

The Week That Was: 2014-02-15 (February 15, 2014)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: *It is impossible for a man to learn what he thinks he already knows.*

Epictetus [H/t Tim Ball]

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Number of the Week: From about 50,000 barrels per day to 1,286,000 barrels per day.

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Severe Weather-Floods: This winter's flooding in South-West England and South Wales has set off a political storm of accusations and finger-pointing. One set of claims blame the floods on the government's failure to maintain dredging of the rivers in region and the development of homes in flood-plains. Defending themselves, some government officials claim that the local rains are proof of human-caused climate change – namely that human emissions of greenhouse gases are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming/climate change. The Green party has announced that all officials who do not embrace the claim should be purged from government. It appears that it is now fashionable for politicians to claim climate change when they have failed to prepare for severe weather events that have been occurring for centuries. Hurricane/Northeaster Sandy was another example. Though the storm was large and hit at an unusually high tide, New York City and Long Island have been hit by more intense storms in the past. However, the politicians conveniently ignore history.

Paul Homewood has performed yeoman-work in presenting the historical record dating to 1910, and earlier, of precipitation for the South-Western region of England and Wales. The November through January precipitation has been significant, but has been exceeded in the past, particularly in 1929-1930. Homewood plotted the years with the most significant precipitation. Wet years appear to occur in clusters, suggesting that the British Met Office seek meteorological patterns that are common for these years. However, such activities are not fashionable for those who favor computer models.

Speaking of those driven by computer models. The Met Office had forecast that this winter would be drier than normal. It has come under severe criticism for this forecast and forecasts in 13 of the past 14 years when it forecasted warmer weather than what occurred. See links under Models v. Observations, Model Issues, and Changing Weather – Floods

Severe Weather – California Drought: California has an under-appreciated engineering marvel in its complex system of capturing storm and spring runoff to prevent flooding and storing the water for irrigation and drinking water in the more arid regions of the state. The system was designed to withstand multi-year droughts of about 5 years. It worked well. Water from wet years was used for dry years.

Unfortunately, Green politicians and environmental organizations could not keep their hands off a system that works well. They have caused much of the water needed for dry years to be diverted into the San Francisco Bay and the ocean, apparently to protect fish such as the delta smelt. Now, California is suffering from several years of drought. Orchards have dried up, and unemployment in many of the agricultural regions, such as the San Joaquin Valley, is very high. Green politicians and environmental groups are witnessing the destructive consequences of their actions. Of course, they are blaming climate change – though more severe droughts have occurred in the past.

Oblivious to the facts, President Obama chose Fresno, California, in the San Joaquin Valley, to announce that he will ask Congress for \$1 Billion to set up a Climate Resilience Fund. Resilience to severe weather events is desirable, but how these monies will be spent is questionable. Based on government reports, US expenditures on climate change since 1993 exceed \$165 billion, much of it going to questionable energy alternatives, and for wind and solar, which are unreliable, disruptive, expensive sources of electricity. Will a Climate Resilience Fund be properly used to prepare for severe weather events or will it be wasted? See links under Changing Weather – Droughts and Expanding the Orthodoxy.

Another Katrina Victim? Ray Nagin was mayor of New Orleans when Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, flooding the city and taking some 1,500 lives. He was among the first to loudly blame the Bush administration for the disaster. The general press amplified this claim, ignoring the fact that Nagin had failed to order evacuation of the city as Katrina approached. The general press ignored local reports that substantial Federal monies, intended to strengthen the defenses of New Orleans from hurricanes, had been diverted from their intended use to personal and political uses. Further, the general press ignored the fact that some environmental organizations had bitterly, and successfully, fought the most effective way of protecting the city, a moveable barrier system similar to the one that protects Holland from the severe storms in the North Sea.

This week, Mayor Nagin was convicted in Federal court of corruption charges, specifically bribery, fraud, and money-laundering. The record shows that Mr. Nagin was following a long-established tradition in New Orleans, diverting Federal funds intended to protect the citizens from hurricanes. Apparently, the thinking was that the next major hurricane would occur when someone else was responsible. Was Mr. Nagin a victim of this thinking? Will this be the model for a Climate Resilience Fund? See link under Litigation Issues.

Headed for the Exits? The ink is hardly dry on the scientific and technical assessment of UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fifth Assessment Report (AR5), *Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis*, which claims that “warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented over decades to millennia.” According to the web site, the report is 1535 pages long.

According to the Summary for Policymakers (SPM), the only natural influence on global warming/climate change is a slight increase in solar irradiance – light energy from the sun, mostly visible or infrared. The authors of the SPM express very high confidence that the climate models are correct, but state there may be some inconsistency between the model results and the observed for short periods, 10 to 15 years.

Already, it appears that some members of the climate establishment are subtly expressing doubt about this certainty. Two different papers by two distinctly different members of the climate establishment suggest that there may be more natural effects on climate than solar irradiance. The papers do not explicitly state that the authors are challenging the IPCC, for such a statement would prevent the papers from being published in most journals.

One paper, English, et al, published by *Nature Climate Change* attempts to explain the fact that there has been no significant surface warming for 16 to 17 years, which the models failed to predict. Instead, the paper blames the lack of warming on changing intensity of the trade winds in the Pacific. The winds are getting stronger. Aside from the fact the area studied is very small,

there are a number of difficulties with this paper. It is opposite of what the principal author claimed a few years ago. The English et al. paper is demolished by David Whitehouse and, writing separately, William Kininmonth. Kininmonth suggests that the authors may have confused cause with effect. *“The question is, does the changing atmospheric circulation regulate the ocean circulation on multi-decadal timescales as proposed by England et. al.? Or is it more plausible that changing ocean overturning on multi-decadal timescales regulate the atmospheric circulation to produce the observed oscillations (such as the Pacific Decadal Oscillation – PDO)?”*

Given that the heat content of the atmosphere is equivalent to that of the top 4 metres of the ocean and the mass of the atmosphere is equivalent to the top 10 metres of the ocean it is unlikely that the atmosphere tail wags the ocean dog!”

The second paper by Chylek, et al., published in Geophysical Research Letters, suggests the lack of warming is caused by a combination of changes in the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) in the Pacific and the Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO). Now we have another natural cause.

The question is, if Chylek, et al. are correct, did these natural events, ENSO and AMO, cause some of the late 20th century warming? If so, according to the IPCC SPM, they have not been properly considered in the models, in which the authors of the SPM express very high confidence. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy, Un-Science or Non-Science? and <http://climatechange2013.org/>

A Different 96%: Climate alarmists managed to get about 105 Olympic athletes, mostly Americans, to sign a petition about global warming/climate change. Luboš Motl calculated the number was about 4% of the athletes attending, or 96% did not sign. Motl also points out that the Olympics are being held in a former, premier, summer resort city of the former Soviet Union. The average February low is above freezing, 2.5°C (36.5°F), and the average February high is 10.4°C (50.7°F). The organizers of the petition made the signers appear to be fools. See link under Expanding the Orthodoxy.

The Snow Effect: On Feb 7, the New York Times carried an op-ed piece by a skier claiming *The End of Snow* and the lack of places for future Olympic events. Apparently, the editors of the Gray Lady are so busy, they cannot look out the window and see the snow. This week, as Mr. Obama was preparing his announcement of the Climate Resilience Fund, the East Coast got hit again. The accumulation totals around the Washington suburbs ranged about 1 to 2 feet (0.3 to 0.6 meters), depending of elevation and distance from the moderating effects of the tidal Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. Based on reports, the storm did not spare New York City. Did the editors of the *Times* notice? See link under Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Magical Theories: On her blog, Melanie Phillips had an effective post on those who blame the flooding in Britain on global warming/climate change. She wrote: *“Truly, AGW [Anthropogenic Global Warming] is a magical theory that explains absolutely everything – including diametrically contradictory phenomena, lack of logic and absence of evidence – whenever people observe profoundly, ‘Something funny’s happening to the weather’.* I have another theory to explain the current deluge. It is Galileo, Newton and Einstein weeping uncontrollably from above.”

On Climate Etc., Judith Curry followed up on the theme of magical theories and presented an article by Gary Taubes on the uncertainty in nutrition science. The article appeared in the *New York Times*, and contains several statements that can apply to climate science as it is practiced by government-funded entities. One statement is: *One lesson of science, though, is that if the best you can do isn't good enough to establish reliable knowledge, first acknowledge it — relentless honesty about what can and cannot be extrapolated from data is another core principle of science — and then do more, or do something else.* See links under Questioning the Orthodoxy and Seeking a Common Ground.

Social Cost of Carbon: The Administration's totally contrived concept of Social Cost of Carbon is being discussed with additional comments due to Office of Management and Budget (OMB) on Monday, February 17. Fred Singer and Ken Haapala of SEPP have submitted separate but complementary comments. Master Resource has an article by Richard Bezdek and Paul Driessen, which briefly highlights some of the failings of this contrived effort.

“First and most fundamentally, under the law and in accordance with any valid and honest benefit-cost (B-C) analysis, both the benefits and the costs of CO2 must be considered. Thus far, the EPA and other government agency analyses, press releases and regulatory proposals have highlighted only the alleged costs of using carbon-based fuels – with an emphasis on their supposed effects on climate change. The agencies have never mentioned or compared the many clear benefits associated with those fuels.

Second, EPA claims the U.S. government is “committed to updating the current estimates, as the science and economic understanding of climate change and its impacts on society improve over time.” That too is questionable.”

The US government has eleven Federal entities, including OMB, which are willfully ignoring such principles and misleading the public. See link under Social Benefits of Carbon and http://www.americanthinker.com/2014/02/the_stealth_carbon_tax.html

Additions and Corrections. Last week TWTW linked to a post by Roy Spencer titled “95% of Climate Models Agree: The Observations Must be Wrong.” A few readers misunderstood the title, thinking Spencer believes that models take precedence over observations. We cannot speak for Roy Spencer, but TWTW doubts this is the case. Spencer displays an unusual sense of humor that is frequently misunderstood. See <http://www.drroyspencer.com/2014/02/95-of-climate-models-agree-the-observations-must-be-wrong/>

Number of the Week: From about 50,000 barrels per day to 1,286,000 barrels per day. Much has been written about the Bakken formation, mostly in North Dakota; but more spectacular results of smart drilling can be seen from the Eagle Ford formation in Texas, where conventional drilling and hydraulic fracturing were used for several years before smart drilling. Eagle Ford has easier access to refineries than the Bakken in North Dakota.

From 2007 through 2009, the production of oil from Eagle Ford formation was running about 50,000 barrels per day. Starting in 2010, with the application of smart drilling, production has steadily increased to an Energy Information Administration's estimated 1,286,000 barrels per day in early February 2014. As importantly, the new-well oil-production per drill-rig has increased from about 50 barrels per day to about 275 barrels per day. The projected net increase in production is about 34,000 barrels per day, from February to March, 2014.

Similarly, the natural gas production from Eagle Ford has increased from about 1,500 million cubic feet/day in 2009 to 6,260 million cubic/day for February. The new-well production per rig remains about the same: 1,200,000 per day. The projected net increase in production of natural gas is about 123,000,000 cubic feet per day, from February to March.

Two things can be observed from this experience. One, although the Administration takes credit for the shale revolution, it occurred without its assistance. The Administration has not promoted the deployment of smart drilling with special favors, special tax breaks, mandates, subsidies, etc. Previously, the government did help with research in sensor technology and horizontal drilling. Two, contrary to the claims by some, the production appears sustainable, however that is defined. The spectacular growth rate may decline, but it appears the production level will continue to grow, unless oil prices collapse or the Federal government intervenes. Note that the time frames in the links are different with one stopping in June, 2013 and the other continuing to February 2014.

<http://www.eia.gov/petroleum/drilling/pdf/eagleford.pdf>

and

<http://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/archive.cfm?my=Feb2014>

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see this week's TWTW at: www.sepp.org. The articles are at the end of the pdf.

1. The Dukes of Workplace Hazard

OSHA slams industries with billion-dollar rules the agency can't enforce.

Editorial, WSJ, Feb 10, 2014

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304680904579366601748914292?mod=I>
[TP_opinion_2](#)

[SEPP Comment: An effort to drive up the costs of smart drilling, which uses a great amount of sand?]

2. Keystone Cop: Pipeline Permit Is Kerry's Call

By Peter Nicholas, WSJ, Feb 7, 2014

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304450904579369251737986872?mod=I>
[TP_pageone_1](#)

[SEPP Comment: An extremely political person will make a "non-political" decision?]

3. The \$2.2 Billion Bird-Scorching Solar Project

At California's Ivanpah Plant, Mirrors Produce Heat and Electricity—And Kill Wildlife

By Cassandra Sweet, WSJ, Feb 12, 2014

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304703804579379230641329484?mod=I>
[WSJ_Energy_2_4_Right](#)

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Commentary: Is the Sun Rising?

Crucial Warming Question

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Feb 14, 2014

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2014/02/14/crucial-warming-question/>

Climategate Continued

New hockey team paper: models tuned to tree rings and other palaeo-climate reconstructions

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 12, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/12/new-hockey-team-paper-models-tuned-to-tree-rings-and-other-palaeo-climate-reconstructions/>

Link to paper: Using palaeo-climate comparisons to constrain future projections in CMIP5

By G.A. Schmidt, et al. Climate of the Past, Feb 5, 2014

<http://www.clim-past.net/10/221/2014/cp-10-221-2014.html>

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

The Real Motivation Behind PRP Journal Shutdown Exposed: It Challenged IPCC Science!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 14, 2014

<http://notrickszone.com/2014/02/14/the-real-motivation-behind-prp-journal-shutdown-exposed-it-challenged-ipcc-science/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

The Pacific and the Pause

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, Feb 14, 2014

<http://www.thegwpf.org/pacific-pause/>

Link to first paper: Recent intensification of wind-driven circulation in the Pacific and the ongoing warming hiatus

By England, et al, Nature Climate Change, Feb 14, 2014 (Corrected)

<http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate2106.html>

Link to second paper: The Atlantic Multi-decadal Oscillation as a dominant factor of oceanic influence on climate†

By Chylek, et al, GRL, Feb 11, 2014

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2014GL059274/abstract>

Do winds control the climate or does the ocean control the wind? Kininmonth on England 2014.

Winds of change?

By William Kininmonth, Jo Nova's Blog, Feb 10, 2014

<http://joannenova.com.au/2014/02/do-winds-control-the-climate-or-does-the-ocean-control-the-wind-kininmonth-on-england-2014/>

Standstill, What Standstill?

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, Feb 10, 2014

<http://www.thegwpf.org/standstill-standstill/>

“The global temperature for the year 2013 is consistent with the long term warming trend,” said WMO Secretary-General Michel Jarraud.

Global Wind excuse — monkey-modeling shows global warming theory is Still Not Wrong.

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Feb 11, 2014

<http://joannenova.com.au/2014/02/global-wind-excuse-monkey-modeling-shows-global-warming-theory-is-still-not-wrong/>

Questioning the Orthodoxy

A truly magical theory

By Melanie Phillips, Melanie's Blog, Feb 11, 2014
<https://www.embooks.com/blog/single/a-truly-magical-theory>

AGW movement collapsing - cooling December/January now for 20 years!

By Joe Bastardi (?), ICECAP, Feb 14, 2014
http://icecap.us/index.php/go/new-and-cool/agw_movement_collapsing_cooling_december_january_now_for_20_years/

How much weather is being caused by climate change? Maybe 1 part in 1,000.

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Feb 14, 2014
<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2014/02/how-much-weather-is-being-caused-by-climate-change-maybe-1-part-in-1000/>

Remember The Acid Rain 'Scare'? Global Warming Hysteria Is Pouring Down

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Feb 11, 2014
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2014/02/11/remember-the-acid-rain-scare-global-warming-hysteria-is-pouring-down/>

Sochi, swimming, climate, activism

By Luboš Motl, The Reference Frame, Feb 12, 2014
<http://motls.blogspot.com/2014/02/sochi-swimming-climate-activism.html#more>

Storms Whip Up Policy Debate On Climate Change

By Pilita Clark and Jim Pickard, Financial Times, Via GWPF, Feb 14, 2014
<http://www.thegwpf.org/storms-whip-policy-debate-climate-change/>

There is No Global Warming and Will Be None for Decades

By Alan Caruba, Warming Signs, Feb 10, 2014
<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2014/02/there-is-no-global-warming-and-will-be.html>

Social Benefits of Carbon

Coal is a gift from Gaia

Solar Energy Storage – A Gift from Gaia
By Viv Forbes, Via Jo Nova's Blog, Feb 11, 2014
<http://joannenova.com.au/2014/02/coal-is-a-gift-from-gaia/>
[SEPP Comment: Amusing take.]

CO2 Benefits Exceed Costs by ... 50:1, more?

By Richard Bezdek and Paul Driessen, Master Resource, Feb 11, 2014
<http://www.masterresource.org/2014/02/co2-benefits-exceed-costs/#more-29629>

Problems in the Orthodoxy

The Davos Apocalypse

By Bjørn Lomborg, Project Syndicate, Feb 14, 2014
<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/bj-rn-lomborg-criticizes-global-leaders-for-creating-an-atmosphere-of-panic-about-climate-change>

Why does the Seattle Times and other media misinform the public about climate change?

By Cliff Mass, His Weather Blog, Feb 13, 2014

<http://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2014/02/why-does-seattle-times-and-other-media.html>

One thing is clear, media misinformation about this topic is undermining the credibility of the scientific community, promulgating false information to the public, and serves as a great aid to those who deny global warming will be a serious threat later in this century.

[SEPP Comment: Certainly, Cliff Mass is not a global warming skeptic. To his credit, he is willing to ask questions that must be asked.]

Surprise! Prestigious Helmholtz Association Reopens Climate Science Debate: “Why Is Dispute Among Scientists So Fierce?”

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 11, 2014

<http://notrickszone.com/2014/02/11/surprise-prestigious-helmholtz-association-reopens-climate-science-debate-why-is-dispute-among-scientists-so-fierce/>

Obama Takes Hollande on Green Unicorn Hunt

By Walter Russell Mead & Staff, American Interest, Feb 12, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.the-american-interest.com/blog/2014/02/12/obama-takes-hollande-on-green-unicorn-hunt/>

Seeking a Common Ground

Magical theories

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Feb 13, 2014

<http://judithcurry.com/2014/02/13/magical-theories/>

One lesson of science, though, is that if the best you can do isn't good enough to establish reliable knowledge, first acknowledge it — relentless honesty about what can and cannot be extrapolated from data is another core principle of science — and then do more, or do something else.

UK-US Workshop Part III: Strategies for robust decision making for climate adaptation

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc. Feb 14, 2014

<http://judithcurry.com/2014/02/14/uk-us-workshop-part-iii-strategies-for-robust-decision-making-for-climate-adaptation/>

Plastic bags: a big concern or just a high-profile target?

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Feb 14, 2014

<http://scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/plastic-bags-big-concern-or-just-high-profile-target>

[SEPP Comment: More a “feel good” exercise for politicians who must do something.]

The global warming pause: the dangers of politicising science

By Ben Pile, Spiked, Feb 12, 2014 [H/t NFC]

<http://www.spiked-online.com/global-warming-pause.html#.Uv50DPldXCv>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

For a full list of articles see www.NIPCCreport.org

Future Global Water Stress

Reference: Wiltshire, A., Gornall, J., Booth, B., Dennis, E., Falloon, P., Kay, G., McNeall, D., McSweeney, C. and Betts, R. 2013. The importance of population, climate change and CO₂ plant physiological forcing in determining future global water stress. *Global Environmental Change* 23: 1083-1097.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2014/feb/11feb2014a1.html>

A better freshwater future is likely in store for humanity in a CO₂-enriched world of the future, and that's a good thing!

Simulating the South Asian Monsoon: A Revealing Status Update

Reference: Islam, S., Tang, Y. and Jackson P.L. 2013. Asian monsoon simulations by Community Climate Models CAM4 and CCSM4. *Climate Dynamics* 41: 2617-2642.

<http://nippcreport.org/articles/2014/feb/11feb2014a2.html>

A 1000-Year SST History of the NE Atlantic and Nordic Seas

Reference: Cunningham, L.K., Austin, W.E.N., Knudsen, K.L., Eiriksson, J., Scourse, J.D., Wannamaker Jr., A.D., Butler, P.G., Cage, A.G., Richter, T., Husum, K., Hald, M., Andersson, C., Zorita, E., Linderholm, H.W., Gunnarson, B.E., Sicre, M.-A., Sejrup, H.P., Jiang, H. and Wilson, R.J.S. 2013. Reconstructions of surface ocean conditions from the northeast Atlantic and Nordic seas during the last millennium. *The Holocene* 23: 921-935.

<http://nippcreport.org/articles/2014/feb/11feb2014a4.html>

As has been found to be the case in so many land-based assessments of the relative warmth of the Medieval and Current Warm Periods, there is nothing unusual, unnatural, or unprecedented about Earth's current level of warmth ... although it could be thought to be somewhat unusual in that, even with the 120-ppm increase in the atmosphere's CO₂ concentration that occurred over the last 1000 years, it is still not as hot now as it was back in the Medieval Warm Period.

Marine Life "Goes with the Flow" of Changing Water Properties

Reference: Poloczanska, E.S., Brown, C.J., Syderman, W.J., Kiessling, W., Schoeman, D.S., Moore, P.J., Brander, K., Bruno, J.F., Buckley, L.B., Burrows, M.T., Duarte, C.M., Halpern, B.S., Holding, J., Kappel, C.V., O'Connor, M.I., Pandolfi, J.M., Parmesan, C., Schwing, F., Thompson, S.A. and Richardson, A.J. 2013. Global imprint of climate change on marine life. *Nature Climate Change* 3: 919-925

<http://nippcreport.org/articles/2014/feb/12feb2014a2.html>

Ten Millennia of Pacific Ocean Heat Content and Temperature

Reference: Rosenthal, Y., Linsley, B.K. and Oppo, D.W. 2013. Pacific Ocean heat content during the past 10,000 years. *Science* 342: 617-621.

<http://nippcreport.org/articles/2014/feb/12feb2014a3.html>

Models v. Observations

Met Office Forecasts: A Reality Check

The Met Office's temperature forecasts issued in 13 out of the last 14 years have been too warm. None of the forecasts issued ended up too cold. That makes the errors systemic and significant.

By Staff Writers, GWPF, Feb 10, 2014

<http://www.thegwpf.org/met-office-forecasts-reality-check/>

Met Office told planners to expect a "drier than normal" winter

By Click Green Staff, Click Green, Feb 11, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.clickgreen.org.uk/news/national-news/124203-met-office-told-planners-to-expect-a-drier-than-normal-winter.html>

A spokesman for the Taxpayers Alliance, said: "The Met Office paid out millions of pounds for a supercomputer capable of performing 1 billion calculations a second, how can we be sure that is delivering value for money."

Met Office Sea Level Forecast: No Resemblance To Reality

By Paul Homewood, Not A Lot Of People Know That, Feb 11, 2014

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2014/02/11/met-office-sea-level-forecast-no-resemblance-to-reality/>

Models Issues

Global Laughing Stock UK Met Office – “Lost Touch With Reality...Corrupted Valuable British Institution”

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 10, 2014

<http://notrickszone.com/2014/02/10/global-laughing-stock-uk-met-office-lost-touch-with-reality-corrupted-valuable-british-institution/>

Another Failed Outlook: NOAA/NCEP Totally Botch 2013-2014 Winter Outlooks For USA and Europe – Exact Opposite Occurs!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 8, 2014

<http://notrickszone.com/2014/02/08/another-failed-outlook-noaancep-totally-botch-2013-2014-winter-outlooks-for-usa-and-europe-exact-opposite-occurs/>

Measurement Issues

Historical and present Total Solar Irradiance has been tinkered with again

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 10, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/10/historical-and-present-total-solar-irradiance-has-been-tinkered-with-again/>

Changing Weather

UK Floods

So what about 1929, Julia?

By Paul Homewood, Not A Lot Of People Know That, Feb 9, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2014/02/09/so-what-about-1929-julia/>

January 2014 Rainfall Not So Unusual

By Paul Homewood, Not A Lot Of People Know That, Feb 13, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2014/02/13/january-2014-rainfall-not-unusual/>

Somerset Floods – February Update

By Paul Homewood, Not A Lot Of People Know That, Feb 13, 2014 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2014/02/13/6989/>

The Misbehaving Jet Stream

By Paul Homewood, Not A Lot Of People Know That, Feb 8, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2014/02/08/the-misbehaving-jet-stream/>

Climate change is NOT main cause of floods, say experts: Building on plains and cutting down trees are among the true reasons

By Ben Spencer, Mail, UK, Jan 21, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2543600/Climate-change-NOT-main-cause-floods-say-experts-Building-plains-cutting-trees-true-reasons.html>

Follow the money

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Feb 10, 2014

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2014/2/10/follow-the-money.html>

Floods on the Somerset Levels: a sad tale of ignorance and neglect

By Colin Clark, Water Power, Feb 6, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.waterpowermagazine.com/features/featurefloods-on-the-somerset-levels-a-sad-tale-of-ignorance-and-neglect-4172602/>

UK floods: Government 'made a mistake' by not dredging

By Staff Writers, BBC, Feb 9, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-26106290>

California Drought

California's Drought Isn't Due To Global Warming, But Politics

Editorial, IBD, Feb 14, 2014

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/021414-690216-failure-to-use-water-infrastructure-is-destroying-farms.htm?p=full>

California Drought

By Dr. Tony Phillips for NASA Science News

Huntsville AL (SPX) Feb 12, 2014

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/California_Drought_999.html

Other Changing Weather

Record Freezing Weather Puts Serious Crimp In Global Warming Argument

Editorial, IBD, Feb 11, 2014 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/021114-689673-how-can-we-be-warming-when-its-so-cold.htm?p=full>

Most Great Lakes ice since the mid 1990s UPDATED - 88.4% coverage

By Joe D'Aleo, ICECAP, Feb 8, 2014

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/in-the-news/most_great_lakes_ice_since_mid_1990s_785_coverage/

[SEPP Comment: Will this reduce lake effect snow in Buffalo, NY?]

Changing Climate

Medieval Warm Period in the Contiguous United States

By Staff Writers, SPPI, Feb 13, 2014

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/originals/medieval_warm_period_in_the_contiguous_united_states.html

Link to paper: Medieval Warm Period in the Contiguous United States

By Staff Writers, Center for the Study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, Feb 12, 2014

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/images/stories/papers/originals/mwp_contiguous_us.pdf

Un-Science or Non-Science?

England, oh England

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Feb 14, 2014

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2014/2/14/england-oh-england.html>

Seven years ago, we were told the opposite of what the new Matthew England paper says: slower (not faster) trade winds caused ‘the pause’

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 14, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/10/seven-years-ago-we-were-told-the-opposite-of-what-the-new-matthew-england-paper-says-slower-not-faster-trade-winds-caused-the-pause/>

A review of Professor Matthew England’s ‘say anything’ past failed claims

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 10, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/10/a-review-of-professor-matthew-englands-say-anything-past-failed-claims/>

England Passes Wind and Discovers Heat at Bottom.

By Anthony Cox, NCTCSP, Feb 11, 2014

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2014/02/england-passes-wind-and-discovers-heat.html>

Quick Comments on England et al. (2014)

By Bob Tisdale, His Blog, Feb 10, 2014

<http://bobtisdale.wordpress.com/2014/02/10/quick-comments-on-england-et-al-2014/#more-6349>

How would England et al (2014) know if recent trade wind strength was “unprecedented” when there is little real data to support such a claim?

ScienceShot: Pacific Ocean Keeping Earth Cool—For Now

By Sid Perkins, Science, Feb 10, 2014 [H/t Ken Capron]

<http://news.sciencemag.org/climate/2014/02/scienceshot-pacific-ocean-keeping-earth-cool%E2%80%94now>

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

Now on Google Earth: 150 Years of Global Temperature Data

By Douglas McCormick, Spectrum, Feb 10, 2014 [H/t Paul Sheridan]

<http://spectrum.ieee.org/tech-talk/at-work/test-and-measurement/now-on-google-earth-150-years-of-global-temperature-data>

[SEPP Comment: 150 years of “global data” is a significant exaggeration.]

Australia: more skeptics than believers, and few really care about “Climate change”

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Feb 9, 2014

<http://joannenova.com.au/2014/02/australia-more-skeptics-than-believers-and-few-really-care-about-climate-change/#more-33264>

[SEPP Comment: Consequences of past exaggerations?]

Polar bear population now officially 13,071-24,238 says IUCN Polar Bear Specialist Group

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Feb 14, 2014

<http://polarbearscience.com/2014/02/14/polar-bear-population-now-officially-13071-24238-says-iucn-polar-bear-specialist-group/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

The End of Snow

By Porter Fox, NYT, Feb 7, 2014

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/08/opinion/sunday/the-end-of-snow.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=edit_th_20140209&r=0

The End of Snow? New York Times hypes yet another warmist lie that snow is disappearing

By Joseph D'Aleo, ICECAP, Feb 7, 2014

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

Potsdam Institute Scientist Rahmstorf Suggests Man Could Guide Planet Back To A “Stable Climate”... Warns Of “More Surprises”!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 12, 2014

<http://notrickszone.com/2014/02/12/potsdam-institute-scientist-rahmstorf-suggests-man-could-guide-planet-back-to-a-stable-climate-warns-of-more-surprises/>

[SEPP Comment: Would like to see the definition of a stable climate – was it Camelot?]

+++**Alas Smith**+++

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Feb 10, 2014

<http://www.bishop-hill.net/blog/2014/2/10/alas-smith.html>

The IPCC Official and the Loaded Gun

By Donna Laframboise, NFC, Feb 13, 2014

<http://nofrackingconsensus.com/2014/02/13/the-ipcc-official-and-the-loaded-gun/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Go Personal.

Wackadoodle 350.org protesters disappear their KKK moment

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 13, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/13/wackadoodle-350-org-protesters-disappear-their-kkk-moment/>

Expanding the Orthodoxy

1 billion dollars to push their climate agenda

By Alex Guillén, Politico, Via WUWT, Feb 14, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/14/1-billion-dollars-to-push-their-climate-agenda/>

Amidst bitter cold and rising energy costs, new concerns about energy insecurity

By Staff Writers, New York NY (SPX), Feb 14, 2014

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Amidst_bitter_cold_and_rising_energy_costs_new_concerns_about_energy_insecurity_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Why is the Federal government subsidizing unreliable and expensive solar and wind, and many state governments requiring it.]

Household explosion replaces population explosion as world concern

By Staff Writers, East Lansing, Mich. (UPI) Feb 11, 2013

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Household_explosion_replaces_population_explosion_as_world_concern_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Something else to create fear in the general population and grants to those who study such things.]

Sochi, swimming, climate, activism

By Luboš Motl, The Reference Frame, Feb 12, 2014

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2014/02/sochi-swimming-climate-activism.html#more>

These Olympians Get A Gold Medal In Poor Judgment

Editorial, IBD, Feb 13, 2014

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/021314-690052-athletes-politicize-olympics-over-climate-change.htm?p=full>

[SEPP Comment: Should these Olympians use forms of transportation that do not emit CO2 to get to and from their events?]

Questioning European Green

Europe's New Climate Targets: Myth & Reality

By Staff Writers, GWPF, Feb 12, 2014

<http://www.thegwgf.org/europes-climate-targets-myth-reality/>

Austria burdened by Germany's shift to green power

By Vera Eckert, Reuters, Feb 12, 2014

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/12/us-austria-energy-germany-idUSBREA1B0ZL20140212>

EU state aid rules hit flagship renewable energy projects

By Guy Chazan, Alex Barker and Pilita Clark, Financial Times, Feb 12, 2014

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/fa74a080-901d-11e3-ae9-00144feab7de.html?siteedition=intl#axzz2tOs8fhYm>

[SEPP Comment: EU questioning if heavy UK subsidies on proposed nuclear and renewable projects are contrary to EU rules against anti-competitive state subsidies.]

Litigation Issues

Nagin Bust Confirms Democrat Graft, Real Katrina Villain

Editorial, IBD, Feb 13, 2014

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/021314-690049-nagin-graft-conviction-lends-credence-to-pre-katrina-mismanagement.htm>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Loss Of Production Tax Credits Brings Big Wind Chill To Cooling Subsidy-Dependent Market

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Feb 9, 2014

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2014/02/09/loss-of-production-tax-credits-brings-big-wind-chill-to-cooling-subsidy-dependent-market/>

[SEPP Comment: It is time to see if these green jobs are sustainable.]

Administration Inventing Concepts to Control CO2

Building on Quicksand: The Social Cost of Carbon

Kevin Dayaratna and David Kreutzer, The Foundry, Feb 12, 2014 [H/t Cooler Heads]

<http://blog.heritage.org/2014/02/12/building-quicksand-social-cost-carbon/>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Examiner Editorial: Time to end the 'secret science' at the EPA

Editorial, Washington Examiner, Feb 13, 2014

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/examiner-editorial-time-to-end-the-secret-science-at-the-epa/article/2543939>

House introduced a bill that would require the EPA to release the data behind its policies

By Staff Writers, ICECAP, Feb 8, 2014

<http://icecap.us/index.php/go/icing-the-hype/house-introduced-a-bill-that-would-require-the-epa-to-release-the-data-behi/>

EPA's use of secret email addresses was widespread: report

By Stephen Dinan, Washington Times, Feb 13, 2014 [H/t Chris Horner]

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/feb/13/epas-use-secret-email-addresses-was-widespread-rep/>

Obama's big freeze for America

By Rick Manning, Net Right Daily, Feb 11, 2014

http://netrightdaily.com/2014/02/obamas-big-freeze-america/?utm_source=WhatCounts+Publicaster+Edition&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=The+tea+party+repealed+the+debt+limit%3f+Really%3f&utm_content=Obama%E2%80%99s+big+freeze+for+America%0d+

EPA moves to regulate diesel in fracking

By Ben Goad, The Hill, Feb 11, 2014

<http://thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/energy-environment/198150-epa-moves-to-regulate-diesel-in-fracking>

[SEPP Comment: Diesel fuel has been used as a fracking fluid, long before the shale revolution.]

Energy Issues – Non-US

With competitive ruin looming, energy policy needs a brand new start

It's only right and proper that politicians should have their say but to be treating energy providers as a political football when there is already an independent investigation by regulators going on is extraordinarily irresponsible

By Jeremy Warner, Telegraph, UK, 2014

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/comment/10629856/With-competitive-ruin-looming-energy-policy-needs-a-brand-new-start.html>

China Announces \$1.6 Billion Air Pollution Fund

By Staff Writes, AP, Feb 13, 2014

http://hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/A/AS_CHINA_POLLUTION?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT

Germany Plans to Raze Towns for Brown Coal and Cheap Energy

Villages face the bulldozer as one of Europe's renewable energy leaders leans more heavily on an old habit.

By Andrew Curry, National Geographic, Feb 11, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/energy/2014/02/140211-germany-plans-to-raze-towns-for-brown-coal/>

Energy Issues -- US

Saudi America

The benefits of shale oil are bigger than many Americans realise. Policy has yet to catch up
By Staff Writers, The Economist, Feb 15, 2014

<http://www.economist.com/news/united-states/21596553-benefits-shale-oil-are-bigger-many-americans-realise-policy-has-yet-catch?fsrc=nlw%7Cbig%7C2-13-2014%7C7790603%7C152586780%7CNA>

REVOLT! Six major unions beg the Senate to stop EPA coal regulations

By Michael Bastasch, Daily Caller, Feb 5, 2014 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://dailycaller.com/2014/02/05/revolt-six-major-unions-beg-the-senate-to-stop-epa-coal-regulations/#ixzz2sZRzo2Q>

Utilities turn to coal as cold blast spikes natural gas prices

By Laura Barron-Lopez, The Hill, Feb 13, 2014

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/198327-utilities-turn-to-coal-as-cold-blast-spikes-natural-gas-prices>

[SEPP Comment: It is necessary to have a reliable alternative.]

Utility, environmental group team up to change electricity business

By Zack Colman, Washington Examiner, Feb 13, 2014

http://washingtonexaminer.com/utility-environmental-group-team-up-to-change-electricity-business/article/2543986?utm_source=Washington%20Examiner:%20Politics%20Today%20Reoccurring%20-%2002/14/2014&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Washington%20Examiner:%20Politics%20Today

[SEPP Comment: No longer is the goal to deliver reliable electricity to the consumer at low cost, yet ensuring that utility makes a reasonable return on investment.]

Washington's Control of Energy

Peter Foster: U.S. oil boom undermines Obama's climate posturing

By Peter Foster, Financial Post, Feb 14, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2014/02/14/peter-foster-u-s-oil-boom-undermines-obamas-climate-posturing/>

That is not just necessary [for Canada] to take advantage of world markets, it is necessary because, under a weak president who sees his legacy as healing the earth, the U.S. has become an unreliable partner.

[SEPP Comment: For the link to the report on national security see Below the Bottom Line.]

President Obama, this is your 'energy moment'

By Mark Perry, AEIdeas, Feb 13, 2014 [H/t Cooler Heads]

<http://www.aei-ideas.org/2014/02/president-obama-this-is-your-energy-moment/>

Energy Department approves natural-gas export project

By Zack Colman, Washington Examiner, Feb 11, 2014

http://washingtonexaminer.com/energy-department-approves-natural-gas-export-project/article/2543844?utm_source=Washington%20Examiner:%20Politics%20Today%20Reoccurring%20-

[%2002/13/2014&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Washington%20Examiner:%20Politics%20Today](#)

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

The Golden Age of Gas, Possibly: Interview with the IEA

By James Stafford of Oilprice.com, Washington DC (SPX) Feb 13, 2014

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/The_Golden_Age_of_Gas_Possibly_Interview_with_the_IEA_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Lengthy interview]

Global demand, inexpensive natural gas are increasing domestic plastic production [US]

By Staff Writers, EIA, Feb 5, 2014

<http://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.cfm?id=14891>

[SEPP Comment: Also the energy required per unit of output is falling.]

Popular anti-fracking study discredited by Colorado health department

By Ashe Schow, Washington Examiner, Jan 30, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/article/2543216#.UurqCNG8PYg.twitter>

Shale not a miracle solution for Europe: think tank

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP), Feb 12, 2014

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Shale_not_a_miracle_solution_for_Europe_think_tank_999.html

[SEPP Comment: From the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations.]

Oil Spills, Gas Leaks & Consequences

Officials: Coal slurry spill blackens 6 miles of West Virginia creek

By Kevin Conton, CNN, Feb 12, 2014

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/02/11/us/west-virginia-slurry-spill/>

[SEPP Comment: Coal slurry is mining wastes and water. Microbes living in the slurry can make it very acidic.]

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Exelon May Shutter Some Reactors in 2014

By Tomas Overton, Power News, Feb 7, 2014

http://www.powermag.com/exelon-may-shutter-some-reactors-in-2014/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2830516&hq_l=8&hq_v=5e660500d0

[SEPP Comment: Possible consequence of base-load producers priced out by subsidized, mandated, and unreliable wind.]

Fukushima should eye 'controlled discharges' in sea: IAEA

By Staff Writers, Tokyo (AFP), Feb 13, 2014

http://www.nuclearpowerdaily.com/reports/Fukushima_should_eye_controlled_discharges_in_sea_IAEA_999.html

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Solar subsidies: US to turn the heat on India at WTO

By Staff Writer, Reuters, Feb 11, 2014, [H/t GWPF]

<http://indianexpress.com/article/business/business-others/us-likely-to-drag-india-to-wto-on-solar-subsidies/>

[SEPP Comment: Getting into trade war over a technology that is a loser for the US.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Energy -- Other

LockMart and Victorian Wave Partners Sign World's Largest Wave Energy Deal

By Staff Writers, Baltimore MD (SPX), Feb 12, 2014

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Lockheed_Martin_and_Victorian_Wave_Partners_Sign_Contract_to_Start_Development_of_Worlds_Largest_Wave_Energy_Project_999.html

Those much maligned plastic grocery bags can run your diesel truck or car

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 12, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/12/those-much-maligned-plastic-grocery-bags-can-run-your-diesel-truck-or-car/>

Link to paper: Production, Characterization and Fuel Properties of Alternative Diesel Fuel From Pyrolysis of Waste Plastic Grocery Bags,"

By Sharma, et al, Fuel Processing Technology, **June** 2014 [Boldface Added]

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378382014000290>

[SEPP Comment: Talk about pre-release hype!]

Carbon Schemes

CCS Could Increase Coal-Fired Electric Generation Costs By 70%–80%

By Aaron Larson, Power News, Feb 13, 2014

http://www.powermag.com/ccs-could-increase-coal-fired-electric-generation-costs-by-70-80/?hq_e=el&hq_m=2830516&hq_l=4&hq_v=5e660500d0

Environmental Industry

Greens calls for clear-out of 'climate change deniers'

The Green Party of England and Wales has called for a purge of government advisors and ministers who do not share its views on climate change.

By Ross Hawkins, BBC, Feb 14, 2014 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-26187711>

Other Scientific News

Laser Facility Blasts Way to Fusion First

Fusion experiment is at least ten times more powerful than previous events, study says

By Dan Vergano, National Geographic, Feb 12, 2014

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/energy/2014/02/140212-laser-facility-blasts-way-to-fusion-first/>

Fish biomass in the ocean is 10 times higher than estimated

By Staff Writers, Madrid, Spain (SPX), Feb 12, 2014

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Fish_biomass_in_the_ocean_is_10_times_higher_than_estimated_999.html

Giant mass extinction may have been quicker than previously thought – carbon dioxide blamed

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 11, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/11/giant-mass-extinction-may-have-been-quicker-than-previously-thought/>

[SEPP Comment: The volcanoes may have produced something more dangerous than CO2. Massive amounts of ash that blackened the sky, blocking the sun.]

Other News that May Be of Interest

The Dangers Of Certainty: A Lesson From Auschwitz

By Simon Critchley, New York Times, Via GWPF, Feb 8, 2014

<http://www.thegwpf.org/dangers-certainty-lesson-auschwitz/>

Tree roots in the mountains 'acted like a thermostat' for millions of years

By Staff Writers, Oxford, UK (SPX), Feb 12, 2014

http://www.terraviva.com/reports/Tree_roots_in_the_mountains_acted_like_a_thermostat_for_millions_of_years_999.html

Link to paper: Montane forest root growth and soil organic layer depth as potential factors stabilizing Cenozoic global change

By Dougherty et al, Geophysical Research Letters, Feb 6, 2014

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2013GL058737/full>

[SEPP Comment: No comment, except enhanced atmospheric carbon dioxide promotes increases in tree roots, which according to this report, is a negative, moderating feedback.]

NASA bets on private companies to exploit moon's resources

By Staff Writers, Washington (AFP), Feb 09, 2014

http://www.moondaily.com/reports/NASA_bets_on_private_companies_to_exploit_moons_resources_999.html

J. D. Bernal on Geoengineering and Climate Change

By Roger Pielke Jr, His Blog, Feb 10, 2014

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2014/02/j-d-bernal-on-geoengineering-and.html>

The Arctic wastes will disappear in time, leaving the world a much pleasanter place, but there is no reason why man should not hasten the process.

Kerry to create Arctic envoy

By Julian Pecquet, The Hill, Feb 14, 2014

<http://thehill.com/blogs/global-affairs/americas/198457-kerry-to-create-arctic-envoy>

[SEPP Comment: Will the Arctic be the envoy's winter home.]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

EPA Warns of Oil Threat

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Feb 11, 2014

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2014/02/11/epa-warns-of-oil-threat-2/>

[SEPP Comment: Amusing, what if there had been an EPA in 1901!]

Climate Crazyness of the Week: Fish living near the equator will not thrive in the warmer oceans of the future

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 11, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/11/climate-crazyness-of-the-week-fish-living-near-the-equator-will-not-thrive-in-the-warmer-oceans-of-the-future/>

Friday Funny: Science by the kilogram

The printed 674 pages report weighs an impressive 2.9 kg!

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Feb 14, 2014

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2014/02/14/friday-funny-science-by-the-kilogram/>

How the U.S. Energy Boom is Changing America's Place in the World

New report sees America's energy riches upending the geopolitical order

By Denver Nicks, Time, Feb 7, 2014 [H/t GWPF]

<http://nation.time.com/2014/02/07/fracking-energy-boom-natural-gas-geopolitics-iran/>

Link to report: Energy Rush: Shale Production and U.S. National Security

By Elizabeth Rosenberg, Center for New American Security, Feb 2014

http://www.cnas.org/sites/default/files/publications-pdf/CNAS_EnergyBoom_Rosenberg.pdf

[SEPP Comment: Nonsense. The administration did nothing to promote the development of oil and gas from shale.]

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ARTICLES:

1. The Dukes of Workplace Hazard

OSHA slams industries with billion-dollar rules the agency can't enforce.

Editorial, WSJ, Feb 10, 2014

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304680904579366601748914292?mod=I_TP_opinion_2

[SEPP Comment: An effort to drive up the costs of smart drilling, which uses a great amount of sand?]

Last month came word that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is rewriting the rules so its regulators can impose themselves over small family-owned farms. Now the workplace overseer has another brainstorm for raising costs on every industry in its purview.

In March OSHA will begin holding hearings on rules unveiled in August for crystalline silica exposure in the workplace. Silica is one of the most common compounds on earth and is essential to industries from construction and manufacturing to oil-and-gas exploration and agriculture. You can find it in everything from glass to golf-course bunkers.

Related Video

Assistant editorial features editor Kate Bachelder on why OSHA's new proposed rules for silica exposure will cost billions of dollars. Photo credit: Associated Press.

OSHA limits a worker's exposure to 100 micrograms per cubic meter of air of silica for general industry and 250 micrograms for construction companies, as overexposure to the powdered quartz can cause a lung condition called silicosis. Though cases of the disease have declined dramatically (and deaths by more than 90%) over the past 40 years, OSHA now plans to cut the permissible rate to 50 micrograms for all industries.

This and other new rules will require 534,000 businesses to overhaul their practices, as silica swirls through the air when sawing, grinding, drilling, crushing and performing other labor-intensive tasks. How much will compliance cost? OSHA puts the tab at \$637 million annually, which is optimistic at best. The American Foundry Society puts it closer to \$2 billion, and the American Chemistry Council's early estimate says the total economic damage will tally \$5.45

billion a year. The rules will cost the fracking oil and gas industry an estimated \$1,120 per affected employee, according to a Bloomberg Government analysis.

OSHA's proposal won't even reduce silicosis because it can't enforce the current exposure limit: Its own sampling shows that more than 30% of tested work sites struggle to adhere to the current standard, never mind the new one. OSHA should figure out how to bring industry practices in line with the current limit before moving the goal posts and calling it "progress."

Under the new limit, compliance is near-impossible. As the American Chemistry Council notes, "serious questions remain" about a laboratory's ability even to measure silica accurately at a concentration as low as the proposed new standard of 50 micrograms.

The new protocol also discourages companies from policing themselves. Since the 1970s, industry groups such as the National Industrial Sand Association have voluntarily offered employee health programs, including routine medical evaluations and periodic exposure assessments. Their reward for all but eliminating silicosis in their workplaces? Millions in new costs, courtesy of Washington.

OSHA first submitted the proposal to the White House's Office of Management and Budget on Valentine's Day 2011. OMB then violated its own 120-day review rule to delay the new rule for more than 2½ years—well past the 2012 election. We can see why the President would fear the political consequences of this job-killing regulation in his first term. Too bad he doesn't seem to fear the economic consequences in his second.

2. Keystone Cop: Pipeline Permit Is Kerry's Call

By Peter Nicholas, WSJ, Feb 7, 2014

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304450904579369251737986872?mod=I TP_pageone_1

[SEPP Comment: An extremely political person will make a "non-political" decision?]

WASHINGTON—Secretary of State John Kerry had one of the most reliably pro-environment records in nearly three decades as a U.S. senator: He frequently has warned about fossil fuels in writings and speeches, and environmental activists describe him as a "champion" of legislation to curb the greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.

"If we put an end to the era of dirty fossil fuels, we can begin an era of sustainability...for our nation and our world," concludes a book written by Mr. Kerry and his wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry in 2007 (The couple met at an Earth Day rally in 1990).

Those principles are being sorely tested by Mr. Kerry's pending decision on whether to green-light the Keystone XL pipeline project, which has become a vivid symbol in the debate over oil's place in the American economy. The State Department is overseeing a permit review because the pipeline crosses Canadian border, and Mr. Kerry told senior staffers in a private meeting this week that he hasn't yet made up his mind.

TransCanada Corp. wants to send oil through a pipeline from Canadian oil sands to Gulf Coast refineries in the U.S. Environmentalists warn this could lead to oil spills and exacerbate global warming, while business interests contend it will create jobs and offer a safer alternative than transporting the oil by rail.

Mr. Kerry's record on environmental issues is drawing scrutiny from proponents and critics alike, adding another complication to one of the most divisive issues the Obama administration faces.

Pro-Keystone forces question whether he can be a neutral referee. "There is wide berth not only for Secretary Kerry but ultimately the president to have it whichever way they want," said Karen Harbert, who heads the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's energy institute.

State Department officials, including one who was in the staff meeting this week, said Mr. Kerry is keeping an open mind. "Of course he has a big environmental record, but there's a process and you have to weigh all the components," another State Department official said.

Under rules governing the permit process, Mr. Kerry plays an important role. He makes the determination of whether Keystone should get the permit, though people involved in the process expect that in the end, President Barack Obama's views on the matter will carry the day.

Mr. Kerry has begun a broad analysis to determine whether the pipeline is in the nation's interests. So, tucked into his binder filled with memos on various foreign hot spots are reports on Keystone.

Mr. Kerry will weigh a range of criteria—cultural, economic, and environmental—before passing his findings to the president. In the past, some White House aides have wanted to distance Mr. Obama from such a contentious decision, preferring that Mr. Kerry be the one on the hook, according to one person familiar with the matter. Other White House aides have argued that Mr. Obama must own the decision, this person said.

The White House declined to comment on the pipeline Friday.

One point Mr. Kerry will consider is the importance of the U.S. taking a lead role in addressing climate issues. "The U.S. role in the global climate-change debate is going to be a factor here," the State official who attended the staff meeting said.

That is a theme Mr. Kerry has emphasized in the past. In a 2009 Senate hearing, he said one benefit of adopting a system to "cap-and-trade" carbon credits to cut greenhouse-gas emissions is gaining "leverage to influence other countries' behavior."

As a senator, Mr. Kerry voted in 2012 against an amendment that would have approved the pipeline. Environmentalists cite that as a hopeful sign he will come out against it now, though State Department officials say Mr. Kerry merely aimed to ensure that Congress didn't strip the Obama administration of its power to decide the matter.

Nonetheless, pro-Keystone lawmakers see Mr. Kerry's vote as a strong signal that he opposes the project.

Sen. John Hoeven, who put forward that amendment and wants the pipeline built, said: "I don't think he favors the project; I think he opposes it.... When he had the chance to vote on legislation to approve the project, he voted against it."

3. The \$2.2 Billion Bird-Scorching Solar Project

At California's Ivanpah Plant, Mirrors Produce Heat and Electricity—And Kill Wildlife

By Cassandra Sweet, WSJ, Feb 12, 2014

http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304703804579379230641329484?mod=WSJ_Energy_2_4_Right

A giant solar-power project officially opening this week in the California desert is the first of its kind, and may be among the last, in part because of growing evidence that the technology it uses is killing birds.

U.S. Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz is scheduled to speak Thursday at an opening ceremony for the Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating Station, which received a \$1.6 billion federal loan guarantee.

The \$2.2 billion solar farm, which spans over five square miles of federal land southwest of Las Vegas, includes three towers as tall as 40-story buildings. Nearly 350,000 mirrors, each the size of a garage door, reflect sunlight onto boilers atop the towers, creating steam that drives power generators.

The owners of the project— NRG Energy Inc., NRG +1.49% Google Inc. GOOG +0.26% and BrightSource Energy Inc., the company that developed the "tower power" solar technology—call the plant a major feat of engineering that can light up about 140,000 homes a year.

Temperatures around the Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System's towers can hit 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit. Zuma Press

Ivanpah is among the biggest in a spate of power-plant-sized solar projects that have begun operating in the past two years, spurred in part by a hefty investment tax credit that expires at the end of 2016. Most of them are in California, where state law requires utilities to use renewable sources for a third of the electricity they sell by 2020.

Utilities owned by PG&E Corp. and Edison International have agreed to buy electricity generated from the Ivanpah plant under 25-year contracts, according to NRG.

Utility-scale solar plants have come under fire for their costs—Ivanpah costs about four times as much as a conventional natural gas-fired plant but will produce far less electricity—and also for the amount of land they require.

That makes for expensive power. Experts have estimated that electricity from giant solar projects will cost at least twice as much as electricity from conventional sources. But neither the utilities that have contracted to buy the power nor state regulators have disclosed what the price will be, only that it will be passed on to electricity customers.

New utility-scale projects began operating at a record rate in the fourth quarter of 2013, adding 1,141 megawatts of capacity, according to research firm SNL Energy. But only a handful of new projects were announced, totaling 13 megawatts.

BrightSource wants to build a second tower-based solar farm in California's Riverside County, east of Palm Springs. But the state Energy Commission in December proposed that the company instead use more conventional technologies, such as solar panels or mirrored troughs.

One reason: the BrightSource system appears to be scorching birds that fly through the intense heat surrounding the towers, which can reach 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit.

The company, which is based in Oakland, Calif., reported finding dozens of dead birds at the Ivanpah plant over the past several months, while workers were testing the plant before it started operating in December. Some of the dead birds appeared to have singed or burned feathers, according to federal biologists and documents filed with the state Energy Commission.

Mirrors reflect sunlight on to boilers atop the Ivanpah facility's towers to create steam for generating power. The Washington Post/Getty Images

Regulators said they anticipated that some birds would be killed once the Ivanpah plant started operating, but that they didn't expect so many to die during the plant's construction and testing. The dead birds included a peregrine falcon, a grebe, two hawks, four nighthawks and a variety of warblers and sparrows. State and federal regulators are overseeing a two-year study of the facility's effects on birds.

"With the data we've gathered, it's far too early in the process to draw any definitive conclusions about long-term impacts on avian or other species," said Jeff Holland, a spokesman for NRG, the project's operator, which is based in Princeton, N.J.

BrightSource has "confidence in the technology and its ability to operate and perform as expected," said Joe Desmond, a spokesman for the company, adding that he thinks it will be able to resolve the problem of bird deaths and build more big plants in California and elsewhere.

The solar-technology company, which remains closely held after canceling a planned public offering in 2012, intends to use its technology in China and other countries, Mr. Desmond said.

By the Numbers

Facts about the Ivanpah project

- \$2.2 BILLION Cost of power plant's construction
- 3,500 Acres covered by the plant, about five square miles
- 459 FEET Height of each of three towers, which are topped by boilers
- 347,000 Number of garage door-size mirrors that are used to reflect sunlight
- 140,000 Homes per year for which the plant is expected to generate electricity

BrightSource

The company put plans for a third California solar farm on indefinite hold last year, and it abandoned a proposed fourth project for which it had sought state approval in 2011.

In response to BrightSource's blueprint for its second big solar farm in Riverside County, near Joshua Tree National Park, biologists working for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service told state regulators that they were concerned that heat produced by the project could kill golden eagles and other protected species.

"We're trying to figure out how big the problem is and what we can do to minimize bird mortalities," said Eric Davis, assistant regional director for migratory birds at the federal agency's

Sacramento office. "When you have new technologies, you don't know what the impacts are going to be."

The agency also is investigating the deaths of birds, possibly from colliding with structures, found at two other, unrelated solar farms. One of those projects relies on solar panels and the other one uses mirrored troughs. Biologists think some birds may have mistaken the vast shimmering solar arrays at all three installations for a lake and become trapped on the ground after landing.

Another concern about the second BrightSource project involves the height of the towers, which would be 750 feet tall, roughly the same as a 69-story building. Indian tribes have objected to the project, saying the tall towers and the light emitted from the facility's mirrors would be visually obtrusive.

The Ivanpah plant draws water for the boilers atop its towers, and for washing its many thousands of mirrors, from underground wells at the site. The water will be recycled; an on-site treatment plant will filter out wastewater sludge, which a waste hauler will remove and dispose of, according to the company.

The plant was more expensive to build than a similar-size conventional solar-power plant would be today, particularly as prices for solar panels, a rival technology, have fallen over the past few years. Many of the solar power facilities currently being developed are smaller than the Ivanpah plant, such as rooftop solar panel installations and solar farms built near cities and towns where there is less space available.

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