

The Week That Was: 2012-1-21 (January 21, 2012)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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SEPP / VA-SEEE Forums:

January 23, 7 pm Mathews County, VA, Cornerstone Fellowship Church, 2243 Buckley Hall Road, Cobbs Creek, Va.

January 24: Virginia Beach, VA, 12:15 to 1:45, Libris Room, Virginia Beach Central Library, 4100 Virginia Beach Boulevard, <http://g.co/maps/upkp3> , For info, contact Kris Allen, klallen@gmail.com. Seating is limited. Please Register at: <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/2746333357>

Speakers include SEPP President Fred Singer, Dr. Charles Battig, and SEPP Exec. VP Ken Haapala. Topics include: status of global warming science and the divergence between models and observations. Why global models, even if modified for regional conditions, are unsuitable for local and regional planning. UN Agenda 21 and how to contest UN and Federal control over local land use issues.

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On the Road Again: Fred Singer will be traveling to the Southwest and West US to spread the joyous news that the NIPCC Reports are correct and the IPCC models do not conform to observations. Humanity has little to fear from the false claims of unprecedented and dangerous global warming. Although his schedule is not final, his stops include: Houston-Austin from Feb 6 to 8; Southern California from Feb 8 to 12, with a talk at Chapman University on Feb 9, additional meeting in San Diego on February 13 & 14 and the key Sigma Xi lecture at the University of New Mexico on Feb 16.

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Quote of the Week:

“...it would not serve the national interest.” – President Obama in rejecting permits to build a new overland pipeline to import additional oil from neighboring Canada using the safest method known for high volume transportation of liquids.

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Number of the Week: 3 years

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THIS WEEK:

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

Keystone Pipeline: On Wednesday, President Obama rejected the request by TransCanada for permits to build a 1700 mile long pipeline to transport crude petroleum from the oil sands of Alberta, Canada, to refineries in the US along the gulf coast. This oil would supplement the heavy crude from Venezuela and Mexico, where production is declining due to the failure of investment by the government owned oil companies. The pipeline was to be privately financed, requiring no government subsidies or loans, and would provide construction jobs along the route. It would supply necessary oil from a reliable ally by the safest method to transport oil – overland pipeline.

The decision elated the environmental industry and demonstrated the extent to which this industry influences energy and economic policy in the US. In praising the decision, an editorial in the *New York Times* stated that the government should focus on renewable and alternative energy. Typical for the environmental industry and its advocates, the *Times* misled its readers by failing to state that oil produces less than one percent of the electricity in the US, mostly on site, such as emergency generation for hospitals when the electrical grid fails. Electricity from wind and solar is not a substitute for oil. Biofuels are a substitute for oil, but as of now require vast amounts of land, drive up food prices, and would not be economically viable without mandates (the subsidies were phased out at the end of 2011).

The decision has other ramifications. The pro-growth government of Canada has made it clear it intends to support the building of a pipeline from Alberta to the Pacific coast in British Columbia in order to transport oil to Asia. The US environmental industry is not welcomed by the government of Canada.

In the spring of 2011, the Obama administration arranged for a \$2 Billion loan from the US Export-Import Bank to the Brazilian government controlled oil company Petrobras to develop deep-water fields off the coast of Brazil. When visiting Brazil in the spring, President Obama declared that the US wants to be a major trading partner of Brazil for the importation of oil from these fields. The company has now signed deals with Chinese companies for the development of the fields and delivery of oil to China.

Thanks to the innovative development of extraction of oil from the dense Bakken shale formation, this year North Dakota is on track to become the second largest oil producing state, after Texas, surpassing California and Alaska, which have been hobbled for decades by unnecessary environmental restrictions by Washington. The Keystone pipeline was designed to take about 100,000 barrels of crude a day from the Bakken fields. Without the pipeline it will be increasingly be moved by rail, which is more expensive and less reliable. No doubt, if a major mishap occurs, the environmental industry will be demanding a moratorium on rail movement, further strangling US oil development.

It would be remiss not to point out that the major rail line serving the Bakken fields is BNSF Railway Co, a unit of Berkshire Hathaway, the president of which is Warren Buffet, a long time Obama advisor. According to reports, Bakken pioneer oilman Harold Hamm, who severely criticizes Obama for not recognizing the importance of the Bakken and the pipeline decision, believes Buffet had no role in the pipeline decision. Please see Articles # 1 & 2, and links under “Energy Issues – Canada”, “Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past” and “Administration’s Control of Oil and Gas.”

Number of the Week – 3 years. The Obama administration had 3 years to study the Keystone pipeline, before President Obama rejected it, claiming not enough time to study it. The technology and the few risks of oil pipelines are well established.

President Obama was in office for 4 weeks when he signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Stimulus Bill) on February 17, 2009 (7 days after it was passed by the Senate) with a then estimated cost of \$787 Billion, funded by government borrowing.

It has been almost 3 years since the stimulus bill was enacted to keep the unemployment rate below 8 percent. Even with a declining work force, the unemployment rate has been above 8 percent for almost 3 years. The predicted government deficit-funded economic boom did not materialize.

According to the Alyeska pipeline web site it took 3 years, 2 months to construct the Trans Alaska Pipeline System across 800 miles of rugged terrain with mountain passes up to 4,739 feet, 34 major river crossings and nearly 500 stream and other crossings, with temperatures ranging from minus 80 F to 95 F: pipeline, pump stations, roads, terminals, etc (April 29, 1974 to Jun 20, 1977) <http://www.alyeska-pipe.com/Pipelinefacts/PipelineConstruction.html>

Between 1880 and 1882, it took Thomas Edison 3 years to create “the world’s first commercial system of electricity generation, transmission, and conversion.” “And the pace and breadth of his inventiveness is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that during those three critical years he was granted not only nearly 90 patents for incandescent filaments and lamps but also 60 patents for magneto or dynamo-electric machines and their regulation, 14 patents for the system of electric lighting, 12 patents for the distribution of electricity, and 10 patents for electric meters and motors.”

<http://www.american.com/archive/2011/september/why-jobs-is-no-edison> Such private innovation by

Thomas Edison would not be well received in Washington today. The permitting process would be mindless, with never ending calls for additional research on the risks of electricity.

New Tactics: Global warming alarmists have taken a new tactic in their efforts to brand global warming skeptics as anti-science. Skeptics, such as SEPP, insist that climate change is natural and normal and that the UN IPCC has failed to produce rigorous scientific research demonstrating that carbon dioxide emissions are causing unprecedented and dangerous global warming. The models used failed to predict current temperature trends, thus the results are nothing but speculation.

In an effort to distort issues, organizations such as the self-styled National Center for Science Education (NCSE) are attempting to lump skepticism about global warming with skepticism about evolution. The subjects are separate and distinct, and any rational discussion needs to separate them. To SEPP, this is but one more example how desperate the global warming alarmists have become over their failure to conduct the necessary research.

The web site of NCSE states: “To ensure the accuracy of the models at projecting future climate trends, the models are often run backwards in time to “retrodict” past climate changes, and then compared with paleoclimate observations. **The models through this process have become remarkably accurate and give the climate research community confidence that the future projections are robust.**” [Boldface added.] The climate models are failing the most critical test – the ability to predict the current temperature trend of no increase. Please see links under “Expanding the Orthodoxy.”

False Positives: No matter how scrupulously conducted, sometimes studies will produce a false positive by sheer random chance. There is no way of knowing when this will occur. As reader Tom Sheahen pointed out, Judith Curry had an interesting post on false positives on her web site, linked in TWTW last week and this week.

To help assure that false positives do not enter into government policy requires demanding repetitive, rigorous, transparent studies. Of course, this is of little use when agencies, such as the EPA in its new mercury rules, pick and choose the studies they wish to use and discard the rest without written justification. Please see link under “Seeking a Common Ground.”

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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 Anti-Jobs President

Obama rejects the Keystone XL pipeline and blames Congress.

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 19, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204468004577168912332364268.html?mod=djemEditorialPage_h

2. A Tale of Two Pipelines

Canada and the U.S. trade economic places.

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 18, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204124204577154573793189262.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_AboveLEFTTop

3. Small Is Beautiful—So Go Nuclear

As environmentally friendly as they sound, biofuels and wind power squander land and other resources.

By Robert Bryce, WSJ, Jan 18, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204409004577156723958026212.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

4. Heavy Metal Politics

Interior bans new uranium mining in Arizona.

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 20, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204124204577154332224006536.html?mod=ITP_opinion_2

[SEPP Comment: Another example of the environmental lobby controlling energy policy in Washington. According to the Environmental Impact Statement, mining in the desolate area put off limits for uranium mining last week will have little environmental impact.]

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

Stocker's Earmarks

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Jan 12, 2012

<http://climateaudit.org/2012/01/12/stockers-earmarks/#more-15404>

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry

The Icelandic Saga Continues

By Paul Homewood, Jan 18, 2012 [H/t ICECAP]

<http://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2012/01/18/the-icelandic-saga-continues/>

[SEPP Comment: NASA-GISS is diddling with the historic data, again.]

Who would have guessed it?

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jan 16, 2012

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2012/1/16/who-would-have-guessed-it.html>

[SEPP Comment: Hadley CRU is diddling with the data, again.]

Challenging the Orthodoxy

What Causes El Niño / La Niña? IPCC Doesn't Know, But Builds Models and Makes Projections Anyway

By Tim Ball, His Blog, Jan 16, 2012

<http://drtimball.com/2012/what-causes-el-nino-la-nina-ipcc-doesnt-know-but-builds-models-and-makes-projections-anyway/>

Sense and Sensitivity II – the sequel

By Christopher Monckton of Brenchley, WUWT, Jan 15, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/01/15/sense-and-sensitivity-ii-the-sequel/#more-54790>

[SEPP Comment, Monckton addressing the claim: "While the non-condensing greenhouse gases account for only 25% of the total greenhouse effect, it is these non-condensing GHGs that actually control the strength of the terrestrial greenhouse effect, since the water vapor and cloud feedback contributions are not self-sustaining and, as such, only provide amplification." Water vapor will disappear from the atmosphere without CO2?]

Defending the Orthodoxy

Warmer summers may bring colder winters

By Staff Writers, Lexington, Mass. (UPI) Jan 16, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Warmer_summers_may_bring_colder_winters_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Contrary to a statement by one researcher, temperature data from the 80 degrees North Latitude shows no significant warming in the summer.]

Carbon dioxide affecting fish brains: study

By Staff Writers, Sydney (AFP,) Jan 16, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Carbon_dioxide_affecting_fish_brains_study_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Tropical fish fanciers often enhance the carbon dioxide levels in aquariums beyond anything that would occur under human CO2 emissions.]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

The Changing Influence of Time

By Patrick Michaels, World Climate Report, Jan 20, 2012

<http://www.worldclimatereport.com/index.php/2012/01/20/the-changing-influence-of-time/>

Winning A Climate Bet

By David Whitehouse, The Observatory, Jan 13, 2012

<http://www.thegwpf.org/the-observatory/4748-winning-a-climate-bet.html>

A Response to Skeptical Science’s “Patrick Michaels: Serial Deleter of Inconvenient Data”

By Patrick Michaels, WUWT, Jan 17, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/01/17/a-response-to-skeptical-sciences-patrick-michaels-serial-deleter-of-inconvenient-data/#more-54904>

Comments on the Misleading Nature Geosciences Article “Climate Change Confirmed... Again”

By Roger Pielke, Sr, Pielke Climate Science, Jan 17, 2012

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2012/01/17/comments-on-the-misleading-nature-geosciences-article-climate-change-confirmed-again/>

Questioning European Green

Wind and Gas

Back-up or Back-out “That is the Question”

By Nora Meray, Clingendael International Energy Programme, Dec 2011

http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2011/20111200_ciep_study_wind_gas.pdf

[SEPP Comment: Problems of wind power in northern Europe. It needs about 80% back-up. If added to the existing systems, the current plants cannot be phased out. If introduced to a new system, it must require an expensive second back-up.]

Re-Evaluating Germany's Blind Faith in the Sun

The costs of subsidizing solar electricity have exceeded the 100-billion-euro mark in Germany, but poor results are jeopardizing the country's transition to renewable energy. The government is struggling to come up with a new concept to promote the inefficient technology in the future.

By Alexander Neubacher, Der Spiegel, Jan 18, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/0,1518,809439,00.html>

[SEPP Comment: Germany has spent more on photovoltaic solar than any other country. According to the above report, the peak demand in northern Europe for electricity is about 6 pm in the winter – when, in Germany, there is no sun.]

Solar Industry Remains In Crisis As Government Battles For Right To Appeal

By Staff Writers, London, UK (SPX) Jan 19, 2012

http://www.solardaily.com/reports/Solar_Industry_Remains_In_Crisis_As_Government_Battles_For_Right_To_Appeal_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Except for isolated use, the solar industry would not exist without government support.]

Renewables must give way to 'natural gas revolution'

By Benny Peiser, PS Europe, Jan 20, 2012

<http://www.publicserviceeurope.com/article/1375/renewables-must-give-way-to-natural-gas-revolution>

[SEPP Comment: As Peiser states it is necessary for political leaders to recognize the obvious. But can the EU leaders do so when deluded by false environmental promises?]

Plans for green energy drive 'will cost families £400 a year by 2020'

Energy secretary accused of 'misleading' the public

By Jason Grovers, Daily Mail, Jan 18, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2088112/Plans-green-energy-drive-cost-families-400-year-2020.html>

Siemens puts cost of nuclear exit at 1.7 trillion euros

By Christoph Steitz, Reuters, Jan 17, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/01/17/us-siemens-energy-idUSTRE80G10920120117>

Expanding the Orthodoxy

The New Science Classroom Battleground: Climate Change

By John Timmer, Ars Technica, Wired Science, Jan 17, 2012 [H/t Ron Lasky]

http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2012/01/climate-change-education/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+wired%2Findex+%28Wired%3A+Index+3+%28Top+Stories+2%29%29&utm_content=Google+Feedfetcher

[SEPP Comment: Peter Gleick who disgraced himself with his attack on Roy Spencer, John Christy, Steve McIntyre and others is on the board of the National Center for Science Education. Need one say more?]

A new climate science player

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jan 18, 2012

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2012/1/18/a-new-climate-science-player.html>

National Center for Science Education – web site.

Defending the Teaching of Evolution & Climate Science [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://ncse.com/climate/climate-change-101/how-much-human-responsibility-for-climate-change>

Climate Change Doubts Heat Up the Classroom

Editorial, IBD, Jan 18, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://news.investors.com/Article/598184/201201181847/climate-change-global-warming-teachers-skeptics.htm>

State Department Launches "Bureau of Energy Resources"

By Staff Writers, Press Release, Nov 16, 2011 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/11/177262.htm>

“With a growing global population and a finite supply of fossil fuels, the need to diversify our supply is urgent.”

[SEPP Comment: SEPP supports electricity from alternative sources in isolated communities, especially for cooking and basic lighting. But the State department policy will become: promote expensive, unreliable energy with devices from China. Forget Canada and its oil.]

Now Playing: The Sustainability Con

By Ron Ross, American Spectator, Jan 18, 2012

<http://spectator.org/archives/2012/01/18/now-playing-the-sustainability>

[SEPP Comments: Graduates of sustainability programs will have jobs at the Department of State Bureau of Energy Resources. Who says bureaucrats cannot plan?]

Seeking a Common Ground

How bad science becomes common knowledge

Two case studies (solar and climate change)

By Eric Dennis, Motls.blogspot, Jan 17, 2012

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2012/01/how-bad-science-becomes-common.html>

[SEPP Comment; A significant difference between the actual examples given in the article and the claims of the Peter Gleick and the National Center for Science Education.]

False (?) Positives

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc, Jan 12, 2012

<http://judithcurry.com/2012/01/12/false-positives/#more-6530>

What Does “Climate Change” Mean? Does A Lack Of Preciseness In Its Definition Discourage Effective Discussion Of The Risks From Climate On Key Societal And Environmental Resources?

By Roger Pielke, Sr, Jan 19, 2012

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2012/01/19/what-does-climate-change-mean-does-a-lack-of-preciseness-in-its-definition-discourage-effective-discussion-of-the-risks-from-climate-on-key-societal-and-environmental-resources/>

[SEPP Comment: The term needs to be precisely defined by scientists with a knowledge of climate history, not by lawyers at the EPA or by the IPCC.]

Climate Proposal Puts Practicality Ahead of Sacrifice

By John Tierney, NYT, Jan 16, 2012

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/17/science/countering-climate-change-without-waiting-for-a-payoff.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha210>

[SEPP Comment: If soot and ozone are major causes of global warming, then start from there. Certainly reducing soot would provide enormous health benefits to the women and children that are using traditional fuels indoors. There are highly questionable statements in the article.]

Largest bird alters its foraging due to climate change

By Staff Writers, Leipzig, Germany (SPX), Jan 16, 2012

http://www.terraviva.com/reports/Largest_bird_alters_its_foraging_due_to_climate_change_999.html

[SEPP Comment: As ocean and wind patterns change, birds change foraging patterns. Nothing unusual here.]

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

Weird weather around the world sees in 2012

With unusual weather in Europe and the Americas, low Arctic ice, droughts in Africa and Latin America, 2012 picks up where 2011 left off

By John Vidal, Guardian, UK, Jan 12, 2012 [H/t Real Science]

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/blog/2012/jan/12/weird-weather-2012>

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Another Billionz Update: NOAA Discovers Inflation

By Roger Pielke, Jr, His Blog, Jan 20, 2012

<http://rogerpielkejr.blogspot.com/2012/01/another-billionz-update-noaa-discovers.html>

“Ultimately, the time for a federal science agency to get the science right is well before issuing breathless press releases. NOAA has dropped the ball on this one, as have virtually all of the media and bloggers who purport to care about science integrity.” – Well said, Roger, great job!

Appalling disinformation in Irish Times

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jan 20, 2012

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2012/1/20/appalling-disinformation-in-irish-times.html>

The Pipeline, the Jobs, & the Media

By Donna Laframboise, NFC, Jan 20, 2012

<http://nofrackingconsensus.com/2012/01/20/the-pipeline-the-jobs-the-media/>

Changing Weather

Winter 2011-2012: Another Cold & Snowier Winter for India

By Madhav Kandekar, Pielke Climate Science, Jan 20, 2012

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2012/01/20/guest-post-by-madhav-khandekar-winter-2011-2012-another-cold-snowier-winter-for-india/>

Snow drought early season vs long trend trends

By Joseph D’Aleo, Weatherbell Analytics, Jan 18, 2012

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/snow_drought_early_season_part_of_a_trend/

Sahara Snow On January 17 2012 – Is It Unprecedented?

By Roger Pielke, Sr, Pielke Climate Science, Jan 20, 2012

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2012/01/20/sahara-snow-on-january-17-2012-is-it-unprecedented/>
[SEPP Comment: Except for the mountains, it seldom snows.]

Pineapple Express Flooding Follows Heavy Snows in Northwest

By Joe D’Aleo, WeatherBELL Analytics, Jan 19, 2012

<http://www.weatherbell.com/weather-news/pineapple-express-flooding-follows-heavy-snows-in-northwest/>

Are the snows of Kilimanjaro returning? Guide says yes

By Alan Boswell, Miami Herald, Jan 18, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2012/01/18/2595738/are-the-snows-of-kilimanjaro-returning.html>

Changing Climate

Global temps in a Crash as AGW proponents Crash the Economy

By Joe Bastardi, Weatherbell Analytics, Jan 18, 2012

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

War-Climate Change Link Disarmed

By Steve Milloy, Junk Science, Jan 19, 2012

<http://junkscience.com/2012/01/19/war-climate-change-link-disarmed/>

[SEPP Comment: Studies of early Europe indicate it was cooling climates that create unrest leading to population migration – war.]

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

Another Luddite victory

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Jan 20, 2012

<http://www.scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/another-luddite-victory>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Barclays Closes US Carbon Desk In Latest Cap And Trade Setback

By Simon Lomax, AOL Energy, Jan 20, 2012 [H/t SPPI]

<http://energy.aol.com/2012/01/20/barclays-closes-us-carbon-desk-in-latest-cap-and-trade-setback/>

[SEPP Comment: There's always California – the ninth largest economy in the world – for now.]

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Cape Wind

By Staff Writers, Avalon Energy Services, Jan 18, 2012

<http://avalonenergy.us/blog/?p=176>

[SEPP Comment: For years regulators, when intensifying regulations, claim the businesses need regulatory certainty. Programmed ever increasing electricity rates gives certainty to those businesses considering moving to locations with lower electricity rates. The web site of Avalon Energy Services states it is an independent consulting service to lower energy bills to clients.]

US looks ahead after ethanol subsidy expires

By Staff Writers, Washington (AFP), Jan 15, 2012

http://www.biofueldaily.com/reports/US_looks_ahead_after_ethanol_subsidy_expires_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Contrary to the statement in the article, the reason for starting the ethanol subsidy program was to increase the oxygen level in fuel to provide more complete combustion, because many carburetors were set too rich causing incomplete combustion. Once the computerized fuel injection replaced carburetors, ethanol was not needed. Yet the mandates remain.]

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Report: Power plant mercury rule won't cause power outages

By Andrew Restuccia, The Hill, Jan 18, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/204789-crs-power-plant-mercury-rules-wont-cause-power-outages>

[SEPP Comment: Highly questionable assertion. Even if outages do not occur, the rules are costly and unneeded.]

Energy Issues -- Canada

Canada: A global energy superpower

By Joe Oliver, Financial Post, Jan 16, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/01/16/canda-a-global-energy-superpower/>

[SEPP Comment: Canada's Minister of Natural Resources debunks claims of extreme environmental damage from oil sands.]

Oil sands money trail

By Vivian Krause, Financial Post, Jan 17, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/01/17/vivian-krause-oil-sands-money-trail/>

Follow the money, then expose the misinformation

By Peter Foster, Financial Post, Jan 19, 2012

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/01/19/peter-foster-follow-the-money-then-expose-the-misinformation/>

Energy Issues

Utility-Scale Energy Storage and Zinc-Air Batteries

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jan 16, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/01/16/utility-scale-energy-storage-and-zinc-air-batteries/#more-54865>

[SEPP Comment: Great if true and can be affordable on a commercial scale.]

Big Reserves Could Make U.S. Energy Self-Sufficient

By Merrill Matthews, IBD, Jan 17, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/Article.aspx?id=598023&p=1&ibdbot=1>

[SEPP Comment: Energy self-sufficiency is not necessarily a desirable goal. But there is no justification for Washington, including the military, for spending massive sums for alternative energy when less costly carbon based fuels are available in the US.]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

North Dakota Sets More Oil Production Records in November; Above 500k Daily Barrels for First Time

By Mark Perry, Carpe Diem, Jan 10, 2012

<http://mjperry.blogspot.com/2012/01/north-dakota-sets-more-oil-production.html>

Energy fact of the week: Gas shakeout coming?

By Steven F. Hayward, Enterprise Blog, Jan 13, 2012

<http://blog.american.com/2012/01/energy-fact-of-the-week-gas-shakeout-coming-2/>

[SEPP Comments: Opponents of hydraulic fracturing for natural gas will claim that it will cause job losses and company failures. In fact, fracturing for natural gas has been so successful that it has driven the price of natural gas so low, that companies that depend on natural gas, such as chemical companies, are booming.]

The Dark Side of Serbia's Oil Shale Fairy Tale

By Vesna Peric Zimonjic, IPS, Jan 19, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=106490>

[SEPP Comment: Wrong type of shale – produces kerogen, not oil. Kerogen requires extensive processing, but it is hardly the “dirtiest technology in the world today.” Women cooking over fires using traditional fuels, such as dung, are using a far more dirty technology.

'Unconventionals are easy to find but hard to get'

Geology Professor Jan de Jager (ex-Shell) puts West European shale gas prospects in perspective

By Annemieke van Roekel, European Energy Review, Jan 16, 2012

<http://www.europeanenergyreview.eu/site/pagina.php?id=3462>

Administration's Control of Oil and Gas

Obama's jobs council report says 'drill'

By Andrew Restuccia, The Hill, Jan 17, 2012

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/204621-obamas-jobs-council-calls-for-expanded-drilling>

President Obama Bows to Special Interests: Refuses to Approve Keystone XL Pipeline from Canada

Ronald Bailey, Reason, Jan 18, 2012

<http://reason.com/blog/2012/01/18/president-obama-bows-to-special-interest>

Re-Election Obsessed Obama Goes Political On Keystone

By Robert J. Samuelson, IBD, Jan 19, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/Article.aspx?id=598312&p=1&ibdbot=1>

Obama's pipe-dream economy

President thinks more jobs created by jobless checks than oil pipeline

Editorial, Washington Times, Jan 18, 2012

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jan/18/obamas-pipe-dream-economy/>

Obama kills Keystone pipeline plan; Why he did it

By Andrew Malcolm, IBD, Jan 18, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/Article.aspx?id=598108&p=1&ibdbot=1>

Jobs Vs. Greens? On Keystone Obama Chooses His Base

Editorial, IBD, Jan 18, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/Article/598185/201201181847/pipeline-decision-purely-political.htm>

More ND oil will be railed with no US pipeline

By Staff Writers, AP, Jan 20, 2012

http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-505245_162-57363033/more-nd-oil-will-be-railed-with-no-us-pipeline/

A Good Call on the Pipeline

Editorial, NYT, Jan 18, 2012

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/19/opinion/a-good-call-on-the-keystone-xl-oil-pipeline.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha211>

China gets jump on U.S. for Brazil's oil

Two export pacts a coup for Beijing

By Kelly Hearn, Washington Times, Jan 19, 2012 [H/t SPPI]

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/jan/19/china-gets-jump-on-us-for-brazils-oil/?page=1>

Oil Spills & Consequences

Exxon Mobil reaches settlement on Montana spill

By Staff Writers, AP, Jan 19, 2012

<http://fuelfix.com/blog/2012/01/19/exxon-mobil-reaches-settlement-on-montana-spill/>

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Japanese reactors await restart approvals

By Staff Writers, WNN, Jan 16, 2012

http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/RS-Japanese_reactors_await_restart_approvals-1601124.html?utm_source=World+Nuclear+News&utm_campaign=58b80bddc1-WNN_Weekly_10_16_January_2012_16_2012&utm_medium=email

Japan reactor lifespan up to 60 years: government

By Staff Writers, Tokyo (AFP), Jan 18, 2012

http://www.nuclearpowerdaily.com/reports/Japan_reactor_lifespan_up_to_60_years_government_999.html

Terrestrial Energy (Geothermal, Nuclear vs. Fossil Fuels and Renewables)

By William Tucker, Master Resource, Jan 16, 2012

<http://www.masterresource.org/2012/01/terrestrial-energy-geothermal-nuclear-vs-fossil-fuels-and-renewables/#more-18190>

Alternative, Green ("Clean") Energy

When Will We Awake From Obama's Bad Green Dream?

Editorial, IBD, Jan 19, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/Article.aspx?id=598318&p=1&ibdbot=1>

U.S. Winning Green Energy Race to Nowhere

By William Yeatman, Global Warming.org, Jan 17, 2012

<http://www.globalwarming.org/2012/01/17/u-s-winning-green-energy-race-to-nowhere/>

“To put it another way, China is subsidizing the supply of green energy, while the U.S. and Europe are mandating its demand.”

Here comes the sun

By Staff Writers, Boston MA (SPX), Jan 16, 2012

http://www.solardaily.com/reports/Here_comes_the_sun_999.html

[SEPP Comment: As of now, the reported cost is 35 million euros with 10MW operational. Not exactly a deal for the Spanish taxpayer.]

Power generation is blowing in the wind

By Anne M Stark, LLNL News, SPX, Jan 18, 2012

http://www.winddaily.com/reports/Power_generation_is_blowing_in_the_wind_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Trying to discover why wind farms perform far more poorly than predicted. Anyone who has listened closely to promoters would understand why.]

The Full Cost to Households of Renewable Energy Policies

Analysis of government’s annual energy policy statement

By Simon Less, Policy Exchange, Jan, 2012

http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/images/publications/pdfs/The_Full_Cost_to_Households_of_Renewable_Energy_Policies_-_Jan_12.pdf

[SEPP Comment: The author supports reducing carbon dioxide emissions, but suggests a different way of going about it.]

Spanish wind farms kill 6 to 18 million birds & bats a year

The average bird and bat deaths per turbine comes down to 333 – 1,000 deaths annually

By Staff Writer, Canada Free Press, Jan 12, 2012

<http://www.canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/43904>

[SEPP Comment: SEPP cannot verify this claim. As stated in the article, the American Bird Conservancy claims about 400,000 for the US. SEPP has been unable to find any systematic nation-wide reporting system. However, these bird kill numbers give some prospective to the 2308 dead birds found with visible oil by U.S. Fish & Wildlife for the full year after the BP oil spill. The spill was not the environmental disaster promoted by the administration and its environmental allies.]

Carbon Schemes

The Future of Coal: Clean coal technologies and CCS in the EU and Central East European Countries

By Frank Umbach, EUCERS, Jan 13, 2012

<http://www.europeanenergyreview.eu/site/pagina.php?id=3461>

[SEPP Comment: Except for the huge costs, it’s a great idea.]

California Dreaming

High-Speed Rail in Calif.: What Price Behavior Mod?

Editorial, IBD, Jan 17, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/Article.aspx?id=598021&p=1&ibdbot=1>

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Modeling Changes in Arctic Ocean Sea Ice Characteristics

Reference: Kwok, R. 2011. Observational assessment of Arctic Ocean sea ice motion, export, and thickness in CMIP3 climate simulations. *Journal of Geophysical Research* 116: 10.1029/2011JC007004.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/jan/17jan2012a1.html>

[SEPP Comment: The skill of the models predicting Arctic sea ice movement and thickness is rather poor.]

Coral Response to Thermal Stress: Symbiont Shuffling Plus

Reference: Fitt, W.K., Gates, R.D., Hoegh-Guldberg, O., Bythell, J.C., Jatkar, A., Grottole, A.G., Gomez, M., Fisher, P., Lajuenesse, T.C., Pantos, O., Iglesias-Prieto, R., Franklin, D.J., Rodrigues, L.J., Torregiani, J.M., van Woesik, R. and Lesser, M.P. 2009. Response of two species of Indo-Pacific corals, *Porites cylindrica* and *Stylophora pistillata*, to short-term thermal stress: The host does matter in determining the tolerance of corals to bleaching. *Journal of Experimental Marine Biology and Ecology* 373: 102-110.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/jan/17jan2012a2.html>

A Summary of Climate Change over the Past Millennium in China

Reference: Zhou, XJ. 2011. The characteristics and regularities of the climate change over the past millennium in China. *Chinese Science Bulletin* 56: 2985.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/jan/18jan2012a4.html>

(1) "temperatures in the Medieval Warm Period are comparable to those in the current warm period over China," and (2) "the effect of solar activity on climate cannot be neglected in any period of the millennium."

Responses of Northeast Atlantic Fish to Rapid Regional Warming

Reference: Simpson, S.D., Jennings, S., Johnson, M.P., Blanchard, J.L., Schon, P.-J., Sims, D.W. and Genner, M.J. 2011. Continental shelf-wide response of a fish assemblage to rapid warming of the sea. *Current Biology* 21: 1565-1570.

Health, Energy, and Climate

La Nina 'May Abet' Flu Pandemics

By Joe D'Aleo, WeatherBELL Analytics, Jan 16, 2012

<http://www.weatherbell.com/weather-news/la-nina-may-abet-flu-pandemics/>

LED lights extend meat shelf life

By Staff Writers, Manhattan KS (SPX), Jan 18, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/LED_lights_extend_meat_shelf_life_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Would changing fluorescent lights to LED in offices extend the shelf life of the workers?]

Environmental Industry

Keystone denial a threat to Gateway line: Enbridge

By Scott Haggett, Reuters, Canada, Jan 19, 2012

<http://ca.reuters.com/article/businessNews/idCATRE8011YQ20120119>

[SEPP Comment: After the Obama administration gave the environmental industry a clear win in the Keystone pipeline, it will be more energized to fight the westward Gateway pipeline.]

2 Million Jobs On Offer If Americans Thinks Big on Energy Efficiency

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Jan 19, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/2_Million_Jobs_On_Offer_If_Americans_Thinks_Big_on_Energy_Efficiency_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Forcing people to live in tiny apartments will save a great deal of energy. Job increases by compelling people to adapt to centralized planning failed to produce prosperity in the Soviet Union.]

Environmentalism and the Leisure Class

In playing Keystone cop, President Obama protects his environmental flank for no good reason.

By William Tucker, American Spectator, Jan 20, 2012

<http://spectator.org/archives/2012/01/20/environmentalism-and-the-leisu>

The Canadian (Climate) Paradox

By Donna Laframboise, NFC, Jan 16, 2012

<http://nofrackingconsensus.com/2012/01/16/the-canadian-climate-paradox/>

[SEPP Comment: Stop all economic progress.]

Bulgarian parliament bans shale gas exploration

By Staff Writers, Sofia (AFP), Jan 18, 2012

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Bulgarian_parliament_bans_shale_gas_exploration_999.html

Other Scientific News

Top Science Scandals of 2011

A list of this year's most high-profile retractions and controversies in science

By Tia Ghose, The Scientist, Dec 19, 2011

<http://the-scientist.com/2011/12/19/top-science-scandals-of-2011/>

Russian Scientists Mock U.S. Radar Theory on Mars Probe

By Staff Writers, Moscow (RIA Novosti), Jan 18, 2012

http://www.spacemart.com/reports/Russian_Scientists_Mock_US_Radar_Theory_on_Mars_Probe_999.html

No Free Launches: Can Commercial Space Bank On NASA Contracts?

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Jan 17, 2012

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2012/01/17/no-free-launches-can-commercial-space-bank-on-nasa-contracts/>

Are you certain, Mr. Heisenberg?

By Staff Writers, Vienna, Austria (SPX) Jan 18, 2012

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Are_you_certain_Mr_Heisenberg_999.html

Cracking Open the Scientific Process

By Thomas Lin, NYT, Jan 16, 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/17/science/open-science-challenges-journal-tradition-with-web-collaboration.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha26

In tackling lead pollution, fungi may be our friends

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Jan 16, 2012

http://www.terradaaily.com/reports/In_tackling_lead_pollution_fungi_may_be_our_friends_999.html

Other News that May Be of Interest

Researchers discover particle which could cool the planet

By Staff Writers, Manchester UK (SPX), Jan 16, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Researchers_discover_particle_which_could_cool_the_planet_999.html

One-third of car fuel consumption is due to friction loss

By Staff Writers, Helsinki, Finland (SPX), Jan 16, 2012

http://www.spacemart.com/reports/One_third_of_car_fuel_consumption_is_due_to_friction_loss_999.html

Opinion: The Dark Side of Science

Scientists are responsible for the foreseeable consequences of their research—good and bad.

By Heather Douglas, The Scientist, Nov 16, 2011 [H/t Catherine French]

<http://the-scientist.com/2011/11/16/opinion-the-dark-side-of-science/>

[SEPP Comment: A challenging thought.]

A Second Here a Second There May Just Be a Waste of Time

By Kenneth Chang, NYT, Jan 18, 2012

http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/19/science/to-keep-or-kill-lowly-leap-second-focus-of-world-debate.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha22

[SEPP Comment: Is the leap second needed? As reader Tom Sheahan writes: a person running a 100 meter dash can greatly improve his time if he selects the right time to run it.]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

US may be behind Mars probe failure: Russia

By Staff Writers, Moscow (AFP), Jan 17, 2012

http://www.marsdaily.com/reports/US_may_be_behind_Mars_probe_failure_Russia_999.html

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ARTICLES:

1. The Anti-Jobs President

Obama rejects the Keystone XL pipeline and blames Congress.

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 19, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204468004577168912332364268.html?mod=djemEditorialPage_h

The central conflict of the Obama Presidency has been between the jobs and growth crisis he inherited and the President's hell-for-leather pursuit of his larger social-policy ambitions. The tragedy is that the economic recovery has been so lackluster because the second impulse keeps winning.

Yesterday came proof positive with the White House's repudiation of the Keystone XL pipeline, TransCanada's \$7 billion shovel-ready project that would support tens of thousands of jobs if only it could get the requisite U.S. permits. Those jobs, apparently, can wait.

Unless the President objected, December's payroll tax deal gave TransCanada the go-ahead in February to start building the pipeline, which would travel 1,661 miles from Alberta to interconnections in Oklahoma and then carry Canadian crude to U.S. refiners on the Gulf Coast.

The State Department, which presides over the Keystone XL review because it would cross the 49th parallel, claimed yesterday that the two-month Congressional deadline was too tight "for the President to determine whether the Keystone XL pipeline is in the national interest." The White House also issued a

statement denouncing Congress's "rushed and arbitrary deadline," which merely passed with overwhelming bipartisan support.

This is, to put it politely, a crock.

Keystone XL has been planned for years and only became a political issue after the well-to-do environmental lobby decided to make it a station of the green cross. TransCanada filed its application in 2008, and State determined in 2010 and then again last year that the project would have "no significant impacts" on the environment, following exhaustive studies. The Environmental Protection Agency chose to intervene anyway, and the political left began to issue ultimatums and demonstrate in front of the White House, so President Obama decided to defer a final decision until after the election.

The missed economic opportunity was spelled out Tuesday by Mr. Obama's own Jobs Council, which released a report that endorsed an "all-in approach" on energy, including the "profound new opportunities in shale gas and unconventional oil." The 27 members handpicked by the President recommended that he support "policies that facilitate the safe, thoughtful and timely development of pipeline, transmission and distribution projects," and they warned that failing to do so "would stall the engine that could become a prime driver of U.S. jobs and growth in the decades ahead."

Only last week the White House issued a "jobs" report praising domestic energy production, but that now looks like political cover for this anti-jobs policy choice.

State did give TransCanada permission to reapply using an alternate route, timetable indefinite. The construction workers, pipefitters, mechanics, welders and electricians who might otherwise be hired for the project—well, they must be thrilled with this consolation prize. Not to mention all the other Americans who might fill "spin-off" jobs on the pipeline's supply chain like skilled manufacturers and equipment suppliers, or still others who might work in oil refining and distribution.

Environmentalists seem to think they can prevent the development of Canada's oil-rich tar sands, and that their rallies against Keystone XL will keep that carbon in the ground. They can't, and it won't. America's largest trading partner will simply build a pipeline to the Pacific coast from Alberta and sell its petroleum products to Asia instead, China in particular.

Such green delusions are sad, and Mr. Obama's pandering is sadder, though everything the country stands to lose is saddest. If Mitt Romney and the other GOP candidates have any political wit, they'll vindicate the Keystone's "national interest" and make Mr. Obama explain why job creation is less important than the people who make a living working for the green anti-industrial complex.

2. A Tale of Two Pipelines

Canada and the U.S. trade economic places.

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 18, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204124204577154573793189262.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_AboveLEFTTop

Oh, for the bad old days, when Americans could poke fun at Canada for its economic policies. Nowadays, Canada has it all over the U.S.

Take the contrasting political reaction to proposed pipelines to carry oil from Alberta's oil sands. In the U.S., the Obama Administration has sat on a permit for the \$7 billion Keystone XL pipeline that would create thousands of jobs, break a supply logjam in Cushing, Oklahoma, and carry the oil to refineries

along the Gulf Coast. President Obama may soon kill the Keystone XL now that Congress is forcing him to finally make a decision.

Then there's Canada, where private companies want to invest \$5.4 billion to build a Northern Gateway Pipeline that would carry Alberta oil to ports in British Columbia. Joe Oliver, Canada's Minister of Natural Resources, recently blasted the "radicals" trying to block the project.

Mr. Oliver said the green movement's "goal is to stop any major project no matter what the cost to Canadian families in lost jobs and economic growth. No forestry. No mining. No oil. No gas. No more hydroelectric dams." He said the greens "attract jet-setting celebrities with some of the largest carbon footprints in the world to lecture Canadians not to develop our natural resources." These groups are willing to "sue anyone and everyone to delay the project even further" to the point it becomes "economically unviable." Sounds right, if a tad understated.

Canadians are at least as environmentally sensitive as Americans, but they realize the economic folly in failing to exploit abundant their national energy resources. They also realize it's possible to balance energy production for economic growth with environmental protections.

The Northern Gateway Pipeline is especially important for Canada given Mr. Obama's hostility to the Keystone XL. If the U.S. shuns Alberta oil, apparently preferring imports from Venezuela, then Canada needs to reach export markets in Asia. "I think it is essential," Prime Minister Stephen Harper said recently, "based on what's happened with Keystone XL." Whoever thought the day would come when Ottawa would be more pro-growth than the U.S. government?

3. Small Is Beautiful—So Go Nuclear

As environmentally friendly as they sound, biofuels and wind power squander land and other resources. By Robert Bryce, WSJ, Jan 18, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204409004577156723958026212.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

Nearly four decades ago, British economist E.F. Schumacher stated the essence of environmental protection in three words: Small is beautiful. As Schumacher argued in his famous book by that title, man-made disturbances of the natural world—farms, for example, and power plants—should have the smallest possible footprints.

But how can that ideal be realized in a world that must produce more and more food and energy for its growing population? The answer, in just one word, is density.

Over the course of the last century, human beings have found ways to concentrate crops and energy production within smaller and smaller areas, conserving land while meeting the ever-growing global demand for calories and watts. But this approach runs counter to the entrenched beliefs of many environmental activists and politicians, whose "organic" and "renewable" policies, as nature-friendly as they sound, squander land and other resources.

Food cultivation exemplifies the virtues of density. During the second half of the 20th century, hybrid seeds and synthetic fertilizers, along with better methods of planting and harvesting, produced stunning increases in agricultural productivity. Between the mid-1960s and mid-2000s, global production of all cereal crops doubled, according to U.N. data, even though the amount of cultivated acreage remained about the same.

Indur Goklany, a policy analyst for the U.S. Department of the Interior, estimates that if agriculture had remained at its early 1960s level of productivity, feeding the world's population in 1998 would have required nearly eight billion acres of farmland, instead of the 3.7 billion acres that were actually under cultivation. Where in the world—literally—would we have found an extra 4.3 billion acres, an area slightly smaller than South America?

Meanwhile, a recent analysis of U.S. Department of Agriculture data, by plant pathologist Steve Savage, found that land devoted to organic farming produces about 29% less corn and 38% less winter wheat than the same acreage conventionally farmed. Since world population is growing and food prices are already at near-record highs, mandates for organic farming could be disastrous. For example, low-density agriculture could increase deforestation as farmers desperately seek more farmland—a result that should disturb environmentalists.

Now consider biofuels, which are supposed to reduce carbon-dioxide emissions. The domestic biofuel craze began in 1976, when Amory Lovins, co-founder of the Rocky Mountain Institute and a darling of the greens, declared that "developments in the conversion of agricultural, forestry and urban wastes to methanol and other liquid and gaseous fuels now offer practical, economically interesting technologies sufficient to run an efficient U.S. transport sector."

Today, Mr. Lovins still promotes this mirage—and unfortunately so do many others, including Secretary of Energy Steven Chu. But a bit of elementary math shows that large-scale biofuels production is a fool's errand.

Assume you wanted to replace one-tenth of U.S. oil consumption with fuel derived from switch grass, a plant often mentioned during discussions of cellulosic ethanol. That would require cultivating some 37 million acres of land—an area roughly the size of Illinois—in nothing but switch grass.

The problem with biofuels is low power density, a term that refers to the amount of energy flow that can be harnessed from a given area, volume or mass. The power density of plants such as corn or switch grass is fractions of a watt per square meter. Some energy analysts estimate the power density of corn ethanol to be as low as 0.05 watts per square meter of farmland. By comparison, a relatively small natural-gas well that produces just 60,000 cubic feet of gas per day has a power density of 28 watts per square meter.

Wind turbines have a power density of about one watt per square meter. Compare that with the two nuclear reactors at Indian Point, which provide as much as 30% of New York City's electricity. Even if you include the entire footprint of the Indian Point project—about 250 acres—the site's power density exceeds 2,000 watts per square meter. To generate as much electricity as Indian Point does, you'd need to cover about 770 square miles of land with wind turbines, an area slightly smaller than Rhode Island.

The virtues of density can also be seen in nuclear waste, a leading bugaboo of groups like Greenpeace and the Sierra Club. According to the Nuclear Energy Institute, an industry group, the American commercial nuclear-power industry, over its entire history, has produced about 62,000 tons of high-level waste. Stacked to a depth of about 20 feet, that would cover a single football field. Coal-fired power plants in the United States, by contrast, generate about 130 million tons of coal ash in a single year.

True, radioactive waste is toxic and long-lived, but it can be stored safely. France produces about 80% of its electricity from nuclear fission, and all of its high-level waste is stored in a single building about the size of a soccer field.

The greenness of density leads to two conclusions. First, those who make environmental policy should consider density a desirable goal in nearly all the issues that they confront. And second, the real

environmentalists aren't the headline-seeking advocacy groups. They're the farmers, urban planners, agronomists—and yes, even natural-gas drillers and nuclear engineers.

Mr. Bryce is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute. This article is adapted from the Winter 2012 issue of City Journal.

4. Heavy Metal Politics

Interior bans new uranium mining in Arizona.

Editorial, WSJ, Jan 20, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204124204577154332224006536.html?mod=ITP_opinion_2

[SEPP Comment: Another example of the environmental industry controlling energy policy in Washington. According to the Environmental Impact Statement, mining in the desolate area put off limits for uranium mining last week will have little environmental impact.]

President Obama's Keystone XL abdication (see above) is all too typical of his Administration's general hostility to domestic energy production. Only last week Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced that he is banning new uranium mining on one million acres of federal land in northern Arizona.

The 20-year withdrawal of these lands from "mineral entry" blocks access to hundreds of millions of pounds of the highest-grade uranium ore to be found in the country. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that the northern Arizona parcels contain uranium that, mined to capacity, would generate enough electricity to power Los Angeles for 154 years. Expect the Obama campaign to tell its green funders how the Administration "saved the Grand Canyon" from corporate despoilers as the Presidential race heats up.

What is surprising is the extent to which the mining ban seems to have been made without regard for the Interior Department's own conclusions about the potential environmental effects. According to the Bureau of Land Management's environmental impact statement on the withdrawal, mining would have "no direct impacts" on protected wilderness areas. The impact on drinking-water supply in the Colorado River was also found to be "negligible."

We love the Grand Canyon as much as anyone, but protecting treasured landscapes is not incompatible with job creation and economic growth. Why bother with an environmental impact assessment if the decision was always going to be made for political reasons?

The Administration contends that the withdrawal merely prohibits new mineral entry on the land, and that previously approved projects will still be allowed to go ahead. But mining based on pre-existing rights is restricted to known deposits, the total uranium output of which is a small fraction of the area's potential. The withdrawal also blocks previously claimed sites from being further explored for uranium endowment, meaning that some claimants will not be able to extract full value from their existing rights.

All of this will go over splendidly in an area of northern Arizona with a 17% unemployment rate. The land bureau's impact statement estimates that Mr. Salazar's withdrawal will cost the region \$160 million in average annual economic output—no small change over 20 years. Too bad this Administration remains more focused on pleasing its Sierra Club donors than creating jobs.

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