

The Week That Was: 2022-02-05 (February 5, 2022)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

Quote of the Week: *"I have no special talent. I am only passionately curious."* – Albert Einstein

Number of the Week: \$30.50 /million BTU, \$208.24/MWh [H/t Ron Clutz]

THIS WEEK:

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

Scope: The TWTW summary of major contributions to climate science over the past year or so will wrap-up by discussing them in four groups: 1) use of proper data, 2) false attribution and use of data, 3) deficiencies in the current procedures used in climate science, 4) suggestions of a way forward to better understand influence of human increases to greenhouse gases in the extraordinarily complex climate system. The last topic will be discussed more fully next week.

Some in the West are slowly learning that their hope for reliable, affordable alternatives to fossil fuels is an illusion (mirage). Western leaders were driven to these hopes by the delusion (fantasy) that climate models can predict / project / forecast future temperatures. The models cannot describe what is occurring today. Thus, there is no logical reason to assume that they can predict temperatures thirty to eighty years from now. Scientific organizations that receive public money and pretend the models are useful for prediction are committing a disservice to the public. Examples will be discussed. The issue extends to scope and intensity of storage needed to back-up unreliable electricity generation.

A current term of art used in climate studies is "a new normal." TWTW will explore how once-respected scientific organizations are using the term, even though their work demonstrates ignorance of prior significant work.

Data Standards: To understand what is happening in the physical world researchers must use the best physical evidence, data, available. If they do not use appropriate physical evidence, the researchers are misleading themselves and others who may believe them. The results of climate models that have not been verified and validated against appropriate physical evidence are not physical evidence but speculation.

The climate industry ignores the best physical evidence, forty-two years of atmospheric temperature trend measurements from the Earth System Science Center at University of Alabama in Huntsville. These are verified against weather balloon data taken by different instruments and checked against information compiled from reanalyses of weather forecasts. There is no better global temperature data. They are not without some issues. For example, it was determined that readings need to be corrected for orbital drift of satellites. When this was discovered and verified, the corrections were promptly made, as they should be, following the scientific method.

Roy Spencer, the co-founder of the techniques of using satellite data to develop temperature trends, reports:

“The linear warming trend since January 1979 now stands at +0.13 C/decade (+0.12 C/decade over the global-averaged oceans, and +0.18 C/decade over global-averaged land).”

The Earth System Science Center reports:

“Equatorial cooling associated with the on-going presence of La Niña continued and the tropics are now substantially below the 30-year average at -0.24 °C (-0.43 °F). As is often noted on these reports, the maximum cooling effect of La Niñas usually occurs sometime from February to May.”

From this we know that the data not only include the greenhouse effect, which occurs in the atmosphere, but also includes other variations to the earth systems such as the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) which has been occurring for hundreds if not thousands of years. However, there is no cause to the ENSO change that has been explained satisfactorily.

Further, the data collection began after a period of global cooling during which some climate scientists were predicting Ice Age glaciation. Why this cooling stopped is not clear, but it may be due to a change in ocean oscillations such as the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) and the Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillation (AMO).

Even though the temperature trends taken by satellites include influences other than the influence of changing greenhouse gases on temperatures, they best represent the maximum change occurring from changing atmospheric carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. They clearly show there is no “climate crisis” and the predictions of one in the future using global climate models that do not consider atmosphere trends are not reliable. The reports of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and reports such as the US National Climate Assessment are a disgrace to science. These government organizations ignore the scientific method requiring testing of the hypotheses against all available physical data.

The essays published in January 2021 under David Legates used proper data to strongly criticize the US National Climate Assessment Reports (NCA) mandated by Congress published under the U.S. Global Change Research Program. These NCA reports have ignored the scientific method, which the essays followed. Both Legates and Patrick Michaels gave talks explaining the problem in climate science at the 14th International Congress on Climate Change organized by the Heartland Institute. See links under Measurement Issues – Atmosphere and links in the January 2022 TWTWs for additional links.

Major Errors: The IPCC assumes that the sun is almost constant, with slight variation. However, in August a group of solar scientists published a paper demonstrating significant disagreement among solar scientists whether or not the assumption is correct. If the assumption is not correct, then the findings of the IPCC are largely meaningless.

Statisticians Ross McKittrick and Stephen McIntyre have found major statistical errors in the studies used by the IPCC to buttress claims that carbon dioxide is causing dangerous global warming. McKittrick focused on errors in understanding the widely accepted Gauss-Markoff theorem of Generalized Least-Squares to claim a method used for the past 20 years can calculate the probability of an event being caused by human additions of atmospheric carbon dioxide. As McKittrick demonstrates, the attribution calculations are statistically meaningless.

McIntyre focused on many studies of marine proxies of temperature being used to develop the claim that there was no variation in global marine temperatures for 2000 years until about 1850, with the start of the industrial revolution. The studies are little bits and pieces with no established relationship. The result is little better than sawdust and glue poured into a form. Again, they have no meaning. For links see January 2022 TWTWs.

Procedural Problems: As discussed in last week's TWTW, the books by Steve Koonin and Mototaka Nakamura bring out sever problems with global climate models, even if one accepts the use of surface temperature data, which TWTW thinks is a poor choice. As brought out by Richard Lindzen: 1) The core of the system consists in two turbulent fluids (the atmosphere and oceans) interacting with each other; 2) The two fluids are on a rotating planet that is differentially [unevenly] heated by the sun and unevenly absorbing the solar warming. Solar rays directly hit the equator and skim the earth at the poles resulting in uneven heating, which drives the circulation of the atmosphere. The result is heat transport from the equator towards the poles (meridional); and 3) The earth's climate system is never in equilibrium.

Thus, the IPCC's pursuit of an "equilibrium climate sensitivity" (ECS) is a fool's errand. Despite thousands of pages of studies there will never be a solution unless there is a significant change in human knowledge of the physical world. As Nakamura writes:

"...climate simulation models are fine tools to study the climate system, so long as the users are aware of the limitations of the models and exercise caution in designing experiments and interpreting their output."

"The models just become useless pieces of junk or worse (worse, in a sense that they can produce gravely misleading output) only when they are used for climate forecasting."

"All climate simulation models have many details that become fatal flaws when they are used as climate forecasting tools, especially for mid- to long-term (several years and longer) climate variations and changes."

"It means that they are also completely useless for assessing the effects of the past atmospheric carbon dioxide increase on the climate. I myself used to use climate simulation models for scientific studies, not for predictions, and learned about their problems and limitations in the process."

Steve Koonin expresses similar views and was taken aback when a lead author of the climate model evaluation chapter in the IPCC's Fifth Assessment Report (AR5, 2013) publicly said that it was IPCC procedure to first adjust the models to fit surface temperatures, then to discard the adjustments when making projections. Using this procedure there is no way that one can know the errors and uncertainties in the projections, or correct them. For links see last week's TWTW.

A Better Way? IPCC climate science has stagnated. But, the more stagnant the science becomes, the more shrill the climate advocates become. In 2020, W. A. van Wijngaarden and W. Happer submitted a paper titled: "Dependence of Earth's Thermal Radiation on Five Most Abundant Greenhouse Gases," discussed in the January 22, 2022, TWTW. Also discussed are the views of Tom Sheahan that the paper is especially important because it shows a remarkable agreement between theory and observations under significantly different conditions: 1) the desert (the Sahara); temperate regions (the Mediterranean) and the polar regions (Antarctica). Interestingly,

the atmosphere of Antarctica gives off far more infrared radiation (cooling the earth) than the surface, demonstrating the importance of convection (atmosphere and oceans) in transporting heat from the tropics to the polar regions. One must realize that the calculations for warming are for “clear skies.” Once an adequate theory for cloud formation develops the estimates for doubling of carbon dioxide will likely be below one degree C, far below the IPCC estimate of 3 °C plus or minus 1.5 °C

Also, the same TWTW discusses the recent work of Howard Hayden following on the work of van Wijngaarden and Happer. To understand the changing impacts of greenhouse gases, we must understand the flow of energy (all forms of electromagnetic radiation) from the sun to the earth, and the flow of energy (infrared radiation) from the globe with the atmosphere included to space. The IPCC does not, and only recently incorporated the important Stefan-Boltzmann law, which was used incorrectly. Future TWTWs will follow developments in understanding these energy flows. See links in the January 22, 2022, TWTW.

Delusion Drives Illusion? According to reports, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson became an advocate of dangerous global warming after meetings with members of the UK Met Office, which makes weather predictions. It is not clear what he was told, but Johnson became an advocate of abandoning fossil fuels, in favor of electricity generation from wind. (Apparently, even solar advocates realize that cloudy, high latitude Britain is not ideal for solar generation, though it is being used without success in Germany.)

From the above, it is clear that weather modeling and climate modeling cannot make reliable predictions about the future, even a couple of years out much less to the end of the century. Based on reports, the costs of “Net Zero” are becoming obvious to many in the public who believe, correctly, they are being misled and deceived.

In the US, certain analysts cost numbers that far exceed official claims. Attorney Francis Menton has an excellent description of estimates from three sources. One is the late Roger Andrews who impressed TWTW, another by Ken Gregory, whose work appears thorough, and another for New York State by Roger Caiazza. Menton explains the assumptions that result in different estimates of needed storage and its costs. Unfortunately, Andrews never considered worse case scenarios, which are critical for net zero which the Biden Administration is pushing.

As an example, in focusing on New York State Menton writes:

“The [New York] Scoping Plan is a massive document (some 330 pages plus another 500+ pages of appendices) of breathtaking incompetence.”

TWTW has found such a characteristic in many such plans. Writing in PV Mag, the reporter states:

“US researchers suggest that by 2050, when 94% of electricity comes from renewable sources, approximately 930GW of energy storage power and six and a half hours of capacity will be needed to fully cover demand for electricity in the United States.”

Based on current peak solar production in the California ISO, in February only about seven hours of solar power is available, and it would not be available to recharge batteries for six and a half

hours of capacity storage at maximum power! California's vaunted solar power is backed-up by natural gas, nuclear (which it is closing), and imports from other states.

The cited report is from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL). The beginning of the Executive Summary is an example of what Menton describes in the New York Scoping Plan:

Due to rapid technology cost declines and significant potential value of energy storage, we could see hundreds of gigawatts of storage on the future grid. The Storage Futures Study (SFS) is designed to explore the potential role and impact of energy storage in the evolving electricity sector of the United States, specifically how energy storage technology advancement could impact the deployment of utility-scale and distributed storage, and the implications for future power system infrastructure investment and operations. This report—the sixth in the series— assesses the hourly operations of high storage power systems in the U.S., with storage capacities ranging from 213 GW to 932 GW.

The assessment builds upon a previously published report in the Storage Futures Study in which NREL added new capabilities to its publicly available Regional Energy Deployment System (ReEDS) model to build least-cost scenarios for a range of cost and performance assumptions for energy storage (A. W. Frazier et al. 2021). Scenarios showed the potential for U.S. storage capacity to exceed 125 gigawatts (GW) by the end of 2050, even in the most conservative estimates—a more than a fivefold increase over current U.S. storage capacity (A. W. Frazier et al. 2021).

This analysis returns to the ReEDS high storage scenarios with detailed production cost modeling to observe the hourly, daily, and annual operations and associated value of storage. Overall, we find that the high storage (and often high variable generation) power system scenarios envisioned in ReEDS successfully operate with no unserved energy and low reserve violations, showing no concerns about hourly load balancing through the end of 2050. The successful hourly load balancing indicates the various improvements to ReEDS in previous work are effective in envisioning these future scenarios.

On a daily basis, we find storage operations are heavily aligned with the availability of solar photovoltaics (PV), which has a predictable daily on and off cycle that aligns well with the need for storage to charge and discharge. Wind, on the other hand, has a less apparent daily cycle and often experiences long periods of overgeneration stretching for many hours or days, which is much longer than the duration of storage we explore here. Although storage can play a key role in utilizing energy from both PV and wind, the synergies with PV are more consistent.

The declines in technology costs are not specified, Other than recognizing the erratic nature of wind power, the NREL report is a great show of bureaucratic incompetence, one incompetent study following a previous incompetent study. See links under Challenging the Orthodoxy, Defending the Orthodoxy, Science, Policy, and Evidence, and Questioning European Green.

The New Normal – Ignorance? A press release from the Monterey Bay Aquarium in California announced a new normal for ocean temperatures. It was based on simulations of marine heat with the baseline being 1870 to 1919. Who knows how realistic the simulations are? Apparently, the simulations were not checked against measurements taken during the 1970s GEOSECS program in which the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego was a major participant. See links under Changing Seas.

Number of the Week: \$30.50 /million BTU, \$208.24/MWh. According to Ron Clutz, the U.S. Energy Information Administration reported New England natural gas prices peaked at \$30.50 per million BTU and electricity peaked at \$208.24 per million watt-hours. These prices are similar to what energy costs in Europe and are consistent with the EIA New England Dashboard. Deliveries of liquified natural gas (LNG) delivered by ship peaked on February 1.

Thanks to the energy policies of New England and New York, New England does not have access to inexpensive natural gas from the nearby Marcellus Shale in New York and Pennsylvania. In Mid-Atlantic, the city gate price of natural gas was running about \$6.00 per million BTU and the electricity power less than \$70.00 per MWh. Amazing what politicians driven by ideology can do. See Energy Issues – US, <https://www.eia.gov/dashboard/newengland/naturalgas>, and <https://www.eia.gov/naturalgas/>.

NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Censorship

Fact checkers defend activist scientists because they agree with them not because they are right

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Feb 1, 2022

<https://polarbearscience.com/2022/02/01/fact-checkers-defend-activist-scientists-because-they-agree-with-them-not-because-they-are-right/>

[SEPP Comment: To those who seek to control social media, conformity is more important than critical thinking and questioning.]

Just Sharing: February 2022

By Jennifer Marohasy, Her Blog, Feb 2, 2022

<https://jennifermarohasy.com/2022/02/just-sharing-february-2022/>

Challenging the Orthodoxy -- NIPCC

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Physical Science

Idso, Carter, and Singer, Lead Authors/Editors, Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), 2013

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

Summary: https://www.heartland.org/_template-assets/documents/CCR/CCR-II/Summary-for-Policymakers.pdf

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Biological Impacts

Idso, Idso, Carter, and Singer, Lead Authors/Editors, Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), 2014

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/climate-change-reconsidered-ii-biological-impacts/>

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

Climate Change Reconsidered II: Fossil Fuels

By Multiple Authors, Bezdek, Idso, Legates, and Singer eds., Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change, April 2019

<http://store.heartland.org/shop/ccr-ii-fossil-fuels/>

Download with no charge:

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Climate-Change-Reconsidered-II-Fossil-Fuels-FULL-Volume-with-covers.pdf>

Why Scientists Disagree About Global Warming

The NIPCC Report on the Scientific Consensus

By Craig D. Idso, Robert M. Carter, and S. Fred Singer, Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), Nov 23, 2015

<http://climatechangereconsidered.org/>

Download with no charge:

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

Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate

S. Fred Singer, Editor, NIPCC, 2008

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

Global Sea-Level Rise: An Evaluation of the Data

By Craig D. Idso, David Legates, and S. Fred Singer, Heartland Policy Brief, May 20, 2019

<https://www.heartland.org/template-assets/documents/publications/SeaLevelRiseCCRIL.pdf>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

2021: The Year Scientists Increasingly Ascribed Shortwave-Modulating Cloud Variability As A Climate Driver

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Feb 3, 2022

<https://notrickszone.com/2022/02/03/2021-the-year-scientists-ascribed-shortwave-modulating-cloud-variability-as-the-driver-of-climate/>

Link to one recent paper: Cloud cover changes driven by atmospheric circulation in Europe during the last decades

By Lucian Sfică, et al. International Journal of Climatology, January 2021

<https://rmets.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/joc.6841>

More Focus On The Impossible Costs Of A Fully Wind/Solar/Battery Energy System

By Francis Menton, Manhattan Contrarian, Feb 1, 2022

<https://www.manhattancontrarian.com/blog/2022-1-31-more-focus-on-the-impossible-costs-of-a-fully-windsolarbattery-energy-system>

Announcement Of Upcoming Speaking Tour

By Francis Menton, Manhattan Contrarian, Jan 28, 2022

<https://www.manhattancontrarian.com/blog/2022-1-28-announcement-of-upcoming-speaking-tour>

Nothing to CO2 here

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Feb 2, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2022/02/02/nothing-to-co2-here/>

“But as we’ve already pointed out, there’s a surprisingly poor correlation between atmospheric CO2 and temperature throughout history and prehistory. And now it turns out there’s a surprisingly poor correlation between atmospheric CO2 and man-made CO2.”

Defending the Orthodoxy

US zero-carbon future would require 6TWh of energy storage

By John Fitzgerald Weaver, PV Mag, Jan 24, 2022

<https://www.pv-magazine.com/2022/01/24/us-zero-carbon-future-would-require-6twh-of-energy-storage/>

Link to paper: Storage Futures Study: Grid Operational Impacts of Widespread Storage Deployment

By Jennie Jorgenson, A. Will Frazier, Paul Denholm, and Nate Blair, NREL, 2022

<https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy22osti/80688.pdf>

The Rise of Greenflation

Extreme weather and energy uncertainty are already sending prices soaring.

By Robinson Meyer. The Atlantic, Feb 2, 2022

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2022/02/greenflation-prices-inflation-climate-change-coffee-lumber/621456/>

The Orphans of Climate Change

By Michael Curley, Real Clear Energy, Feb 1, 2022

https://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2022/02/01/the_orphans_of_climate_change_814750.html

“Michael Curley is an attorney and Visiting Scholar at the Environmental Law Institute.”

“The second brilliant idea is called “Cap & Trade”. Carbon emissions are capped, and then the rights to emit them can be traded. In 2009, an organization called the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, or RGGI, was created by 11 Eastern states:”

Defending the Orthodoxy – Bandwagon Science

Plausible 2005-2050 emissions scenarios project between 2 and 3 degrees C of warming by 2100

By Roger Pielke Jr, Matthew G. Burgess and Justin Ritchie, Environmental Research, Jan 25, 2022

<https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ac4ebf/meta>

[SEPP Comment: Only if one accepts the claim that a doubling of CO2 will result in a warming of 3C +/- 1.5C. The numbers are too high.]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

The Fatal Policy Flaw

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Feb 1, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/videos/the-fatal-policy-flaw/>

Video, Meaningless actions by political leaders

The Great Climate Rip-Off

By Chet Richards, American Thinker, Feb 2, 2022

https://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2022/02/the_great_climate_ripoff.html

When Magic Met Reality

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Jan 27, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/videos/when-magic-met-reality/>

Video

MPs Throw Toys Out Of Pram

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 3, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/02/03/mps-throw-toys-out-of-pram/>

“[BBC’s] Harrabin is obviously getting very frustrated that most of the public don’t give two hoots for his climate agenda, not when it costs them tens of thousands anyway.”

Ten years after the end of winter

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Feb 2, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2022/02/02/ten-years-after-the-end-of-winter/>

“When’s the last time a heat wave cancelled thousands of flights, or trapped motorists overnight on an impassable road?”

105 More Non-Global Warming/Non-Hockey Stick Temperature Records Added To The Database In 2021

By Kenneth Richard, No Tricks Zone, Jan 31, 2022

<https://notrickszone.com/2022/01/31/105-more-non-global-warming-non-hockey-stick-temperature-records-added-to-the-database-in-2021/>

Why The Constant Fabrications?

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 4, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/02/03/why-the-constant-fabrications/>

Open to readers

KTM CEO Pierer: “Electric Mobility Is Nonsense Promoted By Politicians With No Technical Knowledge”

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Jan 30, 2022

<https://notrickszone.com/2022/01/30/ktm-ceo-pierer-electric-mobility-is-nonsense-promoted-by-politicians-with-no-technical-knowledge/>

Political Climate Change

By Tony Heller, His Blog, Feb 4, 2022

<https://realclimatescience.com/2022/02/political-climate-change/>

Change in US Administrations

Biden Blows Up Yet Another Gas Pipeline

By Clarice Feldman, The Pipeline, Jan 30, 2022 [H/t WUWT]

<https://the-pipeline.org/9983-2/>

Biden Climate, Energy Policies’ Costs: High and Rising

By H. Sterling Burnett, Climate Change Weekly, Feb 3, 2022

<https://heartlanddailynews.com/2022/02/climate-change-weekly-424-biden-climate-energy-policies-costs-high-and-rising/>

Biden Goes LNG for the EU (demoting ‘net zero’)

By Robert Bradley Jr, Master Resource, Feb 1, 2022

<https://www.masterresource.org/biden-joe-climate-energy-policy/biden-goes-lng-for-eu/>

Seeking a Common Ground

How the World Really Works: A Scientist’s Guide to Our Past, Present and Future by Vaclav Smil

Book review by Prof Michael Kelly, Net Zero Watch, Jan 29, 2022

<https://www.netzerowatch.com/how-the-world-really-works-a-scientists-guide-to-our-past-present-and-future/>

“This book is a very strong antidote of realism against both the relentless pessimism and the blithe optimism of our day. — Professor Michael Kelly”

“The four materials pillars of modern living are ammonia (half the world is fed on foods that have had the benefit of artificial fertiliser), plastics, steel and cement: the annual production of these are 150 million, 370 million, 1.8 billion and 4.5 billion tonnes respectively. Note that silicon comes a long way down at 10 thousand tonnes per year!”

Looking for the 'center of gravity' on climate change

By Jeremy Beaman, Washington Examiner, Jan 27, 2022

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/policy/energy-environment/looking-for-the-center-of-gravity-on-climate-change>

Why Environmentalists Pose a Bigger Obstacle to Effective Climate Policy than Denialists

By Maarten Boudry, Quillette, Jan 27, 2022

<https://quillette.com/2022/01/27/why-environmentalists-pose-a-bigger-obstacle-to-effective-climate-policy-than-denialists/>

Science, Policy, and Evidence

Rocketing Energy Prices Were Part Of The Plan All The Time

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Jan 29, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/01/29/rocketing-energy-prices-were-part-of-the-plan-all-the-time/>

Link to: Sixth Carbon Budget, required under the Climate Change Act

By Staff, Climate Change Committee, Dec 9, 2020

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/sixth-carbon-budget/>

“As it turns out global price rises for natural gas have brought the CCC’s dream to fruition a decade early.”

Coming soon: Climate lockdowns?

By Kristin Tate, The Hill, Feb 2, 2022

<https://thehill.com/opinion/finance/592011-coming-soon-climate-lockdowns>

Major win: UK Govt backs down on mandatory jabs for Healthworker Jabs

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Feb 3, 2022

<https://joannenova.com.au/2022/02/major-win-uk-govt-backs-down-on-mandatory-jabs-for-healthworker-jabs/>

Measurement Issues -- Surface

Germany January Mean Temperatures Falling Since 1988, Contradicting Claims Of Warming

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 1, 2022

<https://notrickszone.com/2022/02/01/germany-january-mean-temperatures-have-been-falling-since-1988/>

Measurement Issues -- Atmosphere

UAH Global Temperature Update for January 2022: +0.03 deg. C.

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, Feb 2, 2022

<http://www.drroyspencer.com/2022/02/uah-global-temperature-update-for-january-2022-0-03-deg-c/>

Global Temperature Report

By Staff, Earth System Science Center, UAH, January 2022

<https://www.nsstc.uah.edu/climate/>

Map: https://www.nsstc.uah.edu/climate/2022/January2022/202201_Map.png

Graph: https://www.nsstc.uah.edu/climate/2022/January2022/202201_Bar.png

What Goes Up, Must Come Down. What Do You Do When You Find a Radiosonde?

By Cliff Mass, Weather Blog, Jan 30, 2022

<https://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2022/01/what-goes-up-must-come-down-what-do-you.html>

Changing Weather

U.S. Disaster Costs 1990 to 2019

By Roger Pielke Jr. The Hones Broker, Feb 2, 2022

<https://rogerpielkejr.substack.com/p/us-disaster-costs-1990-to-2019>

Dangerous Snow and Ice February

By Staff, ICECAP, Feb 2, 2022

http://icecap.us/index.php/go/new-and-cool/snow_and_ice_keeps_warmists_quiet/

“Yet, as recently as January 6, we were told by USAToday that Boston’s lengthy 316-day streak *without* one inch of snowfall as of January 1st was caused by global warming.

“So, which is it? Global warming causes less snow, or more snow?”

“When science produces contradictory claims, is it really science?”

No, January 2022 Was Not A “Record Breaker”

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 2, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/02/02/no-january-2022-was-not-a-record-breaker/>

February 1962 Flooding

By Tony Heller, His Blog, Feb 3, 2022

<https://realclimatescience.com/2022/02/february-1962-flooding/>

Changing Climate

Low Volcanic Temperature Ushered in Global Cooling and the Thriving of Dinosaurs

Press Release, Tohoku University, Jan 31, 2022 [H/t WUWT]

<https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/941776>

Link to paper: Volcanic temperature changes modulated volatile release and climate fluctuations at the end-Triassic mass extinction

By Kunio Kaiho, et al. Earth and Planetary Science Letters, Feb 1, 2022

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0012821X21006208>

“Low temperature heating caused high SO₂ – low CO₂ emission, resulting in cooling.”

“High temperature heating caused low SO₂ – high CO₂ emission, resulting in warming.”

“The extinction was caused by cooling followed by warming by the above mechanism.”

[SEPP Comment: Yet IPCC modelers play with CO₂ and SO₂ (aerosols) to make their models work.]

Changing Seas

Study finds extreme heat is the 'new normal' for the ocean

Press Release by Monterey Bay Aquarium, Phys.org, Feb 1, 2022 [H/t Bernie Kepshire]

<https://phys.org/news/2022-02-extreme-ocean.html>

Link to paper: The recent normalization of historical marine heat extremes

By Kisei R. Tanaka ,Kyle S. Van Houtan , PLOS Climate, Feb 1, 2022

<https://journals.plos.org/climate/article?id=10.1371/journal.pclm.0000007>

The GEOSECS Program: Objectives, Plan and Benefits

By Staff, GEOSECS, 1974

https://odv.awi.de/fileadmin/user_upload/odv/data/GEOSECS/GeochemicalOceanSections.pdf

“Geochemical Ocean Sections: A U.S. program for the International Decade of Ocean Exploration’

Bubbles of methane rising from seafloor in Puget Sound

Some 349 plumes of methane gas are bubbling up from the bottom of the sea

By Staff, NSF, Feb 2, 2022

https://www.nsf.gov/discoveries/disc_summ.jsp?WT.mc_id=USNSF_1&cntn_id=304355&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

[SEPP Comment: Pollution from the seas!]

How Norfolk’s Coast Has Disappeared Over The Years

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Jan 29, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/01/29/how-norfolks-coast-has-disappeared-over-the-years/>

“The exact locations of the drowned villages are unknown, but clearly huge tracts of land have been lost to the sea since the Middle Ages.”

Changing Cryosphere – Land / Sea Ice

Davis Strait polar bears in Eastern Canada are thriving according to new survey

By Susan Crockford, Polar Bear Science, Jan 31, 2022

<https://polarbearscience.com/2022/01/31/davis-strait-polar-bears-in-eastern-canada-are-thriving-according-to-new-survey/>

Changing Earth

Geologists uncover 'Goldilocks Zone' for precious metals in Earth's crust

By Staff Writers, Leicester UK (SPX) Feb 02, 2022

https://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Geologists_uncover_Goldilocks_Zone_for_precious_metals_in_Earths_crust_999.html

Link to paper: Mobilisation of deep crustal sulfide melts as a first order control on upper lithospheric metallogeny

By David A. Holwell, et al., Nature Communications Jan 31, 2022

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-022-28275-y>

So about that volcano

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Feb 2, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2022/02/02/so-about-that-volcano/>

Lowering Standards

How Boris Was Conned By The Met Office

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 3, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/02/03/how-boris-was-conned-by-the-met-office/>

“The Met Office long ago gave up any pretense of objectivity where global warming is concerned, always positioning itself at the extreme end of the debate.

“To ask them for advice is akin to asking Greenpeace.”

[SEPP Comment: Complete with “tipping points” of no return.]

Nation’s heritage is threatened by climate change!

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Jan 31, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/01/31/nations-heritage-is-threatened-by-climate-change/>

“The authors make no attempt to quantify changing risks based on actual data. They simply assume that flooding will get worse because the Environment Agency says so.

“Meanwhile the National Trust can blame all of its problems on climate change.”

Communicating Better to the Public – Use Yellow (Green) Journalism?

Taxonomy without representation

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Feb 2, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2022/02/02/taxonomy-without-representation/>

“*The Economist*, whose raison d’être seems to be to couch radical ideas in sober language, has found the problem with European energy policy. They haven’t done enough to squash fossil fuels.”

Climate Change Is Waycist!

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Jan 28, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/01/28/climate-change-is-waycist/>

“We know how utterly biased the BBC are when it comes to climate change, and how left wing they are.

“They put the two together in this article which is nothing more than a piece of political propaganda:”

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

The sunburnt lands up north: Pond Inlet

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Feb 2, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2022/02/02/the-sunburnt-lands-up-north-pond-inlet/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Make things up.

What Does Science Have To With Climate Alarmism?

By Tony Heller, His Blog, Feb 3, 2022

<https://realclimatescience.com/2022/02/what-does-science-have-to-with-climate-alarmism/>

“After the failure of their forecasts of the end of snow, climate alarmists are quite predictably trying to blame the snow in the Northeast US on warmer winter temperatures.”

CCC Claim Offshore Wind Will Cost £25/MWh!

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Jan 29, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/01/29/ccc-claim-offshore-wind-will-cost-25-mwh/>

“Do they really believe that offshore wind costs will drop to £25/MWh, well below even the cost of onshore wind at the moment?

“It is only by this chicanery that the CCC were able to keep the costs of Net Zero down to just an odd trillion or two.

“Assuming a more realistic cost of £100/MWh, which is consistent with known construction costs, the costs of Net Zero would be £18 billion a year higher.”

Climate fish scare turns out to be just a fish story

By Steve Milloy, Junk Science.com, Feb 3, 2022

<https://junkscience.com/2022/02/climate-fish-scare-turns-out-to-be-just-a-fish-story/#more-106686>

Cooling is a sign of warming

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Feb 2, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2022/02/02/cooling-is-a-sign-of-warming/>

Media Covid Quotes Retracted by History

By Ron Clutz, Science Matters, Jan 30, 2022

<https://rclutz.com/2022/01/30/media-covid-quotes-retracted-by-history/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Protest

What’s It Like to Have Truckers Protesting Outside Your Door?

By Donna Laframboise, Big Picture News, Feb 4, 2022

<https://nofrackingconsensus.com/2022/02/04/whats-it-like-to-have-truckers-protesting-outside-your-door/>

“Quebec City has reportedly chosen to prevent protesters from blocking streets with trucks by using municipal trucks to block the street themselves. Hilarious. Battle of the big trucks!”

Expanding the Orthodoxy

The Smart People Have Another Way To Save The Planet: Demand That Public Companies Reduce Their Emissions

By Francis Menton, Manhattan Contrarian, Jan 20, 2022

<https://www.manhattancontrarian.com/blog/2022-1-29-the-smart-people-have-another-way-to-save-the-planet-demand-that-public-companies-reduce-their-emissions>

Pentagon requests information from clean energy suppliers in push to reduce emissions

By Rachel Frazin, The Hill, Feb 3, 2022

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/592691-military-eyes-shift-toward-clean-electricity>

This is how much meat and dairy hurt the climate

Ending meat and dairy production would “pause” the growth of greenhouse gas emissions for 30 years.

By Kenny Torrella, Vox, Feb 1, 2022

<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/22905381/meat-dairy-eggs-climate-change-emissions-rewilding>

Questioning European Green

Self-inflicted misery of our energy insanity

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 4, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/02/04/self-inflicted-misery-of-our-energy-insanity/>

EU's Self-Inflicted Wound

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Feb 1, 2022

<https://ddears.com/2022/02/01/eus-self-inflicted-wound/>

European Commission declares nuclear and gas to be green

The European Commission has labeled nuclear and gas as sustainable. Critics are calling the step "greenwashing" and say it could threaten the bloc's bid to become climate-neutral by 2050.

By Marina Strauss (Brussels), DW, Feb 2, 2022

<https://www.dw.com/en/european-commission-declares-nuclear-and-gas-to-be-green/a-60614990>

EU presses on with green label for gas, nuclear

By Alex Pigman, Brussels (AFP). Feb 2, 2022

https://www.oilgasdaily.com/reports/EU_presses_on_with_green_label_for_gas_nuclear_999.htm
↓

Don't They Know We Will Still Need Oil & Gas?

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Jan 30, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/01/30/dont-they-know-we-will-still-need-oil-gas/>

“It is abundantly clear that all our major parties are now opposed to further development of North Sea oil and gas reserves.”

[SEPP Comment: Do the politicians believe their own false claims?]

Plans to ‘blanket’ plant trees across Wales could ‘decimate’ farming communities

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 1, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/02/01/plans-to-blanket-plant-trees-across-wales-could-decimate-farming-communities/>

“What is clearly apparent is that this sort of industrial scale forestation will radically transform local environments for the worse, at the same time destroying local communities.

“All in the name of Green!”

Questioning Green Elsewhere

The Shifting Politics Of The So-Called "Green" Energy Transition

By Francis Menton, Manhattan Contrarian, Feb 4, 2022

<https://www.manhattancontrarian.com/blog/2022-2-4-assessing-the-shifting-politics-of-the-so-called-green-energy-transition>

Clean Energy Dirtier Than Imagined

By Donn Dears, Power For USA, Feb 4, 2022

<https://ddears.com/2022/02/04/clean-energy-dirtier-than-imagined/>

“Wind and solar consume far more critical materials than nuclear, NGCC, and coal-fired power plants.

“The mining, processing, and transporting of critical materials adversely affect the environment.”

Anything can be eco with a coat of greenwash

By Ashley Stefureak, Canada's National Observer, Jan 28, 2022

<https://www.nationalobserver.com/2022/01/28/opinion/anything-can-be-eco-coat-greenwash>

Funding Issues

Investors agree \$10 billion for controversial Uganda oil project

By Michael O'Hagan, Kampala (AFP), Feb 1, 2022

https://www.oilgasdaily.com/reports/Investors_agree_10_billion_for_controversial_Uganda_oil_project_999.html

Litigation Issues

Natural Gas Pipeline Politicization: FERC vs. Consumers in NYS/CT

By Robert Bradley Jr, Master Resource, Feb 2, 2022

<https://www.masterresource.org/federal-energy-regulatory-commission-ferc/ferc-vs-gas-consumers/>

Energy & Environment — Interior in hot seat after court halts drilling sale

By Rachel Frazin and Zack Budryk, The Hill, Feb 2, 2022

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/overnights/592566-energy-environment>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Carbon Tax Recap, January 2022

By Jordan McGillis, IER, Jan 31, 2022

<https://www.instituteforenergyresearch.org/climate-change/carbon-tax-recap-january-2022/>
[SEPP Comment: The actual benefits are trivial and the costs of implementing the tax are huge.]

Government should follow Germany and scrap green levies on energy bills

Press Release, Net Zero Watch, Feb 1, 2022

<https://www.netzerowatch.com/government-should-follow-germany-and-scrap-green-levies-on-energy-bills/>

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Net Zero Watch condemns 'loans' to energy company Fat-cats

Press Release, Net Zero Watch, Feb 2, 2022

<https://www.netzerowatch.com/net-zero-watch-condemns-loans-to-energy-company-fat-cats/>

Energy Issues – Non-US

Europe's Self-Made Energy Crisis

By Conor Bernstein, Real Clear Energy, Jan 31, 2022

https://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2022/01/31/europes_self-made_energy_crisis_814587.html

The Consequences Of A 500% Rally In Lithium Prices

By Alex Kimani, Oil Price.com, Feb 1, 2022

<https://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/The-Consequences-Of-A-500-Rally-In-Lithium-Prices.html>

Abigail Oil Field Gets Go Ahead

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Feb 2, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/02/02/abigail-oil-field-gets-go-ahead/>
[SEPP Comment: Not compatible with meaningless climate targets.]

Mexico's energy reforms test relations with US

By Samir Tounsi, Mexico City (AFP), Feb 1, 2022

https://www.oilgasdaily.com/reports/Mexicos_energy_reforms_test_relations_with_US_999.html

President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador wants to strengthen the state-owned electricity provider and roll back the effects of liberalization under previous governments that he says favored private companies.

[SEPP Comment: Increasing government control is “reform”?]

Energy Issues -- US

A Decade of Deliberate Inaction: Root Causes and Fallout from the Deadly Texas Power Failure of 2021

By Ed Hirs, Power For Tomorrow, January 2022

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5ef4d3472489c155a4924aa7/t/61e9821ca6b8f94a75af70a1/1642693149678/TX+Study+FINAL.pdf>

From the executive summary: Consumers within ERCOT select retail energy providers and plans based on their geographic locations. 3 Proponents hailed this as "deregulating" the Texas electricity market just as the California market had been "deregulated," but it put the ERCOT marketplace on the road to February's system collapse. Hundreds died. More than \$100 billion in property damages were incurred. More than half the nation's refinery and petrochemical complex was knocked out of commission, with supply chains not expected to be fully restored until January 2022.4. What happened in 2021 was preventable and had been predicted a decade earlier in 2011, when a similar winter storm caused blackouts across Texas. That storm was itself previewed by an earlier winter storm, which hit Texas between February 24-26, 2003.

New England Energy Inflation Self-Imposed

By Ron Clutz, Science Matters, Feb 3, 2022

<https://rclutz.com/2022/02/03/new-england-energy-inflation-self-imposed/>

Corrupt Climate Science Poisons Eastern Power Grid Operator

By Gordon Tomb, Real Clear Energy, Feb 02, 2022

https://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2022/02/02/corrupt_climate_science_poisons_eastern_power_grid_operator_814900.html

“Once upon a time the job of the PJM Interconnection — operator of the nation’s largest electricity grid — was reasonably straightforward: Keep the lights on. The organization’s mission statement still identifies PJM’s ‘primary task’ as ensuring the power grid’s ‘safety, reliability and security.’”

Washington's Control of Energy

How Joe Biden's Opposition to Natural Gas Pipelines Emboldens Putin and Jeopardizes Europe

By Kevin Mooney, Real Clear Energy, Feb 1, 2022

https://www.realclearenergy.org/articles/2022/02/01/how_joe_bidens_opposition_to_natural_gas_pipelines_emboldens_putin_and jeopardizes_europe_814777.html

The US government should end its war on natural gas

By Bernard Weinstein, The Hill, Jan 31, 2022

<https://thehill.com/opinion/energy-environment/591938-the-us-government-should-end-its-war-on-natural-gas>

Biden Maladministration Now Cancelling Mining Leases

By David Middleton, WUWT, Feb 1, 2022

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2022/02/01/biden-maladministration-now-cancelling-mining-leases/>

[SEPP Comment: A campaign against smart phones?]

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Big Oil Is Quietly Exploring For More Crude

By Irina Slav, Oil Price.com, Jan 31, 2022

<https://oilprice.com/Energy/Crude-Oil/Big-Oil-Is-Quietly-Exploring-For-More-Crude.html>

Natural Gas as a ‘Bridge Fuel’: Back to the 1980s/90s

By Robert Bradley Jr., Master Resource, Feb 2, 2022

<https://www.masterresource.org/enronken-lay/natural-gas-bridge-fuel-1980s-1990s/>

[SEPP Comment: Previously, coal was the bridge fuel.]

The gas stoves of death

By John Robeson, Climate Discussion Nexus, Feb 2, 2022

<https://climatediscussionnexus.com/2022/02/02/the-gas-stoves-of-death/>

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Suddenly the world shifts back to nuclear power

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Feb 1, 2022

<https://joannenova.com.au/2022/02/suddenly-the-world-shifts-back-to-nuclear/>

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

January Was No Month for Vacation in the Columbia Basin

By Cliff Mass, Weather Blog, Feb 3, 2022

<https://cliffmass.blogspot.com/2022/02/january-was-no-month-for-vacation-in.html>

“Even more depressing is the solar radiation measurement, with many days remaining less than 100 W/square meter). Several near 50. Full sun is around 450 by the end of the month.”

“Ironically, there are several solar projects completed or planned for eastern Washington...they should not expect to generate much electricity in mid-winter I suspect.”

[SEPP Comment; Don’t tell NREL.]

Green Wrecking Ball: Germany Clearing “Undisturbed” 1000-Year Old Forest, Make Way For Massive Wind Park

By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Feb 4, 2022

<https://notrickszone.com/2022/02/04/green-wrecking-ball-germany-clearing-1000-year-old-forest-to-make-way-for-massive-wind-park/>

Who needs trees: Welcome to a black glass wilderness

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Feb 4, 2022

<https://joannenova.com.au/2022/02/who-needs-trees-welcome-to-a-black-glass-wilderness/>

Green Electricity Facts on the Ground

By Ron Clutz, Jan 31, 2022

<https://rclutz.com/2022/01/31/green-electricity-facts-on-the-ground/>

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

New Mexico Climate Activists Fighting to Kill Hydrogen Economy Bill

By Eric Worrall, WUWT, Feb 1, 2022

<https://wattsupwiththat.com/2022/02/01/new-mexico-climate-activists-fighting-to-kill-hydrogen-economy-bill/>

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

The Key To Achieving Biden’s Net Zero Goals

By Haley Zaremba, Oil Price.com, Jan 27, 2022

<https://oilprice.com/Energy/Energy-General/The-Key-To-Achieving-Bidens-Net-Zero-Goals.html>

[SEPP Comment: A plea for pumped hydro storage.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

‘GREEN FANATSY’ Plans to ban sale of new petrol and diesel cars slammed by fuming voters

By Paul Homewood, Not a Lot of People Know That, Jan 31, 2022

<https://notalotofpeopleknowthat.wordpress.com/2022/01/31/green-fanatsy-plans-to-ban-sale-of-new-petrol-and-diesel-cars-slammed-by-fuming-voters/>

Cost of decarbonising private transport

Press Release by Net Zero Watch, Jan 27, 2022

<https://www.netzerowatch.com/cost-of-decarbonising-private-transport/>

Link to factsheet: Cost of Decarbonizing cars,

By Andres Montford, GWPF, January 2022

<https://www.netzerowatch.com/content/uploads/2022/01/Cost-Decarbonising-Cars.pdf>

EPA presses USPS to halt purchase of up to 165K gas-powered vehicles

By Zack Budryk, The Hill, Feb 2, 2022

<https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/592553-epa-presses-usps-to-halt-purchase-of-up-to-165k-gas-powered>

[SEPP Comment: As if the USPS does not have a slew of problems!]

BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE

University of California system sues 8minute Solar, co-founder

By Kevin Clark, Renewable Energy & World, Feb 3, 2022

<https://www.renewableenergyworld.com/news/university-of-california-system-sues-8minute-solar-co-founder/#gref>

“The complaint names both him [the chief executive] and the company as defendants.”

[SEPP Comment: The University of California was deceived by a solar promoter?]

White House Office of Science & Technology Policy and U.S. National Science Foundation

OSTP and NSF host “Quantum Workforce: Q-12 Actions for Community Growth” Event, Release Quantum Workforce Development Plan

https://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?WT.mc_ev=click&WT.mc_id=USNSF_51&cntn_id=304343&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

By Staff, NSF, Feb 1, 2022

https://www.nsf.gov/news/news_summ.jsp?WT.mc_ev=click&WT.mc_id=USNSF_51&cntn_id=304343&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

“New strategic plan aims to strengthen America’s quantum ecosystem by developing a diverse, inclusive, and sustainable workforce.

“Today, the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy’s (OSTP) National Quantum Coordination Office (NQCO) and the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) – in coordination with the National Q-12 Education Partnership – convened educators and leaders in quantum information science and technology (QIST) to explore training and education opportunities for America’s future QIST workforce.”

ARTICLES

Highway Funding Bait-and-Switch

The Biden DOT puts restrictions on new federal highways.

By The Editorial Board, WSJ, Jan. 30, 2022

https://www.wsj.com/articles/highway-funding-bait-and-switch-agencies-bipartisan-infrastructure-new-capacity-cars-public-transportation-11643576500?mod=hp_opin_pos_6#exrecs_s

The editorial begins:

“If you hoped President Biden’s infrastructure spending might bring a smoother drive to an area near you, it’s worth reading the latest fine print. Before funds are disbursed, bureaucrats are attaching strings that make it far more difficult to build new highways.

“The restrictions come from a memo last month from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Transportation Department agency is fielding infrastructure project proposals from states and cities, and it has sway over regulatory approval. Deputy Administrator Stephanie Pollack advised staff on the types of projects they should give the red light.

“According to the memo, proposals should be sent to the bottom of the pile if they ‘add new general purpose travel lanes serving single occupancy vehicles.’ She means cars. That includes construction of new roads and highways, or expansions of existing ones. States and cities that need new capacity will take a back seat to those seeking upgrades.

“This guidance is a bait-and-switch on Congressional Republicans who backed the infrastructure deal mainly because it would expand and improve surface transportation. House Democrats led by Transportation Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio wanted similar limits on new building in the version of the bill they passed, but Senate Republicans kept those limits out of the final draft. Rep. DeFazio staged a public tantrum, but he had to accept it.

“Now highway skeptics in the Transportation Department are imposing restrictions like those that failed to pass Congress. Road construction will also be tied up by environmental reviews. Republicans tried to pre-empt the red tape by including the One Federal Decision framework in the infrastructure bill. The policy imposes a 90-day limit on approval for projects reviewed under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

“But the FHWA is doubling down on other green restrictions. Its memo declares that any project requiring a new right of way is ineligible for a fast-tracked NEPA review. States planning to widen clogged highways using federal funds could face months or years of scrutiny. We warned that the bill’s permitting reforms were insufficient, and here we are.

“The restrictions will likely fall hardest on red states. Fast-growing areas in the Sunbelt and Northwest need highway extensions to improve local commuting and commerce.”

After giving specific examples in North Dakota and Texas, the editorial concludes:

“Disdain for highways is common among progressive regulators, who see blocking road improvements as a virtue that will assist mass transit and climate-change goals. Upon her appointment as the interim highway administration leader, Ms. Pollack promised ‘an agency that supports people rather than a singular mode of transportation.’ Her boss, Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, has said that traditional highway designs are racist.

“States and cities will continue to seek highway expansions, and some may secure funding. But don’t be surprised when federal agencies continue to steer ‘bipartisan’ infrastructure funds toward progressive priorities.”
