**HOT TOPICS**

**N.M. Freezes Energy Mandate**
The New Mexico House of Representatives passed a bill to freeze the state’s renewable energy mandate.

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**Ozone Rules Are Costliest Ever**
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s rewrite of regulations limiting ozone levels could be the most economically costly rules ever proposed.

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**Europe Cuts Wind Subsidies**
Citing high energy costs as a primary reason their economies are trailing, various European countries are reducing the subsidies they grant wind power companies.

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**California Upping Climate Ante**
Californians, already enduring the strictest climate change regulations in the nation, may have to cut gasoline use by 50 percent by 2030 and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by 2050.

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**Poverty, Not Air Pollution, Causing Childhood Asthma**

By Alyssa Carducci

A new study authored by a research team led by Dr. Corrine Keet of Johns Hopkins Children’s Center has found no link between outdoor air pollution and childhood asthma.

Keet’s team followed 23,000 U.S. children and found no statistically significant difference in asthma rates between those who live in inner-city neighborhoods, which have higher pollution levels, and those who live in suburbs and rural areas.

The study comes just as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers tightening limits for ground-level ozone, commonly known as smog.

“Clearly, I think it undermines one of the primary excuses used by the EPA to regulate carbon dioxide emissions and some types of air pollutants as well,” Paul C. Knappenberger, assistant director of the Center for the Study of Science at the Cato Institute, said of the study.

Since the 1970s, EPA has used childhood asthma as the driving force.

**ASTHMA, P. 8**

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**Congressman Attacks Climate Scientists**

By H. Sterling Burnett

Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ), ranking member of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources, sent a letter to seven university presidents demanding information on funding sources, financial disclosure guidelines, and all draft testimony and exchanges relating to the testimony of certain researchers who are known to be skeptical of the theory of manmade climate change who have testified before Congress.

Grijalva’s letter requested information about the climate research and funding related to geographer Robert C. Balling, Jr., Arizona State University; atmospheric scientist John Christy, University of Alabama; climatologist...

**ATTACK, P. 6**
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New Rules Will Further Slow Growth of Fracking on Federal, Indian Lands

By H. Sterling Burnett

The Obama administration has unveiled its first safety mandates for fracking operations on federal and Native American lands.

The new rules, announced on March 20, 2015, take effect in late June. The rules set new well integrity standards to protect groundwater, require public disclosure of fracking chemicals, and tighten storage standards.

Dan Simmons, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research, says there’s no need for the new rules. “The Obama administration’s new hydraulic fracturing regulations are a solution in search of a problem,” Simmons said. “The states already regulate hydraulic fracturing where it is occurring on federal lands. This is because the states have primacy over the regulation of groundwater.

“Furthermore, the states are doing a good job as steward of the environment and of resource production,” Simmons said. “But instead of building on the good work the states are doing, the Obama administration is deliberately trying to reduce natural gas and oil production on federal lands by further increasing the regulations and cost of operating on these lands.”

Obama Admin Delaying Permits

A Heritage Foundation report shows in 2005 it took the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) an average of 154 days to give final approval for drilling applications for lands under its control. Permit approval time has risen to an average of 227 days under President Barack Obama.

State governments currently take 30 days on average to approve the same type of permit. During Obama’s first three years in office, the number of leases on public lands fell by 42.4 percent, and new permits fell by 37.4 percent.

State governments currently take 30 days on average to approve the same type of permit. During Obama’s first three years in office, the number of leases on public lands fell by 42.4 percent, and new permits fell by 37.4 percent.

起义 by 6 percent and natural gas production by 28 percent since 2009, even as production on state and private lands of oil and gas have increased by more than 61 percent and 33 percent respectively.

BLM estimates the compliance cost for its new policies will be approximately $11,400 per well, or roughly $32 million per year. The consulting firm Advanced Resources International estimates total annual costs associated with the regulation could reach $30 million to $2.7 billion.

Gary Stone, vice-president of engineering at FiveStates, a Dallas-based oil and gas company, says the new rules would have a limited but immediate effect on oil and gas production in the United States.

“New regulations issued by the Department of the Interior governing hydraulic fracturing will have limited initial impact on U.S. exploration activity but leave open the possibility of more restrictive industry-wide regulations in the future,” Stone said. “The new regulations currently apply only to wells drilled on federal or Indian land, so areas of high activity in South Texas’s Eagle Ford trend, the Permian Basin of West Texas, North Dakota’s Bakken and Three Forks trend, and the Marcellus and Utica plays are largely unaffected.

“At least two industry coalitions have already filed suit to block the new regulations on the basis that they largely duplicate state laws,” said Stone.

H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D. (hsburnett@heartland.org) is a research fellow with The Heartland Institute.
N.Y. Towns Consider Secession Over Fracking Ban

By Kenneth Artz

Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s (D) decision to ban hydraulic fracturing in New York has driven residents in 15 small towns in the state’s Southern Tier to consider seceding from New York to become part of Pennsylvania.

The Upstate New York Towns Association says the towns threatening secession are in Broome, Delaware, Tioga, and Sullivan counties, though it is not revealing their names at present.

Long History of Problems

Lee Lane, a visiting fellow at the Hudson Institute, says New York’s state government has a long history of driving towns to the brink of secession.

“In early 1788, Albany’s delay in ratifying the U.S. Constitution nearly drove New York City to secede from the state,” said Lane. “Today, Albany’s continuing ban on fracking is driving Southern Tier towns toward the same step. Now, just as in 1788, the state government’s resistance to needed change is the root of the problem.

“Quite a few recent studies confirm that in the communities where drilling takes place, the benefits [of leaving] substantially outweigh [the] costs,” said Lane. “And the whole country gains from cheaper, cleaner, and more secure energy supplies. Fracking bans make no economic sense.

“The state is wrong, too, to violate the property rights of its citizens,” said Lane. “In effect, the ban on fracking expropriates the mineral rights of the citizens of the Southern Tier. If Albany wants to ban fracking, it should compensate mineral rights owners for the full value of the property that it is rendering worthless. If, as one suspects, Albany’s politicos are unwilling to do that, then they should at least have the decency not to impede the Southern Tier towns’ efforts to find a milieu where the rights of private property [owners] are better respected and enterprise is freer.”

‘Anti-Energy Ideology’

Daniel Simmons, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research, says New York’s state government is trampling on landowners’ property rights by not allowing hydraulic fracturing.


Rural Landowners Harmed

John Eick, director of the American Legislative Exchange Council’s Energy, Environment, and Agriculture Task Force, says restrictions on land use trap landowners in the state while reducing the value of their property.

“What’s nice about the so-called laboratories of democracy is that citizens can vote with their feet,” said Eick. “If tax rates are too high or regulations prove to be too burdensome in a given state, people can relatively easily move to a different state with a government more to their liking.

“Unfortunately, mineral rights can’t be transported across state boundaries,” said Eick. “It’s unfortunate that Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s decision to ban hydraulic fracturing in the state will prevent cheap energy from being produced and rural landowners who could use the extra money from benefiting financially.”

Kenneth Artz (iamkenartz@hotmail.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.

Environmental Markets

A Property Rights Approach

Terry L. Anderson • Gary D. Libecap

Environmental Markets explains the prospects of using markets to improve environmental quality and resource conservation. This book compares standard approaches to these problems using governmental management, regulation, taxation, and subsidization with a market-based property rights approach. This approach is applied to land, water, wildlife, fisheries, and air and is compared to governmental solutions. It concludes by discussing tougher environmental problems such as ocean fisheries and the global atmosphere, emphasizing that neither governmental nor market solutions are a panacea.

“Two of the world’s leading scholars on property rights and the environment offer a timely reminder that government is not always an effective steward of natural resources when markets fail at this task, and offer a rich review of the myriad creative ways in which market forces can be harnessed to improve environmental quality. The book’s fresh perspective on the question of how best to solve problems ranging from climate change to overfishing reminds economists and their students to ‘look before they leap’, with regulation as a solution.”

Sheila M. Olmstead, University of Texas, Austin

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Proposed Ozone Rule Costliest in U.S. History

By Kenneth Artz

The Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) proposed ozone rule would be “the costliest regulation in U.S. history,” a study commissioned by the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) has found.

“Regions unable to comply with this especially onerous standard will see their industrial development jeopardized.”

JOHN EICK
DIRECTOR OF THE ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT, AND AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE
AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE EXCHANGE COUNCIL

Using an updated analysis by NERA Economic Consulting, the NAM study estimates reducing the current ozone standard of 75 parts per billion to 65 parts per billion could carry a compliance price tag of $1.1 trillion between 2017 and 2040. The study projects the proposed rule would reduce annual U.S. gross domestic product by $140 billion and result in a loss of the equivalent of 1.4 million jobs per year through 2040.

If the ozone standard is lowered to 60 parts per billion, the rules could cost $270 billion per year on average from 2017 through 2040, or $3 trillion cumulatively by 2040 in present-value terms, with an annual loss of 2.9 million job equivalents.

Zero-Sum Game

John Eick, director of the American Legislative Exchange Council’s Energy, Environment, and Agriculture Task Force, says NAM’s study confirms EPA’s plan to revise the ground-level ozone standard, a move Eick says will cause substantial economic harm for minimal demonstrated health benefits.

“Regions unable to comply with this especially onerous standard will see their industrial development jeopardized, because emissions from each new stationary source would have to be ‘offset’ by emission reductions elsewhere in the nonattainment area,” Eick said.

“In practice, this means industrial development becomes a zero-sum game whereby every new business requires the closing of existing businesses,” said Eick. “As the economy continues to recover from the Great Recession [of 2008], the last thing it needs is a regulation that will do away with many of the gains made to date.”

Going for Broke

Daniel Simmons, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research, says the new ozone regulations could arrive before EPA’s most recent ozone regulations have even been fully implemented.

“Instead of waiting to see how the previous regulations worked, EPA is rushing to implement new and incredibly expensive regulations,” Simmons said. “If EPA goes ahead, as it looks like they will, more and more areas of the country will be in non-attainment. That means EPA will have great regulatory control over local decisions, and it means it will be harder to grow the economy in these areas.

“There are serious questions about the necessity of these regulations,” said Simmons. “Hopefully the [Obama] administration will decide, like it did before the 2012 election, that these new ozone regulations are too costly. But it appears now that [since] President [Barack] Obama cannot run for reelected again, there is nothing stopping EPA from imposing massive costs on the American people.”

Kenneth Artz (iamkenartz@hotmail.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.

INTERNET INFO


Minnesota County Rejects Ban on Frac Sand Mining

By Isaac Orr

County commissioners in Houston County, Minnesota rejected a permanent ban on frac sand mining by a 3–2 vote.

Passage of the ban would have required a 4–1 vote in favor.

Frac sand is a special type of sand perfectly suited for hydraulic fracturing, the technology that has made the United States the largest producer of oil and natural gas in the world. The sand helps keep open the fissures caused by fracking so oil or natural gas can be extracted. A three-year-old county moratorium on sand mining currently remains in place, preventing mining of the large deposits of frac sand found on properties in Houston County.

The results of the vote in early March came despite the raucous antics of environmental activists who packed the public meeting. Several anti-mining protestors were ejected from the meeting by sheriff’s deputies because of their disruptive behavior.

Decision ‘Based on Facts’

A statement distributed by Teresa Walter, one of the three Houston County commissioners who voted against the ban, says she spent the past three years researching and learning all she could about the frac sand industry.

“I felt I was elected to make decisions based on facts and what would be best for the health, welfare and safety of Houston County,” Walter said in her statement. “My decision was to support a strong regulatory mining and extraction ordinance presented from the study group and the Planning and Zoning Commission.”

Air-monitoring results from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency indicate sand mining has not decreased air quality in Minnesota.

Walter says she does not believe the small vocal group of people seeking a ban represents the wishes of most Houston County residents.

“From what I am hearing around the county, most people do not want a ban,” said Walter. “[They only want] regulation …”

Walter says those in the minority who are opposed to fracking in the region have directed their campaign against frac sand mining at her.

“I am receiving threats asking me to resign or get recalled, and [I am] called incompetent on radio ads and in editorials,” said Walter. “It does affect me, of course.”

Despite the recent vote, development of an ordinance allowing environmentally responsible frac sand mining in Houston County remains stalled by County Commissioners Dana Kjome and Justin Zmyewski, who say they will support only an outright ban. As a result, the current moratorium remains in place.

Isaac Orr (ior@heartland.org) is a research fellow for energy and environmental policy at The Heartland Institute.
Letter Attacking Scientists Sparks Heated Responses

Continued from page 1

gist Judith Curry, Georgia Institute of Technology; historian Steven Hayward, Pepperdine University; climatologist David Legates, University of Delaware; atmospheric physicist Richard Lindzen, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and political scientist Roger Pielke, Jr., University of Colorado.

Scientists and policy analysts on both sides of the issue condemned the letter as an attempt to intimidate climate scientists who challenge the Obama administration.

‘Sends a Chilling Message’
The American Meteorological Society (AMS), the national scientific society for the development and dissemination of atmospheric, oceanic, and hydrologic sciences, responded to Grijalva’s letter with a letter of its own.

“Publicly singling out specific researchers based on perspectives they have expressed and implying a failure to appropriately disclose funding sources—and thereby questioning their scientific integrity—sends a chilling message to all academic researchers,” Keith L. Seitter, AMS executive director, wrote. “Further, requesting copies of the researcher’s communications related to external funding opportunities or the preparation of testimony impinges on the free pursuit of ideas that is central to the concept of academic freedom.”

Attacking Skeptics’ Funding
Grijalva justified his requests by citing recent news articles that suggest the views of researchers skeptical of catastrophic manmade global warming are tainted by ties to funding from the fossil-fuel industry.

A late-February article in The New York Times repeated claims by longtime Greenpeace staffer Kert Davies that astrophysicist Dr. Willie Soon concealed the sources of funding that supported his work. The article reported that Soon’s research projects received $1.2 million from fossil-fuel companies since he has testified before Congress on multiple occasions.

“Publicly singling out specific researchers based on perspectives they have expressed and implying a failure to appropriately disclose funding sources—and thereby questioning their scientific integrity—sends a chilling message to all academic researchers.”

KEITH L. SEITTER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY

Grijalva’s ‘Witch Hunt’
“Grijalva was asked why he targeted the seven of us,” said Legates. "His response was that we were the most well-published, most often-cited, and had the most impact on public policy in the United States. Not that our research was likely fraudulent, not that we had taken big sums of money from foreign governments, or that we simply had been publishing bad research. None of these were the reason. It was simply that we are too effective with our research and too persuasive with our arguments. Pure and simple. And since we disagree with him and his views, we must be harassed. Maybe that will stop us.”

Pielke says Grijalva knows he has never received any funding from fossil-fuel companies since he has testified about this before Congress on multiple occasions.

“I know with complete certainty that this investigation is a politically motivated ‘witch hunt’ designed to intimidate me (and others) and to smear my name,” Pielke wrote on his blog.

After myriad assaults by environmental lobbyists on his reputation, Pielke has decided to stop conducting climate research.

Attempts to Chill Dissent
John Nothdurft, director of government relations for The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News, says Grijalva’s investigation of climate researchers is part of a campaign to divert attention away from the facts about climate change.

“Instead of having a real conversation with the American public about the science and economics of climate change, well-financed advocacy groups and politicians with many conflicts of interest of their own would rather direct the public’s focus on who funds nonprofit organizations, independent research institutions, scientists, economists, and other experts,” Nothdurft said.

“This witch hunt has nothing to do with ensuring that science is accurate or reliable,” said Nothdurft. “These attacks are leveled by people who refuse to engage in civil debate over important matters of science, economics, and public policy. They should not be allowed to win the day.”

Even some strong advocates of the claim a manmade climate catastrophe is imminent say Grijalva went too far. Frequent critic of climate skeptics Bob Ward, policy director of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, tweeted, “Politicians should not persecute academics with whom they disagree. No ifs or buts.”

H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D. (hsburnett@heartland.org) is a research fellow with The Heartland Institute.

INTERNET INFO
Keith Seitter, Ph.D., letter to the House Committee on Natural Resources, American Meteorological Society: https://www.heartland.org/policy-documents/ams-letter-house-committee-natural-resources-challenges-academic-freedom

In response to California Gov. Jerry Brown’s (D) call to adopt more aggressive targets to combat climate change, state lawmakers are considering several approaches to force residents to reduce fossil-fuel use and increase the volume of renewable and alternative fuels used.

In his January State of the State address, Brown proposed California reduce its use of gasoline in cars by 50 percent within 15 years, make heating fuels cleaner, and substantially increase the proportion of electricity derived from renewables, including wind and solar.

All of Brown’s proposals have their roots in Assembly Bill 32, the landmark climate change legislation signed into law by then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger (R) in 2006. That law mandates California cut its greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020.

Lawmakers responded to Brown’s proposals with a package of four bills to be considered in the months ahead. The most far-reaching of the bills, Senate Bill 350, would mandate a 50 percent reduction in petroleum use in cars and trucks, a 50 percent increase in energy efficiency in buildings, and a “goal” of 50 percent of all electricity provided by the state’s utilities to be derived from renewable sources. All of the benchmarks are required to be achieved by 2030.

SB 32, an expansion of Assembly Bill 32, would require an 80 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Senate Bill 189 would create the Committee on Maximizing Jobs and Economic Growth to advise the state on how best to spend taxpayer funds on reducing greenhouse gases and promote green energy.

Yet another bill, Senate Bill 185, would require two state pension funds—the California Public Employees Retirement System and the California State Teachers Retirement System—to divest from coal companies. California utilities praised Brown’s initiatives, but they are lobbying for more flexibility in whatever bills eventually are passed. Utilities have proposed the state let them take credit for carbon reductions in other states and for existing hydroelectric and nuclear power generation, neither of which counts toward achieving renewable-energy goals under the 2006 law.

In addition, since they will have to provide increased amounts of electricity, utilities are asking the legislature to allow them to count reduced emissions from the increasing number of electric vehicles against their carbon reduction goals.

Although Democrats control both houses in the California State Legislature, it is possible none of the proposals will be adopted, says Tom Tanton, director of science and technology assessment at the Energy & Environment Legal Institute.

“The expanded initiatives may ultimately fail, due to the rift it would cause between green zealots and advocates for the poor and communities of color,” Tanton said. “By further raising the comparative cost of energy in California, for no environmental benefit, the poor will be disproportionately harmed in both health and economics. It can’t be long before advocates for the disadvantaged see that such programs are to their distinct disadvantage.”

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.

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— HARRISON H. SCHMITT, GEOLOGIST, APOLO 17 ASTRONAUT, FORMER U.S. SENATOR, AUTHOR OF *RETURN TO THE MOON*
Poverty, not Air Pollution, Causing Childhood Asthma

Continued from page 1

behind nearly every “clean air” rule the agency has implemented.
Keet’s study points to indoor air pollution from sources such as secondhand smoke, mold, and rodents as a significant factor in childhood asthma cases. Currently, EPA does not have authority over indoor air pollution.

Following the Science?
EPA’s ground-level ozone proposal would lower the current standard for the concentration of ozone pollution in the air that is breathed from 75 parts per billion to a standard in the range of 60 to 70 parts per billion.

Keet’s findings point to poverty, not air pollution, as a leading factor in childhood asthma, and poverty could be exacerbated by EPA’s new proposal.

Rule Could Kill 226,000
Excluding California, which has been given additional time to meet clean air standards, EPA estimated the new ozone rule would cost the economy between $15 billion and $39 billion by 2025.

A study by the American Manufacturers Association estimates the ozone rule could reduce U.S. gross domestic product by $140 billion per year and by $1.7 trillion between 2017 and 2040. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has estimated every $7.5 million to $12 million in regulatory costs imposed on the economy results in a life lost. The costs imposed by the new ozone limits could result in an additional 1,250 deaths in 2025 alone and a total of up to 226,667 deaths by 2040.

“Our results highlight the changing face of pediatric asthma and suggest that living in an urban area is, by itself, not a risk factor for asthma. Instead, we see that poverty and being African American or Puerto Rican are the most potent predictors of asthma risk.”

EPA Will Ignore Results
Paul Driessen, senior policy advisor to the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow, agrees with Knappenberger.

“Sadly, I think EPA will ignore this study, as it does any research that undermines the need for expanded powers and budgets,” said Driessen.

“Study after study shows EPA’s proposed ozone standards between 60 and 70 parts per billion will do nothing to protect public health in general or prevent childhood asthma in particular. “To suppose this additional 5 to 10 parts per billion reduction will improve human health or environmental quality is absurd,” Driessen said. “The proposed standards are below ozone levels naturally occurring in Teton County, Wyoming, the home of Jackson Hole and the Grand Teton and next door to Yellowstone National Park.”

INTERNET INFO

Sierra Club Misleads in N.M. Renewable Hearings

By James M. Taylor, H. Sterling Burnett

The Sierra Club appears to be hiding its efforts to prevent the New Mexico legislature from freezing the state’s renewable energy mandate at 15 percent.

The New Mexico House of Representatives’ Energy, Environment & Natural Resources Committee held hearings in late February on House Bill 445. The legislation would freeze the state’s renewable power mandate (RPM) at 15 percent, cancelling a scheduled tightening of the RPM to 20 percent by 2020. The bill passed the House on March 12.

State Rep. Larry Scott (R-Hobbs), sponsor of HB 445, says promoting the bill is a way to raise public awareness of the costs of the renewable energy mandate.

“In the mid-2000s, legislation was passed to mandate increasing amounts of renewable power be delivered by electricity providers, increasing to 20 percent by 2020,” Scott said. “The environmental community has dominated the debate up until now, but there has been no real dialogue concerning the true costs and benefits to consumers. This bill starts that dialogue.”

Biased Testimony?

Among those testifying against the bill was Elliott Stern, who identified himself as a “small business owner” whose company “is not directly affected by the bill.” Stern, however, is hardly a disinterested party to the proposed bill. He is co-chairman of the Energy Committee for the Sierra Club’s Northern New Mexico Rio Grande Chapter.

The Rio Grande Sierra Club lobbied for the original renewable energy mandate on its own and as part of the New Mexico Coalition for Clean Affordable Energy.

The business Stern claims to be part-owner of and business developer for is SolarLogic, which designs and installs solar and hydronic renewable energy systems and thus benefits from renewables mandates.

New Mexico Part of Trend

Ohio, which capped its standard in 2014, and West Virginia, which rescinded its mandate entirely in January 2015, are just two of the many states that have recently altered, dropped, or considered revising or removing state renewable energy mandates.

Paul Gessing, president of the New Mexico-based Rio Grande Foundation, says freezing rates would be a blessing to consumers. “Since adopting its current, aggressive renewable portfolio standard, New Mexicans have seen their electricity rates rise dramatically, with rates jumping nearly 40 percent for residential customers over that time frame,” Gessing said.

“The effort to freeze New Mexico’s renewable portfolio standard at 15 percent, where it currently stands, rather than allowing it to rise to 20 percent by 2020 as is planned, would provide welcome relief for New Mexicans facing a still-struggling state economy and the prospect of even more rapid growth in electricity costs,” Gessing said.

New Mexico state Rep. Yvette Herrell (R-Otero), chair of the Regulatory and Public Affairs Committee, said, “This is a great bill for consumers because it should mitigate residential electricity price increases resulting from renewable portfolio standards.”

James M. Taylor (jtaylor@heartland.org) is a senior fellow for The Heartland Institute. H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D. (hsburnett@heartland.org) is a research fellow with The Heartland Institute.

Global Warming Is Not A Crisis

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‘Good Science Prevails’: Renowned Scientist Talks Climate Change

Editor’s Note: S. Fred Singer, Ph.D., has written several books and published more than 200 technical papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Singer, an atmospheric and space physicist, founded the Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP) and the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC). The interview was conducted after Singer was honored at the Ninth International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC-9) in July 2014.

By H. Sterling Burnett

Burnett: You served in many federal agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Department of the Interior, and as the first director of the National Weather Service. What do you find to be the biggest change that has occurred in the agencies from when you worked for them and now?

Singer: I have served in five government departments during my career, and I would say things have changed drastically, particularly since 1970. Before 1970, it was relatively easy to get things done. For example, as director of the Weather Satellite Service, I could pretty much determine the schedule and instruments on satellites, make sure they were launched on time, and that the results were reported. After 1970, particularly after EPA was set up, things became extremely legalistic. It became easier to oppose government actions rather than initiate them. I would cite one exception, perhaps. My last position was as chief scientist of the U.S. Department of Transportation, involving many interesting assignments related to air traffic control and security for the Coast Guard and Federal Aviation Administration.

Burnett: What caused you to found the Science and Environmental Policy Project and the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change, and how did you become one of the most prominent spokespersons for a rational response to climate change?

Singer: After I left government service in 1989, I founded the Science and Environment Policy Project (SEPP) specifically to counteract what I considered to be extreme hype on stratospheric ozone depletion and climate issues. I have always been interested in climate but had never taken a strong position on climate change. In the 1940s, I was active as a researcher and started to measure ozone in the upper atmosphere using high-altitude rockets. In the 1950s, I became concerned with how to use satellites to measure outgoing and incoming radiation, which is actually pretty close to what is being done right now. In the 1960s and 1970s, I organized symposia and edited books having to do with global pollution issues.

Burnett: There are varieties or degrees of skepticism regarding the theory humans are responsible for climate change and whether its impacts on human well-being and ecosystem health will be negative. Some don’t believe humans are playing any role in present climate conditions, others think they have had a modest impact, and others think humans are affecting climate but that it’s not likely to have a dangerous impact. Where do you fall on the spectrum and why?

Singer: You’re quite correct. There is indeed a wide variety of skepticism among scientists, ranging from those who are “lukewarmers,” who go along with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change except to say warming is no big deal, to those who deny the existence of a greenhouse effect.

My position is somewhere in the middle. I accept the theoretical existence of a greenhouse effect. In other words, I recognize carbon dioxide, water vapor, and other gases in the atmosphere can absorb infrared radiation and have a potential effect on climate. On the other hand, I am not convinced these effects really exist to any appreciable extent, so I am definitely not a lukewarmer. But I am not a denier either.

I do have many arguments with my fellow skeptics, particularly with those who claim global warming models violate the second law of thermodynamics. On the other hand, as I look at the actual observations, I can see climate models are not being validated. I have advanced various hypotheses to explain this disparity, though not everyone agrees with me.

Burnett: What have you found to be the most disturbing aspect of the way climate research and climate policy have developed in recent years?

Singer: The most disturbing problem in present climate research is the extreme ideology persisting among those who oppose skepticism. Skepticism is actually an important aspect of scientific research. Every scientist is fundamentally a skeptic who should try to show existing theories are falsified by observations.

Many have tried to disprove Einstein’s theory of relativity, but so far they have not succeeded. By and large, Newton’s law of gravitation is accepted and deserves to be called a theory. Remember, only one hundred years ago most scientists accepted the existence of an all-pervading ether to carry radio and light waves.

Another thing I find disturbing is the existence of smear attacks on scientists who disagree with what some call the “mainstream.” Skeptics are sometimes incorrectly called “deniers.” It is claimed they are supported by fossil-fuel companies and even tobacco companies, and this support allegedly influences their skeptical views.

It makes publication extremely difficult and at times very unpleasant. Despite the difficulties, I have faith all of this will work out eventually because good science prevails in the end.

H. Sterling Burnett, Ph.D. (hsburnett@heartland.org) is a research fellow with The Heartland Institute.
Whence the Warming Pause?

By S. Fred Singer

The absence of a global-warming trend, often described as a “pause” or “hiatus,” beginning around 2000, contradicts the results of every climate model used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

Until the cause of the pause is better understood and incorporated into existing models, all policies aiming to stabilize climate are useless and are nothing more than highly uncertain and hugely expensive exercises.

The label “pause” suggests the absence of a warming is only temporary and warming may soon resume. This is the opinion of climate alarmists who unjustifiably promote the fear human activities are causing potentially catastrophic global warming.

Cause of the Pause

Alarmists have offered myriad possible explanations for why global temperatures have not risen along with increasing carbon dioxide levels as predicted by climate models.

One set of explanations posits temperature has been rising along with carbon dioxide but the heat is being trapped by an unidentified hidden heat sink, such as the deep ocean. If this is the case, the question arises of when and how will the stored heat be released: gradually or suddenly?

Eminent physicist Freeman Dyson of the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study rejects this view, saying, “You ask me where the extra trapped heat has gone, but I do not agree with the models that say the extra trapped heat exists.”

A second set of explanations suggests the temperature forcing from carbon dioxide emissions has been suppressed by one or more negative feedback mechanisms internal to the natural climate system. This brings up the question of whether such a negative feedback really could cancel nearly all of the increased carbon dioxide’s forcing effect.

A third posited explanation is external factors, such as volcanic or human-emitted aerosols, are preventing temperatures from rising. This creates many unanswered problems for modelers: Why have these factors matched and offset the steady increase in forcing from rising carbon dioxide so far? Can or will they continue to match them in the future?

Natural Cycles

Recent research has implicated long-term natural cycles in the oceans could be suppressing temperature, but there is no agreed mechanism. Some papers attribute the pause to Pacific Ocean cycles, while other research points to changes in the Atlantic. One recent paper suggested all the world’s oceans are trapping heat.

Some have suggested there has been no pause in the rise of temperature, instead positing the way the data are analyzed is to blame. They say the pause only appears to exist because faster warming in the Arctic has been excluded from various global temperature analyses.

Not one of these explanations has gained widespread acceptance.

Explanations Leave Questions Unanswered

“IPCC has sidelined itself in irrelevance until it has something serious to say about the pause and has reflected on whether its alarmism is justified, given its reliance on computer models that predicted temperature rises that have not occurred,” said science historian Rupert Darwall.

None of these proposed mechanisms has been able to answer two questions critical to them being plausible explanations of the pause: Why did the pause begin around 2000, and when will it end so the warming predicted by the models can continue?

Scientific efforts to discover mechanisms for the cause of the pause, some dozens of “explanations” so far, have not yet been successful.

When Will the ‘Pause’ End?

The views of Gavin Schmidt, successor to renowned climate alarmist James Hansen as head of NASA’s Goddard Institute of Space Studies, are typical of climate alarmists.

“Within five to 10 years, the steady increase in greenhouse gases will overcome the [cyclical] factors that may be responsible for the pause,” Schmidt said.

Schmidt’s assertion is simply a guess not backed by any analyses.

The most grandiose treatment of the issue has come from Michael Mann, one of the people behind the famous “hockey stick” graph. Writing in the Scientific American in March 2014, he said Earth will cross the 2°C temperature danger threshold by 2036. Mann recognizes the pause but predicts an abrupt end.

No wonder Jeff Id, in an amusing discussion on Air Vent, referred to Mann’s essay as “climate porn.”

S. Fred Singer, Ph.D. (singer@sepp.org) is professor emeritus at the University of Virginia and chairman of the Science & Environmental Policy Project.
Groundwater Regulation Stays With the States

By Kenneth Artz

The U.S. Senate has rejected an effort to repeal the provision of the federal Energy Policy Act of 2005 that exempts gas drilling and extraction from federal requirements imposed by the Underground Injection Control Program of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The 63–35 vote left regulation of hydraulic fracturing firmly in the hands of state agencies.

State Primacy Key to Energy Boom

Daniel Simmons, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research, says states have always had the authority to regulate groundwater within their borders. In 2005, Congress passed and President George W. Bush signed a law barring federal agencies from usurping states' powers by regulating groundwater.

“The fact that state governments have primacy to regulate groundwater protection is one of the key reasons that oil prices are around $50 a barrel today,” Simmons said. “Oil and natural gas production has boomed in the United States over the last few years because the states regulate hydraulic fracturing on private and state land, and not the federal government. On federal lands, oil and natural gas production has fallen, but production is booming on private and state lands. This discrepancy is because of onerous federal regulation.”

Isaac Orr, a research fellow at The Heartland Institute, which publishes Environment & Climate News, says state authority benefits the public through cheaper energy. “Allowing [the Environmental Protection Agency] to step in and require federal permits would likely impede drilling and subject drillers to extensive federal permit applications that have been estimated to add up to one million dollars in costs per well, a very significant amount,” Orr said.

“State agencies have done an exemplary job of keeping pace with the industry as far as requiring best practices and new safety standards to protect the environment, something the EPA has failed to do,” Orr said. “The Government Accountability Office has admonished EPA for failing to incorporate state regulations into EPA guidelines for wastewater disposal wells. Fortunately, state regulators are better [than the federal government] at protecting the environment while allowing for the development of natural resources.”

Concerned About EPA, BLM Studies

John Eick, the Energy, Environment, and Agriculture Task Force director for the American Legislative Exchange Council, says he’s concerned the Bureau of Land Management and the Environmental Protection Agency are conducting studies to determine whether they should expand their authority over fracking.

“Overall, states have done an excellent job regulating the industry,” Eick said. “Significant economic gains have been made, [and] there has never been a single documented case of aquifer contamination. There is a legitimate concern that the federal government playing a growing role in regulating fracking could unnecessarily hinder further development of the oil and gas industry.”

Kenneth Artz (iamkenartz@hotmail.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.
European Nations Cut Wind Support

By Bonner R. Cohen

European governments, once at the vanguard of renewable energy mandates, appear to be having second thoughts about their reliance on giant wind installations erected on land and offshore over the past decade.

The European Wind Energy Association (EWEA) reported in February a sharp drop in new installations in 2014. The EWEA’s annual report shows investments in new wind facilities plummeted in 2014 as a result of “erratic and harsh” changes in renewable energy policies in several countries.

The rate of installations plunged by 90 percent in Denmark, 75 percent in Italy, and 84 percent in Spain.

Spain and Germany Retrenchment

Spain, the global leader in renewable energy until recently, has more wind energy capacity than any other European country except Germany but installed less wind-energy capacity in 2014 than countries outside the European Union such as war-torn Ukraine. Facing severe economic problems similar to those experienced in many other parts of Europe, Spain has been forced to roll back subsidies it can no longer afford.

In a February article in the Financial Times, Tom Becker, EWEA’s CEO, said Europe’s pullback from renewables is the result of changing government programs.

“‘The uncertainty over the regulatory framework for the energy sector is a threat to the continued drive toward sustainable and homegrown energy that will guarantee Europe’s energy security and competitiveness for the long term,’ said Becker.

The “regulatory framework” to which Becker referred is the system of subsidies and mandates that make uneconomical renewable energy profitable for its providers.

Little Wind Energy, High Costs

A brief analysis of renewable energy in Germany, which has Europe’s strongest economy, reveals why wind power is losing support throughout the European Union.

In recent years an increasing number of businesses have been leaving Germany, citing high energy costs and the lack of reliable power.

Germans currently pay more than twice as much for electric power as do their American counterparts. As a result, “German industry is going to gradually lose its competitiveness if this course isn’t reversed soon,” Kurt Bock, CEO of chemical giant BASF, told The Wall Street Journal in August 2014.

Examining data for 2014, German researcher Rolf Schuster said, “Wind energy is extremely volatile. During some quarter-hour periods, the roughly 25,000 turbines [in Germany] indeed delivered a lot of power. But at other times they delivered practically nothing.”

Schuster concludes Germany’s 25,000 wind turbines operated on average at 14.8 percent of their rated capacity in 2014, averaging less than 6,000 MW of their nearly 40,000 MW capacity.

The high costs associated with wind power and the need for redundant electric power plants have caused electricity prices in Germany to rise by 60 percent over the past five years. European governments have continued to push for more renewable energy over that period despite concerns about growing costs.

“High-tech turbines and massive government subsidies cannot overcome the problem humans have had with wind for centuries: Wind is not reliable or stable,” said Dan Simmons, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research. “Adding wind to your electricity-generating system does not actually increase the real capacity of the system, and it does not make the system more reliable. As a result, wind increases the cost of the system without providing real benefits, as the Europeans are beginning to figure out.”

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.

Washington State Republicans Push Renewable Mandate Revision

By Alyssa Carducci

Washington State Senate Republicans passed a bill that would revise the state’s renewable energy mandate to reduce the cost burden on utilities’ customers.

Senate Bill 5735 would allow utilities to meet state-mandated renewable energy targets by investing in non-electricity-sector programs that cut greenhouse gas emissions.


Todd Myers, environmental director at the Washington Policy Center, calls SB 5735 “a step in the right direction.” Although Myers objects to renewable mandates, he says the bill would help reduce the potentially high cost of Washington State’s energy regulations.

“If the goal is to reduce carbon emissions, we should reward any activity that achieves that goal,” Myers said.

“Giving utilities more options to meet that goal drives down the cost while increasing the chance of success. Currently, the law is so restrictive there is basically only one way to meet the targets: wind power. These proposed changes would increase the options for compliance.”

Changes to the Standard

Ericksen’s bill would credit utilities’ investments in projects such as electric vehicle charging stations, converting fleets to alternative fuels, carbon sequestration projects, and energy conservation programs. Utilities would receive credits for each project a third party verifies reduced carbon emissions, as long as the utility invests 1 percent of its annual revenue in such projects. These credits would count toward meeting the state’s current standard of delivering 15 percent of each utility’s electrical power from renewables by 2020.

Ericksen says Washington State’s current renewable standard increases the utility sector’s greenhouse gas emissions because it dismisses hydroelectric generation and because the extremely variable nature of wind generation requires greater use of fossil-fuel-fired power plants to balance loads.

It is not clear whether SB 5735 will pass. Although Republicans have a majority in the Senate, where the bill has garnered the support of one Democrat, Maralyn Chase (Shoreline), Democrats control the House of Representatives, where there appears to be little support for the effort.

Alyssa Carducci (ad.carducci@gmail.com) writes from Tampa, Florida.
Clean Coal Project Canceled

By Kenneth Artz

FutureGen, a project President Barack Obama hoped would cement his environmental legacy during his remaining years in office, has failed.

The Obama administration touted FutureGen and its successor, FutureGen 2.0, as the salvation of the coal-fired power plant industry. The project’s stated goal was to develop strategies that would allow coal to be burned without emitting greenhouse gases. The plan involved retrofitting existing coal-fired power plants with carbon capture and sequestration technology.

The two projects have cost millions of tax dollars and been beset by multiple delays and cost overruns. In early February, the Department of Energy announced it will stop development of FutureGen 2.0 due to its high costs and poor results.

Focused Like a Laser

Daniel Simmons, vice president for policy at the Institute for Energy Research, says the Obama administration’s decision to turn its back on carbon capture should surprise no one.

“The [Obama] administration has been laser-focused on killing coal since day one,” said Simmons. “The talk about the carbon capture program was merely to forestall complaints about their anti-coal regulatory agenda.

“[The] FutureGen project is just one more example of the Obama administration’s war on affordable energy,” Simmons said.

Industry’s Strategic Error

Myron Ebell, director of the Center for Energy and Environment at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, says most of the leaders of the coal industry made a huge mistake when they decided in the 1990s they didn’t need to fight global warming alarmism and policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions because they could count on Congress to fund research into carbon capture and storage technology.

“One corporate executive told me over a decade ago that coal was too important to the American economy to kill, so Congress would spend whatever it took to make ‘clean coal’ technology work,” said Ebell. “That disastrous belief is the main reason why the Obama administration is now able to destroy the industry.”

Coal Will Survive

John Eick, director of the American Legislative Exchange Council’s Energy, Environment, and Agriculture Task Force, says energy security requires a diversity of fuels to meet the demands of different geographic regions and varying energy supplies.

“Despite the Obama administration’s efforts, coal will likely continue to play an integral role in providing the general public with inexpensive and reliable base load electricity that powers our economy and provides Americans with a high standard of living.”

Kenneth Artz (iamkenartz@hotmail.com) writes from Dallas, Texas.
Links Between Fracking and Air Quality Questioned

By Bonner R. Cohen

A widely cited study purporting to show oil and gas operations using hydraulic fracturing, also known as fracking, cause serious air-quality issues suffers from “significant flaws,” a new report has found.


 “[The Macey report showed] eight poisonous chemicals were found near wells and fracking sites in Arkansas, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Ohio, and Wyoming that far exceeded recommended federal levels,” said one article published in U.S. News and World Report.

New York’s acting commissioner of health, Dr. Howard Zucker, cited the Macey study as a key reason he advised Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) to ban fracking in the state.

Study Is ‘Deeply Flawed’

Rich J. Trzupek, a chemist at Trinity Consultants, examined the Macey study and found it to be “deeply flawed.”

Trzupek says the study employed “citizen samplers” to gather air quality samples near oil and natural gas production sites. Trzupek points out the sampling methodology and collection techniques, comparative relationship between fracking and air quality standards, and the study’s conclusion were all conducted without proper peer-review methods.

“Had the peer-review process included these, and other problem areas, an impartial reviewer should have concluded [the study] is deeply flawed,” Trzupek said.

Problem Areas

Trzupek says there are numerous problems with the Macey study. The study did not examine air quality during fracking operations and instead examined air quality near certain operations and equipment common to all oil and natural gas production and transportation, regardless of whether fracking took place.

The study failed to control for the fact some of the emissions measured are common to a variety of industries, including many unrelated to oil and gas operations.

Trzupek also says the study’s authors did not conduct upwind and downwind sampling for purposes of comparison, a significant flaw because it assumes background concentrations ought to be based on natural averages. This fails to adhere to common best practices in ambient air sampling that require upwind sampling to determine the actual background concentrations of targeted compounds at a test location.

“Put any sort of emissions source under a microscope, as the Macey study did, and you will find things that appear to be dangerous,” Trzupek said.

“If similar studies are conducted in the future, even if such studies correct the flaws outlined above, they will be meaningless unless they are part of a larger effort to quantify the same sort of pollutants from other industries and from common mobile, commercial, and residential sources of emissions.

“I don’t believe there is anything nefarious with the Macey study, other than the lamentably common practice in modern science of a conclusion seeking a proof.”

RICH J. TRZUPEK
CHEMIST
TRINITY CONSULTANTS

Obama’s Climate Agenda Hits Manufacturing Hard, Study Shows

By Alyssa Carducci

The Obama administration’s environmental policies could result in devastating job losses in manufacturing and mining across the country, a state-by-state analysis conducted by The Heritage Foundation has found.

“The Obama Administration’s Climate Agenda Will Hit Manufacturing Hard: A State-by-State Analysis,” released February 17, builds on earlier research evaluating the economic impact of the Obama administration’s climate policies. The study breaks down the employment impacts of new regulations by state and congressional district.

“The Obama Administration has put forward a variety of rules and goals aimed at cutting carbon dioxide emissions,” the authors of the Heritage study wrote. “These rules would drive up energy costs, reduce economic activity, and disrupt job markets.”

“One of the surprising conclusions in the Heritage study is job losses in manufacturing are large even in states that already have high electricity costs, such as California and New York,” said Myron Ebell, director of the Center for Energy and Environment at the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

Because the study estimates manufacturing jobs will be disproportionately affected by the new rules, states with large manufacturing sectors could experience disproportionate job losses.

“California, New York, and the northeast states are already committed to economically destructive policies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, so I doubt their governors and state legislators will pay much attention to the Heritage study,” Ebell said.

By 2030, Obama’s climate policies will cause the loss of 586,000 manufacturing jobs, the study found. California tops all states with an expected loss of 65,330 jobs.

“This study should strengthen the determination of elected officials in states that want to continue to grow economically [and encourage them] to oppose the [Environmental Protection Agency] regulations,” Ebell said.

Alyssa Carducci (ad.carducci@gmail.com) writes from Tampa, Florida.
Attempts by Democrats to paralyze climate skeptics in academia, think tanks, and companies using intimidating letters that threaten a federal investigation into their funding have backfired, as now numerous questions are emerging about the potential biases of climate alarmists who received funding from individuals and organizations that profit from increased support for the theory of manmade climate change.

Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Ed Markey (D-MA), and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) have egg on their faces.

Public-choice economics explains politicians and bureaucrats are as self-interested as anyone else, including giant corporations in the energy industry. Instead of looking for improving profits, they seek expanded authority and bigger budgets. Because the federal government and alarmist foundations provide the vast majority of climate research funding, research funded by these two sources should undergo at least as much scrutiny as funding from private industry.

Nearly all university-based climate scientists are funded predominantly by federal grants, and the ideological and political goals of those authorizing the grants could reasonably be expected to affect the studies conducted by research universities and private researchers. The conflict between gaining research money and scientific integrity puts sound but nonconformist science at a crushing disadvantage.

Professor at Pennsylvania State University (PSU) Michael Mann, notorious for his role in the Climategate e-mail scandal, has garnered close to $6 million promoting scary scientific conclusions serving government’s goal of control over energy sources. More than half ($3.6 million) of his funding came from the National Science Foundation (NSF).

PSU and NSF conducted investigations absolving Mann of any wrongdoing in Climategate, but with the offending institutions effectively investigating one of their own, would anyone expect a different outcome?

**Influence, Conflicts of Interest**

The proudly progressive Center for American Progress (CAP) has five people on federal advisory committees, spent $3.6 million on lobbying, and gave $312,400 to Democrat candidates in 2014. Since 2004, CAP has been supported by myriad left-wing foundations, including Marilsa, Rockefeller, Sea Change, which has ties to Russian oil money laundering, and 200 other alarmist foundations.

CAP Senior Fellow and Chief Science Advisor Joe Romm has testified before Congress on global warming and coauthored numerous peer-reviewed studies. Despite his close affiliation with CAP, Romm failed to file conflict-of-interest disclosures for an article in *Environmental Research Letters*, a violation of the publication’s terms.

Government and foundation monies go only toward research advancing a pro-regulatory climate agenda, a reality the overwhelming majority of reporters and pundits in the media have chosen to ignore. This is perhaps the greatest threat to the integrity of scientific research and greatly hinders the ability of the public to determine the truth about Earth’s ever-changing climate.

Ron Arnold (arnold.ron@gmail.com) is a free-enterprise activist, author, and commentator.
Landscape and Ocean Change, Not Carbon Dioxide, Dominate Climate

By H. Sterling Burnett

In Landscapes and Cycles, biologist and ecologist Jim Steele has produced a stunning exposé of the way scientists, wedded to the idea human-caused carbon dioxide emissions are changing the environment in dangerous ways, operate to the detriment of the scientific process and the environment they claim to care about.

Steele served as director, and is now director emeritus, of the Sierra Nevada field campus of San Francisco State University for 25 years. In this role and as a practicing research biologist, Steele has done his own field work and reviewed in detail the field work of dozens of biologists battling to conserve and protect species at risk of local and global extinction. In the course of his work, Steel became worried legitimate concerns for various species’ status was being hijacked by scientists who wanted to link every species decline, even temporary or localized losses, to global warming.

Habitat Change, Not Climate Change

This diversion of attention is a problem because when climate scaremongers misidentify the causes of a particular species’ decline, they divert scarce resources from research into more likely causes, thus reducing the chances of finding a successful solution.

Steele skillfully dissects several factors that have led climate scientists down blind paths from which they refuse to extricate themselves. The book is at its strongest when Steele uses copious evidence to demonstrate local landscape changes and direct human intervention provide far more accurate and compelling explanations for species decline and recovery than do rising carbon dioxide levels.

In case study after case study, Steele shows the threats faced by species as disparate as polar bears and butterflies, inhabiting wildly varying habitats, are caused almost exclusively by localized landscape changes or natural regional and global climate patterns that have nothing to do with anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

Penguin Predictions

Between 2004 and 2009, the emperor penguin population was estimated at approximately 220,000, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) listed them as a species of “Least Concern.” By 2012, though the population had tripled to more than 600,000 penguins, the IUCN changed the status from “Least Concern” to “Near Threatened.”

This shift was not based on actual emperor penguin numbers, but instead on a single study using data from the 1970s examining a single penguin colony in an area of a localized and temporary temperature spike. The study postulated global warming will reduce the sea ice emperor penguins need to survive. Headlines around the world trumpeted the impending doom of the iconic emperor penguin, star of the movie March of the Penguins.

Every single part of the explanation was contradicted by the facts. Antarctic sea ice has expanded dramatically despite rising carbon dioxide levels. Luckily for the penguins, it hasn’t expanded near their preferred breeding sites. The latest research shows emperor penguins actually benefit from additional open water near their colonies.

Damage by Human Intervention

More recent fluctuations in the DuDu colony of emperor penguins and neighboring Adelie penguins in a French-controlled region of Antarctica were attributed to global climate change by a couple of prominent science journals and the press. On-the-ground observations, however, have revealed the changes are likely due to direct human interference with penguins in their habitat.

When studying emperor penguins in the late 1960s to the 1980s, scientists stalked, trapped, and attached flipper bands to them during breeding, a time when penguins are already highly stressed. Some of the penguins migrated to alternate breeding grounds in future years, but others died because the bands were attached too tightly and caused the flippers to atrophy.

By one estimate, flipper bands lowered survival for the penguins by 13 percent annually. Even when the bands didn’t kill the penguins outright, the bands slowed the penguins while swimming, which lowered their hunting efficiency. This resulted in many penguins entering harsh winters in less-than-peak condition.

When flipper banding ended in 1980, the emperor penguin survival rates and overall population numbers rebounded dramatically.

Thousands of Adelie penguins in DuDu also suffered. Like their emperor cousins, Adelie numbers declined sharply in the years scientists attached flipper bands and recovered quickly after banding was halted, but they have yet to recover from more invasive human actions.

Scientists studying penguins desired easier access to their research station, so an airstrip was constructed in the middle of one of the Adelie colony’s nesting grounds, despite protests from Greenpeace and other conservation organizations and scientists. Estimates suggest more than 3,000 nests were destroyed in the construction.

In an ironic twist, an iceberg later destroyed the airstrip. Emperor penguins have since returned to the breeding grounds but the Adelie have not.

This is just one of the many excellent examples Steele provides of how local conditions, not global average temperature, is the cause of species decline, population movement, and recovery or repopulation.

H. Sterling Burnett Ph.D. (hsburnett@heartland.org) is a research fellow with The Heartland Institute.

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**Landscapes and Cycles: An Environmentalist’s Journey to Climate Skepticism**

Jim Steele; self-published, June 2013, 331 pages
$22.49 on Amazon

“The book is at its strongest when Steele uses copious evidence to demonstrate local landscape changes and direct human intervention provide far more accurate and compelling explanations for species decline and recovery than do rising carbon dioxide levels.”

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MARCE OF THE PENGUINS

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H. Sterling Burnett Ph.D. (hsburnett@heartland.org) is a research fellow with The Heartland Institute.
By Bonner R. Cohen

According to a recent study by researchers at George Mason University, the views of researchers skeptical of the theory humans are causing potentially catastrophic climate change have become scarce in news stories covering the topic.

The study published in trade magazine Journalism found contrarian views on man-caused climate change are no longer welcome in many of the nation’s newspapers.

The authors of “Covering Global Warming in Dubious Times: Environmental Reporters in the New Media Ecosystem” interviewed nearly a dozen journalists who regularly report on climate change.

Skeptics ‘Generally Irrelevant’

The George Mason study quotes one reporter as saying, “[T]here is pretty much understanding across the board in the United States media now that [manmade climate change] is real, this is true, it’s happening, [and] we’re responsible. That debate is over.”

The study found news editors encourage reporters to deny there is an ongoing debate over humanity’s role in climate change, and that journalists, many of whom requested anonymity, were encouraged by their superiors to ignore climate skeptic’s arguments.

“This practice of ignoring skeptics was largely supported by their managers and editors,” the study found. “In fact, one reporter’s news organization had recently developed an explicit editorial policy discouraging reporters from quoting climate change deniers in environment and science coverage.”

L.A. Times Confirms Bias

An October 2013 Los Angeles Times commentary confirms the study’s findings. Paul Thornton, an editor for the Times, explained the paper’s decision not to print letters to the editor questioning the theory of human-induced global warming while acknowledging he is “no expert when it comes to our planet’s complex climate processes.”

Instead, Thornton says he relies on the United Nations’ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which he described as “a body made up of the world’s top climate scientists.”

According to Thornton, IPCC had recently concluded the debate over man-caused climate change is over. “It was 95 percent certain that we fossil-fuel-burning humans are driving global warming,” Thornton said in his summary of IPCC’s findings. “The debate right now is not whether this evidence exists (clearly, it does) but what this evidence means for us.”

Thornton’s commentary concluded, “Simply put, I do my best to keep letters of error off the letters page; when one does run, a correction is published. Saying ‘there is no sign humans have caused climate change’ is not stating an opinion, it’s asserting a factual inaccuracy.”

‘Witch Hunt’

Jay Lehr, science director for The Heartland Institute, identifies something more ominous at work.

“There is an old saying in law schools everywhere,” Lehr said. “If you have the facts on your side, pound the facts. If you have the law on your side, pound the law. If you have neither on your side, pound the table.’ What is going on now is a witch hunt, proving there are no longer any supportable facts that indicate mankind has any significant role in determining climate. All that remains is to vilify those in opposition.”

Bonner R. Cohen, Ph.D. (bcohen@nationalcenter.org) is a senior fellow at the National Center for Public Policy Research in Washington, DC.
The Tenth International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC-10) will take place on June 11-12, 2015, in Washington, DC. You won’t want to miss this event!

Republican mid-term election gains create new opportunities to stop and begin to repeal the anti-energy and anti-jobs policies adopted during the height of the global warming scare.

New scientific discoveries suggest the climate’s “sensitivity” to carbon dioxide is lower than previously thought, and economists warn that reducing emissions enough to have a discernible impact on climate would cause more “energy poverty,” exposing millions of people to hardship or even death.

The most recent conference in this series, ICCC-9, took place in Las Vegas in July 2014 and was widely acclaimed as the best in the series yet. Some 650 people turned out to hear 64 speakers cover every aspect of climate change. Thirty-two organizations cosponsored the event and ten prominent scientists and activists received awards. Video of every presentation along with speakers’ Powerpoints delivered at that event can be found at climateconferences.heartland.org.

For more information and to register, go to climateconference.heartland.org.

To learn more about climate change awards, visit climatechangeawards.org.
GLOBAL SATELLITE TEMPERATURES

HOW MUCH GLOBAL WARMING?

Each month, Environment & Climate News updates the global averaged satellite measurements of the Earth’s temperature. These numbers are important because they are real—not projections, forecasts, or guesses. Global satellite measurements are made from a series of orbiting platforms that sense the average temperature in various atmospheric layers. Here, we present the lowest level, which climate models say should be warming. The satellite measurements are considered accurate to within 0.01°C. The data used to create these graphs can be found on the Internet at http://vortex.nsstc.uah.edu/data/msu/t2lt/uahncdc_lt_5.6.txt

FEBRUARY 2015

GLOBAL AVERAGE

The global average temperature for February was 0.30°C above average.

NORTHERN HEMISPHERE

The Northern Hemisphere’s temperature was 0.43°C above average.

SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE

The Southern Hemisphere’s temperature was 0.17°C above average.

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