016

<https://judithcurry.com/2016/02/22/arctic-winter-sea-ice-puzzle/>

Un-Science or Non-Science?

Increasing drought threatens almost all U.S. forests

Press Release by Staff writers, National Science Foundation, Feb 22, 2016

http://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?cntn_id=136815&WT.mc_id=USNSF_51&WT.mc_ev=click

“Many models predict droughts are likely to become more severe, frequent and prolonged across much of the U.S.”

[SEPP Comment: No link to paper given and none found in a search of February and March issues under the author’s name.]

Lowering Standards

UN links climate change to Zika, Ebola

By Devin Henry, The Hill, Feb 19, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/270069-un-links-climate-change-to-zika-ebola>

[SEPP Comment: UNEP is one of the parent organizations of the IPCC, the WMO is the other.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Exaggerate, or be Vague?

Climate Change: Dealing With Complexity

How can we wrap our minds around the truly wicked problem of climate change?

By Frank P. Incropera, Inside Science Minds, Feb 16, 2016 [H/t Peter Salonijs]

<https://www.insidescience.org/content/climate-change-dealing-complexity/3666>

[SEPP Comment: A first step would be defining the issues clearly and precisely. The author relies on broad, vague generalizations.]

Let’s play BOM Bingo, and turn every heatwave into a media scare-fest

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Feb 19, 2016

<http://joannenova.com.au/2016/02/lets-play-bom-bingo-and-turn-every-heatwave-into-a-media-scare-fest/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Is Oregon STILL in Severe Drought?

By Cliff Mass, Weather Blog, Feb 21, 2016

<http://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2016/02/is-oregon-still-in-severe-drought.html>

“The bottom line of all this objective information is that there is absolutely no reason to suggest eastern Oregon is in severe or moderate drought. Or any kind of drought.

“Why is the NOAA, USDA, and other Federal agencies supporting and distributing such inaccurate information? It is disturbing. Folks believe and are acting upon this incorrect information.”

Model claims: Future heat waves to roast 60% of the planetary surface by 2075

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 23, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/23/model-claims-future-heat-waves-to-roast-60-of-the-planetary-surface-by-2075/>

Link to paper: Benefits of mitigation for future heat extremes under RCP4.5 compared to RCP8.5

By Tebaldi and Wehner, Climate Change, Jan 18, 2016

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10584-016-1605-5>

Stochastic Stern

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Feb 25, 2016

<http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2016/2/25/stochastic-stern.html>

Link to essay: Economics: Current climate models are grossly misleading

Nicholas Stern calls on scientists, engineers and economists to help policymakers by better modelling the immense risks to future generations, and the potential for action.

By Nicholas Stern, Nature, Feb 25, 2016

<http://www.nature.com/news/economics-current-climate-models-are-grossly-misleading-1.19416>

[SEPP Comment: Stern avoids the question: have the risks faced by future generations increased or decreased? Has he devised a way to predict future technologies? “There is huge potential in future technologies that can drive change. These are omitted or badly underestimated in our current climate modelling — deeply damaging our guidance for policymaking.”]

This Energy Goal Could Save the US Over a Trillion Dollars

By Maddie Stone, Gizmodo, Feb 22, 2016

<http://gizmodo.com/this-energy-goal-could-save-the-us-over-a-trillion-doll-1760554640>

Climate and health impacts of US emissions reductions consistent with 2 °C

By Shindell, Lee, Falubegi, Nature Climate Change, Feb 22, 2016

<http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate2935.html>

Communicating Better to the Public – Do a Poll?

A Short History of Climatism in Google Ngrams

Guest essay by Ari Halperin, WUWT, Feb 17, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/17/a-short-history-of-climatism-in-google-ngrams/>

[SEPP Comment: The inverse relationship between the use of national consensus and scientific consensus is interesting. Do those who clearly cannot assert a national consensus substitute a non-existent scientific consensus in hopes of being believed?]

Communicating Better to the Public – Use Propaganda on Children

Most Science Teachers Are Smarter Than Most Climate Journalists

By Staff Writer, The Lukewarmer’s Way, Feb 20, 2016 [H/t GWPF]

<https://thelukewarmersway.wordpress.com/2016/02/20/most-science-teachers-are-smarter-than-most-climate-journalists/>

“Climate activists aren’t angry because science teachers are getting it wrong. They’re angry because the teachers are getting it right.”

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Dangerous and Myopic

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Feb 16, 2016

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/02/16/dangerous-and-myopic/>

“Executive Order 13514, issued by the President in 2009, established marching orders for the Department of Defense (DOD) that required it to embrace alternative energy, with an emphasis on cutting CO2 emissions.”

Remember the Climate!

By Paul Driessen, ICECAP, Feb 21, 2016

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/new-and-cool/remember_the_climate1/

[SEPP Comment: Said the lieutenant as he led his men over the top. What a battle cry!]

Questioning European Green

German Consumers Paying Record Amount For Green Energy ...Energiewende On “Best Path To Financial Disaster”

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 18, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/02/18/german-consumers-paying-record-amount-for-green-energy-energiewende-on-best-path-to-financial-disaster/#sthash.dKoYhMuo.dpbs>

Was the UK's Clean Energy Shift of the 1990s Killed by EU Policies?

By John Constable, GWPF, Feb 21, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.com/was-the-uks-clean-energy-shift-of-the-1990s-killed-by-eu-policies/>

Leaving the European Union would be a leap into the light

Harmonisation, EU style, is bad for innovation

My Times column on why the EU is bad for innovation:

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Feb 22, 2016

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/the-eu-and-innovation/>

“There is no security in stagnation.

“The EU says it favours innovation, but what it means by this is not encouraging a ferment of new start-ups à la Silicon Valley, but top-down spending of taxpayers’ money on pet projects in science and technology.”

Brexit: Left and Right Unite to Eject the Green EU from Britain

Guest essay by Eric Worrall, WUWT, Feb 20, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/20/brexit-left-and-right-unite-to-eject-the-green-eu-from-britain/>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Are Environmentalism and Global Warming Effectively Religious Socialism?

Guest Opinion: Dr. Tim Ball, WUWT, Feb 21, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/21/are-environmentalism-and-global-warming-effectively-religious-socialism/>

Funding Issues

NSF in Climate Denial?

By David Wojick, posted by Patrick Michaels, Cato, Feb 23, 2016

http://www.cato.org/blog/nsf-climate-denial?utm_content=buffer2695b&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Litigation Issues

State of West Virginia, State of Texas, et al. v. EPA,

“Brief of Amici Curiae Scientists in Support of Petitioners Supporting Reversal”

<http://www.chamberlitigation.com/sites/default/files/cases/files/2015/Joseph%20S.%20Daleo,%20Harold%20Doiron,%20et%20al.%20Amicus%20Curiae%20Brief%20in%20Support%20of%20Petitioners%20--%20States%20of%20West%20Virginia,%20Texas,%20et%20al.%20v.%20EPA%20%28ESPS%29.pdf>

Peabody Energy Corp.’s Motion (Includes Laurence Tribe)

<http://www.chamberlitigation.com/sites/default/files/cases/files/2015/Opening%20Brief%20of%20Intervenors%20in%20Support%20of%20Petitioners%20--%20States%20of%20West%20Virginia%20C%20Texas%20et%20al.%20v.%20EPA%20%28ESPS%29.pdf>

Brief for Southeastern Legal Foundation as Amicus Curiae in Support of Petitioners

<http://www.chamberlitigation.com/sites/default/files/cases/files/2015/Southeastern%20Legal%20Foundation%20Amicus%20Curiae%20Brief%20in%20Support%20of%20Petitioners%20--%20States%20of%20West%20Virginia,%20Texas,%20et%20al.%20v.%20EPA%20%28ESPS%29.pdf>

Texas savors court's Clean Power Plan ruling

By Mark Lisher, Watchdog.org, Feb 18, 2016

<http://watchdog.org/257054/power-plan-texas/>

Crowell & Moring's Lorenzen says rule will not survive legal challenges

Transcript by Staff Writers, EETV, Feb 18, 2016

<http://www.eenews.net/tv/videos/2095/transcript>

Twenty States Call on Supreme Court to Stay EPA Mercury Rule

By Sonal Patel, Power Mag, Feb 25, 2016

http://www.powermag.com/twenty-states-call-on-supreme-court-to-stay-epa-mercury-rule/?hq_e=el&hq_m=3216218&hq_l=3&hq_v=5e660500d0

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

How To Harm Americans

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Feb 19, 2016

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/02/19/how-to-harm-americans/>

Time for a Carbon Tax

By Kemal Derviş, VP Brookings, Karim Foda, Brookings, Project Syndicate, Feb 15, 2016

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/time-for-a-carbon-tax-by-kemal-dervis-and-karim-foda-2016-02>

MIT: Green Energy Can't Work Unless You Tax Everything

By Andrew Follet, Daily Caller, Feb 25, 2016

<http://dailycaller.com/2016/02/25/mit-green-energy-cant-work-unless-you-tax-everything/>

Link to press release on the paper: Will we ever stop using fossil fuels?

Not without a carbon tax, suggests a study by an MIT economist.

By Peter Dizikes, MIT News Office, Feb 24, 2016

<http://news.mit.edu/2016/carbon-tax-stop-using-fossil-fuels-0224>

From press release: "The study concludes that burning all available fossil fuels would raise global average temperatures 10 to 15 degrees Fahrenheit by the year 2100; burning oil shale and methane hydrates, two more potential sources of copious fossil fuels, would add another 1.5 to 6.2 degrees Fahrenheit to that."

"The scholars examine costs over a time frame of five to 10 years, stating that further forecasts would be quite speculative, although the trend of cheaper fossil fuels could continue longer."

[SEPP Comment: No link to paper. The analysis is quite speculative. The press release contains another plea for a carbon tax and ignores the critical problem, storing electricity on an affordable, commercial scale.]

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Tax Oil to Subsidize Wind?

By Paul Driessen, ICECAP, Feb 16, 2016

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/political-climate/tax_oil_to_subsidize_wind/

EPA and other Regulators on the March

You Ought to Have a Look: Fighting DoE Efficiency Standards, Fracking to Go Global, and a ‘Hairy Panic’

By Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger and Patrick J. Michaels, Cato, Feb 19, 2016

<http://www.cato.org/blog/you-ought-have-look-fighting-doe-efficiency-standards-fracking-go-global-hairy-panic>

Energy Issues – Non-US

A stunning ‘hockey stick’ – How access to energy brought humanity forward

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 22, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/22/a-stunning-hockey-stick-how-access-to-energy-brought-humanity-forward/>

Low oil prices are a good thing

The shale revolution has changed the world

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Feb 14, 2016

<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/the-oil-price/>

A Pact That Cannot Stop The Flow Of Cheap Oil

Editorial, Financial Times, Via GWPF, Feb 18, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.com/a-pact-that-cannot-stop-the-flow-of-cheap-oil/>

Security Of Energy Supply In The United Kingdom

By Staff Writers, GWPF, Feb 18, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.com/security-of-energy-supply-in-the-united-kingdom/>

Britain has lost over 15.4 GW of dispatchable electricity generating capacity in the last five years, with no equivalent replacement; this has resulted in especially tight capacity margins.

UK Blackout Risk – Amber Warning

By Euan Mearns, Energy Matters, Feb 11, 2016 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://euanmearns.com/uk-blackout-risk-amber-warning/>

Germany Made \$2 Billion Selling Energy to Neighbors

By Staff Writers, Understand Solar, Feb 18, 2016

<http://understandsolars.com/germany-made-2-billion-selling-solar-power-to-neighbors/>

[SEPP Comment: If Germany is making so much money selling excess power, why do consumer rates keep increasing?]

Energy Issues -- US

NASA Helps Power Grids Weather Geomagnetic Storms

By Sarah Frazier for GSFC News, Greenbelt MD (SPX), Feb 18, 2016

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/NASA_Helps_Power_Grids_Weather_Geomagnetic_Storms_999.html

N. Korea Satellite Could Carry EMP Capability

By Larry Bell, Newsmax, Feb 22, 2016

<http://www.newsmax.com/LarryBell/north-korea-nuclear-satellite/2016/02/22/id/715456/>

Is a national high voltage transmission system the cheapest way to cut emissions?

Scientists call for HVDC lines connecting the nation's wind, solar, and power markets

By Herman K. Trabish, Utility Dive, Feb 19, 2016

<http://www.utilitydive.com/news/is-a-national-high-voltage-transmission-system-the-cheapest-way-to-cut-emis/413867/>

Link to base report: Rapid, affordable energy transformation possible

NOAA, CIRES study: Wind, sun could eclipse fossil fuels for electric power by 2030

By Staff Writers, NOAA, Jan 25, 2016

<http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2016/012516-rapid-affordable-energy-transformation-possible.html>

Link to paper: Future cost-competitive electricity systems and their impact on US CO2 emissions

By MacDonald, Clack, Alexander, Dunbar, Wilczak & Xie, Nature Climate Change, Jan 25, 2016

<http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate2921.html>

From abstract: Our results show that when using future anticipated costs for wind and solar, carbon dioxide emissions from the US electricity sector can be reduced by up to 80% relative to 1990 levels, without an increase in the levelized cost of electricity.

From the base report: Since the sun is shining or winds are blowing somewhere across the United States all of the time, MacDonald theorized that the key to resolving the dilemma of intermittent renewable generation might be to scale up the renewable energy generation system to match the scale of weather systems.”

[SEPP Comment: One issue is “future anticipated costs” and a second issue is predicting a sudden drop in production which triggers a demand for back-up. Both low costs and reliability have been over-promised and under delivered.]

Water Heater Confusion

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Feb 23, 2016

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/02/23/water-heater-confusion/>

[SEPP Comment: When “load shedding” becomes “demand response” and hyped as “hidden batteries”, it is a change in rhetoric, not substance.]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

No sign of Peak Oil

By Martin Livermore, The Scientific Alliance, Feb 18, 2016

<http://scientific-alliance.org/node/980>

Daniel Yergin: Energy industry at its “day of reckoning”

By Collin Eaton, Fuel Fix, Feb 19, 2016

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2016/02/19/daniel-yergin-energy-industry-at-its-day-of-reckoning/>

[SEPP Comment: Another oil shortage has become another oil glut.]

Exxon Mobil fails to replace production for first time in 22 years

By Staff Writers, Bloomberg, Feb 19, 2016

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2016/02/19/exxon-mobil-fails-to-replace-production-for-first-time-in-22-years/>

[SEPP Comment: Did the oil glut have something to do with spending decisions?]

From Imports to Exports [of Natural Gas]

By Editors, Real Clear Energy, Feb 26, 2016

http://www.realclearenergy.org/charticles/2016/02/26/from_imports_to_exports_109043.html

[SEPP Comment: The US Energy Information Administration projects net exports starting mid-2017.]

Sand mining operations often misunderstood by critics

By William Balgord, Cap Times, Madison Wisconsin, Feb 20, 2016

http://host.madison.com/ct/opinion/column/william-d-balgord-sand-mining-operations-often-misunderstood-by-critics/article_b607fcee-9090-5bab-b140-2c3685441445.html

Return of King Coal?

Keeping coal in the ground buries affordable energy

By Mark J. Perry, IBD, Feb 18, 2016

<http://www.aei.org/publication/keeping-coal-in-the-ground-buries-affordable-energy-2/>

<http://www.investors.com/politics/brain-trust/mark-perry-keeping-coal-in-the-ground-buries-affordable-energy/>

Nuclear Energy and Fears

China Could Have a Meltdown-Proof Nuclear Reactor Next Year

Two high-temperature, gas-cooled reactors under construction in Shandong will make up the first commercial-scale plant of its type in the world.

By Richard Martin, MIT Technology Review, Feb 11, 2016 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<https://www.technologyreview.com/s/600757/china-could-have-a-meltdown-proof-nuclear-reactor-next-year/>

Idaho National Laboratory site permit issued for SMR project

By Staff Writers, WNNW, Feb 19, 2016 [H/t Steven Unikewicz]

<http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/NN-Idaho-National-Laboratory-site-permit-issued-for-SMR-project-19021601.html>

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

17 sperm whales stranded on beaches in a vast offshore windfarm zone

By Staff Writers, World Council for Nature, Feb 2, 2016 [H/t Mark Duchamp]

<http://wcfn.org/2016/02/02/wind-turbines-and-marine-mammals/>

Whales: An Offshore Wind Issue

By Paul Driessen and Mark Duchamp, Master Resource, Feb 18, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/offshore-windpower-issues/whales-offshore-wind/>

[SEPP Comment: North Sea whale stranding: An issue that needs to be examined.]

AWED Energy & Environmental Newsletter: February 15, 2016

By John Droz, Jr., Master Resource, Feb 15, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/alliance-for-wise-energy-decisions/awed-energy-environmental-newsletter-february-15-2016/>

2015 Turned Out To Be A Terrible Year For Wind Power

By Andrew Follett, Daily Caller, Feb 24, 2016

<http://dailycaller.com/2016/02/24/2015-turned-out-to-be-a-terrible-year-for-wind-power/>

Link to report: DNV GL study: El Niño not cause of 2015 “Wind Drought”

The unprecedented drop in windiness affecting vast swaths of the United States in 2015 cannot be explained by the impacts of El Niño.

By Daran Rife, Mesoscale Modeling, Feb 15, 2016

<https://www.dnvgl.com/news/dnv-gl-study-el-nino-not-cause-of-2015-wind-drought--57798>

AWED Energy & Environmental Newsletter: February 15, 2016

By John Droz, Jr., Master Resource, Feb 15, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/alliance-for-wise-energy-decisions/awed-energy-environmental-newsletter-february-15-2016/>

Moniz: U.S. needs investments in clean energy

By Ernest Moniz, Austin American Statesman, Feb 19, 2016

<http://www.mystatesman.com/news/news/opinion/moniz-us-needs-investments-in-clean-energy/nqSLz/>

[SEPP Comment: The Secretary of Energy gets the cart before horse. What is needed is cost-effective storage of electricity. Also, the US does not need “energy breakthroughs to ensure energy security.” Production from shale is accomplishing this, and off-shore resources are more than adequate.]

When Wind Power Needs a 'Haircut'

By Editors, Real Clear Energy, Feb 25, 2016

http://www.realclearenergy.org/charticles/2016/02/25/when_wind_power_gets_a_haircut_109041.html

[SEPP Comment: Links to an article discussing a few reasons why marketed capacity is not actual capacity.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

‘Peak Oil’ Over, Economists Study Climate Policy Costs

By Robert Michaels, Master Resource, Feb 17, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/peak-oil-fixitydepletion/peak-oil-over-economists-climate/>

“In a 2014 ‘EV Everywhere Grand Challenge’ study, the US Department of Energy finds that the current battery cost is \$325 per kWh. At a battery cost of \$325 per kWh, the price of oil would need to exceed \$350 per barrel before the electric vehicle was cheaper to operate.”

Carbon Schemes

Carbon dioxide stored underground can find multiple ways to escape

By Staff Writers, University Park PA (SPX), Feb 15, 2016

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Carbon_dioxide_stored_underground_can_find_multiple_ways_to_escape_999.html

California Dreaming

Will Drought-Hit California Squander Its El Nino Water Bounty?

By Monica Showalter, IBD, Feb 22, 2016

<http://www.investors.com/politics/capital-hill/will-drought-hit-california-squander-its-el-nino-water-bounty/>

Health, Energy, and Climate

Zika Virus Infections in the Americas and the DDT Question

By Don Roberts, ACSH, Feb 23, 2016

<http://acsh.org/news/2016/02/23/zika-virus-infections-in-the-americas-and-the-ddt-question/>

Having sowed the seeds of a public health crisis of the three viral diseases listed above, the U.S. must now help to find solutions. New larval control insecticides are needed that combine DDT's action of repellency, toxicity, and persistence, on or in water containers. Countries should be encouraged to put aside environmental extremism and use DDT if field tests give favorable results.

[SEPP Comment: Revealing maps of the control, then spread, of Aedes aegypti mosquito from 1930 to 1954 to 1998. A very successful program for human health was opposed by US officials.]

5.5 million dying from air pollution, shame no one cares

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Feb 19, 2016

<http://joannenova.com.au/2016/02/5-5-million-dying-from-air-pollution-shame-no-one-cares/#more-47811>

[SEPP Comment: Many incidents of death and respiratory diseases would be eliminated with electricity from modern coal-fired power plants. For analysis, see link immediately below.]

Smoke and mirrors?

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Via ICECAP, Feb 26, 2016

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/political-climate/smoke_and_mirrors1/

Current Wisdom: Swatting Away the Zika/Climate Change Connection

By Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger and Patrick J. Michaels, Cato, Feb 19, 2016

<http://www.cato.org/blog/current-wisdom-swatting-away-zikaclimate-change-connection>

Study: Poor air quality kills 5.5 million worldwide annually

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 13, 2016

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/02/13/study-poor-air-quality-kills-5-5-million-worldwide-annually/>

[SEPP Comment: Modern power plants with scrubbers are not a major cause.]

Environmental Industry

The Greens' Nuclear Identity Crisis

The environmentalism of the 1970s is being challenged by technology-loving climate activists.

By Robert Bryce National Review, Feb 17, 2016

<http://www.nationalreview.com/article/431460/nuclear-energy-greens-support>

Walking the climate talk

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Feb 21, 2016

<https://judithcurry.com/2016/02/21/walking-the-climate-talk/#more-21153>

Other Scientific News

The National Weather Service's New Supercomputers Are Operational!

By Cliff Mass, Weather Blog, Feb 23, 2016

<http://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2016/02/the-national-weather-services-new.html>

Scientists discover new microbes that thrive deep in the earth

By Staff Writers, Uppsala, Sweden (SPX), Feb 16, 2016

http://www.terraviva.com/reports/Scientists_discover_new_microbes_that_thrive_deep_in_the_earth_999.html

Link to paper: Genomic inference of the metabolism of cosmopolitan subsurface *Archaea*, *Hadesarchaea*

By Baker, et al. Nature Microbiology, Feb 15, 2016

<http://www.nature.com/articles/nmicrobiol20162>

NASA Maps El Nino's Shift on U.S. Precipitation

By Kasha Patel for GSFC News, Greenbelt MD (SPX), Feb 26, 2016

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/NASA_Maps_El_Ninos_Shift_on_U_S_Precipitation_999.html

Harp seal: most abundant Arctic seal is an undervalued polar bear prey species

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Feb 24, 2016

<https://polarbearscience.com/2016/02/24/harp-seal-most-abundant-arctic-seal-is-an-undervalued-polar-bear-prey-species/>

#####

BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

f you try hard enough everything can be about climate change

By Staff Writers, Climate Change Predictions, Feb 19, 2016

<http://climatechangepredictions.org/uncategorized/5889>

Link to paper: Long-term daily contact with Spanish missions triggered collapse of Native American populations in New Mexico

New evidence shows severe and rapid collapse of Pueblo populations occurred in the 17th century and triggered a cascade of ecological effects that ultimately had consequences for global climates

By Staff Writers, SMU, Jan 25, 2016

<http://blog.smu.edu/research/2016/01/25/long-term-daily-contact-with-spanish-missions-triggered-collapse-of-native-american-populations-in-new-mexico/>

Peak Exaggeration? Solar, wind may save life in the Universe for 4 billion years: “top” climate scientist

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Feb 16, 2016

<http://joannenova.com.au/2016/02/solar-wind-may-save-life-in-the-universe-for-4-billion-years-top-climate-scientist/>

A wake up call

By Staff Writers, Climate Change Predictions.org, Feb 24, 2016

<http://climatechangepredictions.org/uncategorized/5899>

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change projects significant disruption to coffee production as the planet warms.

Sydney Morning Herald, 31 Mar 2014

150,000 penguins die after iceberg smashes into their breeding grounds in Antarctica amid fears entire colony could be wiped out

By Corey Charlton, Daily Mail, UK, Feb 14, 2016

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3446375/150-000-Antarctica-penguins-die-iceberg-grounding-study.html>

[SEPP Comment: False alarm, see link below.]

The Case of the 150,000 ‘Dead’ Penguins

You may have read that an Antarctic colony of penguins was trapped by an iceberg and died, killed by climate change. But there's a twist: All parts of the story turn out to be untrue.

By Ben Collins, Daily Beast, Feb 22, 2016

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2016/02/22/the-case-of-the-150-000-dead-penguins.html>

#####

ARTICLES:

Please note that articles not linked easily or summarized here are reproduced in the Articles Section of the full TWTW that can be found on the web site under the date of the TWTW.

1. The Paris Climate Accord: Hope, Change – and Collapse

By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Feb 23, 2016

http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2016/02/paris_climate_accord_hope_change_and_colla_pse.html

SUMMARY: The Paris Accord on global warming, concluded in December 2015, had been viewed as an enhancement of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. But only some weeks later, the Supreme Court of the US effectively “killed” EPA’s power plan, the centerpiece of the US commitment to the Paris Accord, by placing a “stay” on the implementation of the power plan.

2. Methane Leaks: Major Distraction, Minor Ill

Costly federal regulation of methane could be counterproductive to the goal of reducing U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions.

By S. Fred Singer, Letter, WSJ, Feb 15, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/methane-leaks-major-distraction-minor-ill-1455557976>

AS SUBMITTED:

The regs proposed by EPA [WSJ, Jan 22, and Krupp op-ed, Feb 3, 2016] to cut methane emitted by flared and leaked gas have no basis in science.

While it is true that each molecule shows strong infrared (IR) absorption bands -- and therefore CH₄ qualifies (in theory) to be called a “greenhouse” (GH) gas -- its actual climate impact is essentially zero -- for three independent reasons:

1. The number of molecules is too small -- only 1% of CO₂ and only 0.01% of water vapor (WV), the most important atmospheric GH gas
2. Absorption by strong IR bands of WV overlaps (“shades”) those of CH₄
3. There is only a minor amount of energy in the IR emission from the Earth’s surface in the region of CH₄ absorption bands.

There are of course valid economic reasons for fixing leaks. But the proposed EPA regs will have no perceptible effect on global climate, constitute a complete waste of resources, and put a heavy economic burden on the energy industry – with all costs, like any tax, passed along to consumers who can least afford them. However, they clearly demonstrate EPA’s lack of scientific expertise in fashioning regulations. Courts that normally “defer” to EPA should pay attention to this example.

3. Antonin Scalia Was Democracy’s Legal Champion

He changed the way judges looked at text and law, and he was the best writer the Supreme Court has ever known.

By Michael McConnell, WSJ, Feb 14, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/antonin-scalia-was-democracys-legal-champion-1455482790?mod=djemMER>

SUMMARY: Mr. McConnell is a law professor and the director of the Constitutional Law Center at Stanford Law School, and is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. He writes:

Antonin Scalia, who died Saturday at age 79, was the most influential Supreme Court justice of the past 30 years. Not because he had the votes. He was influential because he had a clear, consistent, persuasive idea of how to interpret the Constitution: It means what it says; it means what those who enacted it meant to enact.

And Justice Scalia was influential because he wrote opinions with verve and good sense, in prose that any American could read and understand. He was the best writer the Supreme Court has ever known—and with justices like John Marshall, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Robert Jackson, that is saying a lot. He was the court’s most withering logician. He showed us what a real judge can be, even on that most political court.

As a law professor, I find it a joy to teach a Scalia opinion. His opinions make clear their premises. They follow logically. Sometimes students point out that Justice Scalia is not being true to his principles. That is a compliment, because it means he has principles that can be identified and objectively applied.

“...But text and history are about more than fastidious jurisprudence. They are about democracy: allowing Americans to decide contentious questions for themselves, where the Constitution is, honestly read, silent.

*“As Justice Scalia wrote in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992), ‘if in reality our process of constitutional adjudication consists primarily of making value judgments,’ instead of ‘doing essentially lawyers’ work up here—reading text and discerning our society’s traditional understanding of that text,” then the issue is properly one for democratic debate. “The people know that their value judgments are quite as good as those taught in any law school—maybe better.” After all, he wrote, ‘value judgments should be voted on, . . . not dictated.’*

“This is fundamental. If constitutional controversies are governed by discernible law, there is a good reason to allow judges to make the decision. That is what judges do: They interpret and apply laws made by the delegates and representatives of the people at some time in the past.

“True, the results of his text-and-history approach were often conservative. He believed in a colorblind Constitution; he saw no basis in the Constitution for abortion rights; he defended the presence of religion in the public square; he defended the right to keep and bear arms; and he opposed congressional attempts to regulate campaign speech.

“On every one of those issues, he offered reasons based on text and history, never on his own philosophy or moral intuitions. He may have been wrong on some of them—I certainly disagreed with more than a few of my former law professor’s constitutional positions—but he reached his interpretations in good faith, as a judge and not as a philosopher-king. He deserves great credit for that.

“Justice Scalia’s opinions, especially his dissents, scintillated with wit, blistered with scorn and often soared with appreciation for our constitutional heritage. No one brought more laughter to oral arguments or more trepidation to oral advocates. Sometimes he went too far. But he made his mark. As a result of his three decades on the Supreme Court bench, constitutional law more

closely resembles what the Constitution actually says. The American people had their democratic champion. He will be sorely missed.”

4. Only Eight Justices? So What

A Supreme Court vacancy doesn't make the justice system grind to a halt. History shows that it merely delays rulings in a small number of cases.

By Josh Blackman and Ilya Shapiro, WSJ, Feb 23, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/only-eight-justices-so-what-1456272088>

SUMMARY: Mr. Blackman is a constitutional law professor at the South Texas College of Law. Mr. Shapiro is a senior fellow in constitutional studies at the Cato Institute. Both have filed briefs on Cato's behalf in pending Supreme Court cases.

The authors discuss numerous instances and cases that were decided when there were only 8 jurists on the Supreme Court. The authors conclude:

“This history shows that today's court is more than capable of doing its work with eight justices. By far the majority of cases the Roberts court decides aren't closely contested. Last term only 19 of the 74 decided cases went 5-4. Of those, Justice Scalia was in the majority only six times. Yet regardless of what happens in any particular case, Justice Scalia's absence—while a huge loss for the nation—hardly hampers the functioning of the Supreme Court even if his seat remains vacant until after the election.”

#####