

The Week That Was: 2016-09-17 (September 17, 2016)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week. *“Religion is a culture of faith; science is a culture of doubt.”* — Richard Feynman

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Number of the Week: Number of the Week: 2.3 per square mile; 1.1 per square kilometer

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THIS WEEK:

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

Vale Roger Cohen PhD RIP: We have lost a friend. Among his many accomplishments, Roger Cohen was a leader of the Exxon research team who knew that the guesses made by climate modelers were exactly that – guesses. They were not scientific predictions or knowledge. Apparently, many politicians, including attorneys general, cannot comprehend the difference among scientific guesses, predictions, and knowledge. See link under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Treaty or Trivia: Last week’s TWTW reported that President Obama signed the Paris Agreement to limit carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions. Brian Deese, a senior White House adviser, stated that it need not go to the US Senate for ratification by two-thirds of the Senate. Rather, it is an Executive Agreement. Deese claimed: “With respect to the legal form of the agreement, the United States has a long and well-established process for approving executive agreements, that is, a legal form which is distinct from treaties, which are approved through the advice and consent process in the Senate.” Based on its research, TWTW was under the impression that executive agreements require approval of both houses of Congress by a simple majority.

As treated by the administration, the March 2015 nuclear deal with Iran is an example of an executive agreement. But, TWTW was unable to find any record that the deal has been submitted to Congress for approval, even though the administration is acting as if it had been approved, including delivering over \$1 Billion to Iran. There is no logical reason that Mr. Obama will behave differently regarding the Paris Agreement, which he has boasted is the most ambitious climate agreement in history. This agreement will punish all Americans who rely on fossil fuels for electricity, transportation, etc. as well as American businesses that rely on fossil fuels.

In short, this administration believes it has the power to make binding treaties when it wishes and ignore Congress and the Constitution as trivia. See links under After Paris!

ENSO: The El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) continues to baffle those climate experts who make predictions. The US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has called off its watch for an impending La Niña, the cooling part of ENSO which has frequently followed an El Niño. Yet, the Japan Meteorological Agency is stating a La Niña has arrived. Complicating issues, there are reports that the Blob has reappeared. The Blob is a warm area in the Pacific off the coast of Canada, north of the US Pacific Northwest. What these events will do to global temperatures is unknown. The UN Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) is of no value, because it dismissed a succession of El Niños as warming influence, claiming they are too short in duration. See links under Changing Weather.

Standing Rock: The Standing Rock Indian Reservation was established by the US Government in 1864 by treaty with the Sioux. Originally about 6,250 square miles (16,000 square kilometers), the size was unilaterally reduced by the US government to 3,570 sq. mi. (9,250 square km), following wars with the Plains Indians in 1870s & 1880s. According to the 2000 census, the population is about 8,250. The reservation is largely in South Dakota, but extends into North Dakota. The Missouri River forms the eastern boundary of the reservation.

In 1948, the Oahe Dam was started by the Corps of Engineers, to prevent down-river flooding and provide electric power, irrigation, and other benefits. The dam was dedicated in 1962 and it created Lake Oahe, a reservoir running about 230 miles up the Missouri River, through the reservation, to Bismarck, North Dakota. The reservation lost about 87 sq. mi. to the lake.

The reservation has become a flash point in the efforts by the green groups to stop oil and gas development in the US.

A pipeline company, Energy Transfer Partners, thought it had the necessary permits to build an oil pipeline about 1,172-mile-long, costing \$4 billion. The new pipeline would run from the Bakken and Three Forks production areas in northwest North Dakota to Patoka, Illinois. According to a federal court decision, 99% of the pipeline will be on private land. Once completed, the pipeline would transport approximately 470,000 barrels of light sweet crude oil per day, and has a daily capacity of up to 570,000 barrels. The Bakken has been underserved with pipelines, especially since the administration arbitrarily refused permits for the Keystone pipeline from Canada to the Gulf Coast in Texas.

The pipeline would cross the Missouri River/Lake Oahe paralleling the existing Northern Border natural gas pipeline. The Sioux objected, claiming that the new pipeline would endanger their drinking water and violate the reservation. At its nearest point, the new pipeline would be about one-half mile up-river/lake from the reservation.

Immediately, after the Sioux lost in Federal court, the administration arbitrarily stopped the construction invoking the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This is the act used to stop a Corps of Engineers project in the early 1970s, which would have helped protect New Orleans from flooding from hurricanes, as happened with Katerina in 2005.

Apparently, the administration believes it can correct Washington's shabby treatment against the Sioux by equal treatment against oil and gas providers. Fittingly, the presidential candidate for the Green Party, Jill Stein, has issued statements strongly supporting the Sioux in this action during this so-called **climate emergency?** See Article # 1 and links under Washington's Control of Energy and Environmental Industry.

Vice President Biden: Power engineer Donn Dears writes that Vice President Biden has been in Europe warning against the proposed Nord Stream-2 pipeline, which would bring additional natural gas from Russia to Europe. According to Dears, Europe gets one-third of its natural gas from Russia, and some Eastern European countries are wholly dependent on Russia.

Instead, VP Biden states that Europe should depend on natural gas from the US, which depends on hydraulic fracturing, fracking. Apparently, the Vice President is unaware of the National Platform of the Democratic Party which calls for the abolition of fracking and the actions of the administration to stop oil and gas pipelines. Perhaps, Europeans should ask Canadian and US

pipeline officials: Who do you trust more in oil and gas ventures: Moscow or Washington? See link under The Administration's Plan

Arbitrary Power: The Paris Agreement and the oil pipeline actions are the latest in the administration's arbitrary use of executive power, which may or may not be Constitutional. As his term of office is ending, we can expect far more in executive actions, all in the trumped-up title of protecting the environment. These will include national monuments of no particular significance, endangered species, and imposition of NEPA. For some of the new regulations this week, see links under EPA and other Regulators on the March.

U.S. Competitiveness: Since 2011, some professors at Harvard Business School have been conducting annual surveys, including alumni, on US competitiveness with other nations. Although, it was discussed by the Investor's Business Daily (IBD), the report was not complimentary to either political party. The report recognized that the economy was stagnating, and neither party appears to have a program that will relieve the nation from the Great Recession. Clearly, the so-called "Stimulus Bill" did not work, for reasons some economists articulated at that time.

Among the recommendations by these professors are: simplify the corporate tax code and lower the statutory rate; ease immigration of highly skilled individuals; simplify and streamline regulation; create a sustainable federal budget, including reform of entitlements; and responsibly develop America's unconventional energy advantage. Additional recommendations can be: 1) to limit arbitrary enforcement of regulations to and 2) limit legal extortion of funds from businesses under threat of litigation. See links under The Political Games Continue

Social Cost of Carbon (Dioxide): Ever since UK politician Nicholas Stern came up with a highly biased calculation of what he called the social cost of carbon (SCC), many politicians have been trying to create such regulations in order to expand government revenues. Most calculations, including those by US Government entities in the Interagency Working Group on Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases largely ignore the thousands of studies and satellite photos showing the benefits of carbon dioxide to agriculture and the environment. These entities include the council of Economic Advisors, Departments of Agriculture, Energy, Treasury, as well as the EPA, offices of Management and Budget, and Science and Technology Policy.

A noted exception has been the work of Richard Tol, of the UK, who resigned as part of the IPCC team.

Ross McKittrick, who helped expose the logical errors in the model that lead to Mr. Mann's hockey-stick, has developed a guide on how to estimate the social cost of carbon. His key points are:

"First, carbon pricing is meant to be used instead of, not on top of, traditional command-and-control regulation. Second, the carbon price needs to be deflated by the Marginal Cost of Public Funds, which varies quite a bit across provinces. Third, the presence of market uncertainty means that a carbon tax is a less costly option than cap and trade. Fourth, Integrated Assessment Models give a wide range of estimates of the social cost of carbon, but empirical evidence favors numbers on the low end."

This is as a realistic an approach as TWTW has seen. However, given the enormous benefits of increased CO2, the lack of concrete evidence that CO2 is causing significant global warming/climate change, and the current enthusiasm exhibited in Washington for punishing those who use fossil fuels – it is doubtful whether any objective, realistic effort can be accomplished, even if concrete evidence of harm is established. See links under Social Costs of Carbon and Below the Bottom Line.

A New Mascot Needed? The World Wildlife Fund, and others, have used polar bears and the threat of melting Arctic ice as props for fund raising. Writing in her blog, *Polar Bear Science*, Susan Crockford has repeatedly shown that bears feed heavily in the spring, when the ice is thick, and little in the summer. During their heavy feeding season, they do not need ice for hunting their major prey, seals. She suggests seals feed more heavily when the summer when the Arctic has less ice. Among other things, fish is more plentiful and there is less need for seals to search for breathing holes. This heavy summer feeding of seals, allows for young, fat seals in the spring, food for the bears. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy.

Climate Editor Needed: Last week’s TWTW carried a link to the advertisement in the New York Times for a new editor for its section covering climate change. Statistician Matt Briggs has answered the ad. He would be more demanding and balanced than the editors of Science, who refuse to publish articles questioning CO2 as the primary cause of global warm/climate change. In another post, Briggs, points out the mistakes made by those who believe that proxies can calculate global temperatures to one-tenth of a degree C. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy and Below the Bottom line.

Additions and Corrections: Reader Paul Kenyon asks about a statement in TWTW on a coral reef in the Florida Keys that is significantly above current sea level, which gives evidence that sea levels were once far higher than today (possibly 110,000 to 120,000 years ago). He writes: “It's my understanding that land also rises and might that have pushed the coral upwards? I spent three years in the Dominican Republic. What appear to be coral cliffs are found inland around the island. Has the island of Hispaniola risen in the past?”

The question encompasses two different time frames and two different geological plates. Southern Florida (and the Keys) were largely covered by seas about 110,000 to 120,000 years ago. During the last ice age, after Florida was covered, the decrease in sea levels resulted in land extending far into what is now the Gulf of Mexico. The geology of Hispaniola formed over millions of years. Also, Hispaniola is part of the Caribbean plate, not the North American plate. The Caribbean plate is more active. Florida is on the tail end of the North American plate, relatively stable (as compared to the Rockies or California).

It is interesting to note the contributions by scientists from petroleum companies to the science of geology, as seen in the linked article under Changing Earth.

Number of the Week: 2.3 per square mile; 1.1 per square kilometer. That is the population density of the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, based on the 2000 census of a population of 8,250. By contrast, Alaska has a population of 738,500 (2015 est.), with a density 1.3/mi (0.5/km). Many in Alaska desire to see the expansion in oil and gas development, which Washington is denying.

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Science: Is the Sun Rising?

New Scaffeta paper finds planetary resonance drives cosmic rays & climate change

By Blog Writer, The Hockey Schtick, Sep 10, 2016

http://hockeyschtick.blogspot.com/2016/09/new-scaffeta-paper-finds-planetary_46.html

Link to paper: On the astronomical origin of the Hallstatt oscillation found in radiocarbon and climate records throughout the Holocene

By Nicola Scafetta, Earth-Science Reviews, Sep 8, 2016

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0012825216301453>

From the Abstract: "...we test whether the Hallstatt cycle could derive from the rhythmic variation of the circularity of the solar system disk assuming that this dynamic could eventually modulate the solar wind and, consequently, the incoming cosmic ray flux and/or the interplanetary/cosmic dust concentration around the Earth-Moon system."

Commentary: Is the Sun Rising?

Chinese Sunspots

Guest Post by Willis Eschenbach, WUWT, Sep 12, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/12/chinese-sunspots/>

Link to paper: The impact to solar activity on the 2015/12 El Niño event

By Wen-Juan HUO & Zi-Niu XIAO, Atmospheric and Oceanic Science Letters, Sep 9, 2016

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/16742834.2016.1231567?needAccess=true&>

Censorship

Censorship at Colleges

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Sep 13, 2016

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/09/13/censorship-at-colleges/>

Suppressing Scientific Inquiry – The Witch Hunt – Push-Back

11 State Attorneys General Side With ExxonMobil in Climate Change Case

By Barbara Hollingsworth, CNS News, Sep 9, 2016 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://cnsnews.com/news/article/barbara-hollingsworth/11-state-attorneys-general-side-exxonmobil-climate-change-case>

EXCLUSIVE: Climate skeptic files sweeping RICO lawsuit against most all climate related NGO's, and some individuals

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Sep 12, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/12/exclusive-climate-skeptic-files-sweeping-rico-lawsuit-against-most-all-climate-related-ngos-and-some-individuals/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy -- NIPCC

Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming

The NIPCC Report on the Scientific Consensus

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

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/>

Download with no charge

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

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Physical Science

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

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

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

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts

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

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

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

Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate

S. Fred Singer, ed., NIPCC, 2008

http://www.sepp.org/publications/nipcc_final.pdf

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Vale Roger Cohen PhD (updated) [RIP]

Posted by Geoff Brown, Australian Climate Sceptics, Sep 13, 2016

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2016/09/vale-roger-cohen-phd.html>

Global Warming Alarmists Promote XKCD Time Series Cartoon, Ignore Its Mistakes

Not everything is as it seems

By William Briggs, The Stream, Sep 16, 2016

<https://stream.org/xkcds-global-warming-time-series-mistakes/>

[SEPP Comment: Explaining unknown unknowns such as the temperatures 22,000 years ago. Proxies cannot be used to calculate historic temperatures to one-tenth of a degree C.]

Wind: An Important Forgotten or Ignored Weather Variable

Guest opinion by Tim Ball, WUWT, Sep 10, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/10/wind-an-important-forgotten-or-ignored-weather-variable/>

CO2 Coalition: Time to Play Offense

By Robert Bradley Jr. Master Resource, Sep 13, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/carbon-dioxide/co2-coalition-time-play-offense/>

Recent studies show Sept ice of 3-5 mkm² did not kill polar bears off as predicted

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Sep 13, 2016

<https://polarbearscience.com/2016/09/13/recent-studies-show-sept-ice-of-3-5-mkm2-did-not-kill-polar-bears-off-as-predicted/>

Why Albedo is the Wrong Measure of Reflectivity for Modeling Climate

Guest essay by Clyde Spencer, WUWT, Sep 12, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/12/why-albedo-is-the-wrong-measure-of-reflectivity-for-modeling-climate/>

Defending the Orthodoxy

Wheat, one of the world's most important crops, is being threatened by climate change

By Chelsea Harvey, The Washington Post, Sep 12, 2016

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/09/12/climate-change-is-really-bad-for-wheat-which-is-really-bad-for-us/?utm_term=.9bdc19f27392

[SEPP Comment: More studies that fail to discuss grain yields and the benefits of CO2. The global climate models fail to project temperatures properly.]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Decision theory and the doom scenario of climate catastrophe

By Lucas Bergkamp, Climate Etc. Sep 11, 2016

<https://judithcurry.com/2016/09/11/decision-theory-and-the-doom-scenario-of-climate-catastrophe/>

Climate Alarmism Is Not 'Sexy'

By Larry Bell, Newsmax, Sep 12, 2016

<http://www.newsmax.com/LarryBell/alarm-climate-extreme-weather/2016/09/12/id/747762/>

Americans' Trust in Mass Media Sinks to New Low

By Art Swift, Gallup, Sep 14, 2016 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/195542/americans-trust-mass-media-sinks-new-low.aspx>

No-Brainer Sustainable Development

By Bjørn Lomborg, Project Syndicate, Sep 15, 2016

<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/maximizing-development-funding-by-bjorn-lomborg-2016-09>

[SEPP Comment: Which of the 17 UN “Sustainable Development Goals” are most achievable at the lowest cost?]

You Ought to Have a Look: How Climate Alarm Becomes a Self-promulgating Collective Belief

By Patrick J. Michaels and Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger, Cato, Sep 16, 2016

<http://www.cato.org/blog/you-ought-have-look-how-climate-alarm-becomes-self-promulgating-collective-belief>

The Creed of the Climate Scientist

By Peter O'Brien, Quadrant, Sep 10, 2016

<http://quadrant.org.au/opinion/doomed-planet/2016/09/creed-climate-scientist/>

[SEPP Comment: Or, let nothing interfere with the narrative.]

After Paris!

Treaties vs. Executive Agreements: When Does Congress Get a Vote?

By Damian Paletta, WSJ, Mar 10, 2016

<http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2015/03/10/treaties-vs-executive-agreements-when-does-congress-get-a-vote/>

A Bad Deal Off to a Worse Start

Iran is flouting the nuclear deal, except where it's benefiting.

By Mortimer B. Zuckerman, U.S. News, Jan 21, 2016

<http://www.usnews.com/news/the-report/articles/2016-01-21/obamas-iran-nuclear-deal-is-a-bad-deal-off-to-a-worse-start>

“President Barack Obama never submitted his Iranian nuclear deal for ratification by the Congress because he knew it would have no chance of passing. That does not make the United States unique: The Iranian parliament has never approved it either (that body passed a heavily

amended version) and the Iranian president has never signed it. The Iranian cabinet has never even discussed it. And the other members of the P5+1 – Britain, China, Germany, France and Russia – have likewise given it short legal shrift. Indeed, President Obama ‘may end up being the only person in the world to sign his much-wanted deal, in effect making a treaty with himself,’ as the Gatestone Institute's Amir Taheri has said.”

Obama's "ratification" of the Paris climate treaty is a joke

By Luboš Motl, The Reference Frame, Sep 3, 2016

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2016/09/obamas-ratification-of-paris-climate.html#more>

The Administration's Plan

Obama eyes big finish on climate

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Sep 10, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/295260-obama-eyes-big-finish-on-climate>

VP Biden in Europe Supports Fracking

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

<https://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2016/09/16/vp-biden-in-europe-supports-fracking/>

The Administration's Plan – Independent Analysis

Balance and the Grid

By Planning Engineer and Jill Tietjen, Climate Etc. Sep 12, 2016

<https://judithcurry.com/2016/09/12/balance-and-the-grid/>

[SEPP Comment: An overview of major issues regarding the grid and the administration's power plan.]

Social Benefits of Carbon

Some big-name science papers ignore CO2 fertilization when assessing agriculture

Guest essay by Alberto Zaragoza Comendador, WUWT, Sep 12, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/12/some-big-name-science-papers-ignore-co2-fertilization-when-assessing-agriculture/>

In eastern Tibetan forest, signs of tree growth amid climate change

By Staff Writers, Eugene OR (SPX), Sep 13, 2016

http://www.terraily.com/reports/In_eastern_Tibetan_forest_signs_of_tree_growth_amid_climate_change_999.html

Link to paper: Tree growth acceleration and expansion of alpine forests: The synergistic effect of atmospheric and edaphic change

By Lucas C. R. Silva, et al, Science Advances, Aug 31, 2016

<http://advances.sciencemag.org/content/2/8/e1501302>

Social Costs of Carbon

A Practical Guide to the Economics of Carbon Pricing.

By Ross McKittrick, University of Calgary, SPP Research Papers Vol 9 Issue 28, September 2016

<http://www.policyschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Carbon-Pricing-McKittrickFINAL.pdf>

Technical Support Document

By Staff Writers, Interagency Working Group on Social Cost of Greenhouse Gases, August 2016

https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/inforeg/scc_tsd_final_clean_8_26_16.pdf

Problems in the Orthodoxy

Alarmism Not Working: World Citizens Rank Climate Change Dead Last As Concern

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Sep 15, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/09/15/alarmism-not-working-world-citizens-rank-climate-change-dead-last-as-concern/#sthash.oEVfidZL.dpbs>

Sarkozy is a climate skeptic

By Luboš Motl, The Reference Frame, Sep 15, 2016

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2016/09/sarkozy-is-climate-skeptic.html#more>

“Climate has been changing for four billion years. Sahara has become a desert, it isn’t because of industry. You need to be as arrogant as men are to believe we changed the climate.”

Seeking a Common Ground

Announcement: Where are the data?

Editorial, Nature, Sep 7, 2016 [H/t Climate Etc.]

http://www.nature.com/news/announcement-where-are-the-data-1.20541?WT.ec_id=NEWSDAILY-20160909

“Starting this month, all research papers accepted for publication in Nature and an initial 12 other Nature titles will be required to include information on whether and how others can access the underlying data.”

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by CO2 Science

Shell Growth and Repair of Brachiopods in Acidifying Ocean Water

Cross, E.L., Peck, L.S., Lamare, M.D. and Harper, E.M. 2016. No ocean acidification effects on shell growth and repair in the New Zealand brachiopod *Calloria inconspicua* (Sowerby, 1846). *ICES Journal of Marine Science* **73**: 920-926. Sep 16, 2016

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

“...overall, studies showing tolerance of marine species to ocean acidification are increasing, especially with the wider use of longer term experiments,”

High CO2 and Warmth: Some Microzooplankton Absolutely *Love It!*

Horn, H.G., Boersma, M., Garzke, J., Loder, M.G.J., Sommer, U. and Aberle, N. 2016. Effects of high CO2 and warming on a Baltic Sea microzooplankton community. *ICES Journal of Marine Science* **73**: 772-782. Sep 15, 2016

The Fate of a Marine Octopus Species in Our "Brave New World"

Ramos, J.E., Pecl, G.T., Semmens, J.M., Strugnell, J.M., Leon, R.I. and Moltshaniwskyj, N.A. 2015. Reproductive capacity of a marine species (*Octopus tetricus*) within a recent range extension area. *Marine and Freshwater Research*: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1071/MF14126>. Sep 13, 2016

Model Issues

Global climate models and the laws of physics

By Dan Hughes, Climate Etc. Sep 13, 2016

<https://judithcurry.com/2016/09/13/global-climate-models-and-the-laws-of-physics/#more-22136>

“The sole issue for computational physics is Verification of the solution.”

[SEPP Comment: Only in terms of the computations. Validation requires testing of all the assumptions. The model may produce correct results numerous times, but not adequately describe important variables (components) in the system.]

Measurement Issues -- Surface

A profiling float becomes clear

By Staff Writers, Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, Aug 10, 2016 [H/t Climate Etc]

<http://www.mbari.org/a-profiling-float-becomes-clear/>

Diverse growth trends and climate responses across Eurasia's boreal forest

By Lena Hellmann, et al. Environmental Research Letters, July 18, 2016 [H/t GWPF]

<http://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/11/7/074021/meta>

[SEPP Comment: Sticking with tree lines, though less precise, may be more accurate than tree rings.]

Highest Temperature Since 1949 – Next To The Tarmac & Jumbos!

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Sep 13, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/09/13/highest-temperature-since-1949-next-to-the-tarmac-jumbos/>

“The UK has experienced its September highest temperature in more than 65 years, with 32.2C (89.96F) being recorded by lunchtime.” – [Achieved at Heathrow Airport!]

Changing Weather

Recap of Hurricane Hermine and Global Warming

By Paul C. "Chip" Knappenberger and Patrick J. Michaels, Cato, Sep 16, 2016

<http://www.cato.org/blog/recap-hurricane-hermine-global-warming>

Has The Pacific Blob Delayed La Nina?

By David Whitehouse, GWPF, Sep 9, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.com/has-the-pacific-blob-delayed-la-nina/>

Link to paper: Multi-year persistence of the 2014/15 North Pacific marine heatwave

Emanuele Di Lorenzo & Nathan Mantua, Nature climate Change, July 11, 2016

http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate3082.html?WT.feed_name=sujects_physical-sciences

La Nina Is Already Here According to Japan As U.S. Drops Watch

By Staff Writers, GWPF, Sep 11, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.com/la-nina-is-already-here-says-japan/>

A Market-Roiling La Nina Is Dividing World Weather Forecasters

By Brian K Sullivan, Bloomberg, Sep 14, 2016

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-09-14/a-market-roiling-la-nina-is-dividing-world-weather-forecasters>

Andrew Bolt: Floods Sink Climate Change Hysteria

By Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, AU, Via GWPF, Sep 15, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.com/andrew-bolt-floods-sink-climate-change-hysteria/>

Changing Climate

Claim: ‘greenhouse gases could extend California drought for centuries’

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Sep 15, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/15/claim-greenhouse-gases-could-extend-california-drought-for-centuries/>

“What they found was not only that periods of increased radiative forcing could produce drought-like conditions that extended indefinitely, but that these conditions were closely tied to prolonged changes in Pacific Ocean surface temperatures.”

[SEPP Comment: The period described as: “A similar dry period was seen from about 950 to 1250 B.C., a time known as the medieval climate anomaly” is most likely 950 to 1250 A.D.]

Massive Cover-up Exposed: 285 Papers From 1960s-’80s Reveal Robust Global Cooling Scientific ‘Consensus’

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Sep 13, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/09/13/massive-cover-up-exposed-285-papers-from-1960s-80s-reveal-robust-global-cooling-scientific-consensus/#sthash.Ug67wFAG.dpbs>

[SEPP Comment: Question the claim of “cover-up.”]

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Arctic Ice Growing Rapidly

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know that, Sep 15, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/09/15/arctic-ice-growing-rapidly/>

A List of the Full Transits of the Northwest Passage

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Sep 16, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/09/16/a-list-of-the-full-transits-of-the-northwest-passage/#more-24096>

[SEPP Comment: Many did it without a cruise ship.]

Greenland sets record temperatures, ice melts early

By Staff, Phys.org, Sep 13, 2016 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<http://phys.org/news/2016-09-greenland-temperatures-ice-early.html>

The average summer temperature was 8.2 degrees Celsius (46.8 degrees Fahrenheit) in Tasiilaq on Greenland's southeast coast, the highest since records began in 1895 and 2.3 degrees Celsius above the average between 1981 and 2010.

[SEPP Comment: Highly question the precision.]

NASA Study: Mass Gains of Antarctic Ice Sheet Greater than Losses

By Maria-José Viñas, NASA's Earth Science News Team, Updated Aug 18, 2016

<http://www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/nasa-study-mass-gains-of-antarctic-ice-sheet-greater-than-losses>

Changing Earth

Geological evolution of the Caribbean region; A plate-tectonic perspective

By James Pindell, Department of Earth Science, Dartmouth College and Stephen Barnett, Amoco Production Company, The Geology of North America, The Geological Society of America, 1990

http://www.tectonicanalysis.com/site/downloads/Pindell90_Caribbean_geologic_evolution.pdf

Lowering Standards

Press release: Appointment of John Cook, [the latest of the 97 percenters]

George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication
<http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1102608159466&ca=d5965069-aa1a-4220-b822-8008bb53b34b>

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

Spot The Scientist

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Sep 11, 2016

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2016/09/11/spot-the-scientist/>

[SEPP Comment: Jet stream speeding up and slowing down!]

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

Daily Kos Eschews Anthrax Basic Epidemiology, Embraces Climate Fear Mongering

Guest essay by Jim Steele, WUWT, Sep 12, 2016

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/12/daily-kos-eschews-anthrax-basic-epidemiology-embraces-climate-fear-mongering/>

[SEPP Comment: Exposing how a dubious hypothesis becomes a “known” myth.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Do a Poll?

42% of US adults don't want to pay even \$12 a year to stop climate change

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Sep 15, 2016

<http://joannenova.com.au/2016/09/42-of-us-adults-dont-want-to-pay-even-12-a-year-to-stop-climate-change/>

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Foreign Minister Julie Bishop Commits Australia to the Undemocratic, Anti-Australian, United Nations New World Order

By Graham Williamson, Australian Climate Sceptics, Sep 15, 2016

<http://theclimatescepticsparty.blogspot.com.au/2016/09/foreign-minister-julie-bishop-commits.html>

Questioning Green Elsewhere

Green Energy Shock: Canadians Confront Climate Policy

By Allen Brooks, Master Resource, Sep 14, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/canadian-wind-issues/canadians-learning-the-cost-of-environmental-legislation/>

“Ontario’s government signed contracts with wind generators that guaranteed them 13.5 cents per kWh. Solar generators actually get paid more. So with the Hourly Ontario Electricity Price at around 2.5 cents, someone has to pay for the 11-cent subsidy for wind power.

Funding Issues

Argumentum ad Aurum: 'Follow the Money' Fallacy

By Alex Berezow, ACSH, Sep 8, 2016

<http://acsh.org/news/2016/09/08/argumentum-ad-aurum-follow-money-fallacy-10133>

The Political Games Continue

Where the 2016 Presidential Election May Come Out on Climate

By Alan Carlin, Carlin Economics and Science, Sep 16, 2016

<http://www.carlineconomics.com/archives/2942>

If You Want Economic Growth, Vote Republican, Says ... Harvard Business School?

Editorial, IBD, Sep 15, 2016

<http://www.investors.com/politics/editorials/if-you-want-economic-growth-vote-republican-says-harvard-business-school/>

Link to Report: Problems Unsolved and a Nation Divided

The State of U.S. Competitiveness 2016

By Porter, Rivkin, Desai, and Raman, Harvard Business School, 2016

<http://www.hbs.edu/competitiveness/Documents/problems-unsolved-and-a-nation-divided.pdf>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Feds move to protect orchids

By Tim Devaney, The Hill, Sep 12, 2016

<http://thehill.com/regulation/energy-environment/295414-feds-move-to-protect-orchids>

Feds move to protect Joshua tree

By Tim Devaney, The Hill, Sep 13, 2016

<http://thehill.com/regulation/energy-environment/295668-feds-move-to-protect-joshua-tree>

Feds roll out conservation, energy plan for Calif. Desert

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Sep 14, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/295978-feds-roll-out-conservation-energy-plan-for-california-desert>

Obama creates national monument off Massachusetts coast

By Timothy Cama, The Hill, Sep 15, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/296009-obama-to-create-national-monument-off-massachusetts-coast>

Feds move to protect guitarfish

By Tim Devaney, The Hill, Sep 16, 2016

<http://thehill.com/regulation/energy-environment/296332-feds-move-to-protect-guitarfish>

New Zealand dolphins to be listed as endangered

By Tim Devaney, The Hill, Sep 16, 2016

<http://thehill.com/regulation/energy-environment/296315-tourism-threatening-new-zealand-dolphins>

The Maui's dolphin is endangered, the agency said, while the South Island Hector's dolphin is a threatened species that is "likely to become" endangered in the near future, due in part to tourism. [SEPP Comment: Apparently, the New Zealand dolphins live outside the jurisdiction of the US National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).]

Energy Issues – Non-US

Oil, Gas-Field Investment Set to Fall for Two Straight Years, IEA Report Says

In the longest period of retrenchment in 40 years, oil- and gas-field spending fell by 25% in 2015, and is set to fall a further 24% in 2016

By Benoit Faucon, WSJ, Sep 13, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/oil-gas-field-investment-set-to-fall-for-two-straight-years-iea-report-says-1473795274>

U.S. Liquefied Natural Gas Exports Reach A New Market And Continue To Climb In 2016

By Jude Clemente, Forbes, Sep 11, 2016

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/judeclemente/2016/09/11/good-news-for-u-s-liquefied-natural-gas-exports/#436fab8d781b>

Lack Of Pipelines Continues To Dog Canada's Oil Industry

By Nick Cunningham, Oil Price.com, Sep 15, 2016

<http://oilprice.com/Energy/Crude-Oil/Lack-Of-Pipelines-Continues-To-Dog-Canadas-Oil-Industry.html>

Japan's Shift To Renewable Energy Loses Power As Nation Returns To Coal And Gas

By Mayumi Negish, The Wall Street Journal, Via GWPF, Sep 14, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.com/japans-shift-to-renewable-energy-loses-power-as-nation-returns-to-coal-and-gas/>

Nick Butler: What Does The 'Energy Transition' Really Mean?

By Nick Butler, Financial Times, Via GWPF, Sep 12, 2016

<http://www.thegwpf.com/nick-butler-what-does-the-energy-transition-really-mean/>

Energy Issues -- US

Cheap Gasoline is Great But...

By Editors, Real Clear Energy, Sep 15, 2016

http://www.realclearenergy.org/charticles/2016/09/15/low_gasoline_is_nice_but_109252.html

Link to paper: Lower oil prices and the U.S. economy: Is this time different?

By Christiane Baumeister and Lutz Kilian, Brookings, Fall 2016

<https://www.brookings.edu/bpea-articles/lower-oil-prices-and-the-u-s-economy-is-this-time-different/>

Panama Canal 2.0: Good News For U.S. LNG

Editorial, Real Clear Energy, Sep 12, 2016

http://www.realclearenergy.org/charticles/2016/09/12/panama_canal_good_news_for_us_lng_109248.html

Washington's Control of Energy

Offshore Arctic Development; Alaskans Look North to Future

By Mead Treadwell, Real Clear Energy, Sep 16, 2016

http://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2016/09/16/offshore_alaskan_development_alaskans_look_north_to_the_future_109253.html

“More than 42 million acres of Alaskan waters have already been eliminated from potential leasing.”

Obama administration orders ND pipeline construction to stop

By Devin Henry, The Hill, Sep 9, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/295223-obama-administration-orders-nd-pipeline-construction-to-stop>

Surprise: Dakota Access Pipeline Follows Existing Gas Line Through Protested Area

By Rob Port, Say Anything Blog, Sep 7, 2016

<https://www.sayanythingblog.com/entry/dakota-access-pipeline-follows-existing-gas-line-protest-area/>

ND pipeline company will 'trust the process' after project halted

By Devin Henry, The Hill, Sep 13, 2016

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/295618-dakota-access-company-will-trust-the-process>

Environmentalists' Questionable Tactics in North Dakota

By William F. Shughart II, Real Clear Energy, Sep 12, 2016

http://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2016/09/12/environmentalists_questionable_tactics_in_north_dakota_109247.html

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

How Does America Keep Finding Vast Stores of Energy?

By completely overhauling the old rules of the business.

By Daniel Gross, Slate, Sep 12, 2016

http://www.slate.com/articles/business/the_juice/2016/09/apache_corporation_found_tons_of_oil_in_texas_permian_basin_still_how.html

Shale Gas 2.0: A Follow-On Boom In The U.S. Chemicals Trade

By Alan Elliott, IBD, Sep 2, 2016

<http://www.investors.com/research/industry-snapshot/shale-gas-2-0-explosive-expansion-of-the-u-s-chemicals-trade/>

Shale revolution keeps growing

By J. Winston Porter, Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Sep 12, 2016

<http://www.caller.com/opinion/forums/shale-revolution-keeps-growing-3c16112b-5d3d-3b90-e053-0100007f4d0e-393180311.html>

Here's why 31 million barrels are set to disappear from U.S. oil inventories

EIA to remove crude-oil lease stocks from weekly crude tally

By Myra P. Saefong, Market Watch, Sep 16, 2016

<http://www.marketwatch.com/story/heres-why-31-million-barrels-are-set-to-disappear-from-us-oil-inventories-2016-09-15>

Link to announcement, EIA's weekly crude oil inventory data will soon be presented without lease stocks

By Staff Writers, EIA, Sep 21, 2016

<http://www.eia.gov/petroleum/weekly/>

Oil Spills, Gas Leaks & Consequences

Dangers In The Deep: A \$40B Time Bomb Threatening Gulf Of Mexico Oil Companies

By Alex Plough and Marion Halftermeyer, with additional reporting by Alexander Gladstone, Forbes, Sep 13, 2016

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/debtwire/2016/09/13/dangers-in-the-deep-a-40-billion-time-bomb-threatening-the-gulf/#356f98bd4abc>

Oklahoma ramps up energy response to earthquakes

Six seismic events recorded by the USGS over the last 24 hours.

By Daniel J. Graeber, UPI, Sep 13, 2016 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
http://www.spacewar.com/reports/Oklahoma_ramps_up_energy_response_to_earthquakes_999.html

Nuclear Energy and Fears

IAEA Scientific Forum 2016: Atoms for People, Planet and Prosperity

By Aleksandra Peeva, IAEA, Sep 16, 2016

<https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/iaea-scientific-forum-2016-atoms-for-people-planet-and-prosperity>

The Guardian view on Hinkley Point C. Hard choice, wrong call

The seven-week pause over national security concerns only illustrated that when it comes to nuclear power, global politics beats local

Editorial, Guardian, UK, Sep 15, 2016

https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/sep/15/the-guardian-view-on-hinkley-point-c-hard-choice-wrong-call?CMP=share_btn_tw

The Nordic experience in nuclear power

By Lauri Virkkunen, WNN, Sep 8, 2016

<http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/V-The-Nordic-experience-in-nuclear-power-08091601.html>

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

Solar PV capacity factors in the US – the EIA data

By Roger Andrews, Energy Matters, Sep 15, 2016

<http://euanmearns.com/solar-pv-capacity-factors-in-the-us-the-eia-data/#more-15232>

“...EIA estimate for utility-scale plants is probably overstated by several percent and that the overall capacity factor is further overstated because the EIA does not take smaller (mostly rooftop) arrays, which have a significantly lower capacity factor, into consideration.”

Power Expert Says Germany Faces Renewable Energy-Political Fiasco – Technical Problems “Piling Up”

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Sep 11, 2016

<http://notrickszone.com/2016/09/11/power-expert-says-germany-faces-renewable-energy-political-fiasco-technical-problems-piling-up/#sthash.65OFGWW2.dpbs>

Profile Costs of Wind Energy: Why are Utilities Overpaying?

By Tyler McNeal, Master Resource, Sep 15, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/wind-power-costs/profile-costs-wind-power/>

Energy & Environmental Newsletter: September 12, 2016

By John Droz, Master Resource, Sep 12, 2016

<https://www.masterresource.org/alliance-for-wise-energy-decisions/energy-environmental-newsletter-9-12-2016/>

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

Strategies to reduce environmental damage from dams

By Staff Writers, Science Daily, Sep 9, 2016 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/09/160909112300.htm>

Link to paper: How dams can go with the flow

By Poff and Schmidt, Science, Sep 9, 2016
<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/353/6304/1099>

Environmental Industry

Environmentalism as a religion

Guest essay by Andy May, WUWT, Sep 14, 2016
<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/14/environmentalism-as-a-religion/>

Standing Rock Sioux on the front lines of the climate emergency

By Dr. Jill Stein, The Hill, Sep 15, 2016
<http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/energy-environment/296055-standing-rock-sioux-on-the-front-lines-of-the-climate>
[SEPP Comment: Green Party candidate for the President of the US.]

Is the British Labour Party Serious about the Environment?

By John Constable, Energy Editor of the GWPF, Sep 13, 2016
<http://www.thegwpf.com/is-the-british-labour-party-serious-about-the-environment/>

Other Scientific News

Ceramic Composites Revolutionize [Aircraft] Engine Efficiency

By Nancy Smith Kilkenny for GRC News, Cleveland OH (SPX) Sep 12, 2016
http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Ceramic_Composites_Revolutionize_Engine_Efficiency_999.html
NASA link including video: <http://www.nasa.gov/feature/ceramic-composites-revolutionize-engine-efficiency>

Publication bias and the canonization of false facts

By Silas B. Nissen, Tali Magidson, Kevin Gross, Carl T. Bergstrom, Sep 2, 2016 [H/t Climate Etc.]
<https://arxiv.org/abs/1609.00494>

Stop ignoring misconduct

Efforts to reduce irreproducibility in research must also tackle the temptation to cheat,
By Donald S. Kornfeld & Sandra L. Titus, Nature, Aug 31, 2016
http://www.nature.com/news/stop-ignoring-misconduct-1.20498?WT.ec_id=NATURE-20160901&spMailingID=52195183&spUserID=MjA1NTM1Nzc4OAS2&spJobID=1000097132&spReportId=MTAwMDA5NzEzMgS2

Other News that May Be of Interest

Prof Issues 'Trigger Warning' to His Editing Class

By Daniel Lattier, Intellectual Takeout, Sep 13, 2016
[http://www.intellectualtakeout.org/blog/prof-issues-trigger-warning-his-editing-class?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=6516990&utm_content=newsletter\(6516990\)&utm_term=newsletter](http://www.intellectualtakeout.org/blog/prof-issues-trigger-warning-his-editing-class?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=6516990&utm_content=newsletter(6516990)&utm_term=newsletter)
Link to video: <https://www.facebook.com/baltimoresun/videos/10154522831964712/>
[SEPP Comment: A welcome change.]

Invasion of the alien species

Introduced species are the biggest cause of extinction - but not all bad

By Matt Ridley, Rational Optimist, Sep 12, 2016
<http://www.rationaloptimist.com/blog/invasive-species/>

Truthiness on the March

By Lucy Marcus, Project Syndicate, Sep 15, 2016
<https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/truthiness-on-the-march-by-lucy-p--marcus-2016-09>

[SEPP Comment: The article is an example of what the author calls Truthiness. It was impossible to establish beforehand whether Iraq had so-called “weapons of mass destruction” before the invasion of Iraq. But, it clearly had used chemical and biological weapons against Iran and the Kurds. When did Iraq get rid of these weapons?]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

New York Times Is Looking For A Climate Change Editor. That’s Me!

By William Briggs, His Blog, Sep 12, 2016
<http://wmbriggs.com/post/19642/>

Polar bears trap Russian meteorologists in remote Arctic circle

Russian meteorologists at a remote Russian weather station are surrounded by a group of curious polar bears and running out of options.

By Thomas Richard, Blasting News, Sep 13, 2016 [H/t Climate Depot]
<http://us.blastingnews.com/news/2016/09/polar-bears-trap-russian-meteorologists-in-remote-arctic-circle-001117625.html>

Ridiculous study claims: elevated ocean CO2 gives fish brain impairment

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, Sep 13, 2016
<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2016/09/13/ridiculous-study-claims-elevated-ocean-co2-gives-fish-brain-impairment/>

[SEPP Comment Unable to link to paper by researchers of University of Miami (UM) Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science and the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University. Is the next step to study the impact of CO2 on animal life by replacing all oxygen with carbon dioxide?]

Worse than we thought – potential damages!

By Staff Writers, Climate Change Predictions.org, Sep 13, 2016
<http://climatechangepredictions.org/uncategorized/6931>

Sir Nicholas Stern, the author of the world’s most comprehensive study of the economic impact of climate change, says fresh research into the planet’s carbon sink suggests his report probably underestimated the potential damages.

New research indicated a weakening of the so-called carbon cycle, in particular the ability of the planet’s oceans to absorb carbon dioxide, Sir Nicholas said. And the risks threatening forests, another type of carbon sink, “are stronger than we thought”, he said. “So I think we are seeing early signs that some risks are bigger than the ones we included.”

The Age, 28 Mar 2007 – screen copy held by this website

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ARTICLES:

1. Chief Obama and the Dakota Pipeline

A case study in why the U.S. doesn't build more infrastructure.

Editorial, WSJ, Sep 13, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/chief-obama-and-the-dakota-pipeline-1473808024>

“Democrats are running for office claiming that the U.S. needs to spend hundreds of billions on infrastructure. If you want to know why they're not serious, look no further than the Obama Administration's order halting construction on a sliver of an oil pipeline in North Dakota even after the U.S. won in court.

“On Friday federal Judge James Boasberg allowed construction to proceed on the 1,100 Dakota Access pipeline, which aims to deliver a half million barrels of crude a day from the Bakken shale to Pankota, Illinois, for delivery to East Coast and Gulf refineries. Shipping oil via pipeline is less expensive and safer than by rail with fewer carbon emissions.

“The Dakota Access would be a boon for the northern Plains, which has suffered more from the rout in oil prices than other regions with better access to markets. The pipeline would make Bakken crude more economical by reducing the shipping cost and supply glut at the source. It was on course to be finished by the end of this year.

“But green groups have locked arms with some Native American tribes to block pipeline work around Lake Oahe—a water source for the Standing Rock Sioux—that was permitted this summer by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Nearly half of the clearing and grading for the pipeline is complete including 90% in North Dakota. As Judge Boasberg noted, the pipeline “needs almost no federal permitting of any kind because 99% of its route traverses private land.”

“Under the National Historic Preservation Act, federal agencies must follow certain procedures prior to permitting projects that could affect places of cultural or religious significance to Indian tribes. But the law applies only to activities that are subject to federal jurisdiction, not those undertaken on private land.

“The company Dakota Access went above and beyond the law's requirements to mitigate its environmental impact. This meant devising the route to avoid sites on the National Register of Historic Places as well as those identified as potentially eligible for listing. Archaeologists conducted cultural surveys including visual reconnaissance and “shove-test probes” to examine historic sites. The pipeline was modified 140 times in North Dakota alone to avoid potential cultural resources. Around Lake Oahe, the pipeline will run adjacent to the Northern Border Gas Pipeline that was completed in 1982, which reduces the likelihood that construction would harm intact tribal features.

“The Army Corps of Engineers bent over backward to consult the Standing Rock Sioux, only to be ignored or rejected. The tribe ignored agency letters requesting comment and belatedly cancelled meetings. “When the Corps timely arrived for the meeting,” the judge noted, “Tribal Chairman David Archambault told them that the conclave had started earlier than planned and had already ended.”

“After the Corps issued an environmental assessment of “no significant impact” in July, the Standing Rock sued the Corps for violating the National Historic Preservation Act's consultation requirements and sought to force a halt to construction around Lake Oahe.

“The judge has now ruled that the Corps met its legal obligations and the tribe was unlikely to succeed on the merits of its suit. Yet soon after the ruling was made public on Friday, the Justice, Army and Interior Departments enjoined pipeline construction on land “bordering or under Lake Oahe until [the Corps] can determine whether it will need to reconsider any of its previous decisions” and “whether there should be nationwide reform with respect to considering tribes’ views on these types of infrastructure projects.”

“So the Administration is overruling a court decision that vindicates its own decision-making. This has all the earmarks of the kind of power play that President Obama used to kill the Keystone XL pipeline. The only “infrastructure” Democrats seem to want is when government pays for it and which doesn’t violate their tribal antipathy to fossil fuels.”

2. Exxon’s Accounting Practices Are Investigated

New York attorney general’s probe focuses on why Exxon is only oil firm not to write down value of assets amid price rout

By Bradley Olson, WSJ, Sep 16, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/exxons-accounting-practices-are-investigated-1474018381>

SUMMARY: The reporter states:

“New York Attorney General Eric Schneiderman is investigating why Exxon Mobil Corp. hasn’t written down the value of its assets, two years into a pronounced crash in oil prices.

“Mr. Schneiderman’s office, which has been probing Exxon’s past knowledge of the impact of climate change and how it could affect its future business, is also examining the company’s accounting practices, according to people familiar with the matter.

“An Exxon spokesman declined to comment about the investigation by the Democratic attorney general but said Exxon follows all rules and regulations.

“Since 2014, oil producers world-wide have been forced to recognize that wells they plan to drill in the future are worth \$200 billion less than they once thought, according to consultancy Rystad Energy. Because the fall in prices means billions of barrels cannot be economically tapped, such revisions have become a staple of oil-patch earnings, helping to push losses to record levels in recent years.

“The process for booking oil and gas reserves, and recognizing when they fall, is separate from accounting for how the value of those reserves changes over time on a company balance sheet.

“John Herrlin, an analyst at Société Générale, came to a different conclusion in an investor note last month, writing that about three fourths of Exxon’s reserves are from areas with producing wells, a factor that makes impairments less likely than in undeveloped areas.”

“Exxon Chief Executive Rex Tillerson told trade publication Energy Intelligence last year that the company has been able to avoid write-downs because it places a high burden on executives to ensure that projects can work at lower prices, and holds them accountable.

“‘We don’t do write-downs,’ Mr. Tillerson told the publication. ‘We are not going to bail you out by writing it down. That is the message to our organization.’”

“Out of the 40 biggest publicly traded oil companies in the world, Exxon is the only one that hasn’t booked any impairments in the last 10 years, according to S&P Global Market Intelligence.”

3. Notable & Quotable: Infrastructure Isn’t Always Stimulating

‘No one can look at the Japanese numbers and conclude that the money has ramped up the growth rate.

WSJ, Sep 13, 2016

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/notable-quotable-infrastructure-isnt-always-stimulating-1473808615>

Edward L. Glaeser in *“[If You Build It . . .](#)”* from the summer issue of the Manhattan Institute’s City Journal:

Building infrastructure is no surefire way to stimulate economic growth, as Japan’s example shows. . . . Per-capita GDP, in constant U.S. dollars, was no higher in 2009 than in 1991, according to OECD data. The Japanese economy picked up slightly this year, but it’s fair to say that Japan has lost a quarter-century of growth.

To help fight this economic sluggishness, Japan has invested enormously in infrastructure, building scores of bridges, tunnels, highways, and trains, as well as new airports—some barely used. The [New York Times](#) reported that, between 1991 and late 2008, the country spent \$6.3 trillion on “construction-related public investment”—a staggering sum. This vast outlay has undoubtedly produced engineering marvels: in 1998, for instance, Japan completed the Akashi Kaikyō Bridge, the longest suspension bridge in the world; just this year, the country began providing bullet-train service between Tokyo and the northern island of Hokkaido. The World Competitiveness Report ranks Japan’s infrastructure as seventh-best in the world and its train infrastructure as the best. But while these trillions in spending may have kept some people working, no one can look at the Japanese numbers and conclude that the money has ramped up the growth rate. Moreover, the largesse is part of the reason that the nation now labors under a crushing public debt, worth 230 percent of GDP. Japan is less, not more, dynamic after its infrastructure bonanza.

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