

The Week That Was: 2013-07-20 (July 20, 2013)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week: “Can any witnesses say they agree with Obama’s statement that warming has accelerated during the past 10 years?” Senator David Vitter to a panel of climate experts [H/t Climate Depot]

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Number of the Week: \$7 Billion

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THIS WEEK:

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

Showtime! It’s July in Washington – hot and muggy. Time for the Senate’s version of Kabuki Theater – a big stylized hearing on global warming by the US Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. Probably unintentionally, the title demonstrated a bit of humor – “Climate Change: It’s Happening Now.” It’s been happening for hundreds of millions of years. Perhaps some senators are catching on. Who says senators cannot learn?

But a funny thing happen to the script – after the witnesses on the first panel spoke, Senator David Vitter (Republican from the oil and gas producing state of Louisiana asked: “*Can any witnesses say they agree with Obama’s statement that warming has accelerated during the past 10 years?*” Silence, followed by a red herring by a certain witness. Minutes later, Senator Jeff Sessions (Republican, Alabama) followed up with the quote from President Obama and asked: “*Do any of you support that quote?*” Embarrassed silence! Then another red herring that global warming is disappearing in the deep ocean by the same witness. (About 1.52 hours & 2.05 hours in the Senate video.)

Due to prior commitments, SEPP was unable to attend, and focused on the record of the scientific testimony by Roger Pielke, Jr. and Roy Spencer. Unfortunately, they were relegated to the second panel, after many senators left. The complete theater production, including videos, can be found in the links provided.

Pielke gave an excellent seven point summary rebutting the claims that recent extreme events are unusual, more frequent, and causing greater losses than the historic record shows. He went on to say that the humans influence climate, including by emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂), but many claims cannot be substantiated. False claims about extreme weather events can lead to poor decisions and it may take decades, or more, before the human influence can be substantiated.

Spencer appears to be having fun. He identified himself with the 97% of researchers who believe that at least some of the recent warming is human caused. He then proceeded to rebut the claims of the so-called consensus. “*The difficulty in determining the human influence on climate arises from several sources: (1) weather and climate vary naturally, and by amounts that are not currently being exceeded; (2) global warming theory is just that – based upon theory; and (3) there is no unique fingerprint of human caused global warming.*”

Spencer presented evidence that the recent warming happened before, and that the 73 climate models produce far too much warming over the tropics (all exceed the observed warming). Other

notable statements include: *“The fact that all of the models have been peer reviewed does not mean that any of them have been deemed to have any skill for predicting future temperatures.”* He conclude with: *“Thus, the evidence that humans are mostly responsible for either recent warmth or severe weather changes (if such changes exist at all) is equivocal, at best.”*

At the end of the second panel, Senator Whitehouse (D. RI) tried to bait Pielke and Spencer to make incorrect statements. He brought up Spencer’s religious beliefs, was were entirely inappropriate. When Senator Session reappeared after a floor vote, Spencer stated we need to analyze what is wrong with the models. We are not getting anywhere with the models emphasizing warming a that is not occurring. Spencer stated that his recent research emphasizes how much is the human influence on weather and climate.

Senator Whitehouse concluded by dismissing the measurement of carbon dioxide influence on the atmosphere temperatures (where the greenhouse effect takes place) and stated his concern about the oceans. The greenhouse effect takes place in the oceans?

Probably no senators changed their minds from the hearing. But they have been informed that, if they have any integrity, they should not be repeating the administration’s scientifically unsubstantiated claims. Please see links under Showtime!

Climate Plan: According to reports, President Obama’s climate plan is already impacting other countries. The US Export-Import Bank announced it will not provide financing of a 1,200 MW coal-fired power plant in Vietnam. The World Bank, headed by an Obama appointee, announced a new energy strategy plan limiting financing of coal-fired power plants to “rare circumstances.” The World Bank plan will restrict the financing of coal-fired plants to only those countries that have “no feasible alternatives” to coal, whatever that means. The President’s climate plan can be better described as Keeping the Poor, Poor. Please see links under that heading.

Energy Efficiency: The administration has announced plans to implement new energy efficiency requirements on new and existing buildings. This is part of an effort to impose regulations on virtually all things that use energy, including homes, automobiles, appliances, etc. It is an expansion of authoritarian power over the economy, without legislative approval.

Donn Dears has an explanation why many corporations do not reduce the energy costs of their buildings. It is a calculation called Return on Investment (ROI). If the “investment” costs more than what it returns, it is not an investment, but an expense. The British government instituted a plan to increase the energy efficiency of private homes, but failed to realize the homeowners are capable of calculating an ROI and basing it on their cash flow. The plan is failing.

Washington bureaucrats ignore ROI as well. Instead, they will substitute the absurd bureaucratic notion of the Social Cost of Carbon (SCC), which they calculate as they see fit. The SCC has not been approved by the Congress and can be better described as the bureaucratic cost of air plants need. Please see links under Washington’s Control of Energy.

Sustainable Energy: Britain, Spain, and Germany have announced plans to curtail subsidies for green energy. The British government has delayed implementation of a goal for off-shore wind power by about a decade and pushed back the goal of producing 30% of electricity from

renewables to 2030 instead of 2020. Also it is considering minimum reliability standards and seeks to ensure power production is 99.97 % reliable within 3 years. Part of the reason given is the promise of extracting natural gas from dense shale. Another key component is the soaring electricity costs and backlash from businesses and voters.

The government of Spain has said, that given the economy, it cannot continue to absorb the costs of subsidizing wind and solar. The German government has announced a cap on the solar power nameplate capacity it will subsidize. The nameplate capacity is the theoretical maximum capacity, not the far lower actual production.

Of course, all politicians are blaming someone else, and the alternative energy industry is howling. But the politicians and bureaucrats have only themselves to blame. They accepted the claims of the green power advocates and failed to do a proper ROI analysis. If they had, they would have realized that, in many cases, ROI was negative.

With the demise of the alternative energy industries, we will see the demise of green jobs, so heavily touted a few years ago. All this supports John Christy's well stated Law of Sustainability: If it's not economically sustainable, it's not sustainable. Perhaps some US politicians will learn from these experiences. Please see links under Questioning European Green, Subsidies and Mandates Forever, and Energy Issues – Non-US.

Erratic Wind: Jo Nova reports that India's Central Electricity Regulatory Commission implemented a solution to the problem of wind power's erratic characteristics placing burdens on other primary generators of electricity. A directive compels wind farms with a nameplate capacity greater than 10 megawatts to forecast their generation for the next day in 15 minute blocks. Wind Farms with estimates more than 30% off forecasts will face penalties. Those generating power by other means must forecast accurately, why should wind be exempt? Needless to say, the wind investors are not overjoyed. Please see link under Alternative, Green ("Clean") Solar and Wind.

IPCC Temperatures Falling? *The Economist* reported it saw the draft of the upcoming Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) due out this fall. The article had a table showing estimate of various end of century carbon dioxide (CO2) concentrations and associated temperature increases.

According to the article, CO2 concentrations of 425 to 485 parts per million (ppm) would result in a temperature of 1.3 to 1.7 °C (2.3 to 3.1 °F) above pre-industrial levels. This is within the IPCC's concocted no more than 2 °C (3.6 °F) mantra, which politicians pretend is scientific. Many estimates have the current CO2 at about 390 ppm or about 100 to 110 ppm above the preindustrial level. According to some estimates, this increase in CO2 resulted in an increase in temperature of about 0.8 °C (1.4 °F). So the next 135 ppm results in an increase in temperatures of about 0.5 °C (0.9 °F), which appears consistent with the greenhouse gas theory that the relationship is logarithmic.

According to the table, a doubling of CO2 to 560 ppm results in a temperature increase of about 2.2 °C (3.96 °F). Of course all this assumes that CO2 is the major driver of climate change. We will have to wait for the final AR5 to see appears.

What will be the impact of these new, modest projected increases in temperatures on the EPA's finding that human greenhouse gas emissions, particularly CO2, endanger human health and welfare? Certainly, these changes and this week's Senate hearing raise questions on the EPA's claims of scientific certainty and the validity of the models. Please see link under Problems in the Orthodoxy.

Number of the Week: \$7 Billion. That is the annual budget of the National Science Foundation (NSF). Once a pillar of rigorous empirical science, the NSF has lowered its standards as its budget has expanded. Among other things, it finances studies that analyze the impacts decades from now based on the outputs from un-validated climate models, rather than attempting to validate the climate models, or, at least, thoroughly test the assumptions. For other issues on government financed science please see Article # 1, and for government financed non-profits please see Article #4.

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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. Time to Sequester Inspid Federal Research

Focus science funding on real science, not on silliness like studying how to ride a bike.

By Henry Miller, WSJ, Jul 17, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324328204578573323173137426.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

2. Oil by Rail Is Here to Stay

The Quebec disaster shows how badly the industry needs to up its game.

By Holman Jenkins, WSJ, Jul 16, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323848804578609681519319010.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_BelowLEFTSecond

3. Asian Coal Use Grows Despite Gas Challenge

Economic Reality Is Trumping Pollution Worries in the Region

By Jacob Gronholt-Pedersen, WSJ, Jul 19, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323309404578615160884675062.html>

4. How Big Government Co-Opted Charities

Much of the not-for-profit sector has become a junior partner in administering the welfare state.

By James Piereson, WSJ, Jul 18, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324021104578553093991335514.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

[SEPP Comment: Applies to universities and environmental organizations. Full disclosure of sources of funds on all solicitations may be appropriate.]

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Science: Is the Sun Rising?

The Sun in June 2013 – on the way to a grand minimum? New study on the possible consequences

By Frank Bosse, Trans. by P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jul 14, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/07/14/german-researcher-on-possible-consequences-of-a-solar-grand-minimum-weakest-cycle-in-almost-200-years/>

Climategate Continued

Met Office Hindcast

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Jul 19, 2013

<http://climateaudit.org/2013/07/19/met-office-hindcast/#more-18211>

More Met Office Hypocrisy

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Jul 17, 2013

<http://climateaudit.org/2013/07/17/more-met-office-hypocrisy/#more-18197>

Nature-mag Hides the Decline

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Jul 15, 2013

<http://climateaudit.org/2013/07/15/nature-hides-the-decline/>

Showtime

Ouch! ‘Senate global warming hearing backfires on Democrats’ — Boxer’s Own Experts Contradict Obama! — ‘Skeptics & Roger Pielke Jr. totally dismantled warmism (scientifically, economically, rhetorically) — Climate Depot Round Up

By Marc Morano, Climate Depot, Jul 19, 2013

<http://www.climatedepot.com/2013/07/19/ouch-senate-global-warming-hearing-backfires-on-democrats-skeptics-roger-pielke-jr-totally-dismantled-warmism-scientifically-economically-rhetorically/>

Testimony on the Current State of Weather Extremes

By Roger Pielke Jr, Testimony to US Senate, via GWPF, Jul 18, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/roger-pielke-jr-testimony-current-state-weather-extremes/>

Link to full testimony:

http://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=a6df9665-e8c8-4b0f-a550-07669df48b15

Senate EPW Hearing: “Climate Change: It’s Happened Before”

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Jul 19, 2013

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/category/blogarticle/>

Link to full updated written testimony: http://www.drroyspencer.com/wp-content/uploads/Spencer_EPW_Written_Testimony_7_18_2013_updated.pdf

U.S. Senate Hearing “Climate Change: It’s Happening Now”

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc, Jul 18, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/07/18/u-s-senate-hearing-climate-change-its-happening-now/#more-12235>

Watch yesterday's blockbuster performance by Dr. Roger Pielke Jr. and Dr. Roy Spencer at Senate climate hearing

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jul 19, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/07/19/watch-yesterdays-blockbuster-performance-by-dr-roger-pielke-jr-and-dr-roy-spencer-at-senate-climate-hearing/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

The real climate drivers - ocean and solar cycles amplified by levels of volcanism

By Joseph D'Aleo, Weatherbell Analytics, Jul 18, 2013

<http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/the-real-climate-drivers-ocean-and-solar-cycles-amplified-by-levels-of-volc/>

A Basic and Powerful Analysis of Greenhouse Effect Fallacies

By Tim Ball, A Different Perspective, Jul 15, 2013

<http://drtimball.com/2013/a-basic-and-powerful-analysis-of-greenhouse-effect-fallacies/>

Analysis by Norm Kalmanovitch

[SEPP Comment: Somewhat technical]

Controversial Skeptic Book “Die Kalte Sonne” Now Can Be Ordered Worldwide In English: “The Neglected Sun”

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jul 15, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/07/15/controversial-skeptic-book-die-kalte-sonne-now-can-be-ordered-worldwide-in-english-the-neglected-sun/>

Richard Lindzen vs Aljazeera gladiators

By Luboš Motl, Reference Frame, Jul 13, 2013

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2013/07/richard-lindzen-vs-aljazeera-gladiators.html#more>

[SEPP Comment: Summary of a debate between Richard Lindzen and warmests filmed by Aljazeera TV.]

Global Warming as Religion and not Science

By John Brignell, Number Watch, June 2007

<http://www.numberwatch.co.uk/religion.htm>

[SEPP Comment: A useful reminder from 2007.]

Waiting for the Warming

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, Jul 19, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/waiting-inquisition-warming/>

Defending the Orthodoxy

David Kennedy on climate sensitivity

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jul 18, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/7/18/david-kennedy-on-climate-sensitivity.html>

[SEPP Comment: Ignore the changing science.]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Self-harm continues to plague the West

By John Brignell, Number Watch, Jul 18, 2013
<http://www.numberwatch.co.uk/2013%20June.htm#self-harm>

Nature puts methane hydrate fears to rest – says it will be 1,000 years before they make any impact

By Anthony Watts: WUWT, Jul 16, 2013
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/07/16/nature-puts-methane-hydrate-fears-to-rest-says-it-will-be-1000-years-before-they-make-any-impact/>

Link to the 2011 paper:: Methane Hydrates and Contemporary Climate Change

By Carolyn Ruppel, Nature Education Knowledge, 2011
<http://www.nature.com/scitable/knowledge/library/methane-hydrates-and-contemporary-climate-change-24314790>

The phase relation between atmospheric carbon dioxide and global temperature

By Ole Humlum et al, Elsevier Journal of Global and Planetary Change, via ICECAP, Jul 19, 2013

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

[SEPP Comment: The conclusions are thought provoking, such as changes in global atmospheric CO2 are lagging about 11 to 12 months behind changes in global sea surface.]

AGW skeptics in the professional community

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc., Jul 15, 2013
<http://judithcurry.com/2013/07/15/agw-skeptics-in-the-professional-community/#more-12103>

We find that climate science skepticism [sic] is not limited to the scientifically illiterate, *[SEPP Comment: Horrors!]*

Energy program shows the dishonesty of climate change arguments: Guest opinion

By Gordon Fulks, Oregonian, Jul 20, 2013 [H/t ICECAP]

http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2013/07/the_dishonesty_of_climate_chan.html#incart_river

[SEPP Comment: According to the President Obama, Nobel laureate in physics, Ivar Giaever, is a member of the flat earth society. Is he among the scientifically illiterate described in the link above?]

Global Warming - From Science to Agitprop

By Rupert Darwell, Huff Post, Jul 16, 2013

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/rupert-darwall/global-warming-from-science-to-agitprop_b_3604074.html?view=screen

Short Meteorological Memories

By Alan Caruba, WUWT, Jul 15, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/07/15/short-meteorological-memories/>

Fabricating Climate Doom – Part 1: Parmesan’s Butterfly Effect

By Jim Steele, WUWT, Jul 14, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/07/14/fabricating-climate-doom-part-1-parmesans-butterfly-effect/>

Problems in the Orthodoxy

Sensitive information

By Staff Writer, The Economist, Jul 20, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.economist.com/news/science-and-technology/21581979-peek-inside-next-ipcc-assessment-sensitive-information>

New Regime Brings Change of Climate at Reuters

By Staff Writers, The Baron, Jul 12, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.thebaron.info/news/files/a24cc2de4ab115e4c0cf607673ed2323-875.php>

U.K.'s Decade-Long Delay for Offshore Wind Draws Industry Ire

By Sally Bakewell & Alex Morales, Bloomberg, Jul 17, 2013

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2013-07-17/u-k-s-decade-long-delay-for-offshore-wind-draws-industry-ire.html>

Seeking a Common Ground

Climate Dialogue about the (missing) hot spot

By Marcel Crok, De staat van het klimaat, Jul 16, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.staatvanhetklimaat.nl/2013/07/16/climate-dialogue-about-the-missing-hot-spot/>
[SEPP Comment: Somewhat technical]

Certainly not!

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc., Jul 17, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/07/17/certainly-not/#more-12206>

[SEPP Comment: Selections from a provocative essay stating uncertainty and questioning the consensus benefits scientific advancement. Unfortunately, the essay was greatly diminished by the essayist's certainty in human caused catastrophic global warming, a certainty that does not exist.]

Why farmers don't believe in anthropogenic global warming

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc., Jul 17, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/07/17/why-farmers-dont-believe-in-anthropogenic-global-warming/#more-12223>

[SEPP Comment: Farmers are not convinced the humans cause climate change because it has always been happening.]

Lowering Standards

Forecast failure: how the Met Office lost touch with reality

Ideology has corrupted a valuable British institution

By Rupert Darwall, The Spectator, Jul 13, 2013

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/features/8959941/whats-wrong-with-the-met-office/>

Questioning European Green

Our rising bills for going green

Energy giants warn of huge price hikes

GOING green could see power bills go through the stratosphere – and many families go into the red.

By Simon English, The Sun, Jul 17, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/money/5018212/Energy-bill-increase-green-fuel.html>

Eco-Blowback: Mutiny in the Land of Wind Turbines

By Matthias Schulz, Spiegel Online, Jul 12, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/wind-energy-encounters-problems-and-resistance-in-germany-a-910816.html>

German Energy Companies Threaten Shutdown of Power Plants

By Staff Writers, Reuters, Trans: Philipp Mueller, Jul 16, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/german-energy-companies-threaten-shutdown-power-plants/>

Why you'll be paying £3,250 extra for gas and 'leccy in coming years [UK]

It's not 'gas prices': It is the Will of The People, says Psychohistory prof

By Lewis Page, The Register, Jul 19, 2013 [H/t Bishop Hill]

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2013/07/19/energy_firm_heres_the_truth_on_how_greenov_cranks_up_your_bills/

Green Jobs

The dirty secret of Britain's power madness: Polluting diesel generators built in secret by foreign companies to kick in when there's no wind for turbines - and other insane but true eco-scandals

Moving to wind power is expected to cost £1 billion a year by 2015

Official figures on the size of the green economy are extremely misleading

They exaggerate the worth of the sector by up to 700 per cent

By James Dellingpole, Mail Online, Jul 13, 2013 [H/t Bishop Hill]

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2362762/The-dirty-secret-Britains-power-madness-Polluting-diesel-generators-built-secret-foreign-companies-kick-theres-wind-turbines--insane-true-eco-scandals.html>

[SEPP Comment: Green jobs are largely a redefinition of regular jobs – near the end of the article.]

Keeping the Poor, Poor

Report: Ex-Im Bank rejects financing for Vietnam coal plant

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Jul 18, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/312053-report-ex-im-bank-rejects-financing-for-vietnam-coal-plant>

World Bank to limit financing of coal-fired plants

By Anna Yukhananov and Valerie Volcovici, Reuters, Jul 17, 2013

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/07/16/us-worldbank-climate-coal-idUKBRE96F19U20130716>

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

Global population of polar bears has increased by 2,650-5,700 since 2001

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Jul 15, 2013

<http://polarbearscience.com/2013/07/15/global-population-of-polar-bears-has-increased-by-2650-5700-since-2001/>

[SEPP Comment: Challenging the official estimates.]

Invest in Nature, not infrastructure for storm abatement

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jul 18, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/07/18/invest-in-nature-not-infrastructure-for-storm-abatement/>

Link to paper: Coastal habitats shield people and property from sea-level rise and storms

By Arkema, et al., Nature Climate Change, Jul 14, 2013

<http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate1944.html>

[SEPP Comment: For decades the US has been bombarded with the term “fragile wetlands,” now “fragile wetlands” are the best defense against storms?]

Scientists outline long-term sea-level rise in response to warming of planet

By Staff Writers, Corvallis OR (SPX), Jul 16, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Scientists_outline_long_term_sea_level_rise_in_response_to_warming_of_planet_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Projecting thousands of years out, based on short-term data.]

Press Goes Crackers Over Fracking

Media loses its head over a report linking earthquakes and wastewater wells.

By William Tucker, American Spectator, Jul 15, 2013

<http://spectator.org/archives/2013/07/15/press-goes-crackers-over-frack>

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

'Gasland' scandal ignited at EPA

By Ron Arnold, Washington Examiner, Jul 11, 2013 [H/t Joe Bast]

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/gasland-scandal-ignited-at-epa/article/2532966>

Communicating Better to the Public – Go Personal.

How I got on the “black list” of the German Federal Environment Agency

By Günter Ederer, on No Tricks Zone, Jul 20, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/07/20/why-germanys-national-environmental-guard-opened-fire-on-climate-skeptic-journalists-and-scientists/>

[SEPP Comment: Gosselin associating the German government’s listing of skeptics with the Kent State shootings may be inappropriate, but the comments by Ederer are important.]

All parties in Europe, whether left or right, will go along the warming theory because the permission to tax the air we breath will be granted for the first time, and would even be praised because they it will be for rescuing the planet.

David Suzuki Should Set a Positive Example in Climate Debate

Global warming discussions need to be cleaned up if we are to develop rational policy

By Tom Harris Epoch Times, July 12, 2013

<http://www.theepochtimes.com/n3/173847-david-suzuki-should-set-a-positive-example-in-climate-debate/>

[SEPP Comment: Harris presents a list of all too common themes used by those who prefer to go personal than debate the science.]

Measurement Issues

Central Park in USHCNv2.5 (October 2012) magically becomes cooler in July in the Dust Bowl years

By Joseph D'Aleo, ICECAP, Jul 14, 2013

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/central_park_in_uschnv25_october_2012_magically_becomes_cooler_in_july_in_t/

[SEPP Comment: Fiddling with the books, again!]

Changing Weather

Expert Meteorologist: Data Show Little Change In Central European Precipitation Over Last 30 Years!

By P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jul 13, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/07/13/expert-meteorologist-data-show-little-change-in-central-european-precipitation-over-last-30-years/>

Major cold/snow into Brazil while Antarctic ice nears record falsifies polar amplification idea

By Joseph D'Aleo, ICECAP, Jul 20, 2013

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

Changing Seas

Ocean mystery

By Staff Writers, Cape Cod MA (SPX) Jul 16, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Scientists_solve_a_14000_year_old_ocean_mystery_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Rethinking the role of iron in phytoplankton blooms.]

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Analysis Shows That Arctic Sea Ice Melt Extent Mostly Occurs In Natural Cycles

By Sebastian Lüning and Fritz Vahrenholt, Trans by P. Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jul 17, 2013

<http://notrickszone.com/2013/07/17/analysis-shows-that-arctic-sea-ice-melt-extent-mostly-occurs-in-natural-cycles/>

As ice cover disappears, life in the frigid Antarctic moves fast

By Staff Writers, London, UK (SPX), Jul 15, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/As_ice_cover_disappears_life_in_the_frigid_Antarctic_moves_fast_999.html

Is the ice in Greenland in growing decline?

By Staff Writers, Berlin, Germany (SPX), Jul 17, 2013

http://www.terraily.com/reports/Is_the_ice_in_Greenland_in_growing_decline_999.html

Rate of future ice loss remains uncertain

By Darren Osborne, ABC, Jul 15, 2013

<http://www.abc.net.au/science/articles/2013/07/15/3802146.htm>

Link to paper: Limits in detecting acceleration of ice sheet mass loss due to climate variability
By Wouters, et al., Nature, Jul 14, 2013

<http://www.nature.com/ngeo/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/ngeo1874.html>

Polar Ice Melt May Be Natural Event

By John von Radowitz, Scotsman, Jul 15, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/polar-ice-melt-may-be-natural-event-1-3001226>

[SEPP Comment: Similar to the above link.]

Acidic Waters

Ocean acidification discussion thread

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc, Jul 19, 2013

<http://judithcurry.com/2013/07/19/ocean-acidification-discussion-thread/#more-12245>

[SEPP Comment: Curry discusses the normative testimony by Scott Doney, largely that asserting Congress must do something, and follows with a brief discussion on the rebuttal by Craig Idso to a prior film by the NRDC that claimed much the same as Doney.]

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

Starved for Science

By Louise O. Fresco, Project Syndicate, Jul 17, 2013

<http://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/how-technological-progress-can-help-to-feed-the-world-by-louise-o--fresco>

[SEPP Comment: Broader application of the advances in agriculture are needed, especially in Africa.]

FAO releases new statistical yearbook details World Food and Agriculture

By Staff Writers, PMAC, Jul 1, 2013

<http://www.pmac.co.nz/node/875>

Link to report: FAO Statistical Yearbook paints a big, and detailed, picture of food and agriculture

By Staff Writers, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Jun 19, 2013

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/178138/icode/>

Global crop production has expanded threefold over the past 50 years, largely through higher yields per unit of land and crop intensification.

[SEPP Comment: The report discusses the greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture but does not discuss the CO2 benefits to agriculture.]

The greening of the Sahel

By Andrew Montford, Bishop Hill, Jul 14, 2013

<http://bishophill.squarespace.com/blog/2013/7/14/the-greening-of-the-sahel.html>

New study addresses trade-offs between food security and climate change mitigation

By Staff Writers, Rome, Italy (SPX), Jul 17, 2013

http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/New_study_addresses_trade_offs_between_food_security_and_climate_change_mitigation_999.html

Agriculture and land use change contributed about 1/3 of total human greenhouse gas emissions in the past decade, through crop cultivation, animal production, and deforestation.

[SEPP Comment: Another incomplete study of agriculture that ignores the social benefits of carbon – CO₂ fertilization.]

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

Surface Activity on the South-Central Greenland Ice Sheet

Reference: Jezek, K.C. 2012. Surface elevation and velocity changes on the south-central Greenland ice sheet: 1980-2011. *Journal of Glaciology* 58: 1201-1211.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/jul/16jul2013a1.html>

How Much Heat Can Amazon Tree Species Take and Still Survive?

Reference: Dick, C.W., Lewis, S.L., Maslin, M. and Bermingham, E. 2012. Neogene origins and implied warmth tolerance of Amazon tree species. *Ecology and Evolution* 3: 162-169.

<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2013/jul/16jul2013a2.html>

Sea Anemones and Microbes in a CO₂-Vent-Induced pH Gradient

Reference: Meron, D., Buia, M.-C., Fine, M. and Banin, E. 2013. Changes in microbial communities associated with the sea anemone *Anemonia viridis* in a natural pH gradient. *Microbial Ecology* 65: 269-276.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/jul/16jul2013a4.html>

Atmospheric CO₂ and Global Temperature: Which Leads Which When Change Occurs?

Reference: Humlum, O., Stordahl, K. and Solheim, J.-E. 2013. The phase relation between atmospheric carbon dioxide and global temperature. *Global and Planetary Change* 100: 51-69.

<http://nipccreport.org/articles/2013/jul/17jul2013a1.html>

Litigation Issues

Attorneys General in 12 States File Suit Against Environmental Protection Agency

AGs target 'sue and settle' suits that create new regulations

By Scott Pruitt, AP, Jul 16, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://freebeacon.com/attorneys-general-in-12-states-file-suit-against-environmental-protection-agency/>

In some instances, the EPA filed a "consent decree" agreeing to new regulations on the same day the lawsuits were filed, leading critics to suspect prior knowledge.

[SEPP Comment: Talk about quick litigation!]

EPA's failure to meet deadlines invites regulatory manipulation

Editorial, Washington Examiner, Jul 14, 2013

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/epas-failure-to-meet-deadlines-invites-regulatory-manipulation/article/2532970>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

The start of the end. Rudd ditches carbon tax for a trading scheme. Eurocrats now dictate what we pay.

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Jul, 14, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/07/the-start-of-the-end-rudd-ditches-carbon-tax-for-a-trading-scheme-eurocrats-now-dictate-what-we-pay/>

[SEPP Comment: To a promoter of the Greatest Moral Challenge, the Challenge has become something else, for political convenience. So much for the Greatest Moral Challenge.]

Carbon tax melts, and with it \$4 billion of spending [AU]

By Phillip Coorey and Marcus Priest, Financial Review, Jul 15, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

http://www.afr.com/p/national/carbon_tax_melts_and_with_it_billion_zDyFInSC42dIN5ezuWvO6O

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Phasing out subsidies

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Jul 19, 2013

<http://scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/phasing-out-subsidies>

[SEPP Comment: Written at a time when the electricity consumption is high and wind is supplying only 8% of its nameplate capacity.]

EU Renewable Energy Subsidies Make Natural Gas Plants Uneconomic

By Staff Writers, Daily Fusion, Jul 16, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://dailyfusion.net/2013/07/eu-renewable-energy-subsidies-make-natural-gas-plants-uneconomic-14583/>

[SEPP Comment: If a highly efficient large-scale combined-cycle natural gas plant cannot operate without a loss thanks to unreliable wind and solar, what will provide the necessary back-up generation when solar or wind fail, as they always do?]

Germany pulls plug on solar subsidies

By Staff Writer, The Local, Jul 9, 2013

<http://www.thelocal.de/money/20130709-50753.html>

Requiem For Spanish Wind?

By Loren Steffy, Forbes, Jul 15, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/lorensteffy/2013/07/15/requiem-for-spanish-wind/>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Obama Using the EPA as His Weapon of Choice

By W.A. Beatty, American Thinker, Jul 14, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/07/obama_using_the_epa_as_his_weapon_of_choice.html

Link to report: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Assault on State Sovereignty

By William Yeatman, ALEC, 2013

http://alec.org/docs/EPA_Assault_State_Sovereignty

Another rogue Obama agency with next to no accountability.

EPA Growth Knows No Limits

By Todd Wynn & William Yeatman, American Spectator, Jul 5, 2013

<http://spectator.org/archives/2013/07/05/epa-growth-knows-no-limits>

McCarthy sworn in at EPA after Senate vote

By Zack Colman, The Hill, Jul 19, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/312255-mccarthy-sworn-in-at-epa-after-senate-vote>

Lawmakers concerned new carbon metric developed in secret

By Julian Hatten, The Hill, Jul 18, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/energyenvironment/312145-lawmakers-concerned-new-carbon-metric-developed-in-secret>

[SEPP Comment: Why should the administration keep Congress informed when it expands its powers?]

Energy Issues – Non-US

Natural Gas: The Future Premier Fuel of the World Economy

By Michael Economidies and Xiuli Wang, Energy Tribune, Jul 16, 2013

<http://www.energytribune.com/78249/natural-gas-the-future-premier-fuel-of-the-world-economy#sthash.KRhBRsfi.dpbs>

Bowland Shale fracking could reignite UK economy and cut CO2 emissions

The world's largest shale-gas field – underneath Lancashire and Yorkshire – could add £7bn a year to the UK economy and create thousands of jobs

By Bjørn Lomborg, Guardian, UK, Jul 16, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/economics-blog/2013/jul/16/bowland-shale-fracking-uk-economy-co2-emissions>

It's official: US-style shale revolution could soon slash gas prices in Britain

By Corin Taylor, City, AM, Jul 19, 2013

<http://www.cityam.com/article/it-s-official-us-style-shale-revolution-could-soon-slash-gas-prices-britain>

Britain Scales Back Wind Power as Shale Revolution Shakes Green Energy Assumptions

By Tim Webb, The Times, via GWPF, Jul 17, 2013

<http://www.thegwpf.org/britain-scales-wind-power-shale-revolution-shakes-green-energy-assumptions/>

Energy Issues -- US

Americans continue to use more renewable energy sources

By Anne M Stark for LLNL News, Livermore CA (SPX) Jul 19, 2013

[http://www.energy-](http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Americans_continue_to_use_more_renewable_energy_sources_999.html)

[daily.com/reports/Americans continue to use more renewable energy sources 999.html](http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Americans_continue_to_use_more_renewable_energy_sources_999.html)

Graph: https://www.llnl.gov/news/newsreleases/2013/Jul/attach/2012_flow_chart_high_res.jpg

[SEPP Comment: According to the graph, of the 95.1 Quads used by the US, 0.227 came from geothermal, 0.235 from solar, 1.36 from wind, and 4.32 from biomass. Not particularly significant considering the massive subsidies and mandates.]

Fracking is greener than critics claim

On the ground in natural-gas country

By Deroy Murdock, Washington Time, Jul 12, 2013

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/jul/12/fracking-is-greener-than-critics-claim/>

Washington's Control of Energy

Investment Truths

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Jul 16, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/07/16/investment-truths/>

[SEPP Comment: A concept bureaucrats in Washington who are dictating energy efficiency ignore.]

White House seeks carbon curbs through energy efficiency gains

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Jul 18, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/311883-white-house-on-three-fronts-seeks-carbon-curbs-through-efficiency-gains>

Interior chief defends 'fracking' rules amid GOP, industry attacks

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Jul 17, 2013

<http://thehill.com/blogs/regwatch/energyenvironment/311651-interior-chief-defends-fracking-rules-as-gop-attacks>

[SEPP Comment: Explains why oil and gas production on private and state controlled lands will continue to outstrip production on federally controlled lands.]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Peak Oil Peters Out: Neo-Malthusian Cult Website The Oil Drum Shuts Down

Ronald Bailey|Jul. Reason, Jul 12, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://reason.com/blog/2013/07/12/peak-oil-peters-out-neo-malthusian-cult>

APNewsBreak: 1st federal study finds natural gas fracking chemicals didn't spread

By Staff Writers, AP, Jul 19, 2013

http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/apnewsbreak-first-ever-federal-study-finds-natural-gas-fracking-chemicals-didnt-spread/2013/07/19/85b75e4e-f03c-11e2-8c36-0e868255a989_story.html

[SEPP Comment: Fails to mention that many of the chemicals are edible.]

Global Shale Oil and Gas Estimates Expand

By Geoffrey Styles, The Energy Collective, Jul 12, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://theenergycollective.com/geoffrey-styles/248216/global-shale-oil-and-gas-estimates-expand>

[SEPP Comment: We may be on the beginning of the knowledge curve in the technology to extract oil and gas from dense shale.]

Eagle Ford: Texas Shale Star (Resourcehip in action: III)

By Fred Lawrence and Ron Planting, Master Resource, Jul 19, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/07/eagle-ford-resourcehip3/#more-26120>

Alternative, Green ("Clean") Solar and Wind

India threatens Wind farms with fines. They must accurately predict the wind a day in advance or else!

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Jul 18, 2013

<http://joannenova.com.au/2013/07/india-threatens-wind-farms-with-fines-accurately-predict-the-wind-a-day-in-advance-or-else/>

Solar Roads? Let's not get Excited

By Sierra Rayne, American Thinker, Jul 13, 2013

http://www.americanthinker.com/2013/07/solar_roads_lets_not_get_excited.html

Alternative, Green ("Clean") Vehicles

Inaccurate EPA Mileage Tests Mislead Consumers

Editorial, IBD, Jul 15, 2013

<http://news.investors.com/ibd-editorials/071513-663809-epa-mileage-tests-mislead.htm>

How many miles per gallon does your Prius really get?

The EPA should update the way it measures fuel efficiency, after independent tests raised questions about hybrids' gas mileage.

By The Denver Post Editorial Board, Jul 15, 2013 [H/t Timothy Wise]

http://www.denverpost.com/opinion/ci_23644029/how-many-miles-per-gallon-does-your-prius

EV and PHEV Sales Update

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, Jul 19, 2013

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2013/07/19/ev-and-phev-sales-update/>

[SEPP Comment: EV stands for electric vehicles and PHEV stands for plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.]

Carbon Schemes

Carbon dioxide stored in Marcellus Shale wells could also boost gas production

By Anne Danahy, Penn State News, Jul 11, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://news.psu.edu/story/281335/2013/07/11/research/carbon-dioxide-stored-marcellus-shale-wells-could-also-boost-gas>

[SEPP Comment: Carbon dioxide is used to promote production; but for storage, government regulations may become so stringent to make it enormously expensive.]

California Dreaming

Don't Thank Stringent Regulations For California's Reduced Electricity Use

By Lawrence J. McQuillan, Forbes, Jul 10, 2013

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2013/07/10/dont-thank-stringent-regulations-for-californias-reduced-electricity-use/>

Health, Energy, and Climate

European descent into Dark Age ignorance continues apace

By Staff Writer, ACSH, Jul 15, 2013

<http://acsh.org/2013/07/european-descent-into-dark-age-ignorance-continues-apace/>

Environmental Industry

Fractavists force PA landowners to abandon gas and oil leasing

By Staff Writer, ACSH, Jul 18, 2013

<http://acsh.org/2013/07/fractavists-force-pa-landowners-to-abandon-gas-and-oil-leasing/>

Locavorism vs. Resource Efficiency

By Pierre Desrochers, Master Resource, Jul 18, 2013

<http://www.masterresource.org/2013/07/locavorism-vs-efficiency/#more-26676>

[SEPP Comment: Another environmental fad exposed.]

Other Scientific News

Distorted GPS signals reveal hurricane wind speeds

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), Jul 16, 2013

[http://www.gpsdaily.com/reports/Distorted GPS signals reveal hurricane wind speeds 999.html](http://www.gpsdaily.com/reports/Distorted_GPS_signals_reveal_hurricane_wind_speeds_999.html)

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Wyoming rancher: Grizzly could have killed me if she wanted

By Staff Writer, AP, Jul 6, 2013

http://m.trib.com/news/state-and-regional/wyoming-rancher-grizzly-could-have-killed-me-if-she-wanted/article_87812500-a1c9-53dc-a37d-834f276418d0.html

[SEPP Comment: Global warming drove the grizzly bear off the mountain? Grizzly bears are native to the Great Plains.]

Revealed the keys to reducing the impact of agriculture on climate change

By Staff Writers, Cambridge, UK (SPX), Jul 17, 2013

[http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/Revealed the keys to reducing the impact of agriculture on climate change 999.html](http://www.seeddaily.com/reports/Revealed_the_keys_to_reducing_the_impact_of_agriculture_on_climate_change_999.html)

[SEPP Comment: Government control of land use is best for all – as demonstrated by the Soviet Union.]

\$487K Study of Viking Textiles During Little Ice Age To ‘Mitigate Climate Change’

By Alissa Tabirian, CNS News, Jul 15, 2013 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/487k-study-viking-textiles-during-little-ice-age-mitigate-climate-change-1>

Extreme irony – EPA rules shut down the mother of all weather conspiracy theories

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jul 16, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/07/16/extreme-irony-epa-rules-shut-down-the-mother-of-all-weather-conspiracy-theories/>

Kenji gets mail – ‘Union of Concerned Scientists’ wants a one-sided Senate hearing panel, asks for money

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Jul 17, 2013

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2013/07/17/kenji-gets-mail-union-of-concerned-scientists-wants-a-one-sided-senate-hearing-panel-asks-for-money/>

[SEPP Comment: Anthony’s dog gets it, do you?]

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ARTICLES:

1. Time to Sequester Inspid Federal Research

Focus science funding on real science, not on silliness like studying how to ride a bike.

By Henry Miller, WSJ, Jul 17, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324328204578573323173137426.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

The budget sequester has hit federal research hard, and the lions of the scientific research establishment are roaring. Bruce Alberts—editor of the journal *Science* and former president of the National Academy of Sciences—recently lamented the National Science Foundation's announcement that "it may award 1000 fewer research grants in 2013 than it did in 2012."

Still, all research is not created equal. Too much of what's dispensed is pork, overlaps with work that would otherwise be performed in the private sector, or supports poorly conceived or trivial experiments.

Public funding for scientific investigations should largely be limited to basic research or proof-of-principle experiments—which can be justified on the grounds that they are public goods. Federal research also should follow recognized experimental methodologies and focus on nontrivial questions or problems. Unfortunately, these seemingly obvious criteria are often sacrificed on the altar of scientific fads and political correctness.

The National Science Foundation is an example. A major driver of American science with an annual budget of over \$7 billion, the NSF funds about one-fifth of all federally supported basic research at U.S. colleges and universities and 60% of all nonbiomedical life-science research. Yet a 2011 report, "NSF Under the Microscope," released by Sen. (and physician) Tom Coburn (R., Okla.) identified projects that will make plenty of Americans, scientists and nonscientists alike, shake their heads.

These studies include: how to ride a bike; when dogs became man's best friend; whether political views are genetically predetermined; and why the same teams always seem to dominate the NCAA basketball tournament. More recent studies funded by the NSF include "how power affects empathy" and an assessment of "the role of optimism and pessimism in shaping the political beliefs and behavior of Americans."

Most of these ill-advised projects are funded by the science foundation's Social, Behavioral and Economics Directorate. The social sciences grants were evaluated with more rigor when they were organizationally within the NSF's Biology Directorate. When these grants were split off, scientific rigor gave way to cronyism and narcissistic self-regard.

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine at the National Institutes of Health is also plagued by a flawed mandate and the breakdown of effective peer review. NCCAM's mission is "to define, through rigorous scientific investigation, the usefulness and safety of complementary and alternative medicine interventions and their roles in improving health and health care." But as infectious-disease specialist Dr. Paul Offit writes in "Do You Believe in Magic?", his new book, "There is no such thing as alternative medicine. There's only medicine that works and medicine that doesn't."

Many of the center's projects are hardly essential to advancing scientific knowledge. For example, one NCCAM-funded study published in 2011 found that cranberry juice cocktail was no better

than placebo at preventing recurring urinary-tract infections. Other studies include, "Metabolic and Immunologic Effects of Meditation," "Long-Term Chamomile Therapy of Generalized Anxiety Disorder," and "Restorative Yoga for Therapy of the Metabolic Syndrome."

Much of the research funded by NCCAM, to the tune of \$130 million annually, is an affront to NIH-funded investigators who are leaders in disciplines like cell and molecular biology, immunology and infectious diseases—but who are having increasing difficulty getting federal funding even for studies with obvious scientific merit.

Organizations within the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health (among other federal funding agencies) have shown themselves to be incapable of consistently discerning good science from bad. The public and responsible members of the scientific community should pressure Congress to, at the very least, improve the process for reviewing science research proposals. Better still, unworthy federal organizations should be stripped of the ability to dispense research funds.

Instead, Congress is being importuned for more money to offset the billions of sequester-related reductions in research funding (the cuts at NIH and NSF are \$1.55 billion and \$350 million respectively). At an April rally in Washington, D.C., thousands of scientists and patient advocates demanded more (not smarter) funding for biomedical research. The demonstrators chanted "more progress, more hope, more life." Emcee Cokie Roberts of NPR declared that "it could not be a stupider time to cut back on funding for medical research." She should have said that it could not be a stupider time to waste money on stupid research.

Dr. Miller is a research fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution. A physician and molecular biologist, he was the founding director of the FDA's Office of Biotechnology.

2. Oil by Rail Is Here to Stay

The Quebec disaster shows how badly the industry needs to up its game.

By Holman Jenkins, WSJ, Jul 16, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323848804578609681519319010.html?mod=W_SJ_Opinion_BelowLEFTSecond

Fracking has been a boon to railroads not just because of a huge jump in crude-by-rail shipments—from nearly nothing to 300,000 annual carloads in half a decade.

Railroads have also booked rapidly growing revenues delivering "frac sand"—used in hydraulic fracturing of wells. Last year trains moved at least 200,000 carloads of frac sand. In Wisconsin alone, more than 100 frac-sand mines now are operating.

Then there's the downstream traffic boom: chemicals, plastics, natural gas liquids.

The unhappy face of this unexpected industrial revolution, at least in Canada, has become a U.S. rail executive, Ed Burkhardt, whose runaway Montreal Maine & Atlantic train devastated the Quebec town of Lac-Mégantic on July 6. Bodies are still being recovered but the dead number 37 so far. Editorialists and politicians in Canada have whipped themselves into fury of denunciation. Mr. Burkhardt was inexcusably tardy in visiting the town. He said too much, or too little, or not

the right thing, whatever that is. But this is how it works. And unlike Trayvon Martin and the San Francisco plane crash, news of which have overshadowed Lac-Mégantic in the U.S., the consequences will be large for years to come.

In fact, the evidence is mixed on whether pipelines or railroads are safer for transporting oil, and may not be relevant, industrially or politically. Rail shipping is likely to keep growing no matter what happens with the Keystone pipeline, over which President Obama has been perfecting his Hamlet impersonation.

Rail offers flexibility, allowing shippers quickly to redirect supplies to wherever they are most valued. What's more, East and West Coast refineries, like the one in Saint John, New Brunswick, toward which the MM&A train was headed (displacing North Sea oil), are not convenient to the pipeline network and likely never will be. And when it comes to Alberta tar sands, rail has another advantage: Before Canada's sludgy bitumen can even be handled by a pipeline, it must be diluted with natural gas condensate, often shipped all the way from the Gulf Coast.

Let's be serious about environmental opposition. Environmentalists are not opposed to pipelines, aka Keystone; they are opposed to fossil fuels. They will oppose both Keystone and oil shipping by rail with perfect consistency. Their goal is to raise the cost of using fossil fuels and to punish politicians who don't move their way on regulating carbon.

Lac-Mégantic will now be thrown into the battle. The Lac-Mégantic disaster may well boil down to a railroad industry that was unready for the opportunity that opened up in the past few years to carry large amounts of a hazardous substance on routes and lines laid down a century ago around which highly populated areas inevitably grew up.

That MM&A's nearly mile-long oil train was left parked and unguarded overnight. That the lead locomotive was left running and unlocked on a hill above town. That nobody can say for sure whether the sole crewmember manually set the brakes on enough tank cars before heading off to a motel. Um, er, um.

Somehow we doubt this is how an industry behaves that knows it's handling a cargo capable of erasing a town. Reports of windfall profits by owners of tank cars; news of a multitude of minor spills and derailments; all are evidence of a crude-by-rail market developing faster than certain operators have been able to master the new opportunity.

Mr. Burkhardt, before he became the face of the Lac-Mégantic disaster, led a heroic generation of entrepreneurs who came along after deregulation to return abandoned, decaying and bankrupt rail lines to useful service. He was especially famous for his globe-trotting search for "best practices."

After Lac-Mégantic, every town through which freight trains rumble will wonder whether archaic technology in the hands of goofballs stands between them and disaster.

Automation will certainly become more important. Mr. Burkhardt continues to be a believer in one-man train crews, although a practical lesson may be that, until the human element can be removed altogether, combining a single operator with technology that drains his job of engagement and urgency is the worst of all possible worlds. Airlines have figured this out already.

Airlines discovered "crew resource management," or CRM, precisely because too many of their multi-person crews were behaving like one-man crews, with underlings refusing to second-guess a more senior pilot who, amid a welter of automated processes and signals, had lost the plot.

Oil still runs our civilization. NIMBYism and environmental activism may push back. Building a new pipeline or rail facility may become harder and more expensive than it needs to be. But Lac-Mégantic will not prove a way station on the route to a carbon-free future. More likely it will bring forth a serious campaign to make sure crude-by-rail is safe enough to become a permanent feature of a North American energy landscape being transformed by fracking.

3. Asian Coal Use Grows Despite Gas Challenge

Economic Reality Is Trumping Pollution Worries in the Region

By Jacob Gronholt-Pedersen, WSJ, Jul 19, 2013

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323309404578615160884675062.html>

Sometimes dismissed as the dirty fuel whose day is nearly over because of environmental concerns and ballooning output of cleaner-burning gas, coal is on a roll in Asia, with governments across the region ordering new coal-fired power stations.

Economic realities are outweighing worries about pollution, and coal's lower cost means its share of the energy mix in most Asian countries will rise for years, or even decades ahead. While investments in more expensive and cleaner power production are continuing, a greater emphasis on coal will provide life support for some mining companies grappling with a demand downturns elsewhere.

It is the reverse of the scenario in the U.S., where coal's dominance is being usurped by fast-growing and cheap shale-gas output, prompting a rise in coal exports, some of which is making its way to Asia. In the U.S., gas sells for around a quarter the price it does in Asia.

The fastest shift to coal is in Southeast Asia, where local gas output can't keep up with energy demand and increasingly available supplies of Australian and Qatari gas are seen as too costly. Southeast Asians are embracing coal even as additional gas projects are rolling out around the world, including in Russia, East Africa, not to mention North America.

Coal demand across Southeast Asia may almost double between 2010 and 2020 to 230 million tons, according to the International Energy Agency, which in an April report warned that its growing use to generate electricity is undermining efforts to rein in global greenhouse-gas emissions.

"If you're a local politician in Southeast Asia, you would definitely consider coal to have a bigger role in your energy mix," said Graham Tyler, who heads energy research firm Wood Mackenzie's gas and power research team in Southeast Asia.

According to Wood Mackenzie, the share of coal-fired power generating capacity in Southeast Asia's energy mix will likely rise to 48% by 2030 from 35% now.

In Indonesia, the world's largest thermal coal exporter, the government proposed in May to alter a long-term plan to increase power generation using a variety of energy sources by raising coal's share. Malaysia is building four large coal-fired plants, adding five gigawatts of power capacity by 2019.

Vietnam is adding nine large coal-fired plants, due online in 2015-2016, in part because exploitation of its domestic gas reserves is going more slowly than expected. A significant exporter of coal just a few years ago, it recently started importing and plans to raise coal-fired electricity capacity more than fivefold by 2020.

In Thailand in April, power supplies became a hot issue after maintenance on a gas platform in Myanmar cut pipelined gas imports, creating power shortages that forced manufacturers to halt operations. Thailand uses gas for over two-thirds of its power needs, but officials want coal to play a larger role.

"It is highly crucial for Thailand to introduce the use of coal in power generation in order to help shoulder the cost of natural gas," Thailand's energy minister, Pongsak Raktapongpasal, told The Wall Street Journal, adding that coal will help keep electricity prices low and enhance energy security. "When compared with other types of energy sources, coal remains cheaper," Mr. Pongsak said.

Thermal coal prices in Asia have been trading at multiyear lows since slumping in mid-2012. The cost of producing electricity from coal has historically been well below that of gas and coal, U.S. government data show.

China, the world's largest coal consumer, uses it for over two-thirds of its energy, and demand is expected to rise steadily until at least the end of the decade. India could become the world's largest thermal coal importer in coming years due to mining and transport bottlenecks and stagnant domestic natural gas output.

Japan is burning more. Tokyo Electric Power Co., operator of the Fukushima nuclear power plant, said it used roughly three times more coal in June than a year earlier, helping offset idled nuclear reactors.

All this is good long-term news for Australia, where for the past 18 months the mining sector has been hit by falling prices and softening demand. "The construction of new thermal power plants [in Southeast Asia] is very exciting in terms of being able to sustain our industry here in Australia," said Paul Flynn, chief executive of Whitehaven Coal Ltd., one of Australia's largest coal miners.

Australian thermal coal exports are expected to rise to 183 million metric tons this year, up 7% on year, and by a further 7% in 2014, the government has forecast, despite some producers having shut mines and cut investments.

"We don't foresee a glut of LNG in Asia and don't think marginal costs for gas will come down in the long run to where they can compete with coal," said Mr. Tyler of Wood Mackenzie.

4. How Big Government Co-Opted Charities

Much of the not-for-profit sector has become a junior partner in administering the welfare state.

By James Piereson, WSJ, Jul 18, 2013

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324021104578553093991335514.html?mod=IT_P_opinion_0

[SEPP Comment: Applies to universities and environmental organizations. Full disclosure of sources of funds on all solicitations may be appropriate.]

Debate continues in Washington over limiting the charitable deduction for the wealthy to help balance the budget. Billionaires Warren Buffett and Bill Gates, in addition to influential advocacy groups like Independent Sector, an umbrella organization of 600 charities, insist that the charitable deduction is vital to preserve America's vibrant voluntary tradition.

Yet the nonprofit sector has problems beyond the charitable deduction. For much of U.S. history, nonprofits have operated as a check on government by providing private avenues to serve the public interest. Unfortunately, American charities—and more broadly, the entire nonprofit sector—have become a creature of big government.

For decades, the U.S. government has administered research, welfare, housing and educational programs through a system of grants to state and local governments, colleges and universities, hospitals, research organizations, consulting firms and not-for-profit advocacy groups. In the past 50 years, federal spending has exploded 36-fold, to about \$3.6 trillion in 2012 from \$100 billion in 1962. Meantime, the number of federal civilian employees has expanded modestly in comparison—to 2.8 million in 2011 from 2.5 million in 1962. The reason the federal government can increase its spending without adding many employees is because it subcontracts so many of its functions to ostensibly private institutions. This system has gradually turned much of the not-for-profit sector into a junior partner in administering the welfare state.

The publication Giving USA, which tracks charitable spending, reports that the government now supplies one-third of all funds raised by not-for-profit organizations. Major research universities, hospitals and health centers could not survive without large allocations from the federal government, and are among the largest recipients of federal grants and contracts. They include the Dana Farber Cancer Institute (\$136 million in federal grants in 2012), St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital (\$56 million), the American Red Cross (\$27 million) and National Jewish Health (\$26 million).

According to a study by the National Science Foundation, nearly 900 research universities received federal grants and contracts totaling \$40 billion in 2011. Johns Hopkins led the pack with \$1.9 billion, followed by the University of Washington (\$949 million), the University of Michigan (\$820 million) and the University of Pennsylvania (\$707 million).

The website www.opensecrets.org, which tracks money in politics, reports that many of the institutions that receive these large grants and contracts—including Johns Hopkins, the University of Washington and the University of Pennsylvania—maintain lobbying operations in Washington. In addition, influential advocacy organizations like the American Council on Education and the American Association of Universities are similarly active in promoting the interests of higher education in the federal budget.

If we leave out the large sums these institutions receive, the nonprofit sector still got \$215 billion in 2010 in government grants and contracts. These funds were directed primarily to advocacy groups, social service organizations and nonacademic research institutions. According to a recent report by the Chronicle of Philanthropy, government funding of such charities grew by 77% between 2000 and 2010, while private support for such groups grew by just 47%.

Many political groups that lobby for increased government spending are major recipients of government grants. AARP, which lobbied mightily on behalf of the Affordable Care Act, has a tax-exempt foundation that received \$97 million (or 82% of its revenues) in government grants in 2009.

According to the website www.USASpending.gov, the National Urban League received \$16 million in 2012 and the National Council of La Raza, which lobbies on behalf of immigration reform and other issues important to Hispanics, got more than \$8 million in 2010 in grants from various government departments and agencies. La Raza recently won a \$100,000 grant from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for a public-relations campaign called "Engaging the Latino Community as Only NASA Can."

Planned Parenthood, also an influential advocate for government spending, received more than \$25 million in federal grants in 2012. This list could be expanded many times. Often these well-connected organizations win several grants per year from different federal departments and agencies.

Religious organizations also receive large infusions of federal funds. Catholic Charities USA receives more than half of its funding each year (\$554 million in 2010) from federal grants. In 2012, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops received \$63 million, and World Vision, an evangelical relief organization, received \$57 million in federal grants.

These are reputable institutions, and many of the programs they sponsor are important. Nevertheless, in view of their dependence upon government funds, no one can seriously maintain that these groups are "independent." Instead, they form one of the more powerful lobbying forces in Washington for increasing government spending, especially spending on tax-exempt groups.

Their interest in maintaining federal funds may compete with their concern with maintaining the charitable tax deduction. This is undoubtedly true of the larger and more influential organizations that receive large federal grants. Last year during the "fiscal cliff" negotiations, Independent Sector joined several other organizations to support a tax increase in exchange for President Obama's agreement to maintain the charitable deduction. More recently, prominent charitable groups, including the National Council of Non-Profits and the Center for Effective Government, have complained about sequester-related spending cuts.

The cozy relationship between nonprofits and the government should make us question the value of the charitable deduction in an era of expanding government. The original purpose of the deduction was to encourage charitable giving based on the belief that strong voluntary associations would reduce the need for government support. It no longer serves that purpose, given that private charities have become advocates for bigger government.

But placing a limit on the charitable deduction might make charities even more dependent on government funds. A practical step in the right direction would be to raise awareness so private donors understand that many charities seeking their contributions rely heavily on government grants and advocate for higher taxes and spending. Watchdog groups, such as Charity Navigator, should monitor the percentage of revenues charities receive from government sources so donors can honestly evaluate different organizations.

Whether or not we keep the charitable tax break is a question that should be judged broadly in terms of the role we want charities to play in our system of limited government. Those committed to preserving the charitable deduction and the integrity of not-for-profit organizations would be well advised to liberate the charitable sector from its self-defeating dependence on government.

Mr. Piereson is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and president of the William E. Simon Foundation.

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