

## **County ponders rules on dairies**

**Fresno Co. owners worry that added regulations will boost their overhead costs.**

By Kerri Ginis

The Fresno Bee, Sunday, April 8, 2007

Fresno County is weighing additional regulations for dairies that would give local government more control over the expanding industry.

The public will have an opportunity to comment on the proposed regulations at a meeting Tuesday.

The 10-page draft dairy ordinance establishes where dairies can be located and includes a permitting process for new and expanding dairies that exceed 500 cattle.

Other Valley counties already have in-depth environmental reviews for dairies, including Tulare, Merced and Kings counties.

Those counties began placing more regulations on dairies as the industry boomed and require dairy owners to take steps so manure doesn't pollute the ground, foul the air or create a nuisance with swarming flies.

Fresno County is one of the last in the state to consider establishing a screening process for new and expanding dairies.

It currently allows dairy owners to locate their businesses in areas zoned for agricultural uses without having a special permit.

The environmental monitoring is handled by a state water agency and local air district.

Environmentalists say more local control is needed to ensure that dairies are doing enough to protect public health. Dairy owners worry too many regulations will increase overhead costs, making it difficult for business to thrive.

Fresno County has more than 150,000 dairy animals -- far fewer than most other Valley counties. But the industry is growing with more "mega-dairies" coming into the Valley from Southern California.

That will mean more animals producing manure, which some fear could further pollute the air or contaminate water.

The Fresno Healthy Dairy Commission -- a coalition of doctors, clergy and educators -- wants to see standards imposed to ensure dairies aren't polluting the air and water.

While the group is pleased the county is considering more regulations, it says the ordinance doesn't go far enough.

Dr. Lee Snyder, a retired physician, said the draft ordinance is "generic." He said it doesn't address using landfill-grade liners for waste lagoons to prevent ground-water contamination. He also said the ordinance doesn't include penalties for dairy operators who fail to follow the regulations.

"There is no teeth in it," he said. "It needs some modifications."

Charlie Eaton, a regional political organizer for SEIU United Healthcare Workers West, said the union's 10,000 local members are concerned about the adverse effects dairies have on air quality. The draft ordinance, he said, does not contain any "meaningful standards for reducing emissions." The ordinance doesn't require operators to enclose barns, cover lagoons or protect their seed-storage areas, he said.

County officials said some of the concerns being raised by the Fresno Healthy Dairy Commission are already addressed by the state water agency and local air district regulations. Senior planner Chris Motta also said that each new dairy will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and additional regulations could be placed on the operation before a permit will be issued.

But those in the industry say they fear the county will impose standards that will put them out of business.

"I don't want a standard or a condition imposed on my facility that is impractical and unfeasible for me to implement," said Brian Pacheco, a fourth-generation dairyman in Kerman. "I want these regulations to be based on science and best practice. Not on technology that I don't have the means to implement."

Steve Nash, who owns a dairy in Selma, said the county has a lot of smaller, established dairies that have been operating for two or three generations. He's concerned the proposed regulations will limit dairy expansions by forcing operators to buy costly equipment.

"We don't want an overreaction. We just want an ordinance that will be fair," he said.

County officials may make some revisions to the draft ordinance following Tuesday's meeting. The ordinance then goes before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for approval. Some supervisors believe it's time for the county to take the lead role in regulating the industry. But at least one supervisor said he has concerns about the proposed ordinance.

"The things they're asking small farmers to do are things large farmers can't afford to do," Supervisor Phil Larson said.

Others said the county needs to make sure the regulations address the concerns of everyone involved.

Said Supervisor Henry Perea: "The trick is finding the balance that allows dairies to remain financially in business while still being environmentally sensitive."

## **Big West to use safer chemical**

### **Experts: Modified hydrofluoric acid doesn't form vapor clouds as easily**

BY STACEY SHEPARD, Californian staff writer  
Bakersfield Californian, Saturday, April 7, 2007

Bending to public pressure, officials with Big West of California have opted for a safer alternative to a toxic chemical it had planned to use at its Rosedale Highway refinery.

The company came under intense scrutiny after recently disclosing it would use hydrofluoric acid in new processes that are part of a planned expansion at the plant to boost diesel and gasoline output.

Hydrofluoric acid, or HF as it's commonly known, poses a risk to nearby residents and businesses because it can form a dense, vapor cloud capable of migrating up to several miles. Exposure to HF can cause severe damage to skin and lung tissue.

If the chemical penetrates the skin, it can react with calcium and decompose bones.

On Friday, Big West officials said they would use a modified form of HF that is considered by experts to be safer. Modified HF contains an additive that reduces the acid's ability to form a traveling cloud.

"With a lot of the outcry we said we ought to look at this and make sure we go the extra mile here," said Gene Cotten, vice president and manager of the Big West refinery.

The decision was welcomed by county officials, who were concerned with the facility's original plans to use the more concentrated form of the chemical as part of the processes proposed in the expansion.

The refinery's plans to expand will go before the county Planning Commission in May.

"If they've chosen to go with that, I think that's a move in the right direction," said Matt Constantine, director of the county's Environmental Health Services Department.

Constantine had requested that the county require the refinery to use modified HF as a condition of approving the project, citing concerns related to a recent accidental venting of another hazardous chemical at the plant.

The department cited the refinery earlier this week for releasing hydrogen sulfide gas into the air in October.

The gas, which can be lethal in high concentrations, migrated to nearby Lowe's hardware store and made some nearby residents sick.

Constantine said the October incident raised concerns about how well the facility was able to respond to emergency situations. And despite the company's newly announced plans to use modified HF, Constantine said Friday he'd still like to evaluate all other alternatives to using HF to ensure the community's safety.

HF is used at refineries in a process called alkylation, which increases the octane in the fuel, making it more efficient.

It was common for refineries to use the highly corrosive chemical until two accidental releases at refineries in Torrance and in Texas in the late 1980s brought attention to its public health dangers.

After that, most refineries moved away from using concentrated hydrofluoric acid and instead began using sulfuric acid, which does not form a toxic cloud when released.

Only two other refineries in California use hydrofluoric acid.

The Exxon Mobil refinery in Torrance has already switched to a modified form of the chemical. The Valero refinery in Wilmington has agreed to switch to the safer form and the construction to do so is about 75 percent complete.

## **LA breaks ground on underground sludge project**

from The Los Angeles Times

In the Bakersfield Californian, Saturday, April 7, 2007

Los Angeles city officials broke ground Thursday on a renewable energy project in San Pedro they touted as an innovative way to produce electricity for about 3,000 homes while saving money, reducing truck traffic on local roadways and cutting greenhouse emissions.

Officials unveiled the five-year plan at the city's Terminal Island Water Reclamation Plant, calling it a first-of-its-kind in the country that could serve as a model for other cities.

"This renewable energy project is absolutely electrifying," Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa said in announcing the plan, which is part of a broader effort to increase the city's use of alternative energy sources. "It will save money and make money."

The renewable energy project calls for injecting spongy organic material left over from treated wastewater into depleted oil and gas reservoirs more than a mile underground.

High temperatures and pressure in those pockets will compress the biosolid material, creating methane gas that will be captured to power fuel cells on the surface, engineers say. The underground processes also will dissolve carbon dioxide that the organic material would normally release into the air, removing the equivalent of exhaust from 3,200 cars each year over the next five years.

The system is expected to cost \$3 million to \$4 million to build, and it will come on line in phases, starting in the spring of 2008, project director Homayoun Moghaddam said.

When fully operational in three years, it is expected to produce 3.5 megawatts of electricity, enough to power nearly 3,000 homes - energy worth \$2.4 million a year. The energy, however, is expected initially to go to port-related facilities around Terminal Island.

The biosolid material for the new system will come from the Terminal Island treatment plant and the Hyperion sewage treatment plant in El Segundo. It will be combined with treated water from the Terminal Island plant that would otherwise be pumped into the Los Angeles Harbor.

City engineers said the energy project would reduce by about half the 750 tons of treated solid waste trucked daily to a city-owned farm in Kern County, where it is spread as fertilizer. That would cut truck trips from 38 to 16 each day, Moghaddam said. The city would save more than \$1.6 million annually in hauling costs, officials said.

The project received an enthusiastic thumbs up Thursday from an administrator with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the head of Santa Monica Baykeeper, a nonprofit group dedicated to protecting inland and coastal waters throughout Los Angeles.

"There is a great deal of interest among researchers, among operators, among other cities and utilities in exploring what can be gained as this operation moves forward," said Alexis Strauss, the EPA's water division director in California.

The L.A. Public Works Department is coordinating the project with Terralog Technologies USA Inc., which will operate the system during the initial five years.

The city must obtain a permit from the EPA to continue operations permanently. Engineers and city leaders voiced confidence in its success.

City Councilwoman Janice Hahn, who represents San Pedro, said she was an early skeptic but came around to the project's potential benefits.

"I have no concerns about this project now," Hahn told the Terminal Island gathering. "I'm excited that Los Angeles is the first anywhere to put this project into implementation. We're making history here today."

## **Muni ready to send hybrids into service**

Rachel Gordon, Chronicle Staff Writer  
San Francisco Chronicle, April 9, 2007

After years of hand-wringing and political heat, the San Francisco Municipal Railway is planning to put its first two hybrid buses into service by the end of the month.

The city's public transit agency already has road-tested one of the buses, filling the vehicle with sandbags to simulate the weight of passengers to make sure it could handle the city's hilly terrain.

"We ran it across all the different routes and feel confident the buses will be ready for service, so we're ready to move forward," said Ken McDonald, the San Francisco Transportation Authority's chief operating officer.

The new buses -- made by Daimler-Chrysler at a cost of about \$488,000 each -- will replace Muni's oldest diesel buses, some of which are nearly 20 years old. Environmentalists and public-health activists long have been trying to get them off the street. Diesel exhaust is a major source of air pollution. The soot can cause asthma attacks and other respiratory problems and is linked to cancer and heart ailments.

McDonald anticipates that four or five of the new diesel-electric hybrid buses will be added to Muni's fleet every week over the coming months. The agency expects 86 buses during the initial acquisition period, McDonald said, and could buy more later.

With rising concern over greenhouse gases and a growing body of evidence linking diesel exhaust to health problems, transit agencies across the globe -- including many in the Bay Area -- are moving toward cleaner vehicles.

Despite pressure from the Board of Supervisors five years ago to move to cleaner public transit, Muni originally balked at replacing the workhorse diesel fleet, fearing the hybrids would not

perform well on the hills. But a combination of new technology and trials in other cities -- in addition to a mandate by San Francisco voters -- pushed the agency to act.

In 2004, San Francisco voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition I, a ballot measure that required Muni to start replacing about 150 diesel buses by 2007. Muni moved slower than voters directed, but is now pressing ahead.

"When it comes to the air that we breathe in San Francisco, it's better late than never that we're getting the oldest, most polluting buses off the road," said Jon Golinger, a spokesman for the coalition behind Prop. I. The new buses are expected to emit 90 percent less particle pollution and 20 percent fewer greenhouse gases than conventional buses, city officials report.

A small diesel engine will start the bus and an electric generator will keep it running, McDonald said.

More than half the Municipal Railway's existing fleet of 1,069 vehicles -- including trolley buses, streetcars and cable cars -- is powered by electricity.

"Bringing clean, reliable hybrid buses to public transit riders will bring us one step closer to reaching the (agency's) goal of being emissions-free in San Francisco by 2020," said Nathaniel Ford, the city's public transit chief.

San Francisco is not the only transit agency in the Bay Area to use low-polluting or pollution-free buses. AC Transit has three zero-emission hydrogen buses in its 700-bus fleet and plans to add three more, said agency spokesman Clarence Johnson.

"Theoretically, you could drink what comes out of the tailpipe," Johnson said.

Although hydrogen buses get high ratings for performance and are great for the environment, Johnson said the cost -- at roughly \$3 million apiece -- means a wholesale replacement of Muni's diesels won't happen any time soon. He said the regular buses cost \$150,000 to \$200,000 each.

Golden Gate Transit, which has partnered with AC Transit on developing the hydrogen-fueled buses, hopes to operate one of them later this year, said Mary Currie, spokeswoman for the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District.

She noted that a California law adopted in 2000 requires public transit agencies to reduce emissions. Some operators have used alternative fuels, some have bought new buses with cleaner-running engines or refitted old ones, and others have used a combination of measures.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission, a regional funding and planning body for road and transit projects in the greater Bay Area, said several agencies -- including those in Fairfield, Napa, Sonoma and Union City -- are using compressed natural gas to operate some of their buses.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has a handful of hydrogen buses, said John Goodwin of the MTC. In addition, he said, the Western Contra Costa Transit Authority has a couple of propane buses. Wheels, the transit agency serving the Livermore and Amador valleys, is set to receive 16 diesel-electric buses. SamTrans is fitting its dirtiest-running diesel buses with pollution-reducing devices.

## **Groups plug electric cars to raise demand**

### **Movement works to persuade major automakers to manufacture plug-in hybrid vehicles**

By Kristina Peterson, MEDIANEWS STAFF  
Contra Costa Times, Sunday, April 8, 2007

Imagine a golf cart that could drive from Palo Alto to Sacramento.

That's how Tom Hayse, CEO of ETM Electromatic, described plug-in hybrid electric cars last month in front of Palo Alto's City Hall. The event marked the launch of a new partnership between the Silicon Valley Leadership Group and Plug-in Bay Area, a grass-roots movement designed to generate demand for the environmentally friendly vehicles not yet mass-produced.

Palo Alto Mayor Yoriko Kishimoto made a personal soft order for a plug-in hybrid for her own family and said the city staff would research ordering a fleet of the cars for the city.

"I will encourage staff to look into this," Kishimoto said as employees from the city's utilities department peered into the battery pack of a plug-in hybrid on display.

Unlike standard hybrid electric vehicles, plug-in cars have a larger battery pack, plug in overnight to charge and can drive for more than 100 miles per gallon.

The vehicles "improve air quality and reduce oil consumption," said Kishimoto. She noted that plug-ins charge at night "when more electricity is available" and run "completely green" during the day.

Felix Kramer, founder of Cal Cars, which has converted five hybrids into plug-in vehicles, said he once drove 1,034 miles on fewer than 10 gallons of gas.

"We're doing this because we want Toyota to do it," Kramer said.

Jodie Van Horn, coordinator for Plug-in Bay Area, said the goal of the program is to demonstrate to large auto manufacturers that both the technology and demand for plug-in hybrids exists. The national Plug-in campaign has gathered more than 7,000 orders for plug-in vehicles.

Van Horn said the group plans to dangle its database of orders "like a carrot in front of automakers."

So far, she said General Motors, Toyota and Nissan have made plug-in prototypes but set no production dates.

"Whoever comes out first will have a long list of customers," she said.

Hayse added an order for 10 more plug-ins on March 22.

"The first one's mine!" he said, noting that "electric cars are really fun to drive."

"It drives just like a Prius, except at low speeds; it's completely silent," Kramer said.

Hayse said four months ago, he created a \$5,000 incentive at his company for anyone who buys a hybrid car.

"There are already three new hybrids in the parking lot," he said.

Now, as the "executive champion" of plug-ins at Silicon Valley Leadership Group, Hayse is working to tempt some of the regional group's 210 companies to join him.

"We need to reach out to our members and engage them in this national campaign," said Laura Stuchinsky, the leadership group's director of transportation and land use.

In the Bay Area, San Francisco, Oakland and Berkeley and Alameda and Marin counties have joined the plug-in campaign to promote the vehicles.

## **California 'Green' project makes critics see red**

**The DWP's proposed energy corridor, to bring nonpolluting power to L.A., would traverse a national forest and wildlife preserves.**

By Janet Wilson, Times Staff Writer

LA Times, Monday, April 9, 2007

Highlighting the environmental pitfalls of harnessing "green" energy, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's push to import nonpolluting power to Los Angeles could require building power lines and transmission towers through a national forest, two desert wildlife preserves and a rustic hamlet used in countless westerns.

According to the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the 85-mile-long "Green Path" energy corridor designed to bring solar, geothermal and nuclear power from southeastern

California and Arizona would slice across the Big Morongo Wildlife Preserve north of Palm Springs, Pioneertown near Yucca Valley, Pipes Canyon Wilderness Preserve and a corner of the San Bernardino National Forest before crossing over the Cajon Pass and connecting with existing power lines in Hesperia.

More than a dozen preservation and community groups have condemned the mayor and DWP for a plan that they say would destroy priceless vistas, natural areas and wildlife corridors.

"Not only is such energy consumption not 'green,' it is unacceptable under any name.... The ends cannot justify the means," Justin Augustine of the Center for Biological Diversity said in a letter to Villaraigosa last week.

City officials are up against tough new state laws and self-imposed deadlines to replace highly polluting coal-fired power with renewable energy produced by geothermal, wind and solar generators in the Imperial Valley, the Tehachapi Mountains in Kern County and elsewhere.

Villaraigosa did not return calls for comment. DWP commission President David Nahai insisted that no final decisions on a route had been made.

"This project is very much environmentally at its beginning stages," Nahai said.

The anger over the proposed route underscores challenges nationwide over how to ship wind, sun and steam power from remote rural reaches to booming urban centers.

"People do not like the way power lines look," said George Douglas, spokesman for the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Energy.

He said vast amounts of renewable resources exist across the country. Enough wind turbines could be built in North Dakota to power Chicago. One hundred square miles of desert solar panels in California, Nevada or New Mexico could power most of the United States.

But, Douglas said, "the chances it's going to happen are zero, because nobody's going to build the transmission lines. They're great big things that cost a lot of money, and people don't like them. They are unsightly — there's no two ways about it — and when you build them, they definitely disturb the land."

In Los Angeles, Villaraigosa said last year that he wanted to make the sprawling metropolis "the greenest city and cleanest city in America" and was pushing aggressively for 20% of the city's power to be renewable by 2010. Officials also chose not to renew a contract with a Utah coal plant that provides more than 40% of the city's power. That pact will expire in 2023.

The proposed Green Path is a key piece of the mayor's strategy. High-voltage lines in the transmission corridor would ship 800 megawatts of geothermal and solar power from near the Salton Sea and 400 megawatts of nuclear power from Arizona — enough to meet 10% of the city's current energy needs.

DWP officials said they decided on a "preferred alternative" in December after studying possible routes for more than a year. They said the route they chose would be the least intrusive to existing homes, tribal lands, national parks and wilderness areas.

Environmentalists scoffed at that claim. "We were just shocked," preservationist David Myers said of his reaction after looking at a map of the route.

Myers is head of The Wildlands Conservancy, a nonprofit group that has spent \$50 million assembling private wildlife corridors and preserves close to Joshua Tree National Park, the San Bernardino National Forest and elsewhere, including Pipes Canyon.

Myers accused city officials of secretly planning the route, saying that conservationists learned about it two weeks ago from a staff member of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Nahai said there was no attempt at secrecy but acknowledged that Myers had a point. "I think we need to do a better job of outreach and a better job of communication," he said. "This is a new, environmentally committed administration. What we're trying to do is to diversify away from filthy coal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and do it in a way that is environmentally protective."

The DWP staff members said that there would be extensive public hearings before a final decision was made, and that they might "tweak" the map to try to move it away from the Pipes Canyon preserve, Pioneertown and the surrounding Sawtooth Mountains, which provided the backdrop for "The Cisco Kid" and many other western television shows and movies.

But Nahai added that no matter what route was chosen, there would be some environmental damage caused by the project. He said the priority was obtaining clean, renewable energy on a citywide basis to reduce greenhouse gases and other air pollution, as well as meeting power needs.

"Failure is not an option," he said. "What I can commit is that the department will do its utmost to minimize adverse environmental effects."

## **U.N. report raises pressure on China to cut pollution**

**Economic growth has brought environmental disaster, but fixing it is complicated by politics, poverty and tradition.**

By Mark Magnier, Times Staff Writer  
LA Times, Sunday, April 8, 2007

BEIJING — As China's economy roars ahead, leaving Technicolor rivers and polluted skies in its wake, the world's most populous nation has struggled to craft environmental policies that will appease growing numbers of critics at home and abroad.

Traditionally, many of the issues outlined in Friday's ominous United Nations report on climate change have been framed here, as elsewhere, as a trade-off between clean air and jobs. Yet it's also becoming increasingly evident that the division is not so clear-cut. Some studies estimate that pollution exacts a 7% to 10% cost on China's economy.

Complicating what passes for an environmental debate in China are political sensitivities, a controlled media, widespread rural poverty and a long tradition of top-down government wary of too much "meddling" by citizens.

For two decades, China has made economic growth a priority. The results have been impressive as the country becomes a bigger player on the global stage and hundreds of millions of its people are lifted out of extreme poverty.

But the cost has been high. China is home to 20 of the world's 30 most polluted cities, the World Bank concluded in a report last week. Officials here have acknowledged that 410,000 deaths a year are caused by pollution. And China is projected to surpass the United States and become the world's largest producer of greenhouse gases by 2009.

The U.N. report released Friday, which warned of the catastrophic results of global warming, served as a pointed indictment of the world's biggest producers of pollution.

### **Lagging behind**

Many of China's neighbors, including Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, were able to pollute their way to prosperity and pay for the cleanup afterward. China, which comes to the development game late, is under growing international pressure to tackle its environmental problems at the same time, given its huge planetary footprint.

By some accounts, China remains two decades behind the United States in its environmental standards and as much as three decades behind Europe.

In response, Chinese leaders have set targets designed to promote alternate fuels, recycling and "green economic growth." These include vows by Beijing to get 16% of the nation's energy from renewable sources by 2020, double today's rate, and to become 20% more energy efficient by 2010.

Unlike the United States, China has signed the Kyoto Protocol on climate change, although it is not required to reduce its carbon emissions under the agreement. And in two weeks, Beijing is set to release a national climate change plan that, though unlikely to break new ground, will consolidate and bring more focus to existing rules.

The effort, however, faces a host of problems. Many of the laws and regulations passed by the central government are routinely ignored or otherwise undermined by local officials because of corruption, mismanagement, greed and a system that hands out promotions based on economic growth.

"This is a big problem," said Yang Ailun, campaign manager for energy and climate change with Greenpeace China. "An important task for the central government is to design a framework for local implementation, rather than just issuing orders from above."

### **Mixed awareness**

Although environmental awareness among the general public is growing, the picture is still mixed, reflecting divisions within Chinese society. Increasingly prosperous middle-class urban residents of Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing are voicing concerns. But many impoverished rural residents remain more focused on filling their rice bowls than rattling for quality-of-life improvements.

Still, the nation is seeing growing outrage and more violent protests as crops wither and children are born with birth defects caused by chemicals leaking from factories. Heart disease and respiratory problems linked to air pollution are among the leading causes of death in China, experts say, with acid rain now falling on 30% of the country.

Much of this information is successfully covered up by local officials holding an iron grip on the press and police. And victims have been prevented from organizing by a legal system that discourages class-action lawsuits.

China also has kept nongovernmental organizations on a relatively short leash, wary of any movement that might one day challenge the Communist Party's monopoly on political power. Registration and funding rules have been tightened, some activist environmental groups have been shut down, and other restrictions have been enacted to ensure organizations remain small.

The structure of the Chinese government creates other problems. Although the State Environmental Protection Administration, or SEPA, was elevated to the ministry level a few years ago, it is still far outgunned in terms of personnel and budget by ministries that oversee resource extraction, construction, industry and land use.

Even within SEPA, officials' hands are tied. In a quirk of the Chinese governmental hierarchy, local SEPA inspectors are paid by and otherwise dependent on the mayors and local Communist Party secretaries they are supposed to oversee, creating potential conflicts of interest.

### **Carbon trading**

Beijing has not denied the scope of climate change or its potential consequences for China. But its basic position remains that developed countries must take the lead. It also argues that globalization has dealt it a disproportionate share of the problem, given the relocation of many energy-intensive, polluting industries to China, including steel, aluminum, cement, paper, chemicals and petrochemicals.

One early bright spot has been China's growing interest in carbon trading, under which pollution rights are traded globally in an effort to bring down overall carbon dioxide output.

Beijing has expressed interest in the idea. Not only would it allow the central government to show critics that it's trying to be a responsible global citizen, the system promises to bring investment to local governments, create jobs and improve environments.

"It's a fabulous opportunity for China to do the right thing, and lots of projects will be developed that wouldn't be otherwise," said Scott Lamont, chief executive of Beijing-based Clean Energy Services, a carbon trading firm. "The main concern, though, is that there be ongoing monitoring.

You have to make sure what the money is allocated for actually gets built, as with any industry in China."

## **Natural gas: It's the alternative alternative**

John O'Dell

LA Times, Saturday, April 7, 2007

Gasoline-electric hybrids are the glamorous celebrities of the automotive world these days, but there are other choices for those who want to drive green.

One of the best could be cars or trucks that run on compressed natural gas, or CNG.

They run far cleaner than gasoline or diesel vehicles, their fuel costs about 33% less and most of the stuff is natural gas produced in the U.S., helping reduce dependency on foreign oil.

Unfortunately, there aren't many publicly available CNG filling stations outside of California. The Golden State has about 100 such locations, including 60 within 100 miles of downtown Los Angeles. Many of them, however, require a special key card for admittance, so CNG vehicle drivers can't just drop in.

The newest is in Carson. It was opened last month by the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, an agency that also operates a public CNG station at a recycling facility in Whittier.

The Carson station, at Figueroa Street and Sepulveda Boulevard, is expected to serve business, government and taxi fleets that use older, mass-market CNG vehicles such as the 2004 Ford Crown Victoria sedan and the 2005 GMC Sierra and Chevrolet Silverado pickups.

There are a number of CNG vehicles out there that private companies have converted from standard gasoline cars and trucks. The sanitation agency, spokesman Basil Hewitt said, wants to switch its entire fleet of 120 vehicles to CNG by 2012.

Even as CNG fleets chug along, the number of models available to everyday drivers is dropping.

For a while it appeared that automakers were going to start jumping on the bandwagon. In 2004 there were nine models available from General Motors Corp., Ford Motor Co. and Honda Motor Co.: three full-size pickup trucks, two compact cars, three vans and a full-size sedan.

But all except Honda have dropped CNG vehicles from their lineups. The manufacturers blame the dearth of publicly available stations, the lack of public knowledge about natural gas vehicles and — until the last few years — the relatively low cost of oil and gasoline.

The lone 2007 model CNG passenger vehicle marketed by a major automaker is Honda's Civic GX, which is sold only in California and New York and carries a fairly hefty price tag of \$25,185. That compares with \$22,600 for the base Civic hybrid and \$15,400 for the base DX gasoline model.

Not to worry: Whatever compression a would-be CNG driver might feel in the wallet can be offset by some good old-fashioned government incentives.

First, the natural gas Civic qualifies for a \$4,000 federal tax credit, versus \$2,100 for the hybrid model.

In addition, if time is money, the GX offers another advantage for anyone with a tough commute: It is the only car sold in California that still qualifies for a sticker permitting it to use the state's diamond lanes with only one occupant. All stickers for hybrids have been distributed.

There's still that issue of where to fuel up. But consider that Honda dealers sell or lease a home natural gas fuel maker with the GX. And after a \$2,000 South Coast Air Quality Management District subsidy and a \$1,000 federal tax credit, the thing is almost free: The \$3,500 model that installs in the owner's garage ends up costing \$500.

The device, called Phill and made by FuelMaker Corp. of Toronto, is capable of compressing enough natural gas each day to fill the GX's 8-gallon tank (yep, only 8, but the car is rated at 28 miles per gallon in the city and 39 on the highway, so it can travel 200 to 300 miles on a tankful).

CNG fuel costs about \$2 a gallon at a public station but runs about \$1.20 a gallon when produced with the home fuel maker.

CNG vehicle drivers, especially those planning long trips, can find the locations of every CNG filling station in the nation on the Energy Department's alternative fuel station locator website at <http://afdcmap2.nrel.gov/locator/findpane.asp>.

## **Dairy is No. 1 agriculture commodity in Tulare County**

By Esther Avila

Porterville Recorder, Friday, April 6, 2007

It's official. No other county in California - or the nation - has more milk production than Tulare County.

But, with more than 335 dairies and approximately 451,000 cows in the county, it should be no surprise that milk held on to its rank as the No. 1 commodity in the 2005 Tulare County Annual Crop and Livestock Report. The 2006 report will not be available until mid-April.

"No one else comes close," said Debora Bacon, dairy farm advisor. "Tulare County is the No. 1 dairy county in the United States. Tulare County is a reference point for dairy production in the United States. At farm shows out of the area, it is not uncommon to hear references to what is happening in Tulare County."

Plenty is happening. In 2005, Tulare County produced close to 9.7 million pounds of Grade-A and more than 209.5 thousand pounds of Grade-B milk - coming in with a value of approximately \$1.5 billion.

Bacon, 30, would know. A veterinarian and a native of Brazil, Bacon was named the University of California Cooperative Extension dairy farm advisor for Tulare County on Feb. 1, 2006.

Her experience in California has included troubleshooting mastitis outbreaks, evaluating milking machines, conducting research and analyzing statistics.

Bacon earned her doctorate in veterinary medicine in Brazil. She came to the United States in 1998 and earned her dairy science degree at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, in 2003. She moved to the Tulare area two years ago and held positions with the University of California, Davis Veterinary Medicine Teaching and Research Center in Tulare and with the UC Cooperative Extension office in Kings County.

But she has not always been around farms or dairies.

"I was a city girl. I was from San Paulo, Brazil - a city of 19 million people. But I found out, even though I came from a big city, I love the peaceful part of being in the countryside," Bacon said. "I found out I liked working with big animal. We have lots of cows in Brazil - more than here. But they have less milk production."

Now, Bacon says her biggest challenge is convincing dairymen that they can rely on her. Many of the dairymen turn to their feed or other dairy representatives for free advice or suggestions, she said.

"I have visited about 40 dairies, but with 335 dairies in the county, it is almost impossible to see them all," Bacon said. "A lot of the dairymen forget us, or that we can be as helpful as the other guy. I want them to call me. I can advise them. I am here. And it is free."

She has spent a lot of time becoming familiar with regulations related to air and water quality. That is important because the economic importance of the county's dairy industry goes beyond its \$1 billion farm gate value. It supports many other agricultural sectors.

"The dairy industry has vast economic importance in Tulare County because of the value of dairy products produced here and the many jobs both on and off the farm that support it. Dairies also figure prominently in regulatory planning for air and water quality in Tulare and the San Joaquin Valley," said Jim Sullins, the director of UC Cooperative Extension in Tulare County. "The need for good science has become apparent to industry and regulatory agencies as solutions to the environmental concerns are developed."

That is where Bacon comes in. In her position, Bacon consults with dairy producers, other Cooperative Extension dairy advisors and campus-based specialists and professors to determine what needs her primary research and education program should address.

In addition, Bacon is dedicated to research. She is involved in approximately eight projects - researching everything from collaborating with dairy advisor Alejandro Castrillo on nutrient balances in California dairy herds to evaluating wastewater treatment technology for California dairy farms and working with Tulare veterinarian Dale Moore demonstrating the value of pre-purchase testing of dairy cattle for bio-security.

Because dairies buy and sell dairy animals all the time, it is possible to introduce a disease to the herd.

"We examine cattle and collect samples for testing for six diseases from animals that are being transported to a new farm in one county," Bacon said. "Ideally, it is best to isolate any newly acquired animal. It is very crucial for dairies to understand. Disease can spread."

Bacon said she is often called about environmental issues or when there are questions about dairy regulation changes.

"Regulations are [constantly] changing," Bacon said. "Understanding the impact of these regulations can be challenging and one of my priorities is ensuring that local farmers have the necessary information to comply with these regulations."

## **Tulare County essay and poster contest seeks entries**

By The Porterville Recorder Staff

Porterville Recorder, Thursday, April 5, 2007

VISALIA - It's time for Tulare County students to grab paper, pencils, crayons and paint to enter the 5th annual Make A Difference in Air Quality essay and poster contest.

Pupils have until May 23 to enter the contest, which teaches the community how to make alternative choices to clean the air.

To enter the contest, pupils must write an essay or create a poster illustrating how their families make a difference in air quality by carpooling, biking, walking, riding skateboards, buses or by conserving energy.

"We want students to know that they can make a difference in our air quality. They can make decisions everyday that will clean up the air," said Elizabeth Wright, associate regional planner for Tulare County Association of Governments.

This year, essay and poster winners in each category - kindergarten through third grade, fourth through sixth grades, seventh and eighth grades and nine through 12 - will get \$250 gift cards that can be used to buy new bikes, helmets, bike accessories, scooters or skateboards.

Two grand-prize winners from both the essay and poster contest will receive \$500 gift cards.

"This contest talks about air quality, a lesson that teachers can take to the classroom. Many do and we appreciate that. We're always impressed by the entries," Wright said.

Essays should run between one to two pages and posters should be submitted on 8 1/2-by-11-inch white paper, turned horizontally.

Entries should include contestant's name, address, grade, school and phone number.

Entries must be mailed by May 23 to The Lockwood Agency, 500 N. Willis St., Visalia, CA 93291.

Entries can also be submitted by e-mail to [bkclch@thelockwoodagency.net](mailto:bkclch@thelockwoodagency.net). Contestants may enter both categories.

Last year more than 300 pupils across the participated.

## **Conservatives warm to climate concerns**

### **From dams to power plants, GOP suggests its own fixes**

By E.J. Schultz, The Fresno Bee

April 8, 2007

How popular is global warming as a political issue?

So popular that even conservative state lawmakers are getting into the act, using the issue to sell everything from building dams and nuclear power plants to thinning forests.

The arguments are simple enough:

Higher temperatures reduce mountain snowpack, so more dams are needed to capture winter precipitation that falls as rain.

Nuclear power plants produce few greenhouse gases, the leading cause of man-made warming.

Forest fires, on the other hand, send plenty of gases into the air -- so why not encourage timber companies to clear more brush to reduce fire risk?

Environmentalists, who are skeptical of the proposals, are peeved that the other side has stolen their issue.

"Clearly these legislators are just dressing up their existing legislation with a thin veneer of a pretended concern about global warming," said Bill Magavern, senior representative for Sierra Club California.

Republican lawmakers strongly opposed last year's landmark legislation to cut the state's greenhouse gases by 25% by 2020. They criticized the bill as a job-killer and primitive attempt at placing local controls on a global problem.

Have they converted?

Not necessarily, says Assembly Member Chuck DeVore, R-Irvine, author of the nuclear bill.

"It's politics," he said. "If the [Democratic] leadership has said this is a problem ... then all I'm suggesting is maybe this is one of the solutions we should look at."

That Republicans are now talking about climate change shows how far it has come, said GOP strategist Dan Schnur.

"You can always tell that an issue has evolved when both parties start using it," he said. "They're not arguing about global warming anymore in the state Legislature. They're arguing about what issue it next influences."

Without the backing of environmentalists, the Republican proposals will likely face an uphill fight in the Democratic-controlled Legislature.

But if passed, the bills could have a major effect in the Valley. The Fresno area is being targeted for a new dam and nuclear power plant. And the region is home to a struggling timber industry.

Here's a closer look at the legislation:

### **Momentum builds behind nuclear plants**

DeVore's Assembly Bill 719 would lift a 31-year-old state ban on new nuclear power plants, clearing the way for a \$4 billion plant proposed for Fresno by a group of prominent business leaders. He's titled the bill the "California Zero Carbon Dioxide Emission Electrical Generation Act of 2007."

About 13% of the state's electricity supply comes from nuclear plants, including two in California - San Onofre in Southern California and Diablo Canyon in San Luis Obispo County -- according to a report last year by the California Energy Commission. But a state law passed in 1976 prohibits the construction of more plants until the federal government finds a way to dispose of high-level nuclear waste.

The most-discussed proposal is a repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada. The project, opposed by Nevada officials, has stalled, however. The delays led the energy commission to say in its report that it "cannot conclude that the [federal government] will ever operate the permanent repository at Yucca Mountain."

DeVore says that even if a plant were approved today, it would be at least 10 years before it's operational. So by keeping the ban in place, "other states will be the first in line to build new, modern, and highly safe nuclear power plants, delaying the availability of this large-scale and reliable source of zero carbon dioxide emission electricity," he says in the bill.

Unlike plants that burn fossil fuels, nuclear plants emit few greenhouse gases. Such gases trap heat in the atmosphere, causing global warming, according to scientists.

Nuclear watchdog groups say nuclear plants are too expensive, pointing to cost overruns that have plagued previous projects. Construction of the Diablo Canyon plant exceeded the \$320 million estimate by more than \$5 billion, according to the energy commission.

Yet the emergence of global warming as a hot issue has given nuclear supporters some momentum. The 2005 Energy Bill passed by Congress includes federal loan guarantees for nuclear plant financing. Even House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, has said nuclear power should at least be on the table.

But Rochelle Becker, executive director of the Alliance for Nuclear Responsibility in San Luis Obispo, said DeVore is jumping the gun.

"Lifting this ban," she said, "would be absolutely irresponsible" without a solution to disposal of nuclear waste.

### **State moves to build more dams**

Gov. Schwarzenegger, whose drive against global warming has gained international attention, has not taken a position on the nuclear bill. But the governor has used climate change to push for more dams.

His plan -- contained in Senate Bill 59 by Sen. Dave Cogdill, R-Modesto -- would put a \$4 billion water bond on the 2008 ballot, including \$2 billion for two dams. One dam is targeted for Temperance Flat, upstream of Friant Dam.

The state Department of Water Resources predicts warming will result in a loss of at least a quarter of the state's snowmelt runoff by 2050. This has led the department to recommend more surface storage to capture winter rain that today falls as snow.

"We are in desperate need to have more above-the-ground water storage," the governor said at a recent appearance at Friant Dam.

Environmentalists, who prefer conservation and more ground-water storage, say the governor is misguided.

The proposed site at Friant sits at the base of some of the highest mountains in the state. So even with rising temperatures, there will be plenty of snowpack at those higher elevations, said Barry Nelson, a senior analyst with the Natural Resources Defense Council.

"If you're going to build new storage to respond to climate change, probably the last place you'd build that storage is the southern Sierra," he said.

Also, research suggests global warming will cause more evaporation, meaning less runoff from the state's rivers and streams, Nelson said.

"You could be building a dam to capture water that won't be there in the future," he said.

Dam supporters say global warming is just one of many reasons to build dams. The other main argument is that more water is needed for the state's growing population.

"In reality," Cogdill said, "we just let too much [water] run into the ocean."

### **Tweaking the timber laws**

Cogdill said he voted against last year's global warming legislation -- Assembly Bill 32 -- because he is skeptical that Californians can do much to reverse climate change: "To me, it's a big stretch to say that human beings can turn this around."

But now that the bill is law, Cogdill is not afraid to propose his own solutions. His Senate Bill 572 would direct the state to consider emissions created by catastrophic wildfires as officials implement AB 32.

Cogdill is still finalizing the bill's details but said it could allow timber companies to cut down more trees without going through extensive and costly environmental reviews. That would give loggers more of an incentive to clear the smaller brush that fuels forest fires, he said, and at the same time could help revive the region's long-struggling timber industry.

"The whole thing could be a win-win," he said.

Trees absorb carbon dioxide -- a greenhouse gas -- from the atmosphere. But when forests burn, gases are released, contributing to warming.

Cogdill's argument rests on the belief that reducing devastating forest fires will cut carbon emissions. But forest management is a delicate art.

Cutting down large trees can actually increase fire risk because "those are the fire-resilient trees," said Dave Jaramillo, fire protection coordinator of the Sierra Forest Legacy, an environmental coalition.

When a forest burns, the amount of gases released depends on the intensity and size of a fire. But, in general, carbon dioxide emitted from forest fires pales in comparison to emissions from power plants, cars and airplanes, said Jim Randerson, a professor of earth system science at the University of California at Irvine, who studies fires and climate change.

In California, for example, fossil fuel consumption by vehicles accounts for 41% of all greenhouse gas emissions, according to a report by Schwarzenegger's Climate Action Team.

In general, loggers can remove trees of up to 18 inches in diameter without going through a rigorous review, as long as they remove brush to reduce fire risk. Cogdill's proposal would allow loggers to take bigger trees. (A bill by another lawmaker seeks to allow cutting of trees up to 24 inches.)

"I'm not talking about going in and massively clear cutting," Cogdill said. "I'm talking about some tweaks to our law."

The Sierra Club California hasn't taken a position on Cogdill's plan because it is still being developed.

Paul Mason, a legislative representative with the group, said the devil is in the details. If you allow for too many exemptions, he said, you "undermine the logging review process."

The reporter can be reached at [eschultz@fresnobee.com](mailto:eschultz@fresnobee.com) or (916) 326-5541.

## Forces dig in for energy battle

Mark Martin

San Francisco Chronicle, April 8, 2007

Sacramento -- A four-year battle to bring liquefied natural gas to California comes to a head beginning this week, as Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and two state commissions make key decisions on a project that pits the state's dependence on fossil fuels against the push to boost renewable energy and combat climate change.

An Australian company hopes to build a terminal off the Southern California coast with the promise of creating a new supply of the liquid natural gas needed to fuel California's electricity power plants. The LNG terminal would be located 14 miles offshore near the cities of Oxnard (Ventura County) and Malibu (Los Angeles County).

The proposal has generated emotional debate and sparked plenty of political intrigue. The company pushing the project, BHP Billiton, has poured millions into its lobbying effort and hired several friends of Schwarzenegger to work on its behalf. And while the lobbying effort has taken place primarily behind the scenes, a congressional committee under Democratic leadership has launched an inquiry into whether the White House influenced a federal environmental ruling that benefited the company.

Decisions made this week by the state Lands Commission and the California Coastal Commission, as well as a verdict from Schwarzenegger due by mid-May on whether to allow the terminal could have profound impacts on the state's energy future.

"In the context of the state's emphasis on renewables, LNG does not make sense," said Rory Cox of the San Francisco group Pacific Environment. "This would be a big step backward."

BHP Billiton officials and advocates say more natural gas is needed to stabilize the state's electricity supply, and opponents argue the new \$800 million terminal flies in the face of the state's efforts to address global warming.

The company has proposed extracting natural gas from western Australia, cooling it until it becomes liquid, and shipping it to the terminal where it would be re-heated and sent by pipeline to shore. The company is one of five proposing LNG terminals in the state, but is the first in line to seek approval -- or face denial -- from state officials.

BHP officials argue that California will need more natural gas, which is the fuel that creates about 40 percent of the state's electricity, and tapping a new source for gas will help keep costs down as demand rises around the country. Their terminal would add 13 percent more natural gas to the state's supply.

Renee Klimczak, president of BHP's LNG division, noted natural gas burned much more efficiently than other fossil fuels and said the project wouldn't compete with renewable power.

"The reality is you can't solve the state's energy needs with renewables alone," she said, noting that renewable power, like wind farms, are not reliable around-the-clock sources of power, requiring other forms of generation.

Klimczak also noted that natural gas, which is the cleanest of fossil fuel alternatives, already powers fleets of transit buses and can be used to power cars in the future.

In interviews this week, Lt. Gov. John Garamendi and state Controller John Chiang -- two of the three members of the Lands Commission -- declined to say how they would vote when the Lands Commission meets in Oxnard on Monday to discuss the project's environmental impact report.

But both Democrats expressed concerns.

Garamendi noted that the state's new emphasis on addressing climate change and reducing its use of fossil fuels has led to an increased push for more renewable energy in the state. He said if the state intends to eventually reach a goal of generating one-third of its electricity from sources like wind and solar power, more natural gas might not be necessary.

"I think there is a big question as to the need for this," Garamendi said.

Chiang said that he thought LNG could be an important interim fuel as the state slowly moves toward more renewable power. But he noted that a new facility being built in Baja California could provide natural gas to California, and he compared LNG to oil.

"Do we want to depend on a foreign source of fossil fuel for another 25 years?" he asked.

BHP argues that the state will remain dependent on natural gas even as other power sources are built.

The California Energy Commission has predicted demand for natural gas will grow by 0.7 percent per year and concluded in a 2005 report that a West Coast LNG facility would be beneficial.

The third member of the Lands Commission, Schwarzenegger's director of finance, Mike Genest, declined to comment.

Like other previous LNG proposals -- two planned in Northern California have been scuttled amid community antagonism -- the BHP project has significant opposition. The Malibu and Oxnard city councils oppose the project, and a hearing held Wednesday in Oxnard by the U.S. Coast Guard was attended by about 250 people, with a large majority of the speakers voicing concerns.

Local opponents are concerned about safety issues, and many environmental groups argue a facility is not appropriate for the coast. The project will create more than 200 tons of local air pollution per year through its operation in California, although BHP has said it will spend money to clean up other sources of pollution along the coast to mitigate the problem.

"It's basically a factory along the coast," complained Owen Bailey of the Sierra Club.

A study cited in a recent Coastal Commission report found that the project -- from the extraction of the gas in Australia through its final conversion into electricity in California -- would emit about 23 million metric tons of carbon dioxide, a contributor to greenhouse gas, into the air annually. That's the equivalent of more than 4 million cars.

BHP spent more than \$2.8 million lobbying for the project during 2005 and 2006, making it one of the biggest spenders in the state. Virtually all of that money went to Manatt, Phelps & Phillips, a Los Angeles law firm with several connections to Schwarzenegger.

One of the firm's partners, George Kieffer, has been a personal attorney for first lady Maria Shriver and was a co-chairman of Schwarzenegger's re-election committee. Richard Costigan, who was Schwarzenegger's legislative secretary, went to work for Manatt this year. And former state Sen. Martha Escutia, a Democrat who worked closely with the governor on legislation banning junk food in schools and who the governor mentioned in his 2006 State-of-the-State speech, joined the firm last year and has been working on behalf of BHP.

Manatt also was one of four members of Garamendi's inaugural committee this year. Garamendi said he had known Kieffer and one of the founders of the firm, Chuck Manatt, for about 30 years, but had spoken to neither man about the BHP project.

BHP also has hired a public relations firm, Dewey Square Group, that is headed in California by Karen Skelton, a good friend of Shriver's.

By federal law, Schwarzenegger can approve the project, deny it or demand changes to it. He has until May 21 to make his decision.

And while state officials consider the project, U.S. Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Los Angeles, chairman of a government oversight committee, has launched an investigation into whether the White House forced the Environmental Protection Agency staff to reverse itself on requiring the project to meet strict air-quality standards. Waxman has charged that political appointees interfered with staff decisions, and he has demanded information from the EPA, White House and BHP.

This week's question:

Are liquified natural gas terminals wise energy-use options?

-- Yes. It's just a new delivery system to run power plants.

-- No. It's dangerous and environmentally unsound.

-- No. Heavy investment in technology we want to phase out.

-- Not in my backyard.

Vote at [sfgate.com/polls](http://sfgate.com/polls)

Last week's results:

Do you think you're susceptible to the branding of politicians?

-- Yes. It captures a candidate's essence.3%

-- Catch-phrases can hook me, but I'll take a closer look.6%

-- No. I tune out the noise and really just look at the record.65%

-- They're probably so effective I can't really tell.26%

Total votes: 390

## **Vt. bid to curb emissions heads to court**

By DAVID GRAM -- Associated Press Writer

Washington Post and San Francisco Chronicle, Monday, April 9, 2007 and Sacramento Bee, Sunday, April 8, 2007

BURLINGTON, Vt. (AP) A week after the U.S. Supreme Court said vehicle carbon dioxide emissions can be regulated like other pollutants, an effort by several states to do that is about to get its first court test.

California long has been the pacesetter in [regulating car emissions](#), setting tougher limits than those imposed by the federal government.

To avoid having cars built to meet 50 different sets of state rules, federal law allows other states to choose between the federal and the California rules. Vermont and nine other states follow California.

But on Tuesday, the focus shifts to Vermont, where a trial begins over new rules - adopted by California in 2005 and soon after by the other states - designed to reduce emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide.

The trial, resulting from a lawsuit filed against Vermont by a coalition of automakers and car dealers, is the first of a series of court fights expected in the states.

"Vermont is the first court in the nation to decide this issue and that will potentially have enormous impact," said Melissa Hoffer, vice president of the Conservation Law Foundation, one of several environmental groups involved in the case.

Charles Territo, spokesman for the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, called the case "very important, because it's the first trial where the issue of whether or not states have the authority to set their own fuel economy standards will be decided."

At issue is which set of federal regulations will control vehicle carbon emissions.

The auto industry argues that the only way to reduce carbon emissions is to improve vehicle mileage, because carbon emissions depend on how much fuel is burned. The U.S. Department of Transportation sets fuel economy standards; federal law - the Energy Policy and Conservation Act - pre-empts states from doing so.

The EPA made the same argument in determining that it would not set limits for carbon emissions, but the Supreme Court rejected the assertion.

Territo said the states' rules would ratchet down carbon emissions until fleet average fuel efficiency would be 43 miles per gallon by 2016.

Much of the trial in U.S. District Court is expected to feature experts testifying about whether that goal is technically achievable - and economically wise.

The automakers say the state rules fail on both counts. Environmental groups counter that the goals are achievable with current technology.

The states and the environmental groups in their corner don't think carbon emissions should be ruled by the Department of Transportation fuel economy standards. Instead, they want the [Clean Air Act](#) to hold sway.

That 1970s law allowed California to set more stringent emissions rules than the federal government, in recognition of that state's smog problems and that it passed regulations before the federal government did.

It also allowed other states to piggyback on the California rules, effectively setting up a system in which there are "federal cars," built for less stringent emission limits, and "California cars" built for tighter ones.

Amid growing concern about global climate change, California decided in 2005 to add carbon to the list of pollutants it would regulate, effective with the 2009 model year.

Vermont and eight other states - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and Washington - followed suit, and Maryland is expected to join when Gov. Martin O'Malley signs a bill passed by its Legislature last week.

Hoffer says the federal fuel economy law doesn't trump the Clean Air Act. There is an "unbroken precedent" of the Department of Transportation taking Clean Air Act emissions limits into account when it sets fuel economy standards, she said.

In its ruling last week, the U.S. Supreme Court appeared to agree that the EPA and DOT can work in tandem.

The majority said "that DOT sets mileage standards in no way licenses EPA to shirk its environmental responsibilities. EPA has been charged with protecting the public's health and welfare, a statutory obligation wholly independent of DOT's mandate to promote energy efficiency. The two obligations may overlap, but there is no reason to think the two agencies cannot both administer their obligations and yet avoid inconsistency."

## **Let's grow slowly, Patterson residents say** **They like city's tight-knit feel, but no lack of medical care**

By CHRISTINA SALERNO

Modesto Bee, Saturday, April 7, 2007

PATTERSON — Residents want to hold onto the city's small-town feel and agricultural land, while growing enough to create better-paying jobs and economic development by 2050.

Those were some of the priorities spelled out by the 25 people who showed up at the Patterson City Council chamber Wednesday night to share their opinions about the future of the West Side.

The meeting was one of seven town hall gatherings sponsored by the Stanislaus Council of Governments. The goal is to arrive at a "blueprint" for city councils and the Board of Supervisors to follow to build the communities residents want.

People in Patterson said they appreciate its location, farmland and tight-knit community. They don't like its lack of medical facilities, poor public transportation system and unaffordable housing.

The West Side gets the county's unwanted "trains and garbage," Patterson resident Elwood Schut said.

"Gangs are starting to really be a problem," added Sandy McDowell of Patterson.

By 2050, residents said they want to see a West Side with a regional hospital, more jobs and shopping, better public transportation, [clean air](#) and water, preserved agricultural land and a satellite campus for Modesto Junior College.

"And no short-rail," said Patterson City Councilman Sam Cuellar, whose statement was met with laughter from the small group.

Cuellar was referring to a development proposal for the nearby former Crows Landing air facility that includes a short-haul rail connection to the Port of Oakland.

The Stanislaus County effort is part of a larger San Joaquin Valley blueprint process being coordinated among eight counties.

Participants played a card game to measure the degree of effort that should be put into making changes. A majority played the cards asking for fairly aggressive regulations and laws that would improve the quality of life.

"I'd like to see the city build up rather than out," said Patterson Mayor Becky Campo, who was one of several city officials participating in the workshop. "I envision our downtown with more pedestrian walkways, shops, kiosks and services."

The rest of the meeting schedule:

Oakdale, Riverbank, Waterford, Hickman and Knights Ferry, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Oakdale Community Center, 110 Second St., Oakdale.

Ceres, Hughson, Empire and Keyes, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thursday in the Ceres City Council chamber, 2210 Magnolia St., Ceres.

## **Global warming adaptation won't be easy**

**Report says poor will suffer most, but California's energy efforts offer hope**

By Douglas Fischer, STAFF WRITER

Tri-Valley Herald, Saturday, April 7, 2007

The absence of serious action to curb industrial and automotive emissions will cook the planet beyond society's — and nature's — ability to adapt, according to a report released Friday by a panel of international scientists and diplomats.

Poor countries are particularly vulnerable, but virtually every spot on the globe faces change that will last thousands of years: increased hunger in the poorest countries, water shortages in the West, and massive floods and avalanches in Asia, warned the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

One in five species worldwide risks extinction. Say goodbye, for instance, to the polar bear. The United States faces increased wildfires, heat waves and coastal flooding, with California facing all three plus a 75 percent increase in the number of [smog-inducing bad air days](#).

And industrial and automotive emissions driving the change are having an impact today, the panel concluded after a bitter all-night session in Brussels, Belgium.

"The poorest of the poor in the world — and this includes poor people in prosperous societies — are going to be the worst hit," said Rajendra Pachauri, the panel's chairman. "People who are poor are least able to adapt to climate change."

The report, the second of three major reports on climate change expected this year from the intergovernmental panel, is 1,572 typewritten pages and charts the warming's likely impact across the world's major ecosystems, river deltas, cities and agricultural centers, Pachauri said. The summary alone tops 200 pages. It makes clear the problem's global dimension and the need for rich nations to lead.

Don't count the United States among them. Bush said this week that while he takes global warming "very seriously," any solution "cannot hurt economic growth," and reductions in greenhouse gases must not be nullified by increased emissions from developing nations.

But all is not doom and gloom. California's ongoing efforts to trim energy use, strip greenhouse gases from fuels and reduce emissions 80 percent below 2000 levels by midcentury could, if adopted by the United States and other industrialized nations, avert many of the worst-case scenarios outlined in the report, say many scientists working on energy and climate issues.

"We are conducting a singularly dangerous and ill-advised experiment with the world's climate," said Ralph Cavanagh, co-director of the Natural Resource Defense Council's energy program.

"The question is: What will it take to stop this experiment and how much will it cost? California's progress ... is the most hopeful part of that."

Cavanagh was in Davis on Friday to open the University of California, Davis, Western Cooling Efficiency Center, which hopes to revolutionize the country's air conditioners.

In the past 30 years, for instance, per capita electrical use has jumped 50 percent across the United States. In California, use has stayed flat.

But if California is to avoid losing its coasts, wine industry, or Sierra snowpack, society must do more.

"We must bend the curve down," Cavanagh said. "California will lead on this and will make it easier for Washington (D.C.) to do what it must do: make the case for mandatory limits on global warming pollution and strategies for achieving them at the lowest possible cost."

The IPCC report is the clearest and most comprehensive scientific statement to date on the impact of global warming mainly caused by man-induced carbon dioxide pollution.

The first report, issued in February, assessed the science of climate change and concluded humans are "very likely" causing the global warmup. The third, due in May, will explore the economic impacts of doing nothing to curb emissions.

Without action to curb carbon emissions, man's livable habitat will shrink starkly, said Stephen Schneider, a Stanford scientist who was one of the authors. "Don't be poor in a hot country, don't live in hurricane alley, watch out about being on the coasts or in the Arctic, and it's a bad idea to be on high mountains with glaciers melting.

"We can fix this" by investing a small part of the world's economic growth rate, Schneider said. "It's trillions of dollars, but it's a very trivial thing."

In California, the effects could be equally daunting, said Amy Leuers, California Climate Program manager for the Union of Concerned Scientists and lead author of the state's assessment of a warmer planet's impacts:

-Two to four times more heatwaves similar to last summer's, which left 150 people dead, killed 25,000 cattle and maxed the state's electrical grid.

-A 90 percent reduction in the Sierra snowpack, source of drinking water for at least two-thirds of California's 33 million residents.

-A 75 to 85 percent increase in the days conducive to smog formation.

"The economic argument (against action) makes no sense," Leuers said. "The reality is the climate is changing and the world is recognizing it. People are taking action. The smart governments are not only addressing this issue because it is the right thing to do, but because there's a smart business opportunity here. The people who do take action and who do take the lead will be the winners."

But while the science of climate change is all but certain, the politics are certainly not so.

Agreement on the report's conclusion came after an all-night session during which key sections were deleted from the draft and scientists angrily confronted government negotiators who they feared were watering down their findings.

Several scientists objected to the editing of the final draft by government negotiators but, in the end, agreed to compromises. However, some scientists vowed never to take part in the process again.

Five days of negotiations reached a climax when the delegates removed parts of a key chart highlighting devastating effects of climate change that kick in with every rise of 1.8 degrees, and in a tussle over the level of scientific reliability attached to key statements.

There was little doubt about the science, which was based on 29,000 sets of data, many of them collected in the last five years.

The United States, China and Saudi Arabia raised many of the objections to the phrasing, often seeking to tone down the certainty of some of the more dire projections.

The report said up to 30 percent of species face an increased risk of vanishing if global temperatures rise 3.6 degrees above the average in the 1980s and 1990s.

Areas in drought will become even dryer, adding to the risks of hunger and disease, it said. The world will face heightened threats of flooding, severe storms and the erosion of coastlines.

"This is a glimpse into an apocalyptic future," the Greenpeace environmental group said of the final report.

More than 120 nations attended the meeting. Each word was approved by consensus, and any change had to be approved by the scientists who drew up that section of the report.

At one point early Friday, it looked like the report "was not going to be accepted. It was very, very close to that point," said David Karoly, one of the scientific authors from the University of Oklahoma.

This year's series of reports by the IPCC were the first in six years from the prestigious body of 2,500 scientists, formed in 1988. Public awareness of climate change gave the IPCC's work unaccustomed importance and fueled the intensity of the closed-door negotiations during the five-day meeting.

"The urgency of this report prepared by the world's top scientists should be matched by an equally urgent response from governments," said Hans Verolme, director of the global climate change program of the World Wide Fund for Nature.

At the final session, the conference snagged over a sentence that said the impacts of climate change already were being observed on every continent and in most oceans.

"There is very high confidence that many natural systems are being affected by regional climate changes, particularly temperature increases," said the statement on the first page of text.

But China insisted on striking the word "very," injecting doubt into what the scientists argued were indisputable observations. The report's three authors refused to go along with the change, resulting in an hours-long deadlock that was broken by a U.S. compromise to delete any reference to confidence levels.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

## **Climate report: Poor will suffer most**

By ARTHUR MAX -- Associated Press Writer  
Fresno Bee, April 8, 2007

BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) The world faces increased hunger and water shortages in the poorest countries, massive floods and avalanches in Asia, and species extinction unless nations adapt to climate change and halt its progress, according to a report approved Friday by an international conference on global warming.

Agreement came after an all-night session during which key sections were deleted from the draft and scientists angrily confronted government negotiators who they feared were watering down their findings.

"It has been a complex exercise," said Rajendra Pachauri, chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Several scientists objected to the editing of the final draft by government negotiators but, in the end, agreed to compromises. However, some scientists vowed never to take part in the process again.

Five days of negotiations reached a climax when the delegates removed parts of a key chart highlighting devastating effects of climate change that kick in with every rise of 1.8 degrees, and in a tussle over the level of scientific reliability attached to key statements.

There was little doubt about the science, which was based on 29,000 sets of data, much of it collected in the last five years. "For the first time we are not just arm-waving with models," Martin Perry, who conducted the grueling negotiations, told reporters.

The United States, China and Saudi Arabia raised many of the objections to the phrasing, often seeking to tone down the certainty of some of the more dire projections.

The final IPCC report is the clearest and most comprehensive scientific statement to date on the impact of global warming mainly caused by man-induced carbon dioxide pollution.

"The poorest of the poor in the world - and this includes poor people in prosperous societies - are going to be the worst hit," Pachauri said. "People who are poor are least able to adapt to climate change."

The report said up to 30 percent of species face an increased risk of vanishing if global temperatures rise 3.6 degrees above the average in the 1980s and 1990s.

Areas in drought will become even more dry, adding to the risks of hunger and disease, it said. The world will face heightened threats of flooding, severe storms and the erosion of coastlines.

"This is a glimpse into an apocalyptic future," the Greenpeace environmental group said of the final report.

Without action to curb carbon emissions, man's livable habitat will shrink starkly, said Stephen Schneider, a Stanford scientist who was one of the authors. "Don't be poor in a hot country, don't live in hurricane alley, watch out about being on the coasts or in the Arctic, and it's a bad idea to be on high mountains with glaciers melting."

"We can fix this," by investing a small part of the world's economic growth rate, said Schneider. "It's trillions of dollars, but it's a very trivial thing."

Negotiators pored over the 21-page draft meant to be a policy guide for governments. The summary pares down the full 1,572-page scientific assessment of the evidence of climate change so far, and the impact it will have on the Earth's most vulnerable people and ecosystems.

More than 120 nations attended the meeting. Each word was approved by consensus, and any change had to be approved by the scientists who drew up that section of the report.

Parry denied the hard-fought editing process resulted in a watered-down version, but acknowledged that "certain messages were lost."

At one point early Friday, it looked like the report "was not going to be accepted. It was very, very close to that point," said David Karoly, one of the scientific authors from the University of Oklahoma.

Though weakened by the deletion of some elements, the final report "will send a very, very clear signal" to governments, said Yvo de Boer, the U.N.'s top climate official.

The summary will be presented to the G8 summit of the world's richest nations in June, when the European Union is expected to renew appeals to President Bush to join in international efforts to control emissions of fossil fuels.

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It is the second of four reports from the IPCC this year; the first report in February laid out the scientific case for how global warming is happening. This second report is the "so what" report, explaining what the effects of global warming will be.

For the first time, the scientists broke down their predictions into regions, and forecast that climate change will affect billions of people.

North America will experience more severe storms with human and economic loss, and cultural and social disruptions. It can expect more hurricanes, floods, droughts, heat waves and wildfires, it said. Coasts will be swamped by rising sea levels. In the short term, crop yields may increase by 5 percent to 20 percent from a longer growing season, but will plummet if temperatures rise by 7.2 degrees.

Africa will be hardest hit. By 2020, up to 250 million people are likely to be exposed to water shortages. In some countries, food production could fall by half, it said.

Parts of Asia are threatened with massive flooding and avalanches from melting Himalayan glaciers. Europe also will see its Alpine glaciers disappear. Australia's Great Barrier Reef will lose much of its coral to bleaching from even moderate increases in sea temperatures, the report said.

Separately, an independent organization that keeps tabs on glacial melting in Austria's Alps said its latest survey confirms that the ice sheets continue to shrink significantly and predicted most will vanish by the end of the century.

The Austrian Alpine Association said experts measured 105 of Austria's 925 glaciers last year and found they had receded by an average of 52 1/2 feet, with one of the sheets shrinking a dramatic 262 feet during 2006.

## **Scientists Get Last Say in Climate Study**

By SETH BORENSTEIN, The Associated Press

In the Washington Post, SF Chronicle, Fresno Bee, and other papers, April 7, 2007

BRUSSELS -- Two distinctly different groups, data-driven scientists and nuanced offend-no-one diplomats, collided and then converged this past week. At stake: a report on the future of the planet and the changes it faces with global warming.

An inside look at the last few hours of tense negotiations at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reveals how the diplomats won at the end thanks to persistence and deadlines. But scientists quietly note that they have the last say. Diplomats from 115 countries and 52 scientists hashed out the most comprehensive and gloomiest warning yet about the possible effects of global warming, from increased flooding, hunger, drought and diseases to the extinction of species.

The 23-page summary certainly didn't sound diplomatic. But it was too much so, scientists said.

In the past, scientists at these meetings felt that their warnings were conveyed, albeit slightly edited down. But several of them left Friday with the sense that they had lost control of their document. At one point, NASA's Cynthia Rosenzweig filed a formal protest and left the building, only to return, make peace and talk in positive tones. Others talked about abandoning the process altogether.

"There was no split in the science \_ they were all mad," said John Coequeyt, who observed the closed-door negotiations for the environmental group Greenpeace.

But Yvo de Boer, a diplomat who is the top climate official for the United Nations, countered that it was a "difficult choice." If it stayed the way scientists originally wrote it, some countries would not accept nor be bound by the science in the document. By changing the wording, "in exchange the countries are bound to this," de Boer said.

The report doesn't commit countries to action, like the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, but those involved agree that the science is accurate and that global warming is changing the planet and projected to get much worse.

Here's how negotiations went, based on interviews and an unusual opportunity for The Associated Press to observe the last 3 1/2 hours of debate.

The four-day meeting was supposed to end Thursday afternoon but was extended to Friday morning. A news conference was scheduled for 10 a.m. Friday to release the report, but the document wasn't finished until after that time.

Interpreters had been sent home at 2 a.m. Friday due to financial issues. Some pages had not been discussed and some of the most critical issues were still not solved as small group negotiations stalled.

Panel co-chairman Martin Parry of the United Kingdom acknowledged that some parts of the document were eliminated "because there was not enough time to work it through as well."

With such deadline problems, some countries \_ especially China, Saudi Arabia and at times Russia and the United States \_ were able to play hard ball.

China and Saudi Arabia wanted to lower the level of scientific confidence (from more than 90 percent to 80 percent) that the report had in a statement about current global warming effects and it looked like they would win because they wouldn't accept the original wording. That's when Rosenzweig protested and walked.

A U.S.-based compromise saved the day, avoiding any mention of scientific confidence.

A comparison of the original document, written by scientists, and the finished paper showed major reductions in forecasts for hunger and flooding victims. Instead of "hundreds of millions" of potential flood victims, the report said "many millions." A key mention of up to 120 million people at risk of hunger because of global warming was eliminated.

Yet, scientists have their fallback: a second summary that consists of 79 densely written, heavily footnoted pages.

The "technical summary," which will eventually be released to the public but was obtained by The Associated Press, will not be edited by diplomats. The technical summary, Rosenzweig said, contains "the real facts."

Some of its highlights, not included in the 23-page already-released summary:

\_ "More than one sixth of the world population live in glacier- or snowmelt-fed river basins and will be affected by decrease of water volume." And depending on how much fossil fuels are burned in the future, "262-983 million people are likely to move into the water stressed-category" by 2050.

\_ Global warming could increase the number of hungry in the world in 2080 by anywhere between 140 million and 1 billion, depending on how much greenhouse gas is emitted into the air over the next few decades.

\_ "Overall a 2 to 3 fold increase of population to be flooded is expected by 2080."

\_ Malaria, diarrhea diseases, dengue fever, tick-borne diseases, heat-related deaths will all rise with global warming. But in the United Kingdom, the drop in cold-related deaths will be bigger than the increase in heatstroke related deaths.

\_ In eastern North America, depending on fossil fuel emissions, [smog](#) will increase and there would be a 4.5 percent increase in smog-related deaths.

\_ Because global warming will hurt the poor more, there will be more "social equity" concerns and pressure for governments to do more

## **U.S., China Got Climate Warnings Toned Down**

By Juliet Eilperin, Washington Post Staff Writer  
Washington Post, April 7, 2007

Some sections of a grim scientific assessment of the impact of global warming on human, animal and plant life issued in Brussels yesterday were softened at the insistence of officials from China and the United States, participants in the negotiations said.

In particular, U.S. negotiators managed to eliminate language in one section that called for cuts in greenhouse gas emissions, said Patricia Romero Lankao, a scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colo., who was one of the report's lead authors.

In the course of negotiations over the report by the second working group of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, U.S. officials challenged the wording of a section suggesting that policymakers need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions because countries will not be able to respond to climate change simply by using adaptive measures such as levees and dikes.

In that instance, the original draft read: "However, adaptation alone is not expected to cope with all the projected effects of climate change, and especially not over the long run as most impacts increase in magnitude. Mitigation measures will therefore also be required." That second sentence does not appear in the final version of the IPCC Summary for Policymakers.

In a conference call with reporters early yesterday morning, Sharon Hayes, associate director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, said there was "a good deal of discussion" in Brussels over how best to summarize the report's scientific conclusions.

"And in this summary document there was a lot of care taken by all of the nations involved in the discussion to make sure that the certainty statements in this document -- whether scientists felt they had medium certainty or high certainty or very high certainty about different projected impacts -- were accurately reflected," Hayes said.

She declined to discuss specific negotiations over language, saying only that the U.S. government is satisfied with the final report.

Washington was not alone in seeking to alter some of the scientists' findings. China objected to wording that said "based on observed evidence, there is very high confidence that many natural systems, on all continents and in most oceans, are being affected by regional climate changes, particularly temperature increases." The term "very high confidence" means researchers are at least 90 percent sure of their findings.

When China asked that the word "very" be stricken, three scientific authors balked, and the deadlock was broken only by a compromise to delete any reference to confidence levels.

"That was a really hard discussion," said Romero Lankao, who participated in the talks. But the scientist, a lead author on the chapter examining the effect of global warming on industry, settlements and society, said the panel's overall message remained clear: "No one on Earth will escape the impacts of a warming planet."

Yesterday's report, titled, "Climate Change 2007: Climate Change Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability," warned that human-generated warming is already making oceans more acidic and parched regions even drier. Twenty to 30 percent of the world's species may disappear if the world warms another 2.7 to 4.5 degrees Fahrenheit, the authors concluded, and the risk of massive floods will increase significantly along the coasts because of rising seas and more intense storms.

Much of the report focuses on how particular regions will fare in a warming world, concluding that less-developed countries will experience more upheaval than developed ones. River runoff and water availability is likely to increase 10 to 40 percent at high latitudes and in wet, tropical areas; the regions that already suffer from shortages of water are likely to have 10 to 30 percent less available.

NCAR scientist Kathleen Miller -- a lead author of the chapter on fresh water resources -- said she is confident that dry regions such as the American Southwest will experience more drought in future decades, but it is hard to predict how severe the changes will be.

"The extent of the damage will depend on how much warming we experience, and how rapidly it proceeds," Miller said.

The report also examines how infectious diseases might spread in a warmer climate. Jonathan Patz, an associate professor of environmental studies and population health sciences at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and a lead author of the North America chapter, said the currently projected warming alone will probably mean that by 2050, the [Northeast will experience 68 percent more "red ozone alert" days indicating the air is unhealthy to breathe.](#)

The U.S. strain of the West Nile virus is also especially responsive to warmer temperatures, Patz added, and Africa is expected to experience an uptick in malaria, a disease that already accounts for 1 million to 2 million deaths a year worldwide.

"Climate change presents one of the most challenging environmental and public health threats of this millennium," Patz said.

Bush's top environmental adviser, James L. Connaughton, told reporters in the conference call that the report "reinforces" the administration's belief that it is pursuing the right policies to combat

climate change. This includes a push for increased auto efficiency and greater use of renewable fuels.

But Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.), who chairs a select House committee on climate change, said the administration is dealing only with a fraction of greenhouse gas emissions by regulating cars, and Congress is committed to passing a mandatory, economy-wide limit on emissions by the end of the year.

"The conclusions in the report are so scary that whatever success the Bush administration may have had in watering down the language won't have any impact on what the reaction of the world will be," Markey said in an interview, adding that Bush will soon have to decide whether to veto an emissions cap.

"Congress is heading toward a legislative showdown with the president on this issue. On that, there's no doubt."

## **X-Press Yourself: Teacher-to-be really is old school**

**In an age of runaway technology, Rod Oldfield is a VHS kind of guy**

By CHRISTOPHER CASKEY

Modesto Bee, Life Styles, Sunday, April 8, 2007

Rod Oldfield lives a life that does not revolve around technology. He and his wife, Stacy, got their first cell phone this month. They only recently bought a computer. They picked up their first DVD player this year, and it was more out of necessity than choice.

"We were renting movies, and all the cool movies were on DVD," said Oldfield, 36. "I guess it is time to give in."

His face is recognizable to many people who frequent bars and clubs in downtown Modesto. A popular bartender, he used to serve drinks at Tresetti's World Caffe and now tends bar at the new Bacchus.

But his days of slinging liquor could be limited. Oldfield soon will be studying to earn a teaching credential. He hopes to teach history at a high school or junior high level.

"I was originally thinking about law school, but I decided that wasn't for me," said Oldfield, who studied political science at the University of California at Santa Cruz. "I would like to try and make history fun for students. Sometimes those classes can be a little stale."

Though Oldfield grew up and currently lives in Modesto, he has been all over. He lived in Boise, Idaho, for five years and frequently visits Minnesota, where his wife's family lives. The two recently visited Paris.

When he can, Oldfield also likes to spend time outdoors.

**Q: You are a pretty popular bartender. What makes you be good at bartending?**

**A:** Maybe it comes easy to me because I have been fortunate to work at good spots where people have been great to me. But also, I look at it like having friends over at your house and pouring drinks. It's kind of like serving your friends in your house environment, except it is called work. And I just like talking to people and listening to their stories. Everyone has something to say.

**Q: It is probably the best job to hear interesting stories, right?**

**A:** It's true. You see a lot of people, and with Modesto growing in size, we get people traveling into town. I was wine tasting one time and talking to the guy pouring, and he said he gets to travel every day. What do you mean you get to travel every day? And he said, "Oh, yeah, you get to listen to people's stories from all over the world." He gets to travel through them.

**Q: What is the weirdest drink you have had to make?**

**A:** I used to have this kid who would come in. He had just turned 21, but he was into different drinks. He would come in with a little list. He would go online and get a recipe and bring it in and be like, "Can you make this?" And it was always when the bar was really busy. I would be like, this is going to be an expensive drink, and he was always like "Oh, I'll try it."

**Q: You want to teach. Why would you like to teach older students, like high school, as opposed to elementary students?**

**A:** The young kids are all over the place. Older kids, you can have more of a conversation with them. They are young adults. It is their choice to contribute and be part of it. The elementary level, they teach different subjects all day. At the higher levels, it is the same subject but different levels throughout the day.

**Q: You travel when you can. Do you have a favorite place you have visited so far?**

**A:** My wife and I loved Paris, but Lake Tahoe is probably our favorite spot. We got married there, and we always like going up there. Do some gambling, look at the water — just the scenic beauty.

**Q: Is there a place you still really want to visit?**

**A:** Oh, a ton of places. I would like to go to Fiji or Thailand. I've been to Spain, but (my wife and I) have never been there together. We have a huge list of places we would like to go, even here in the States. Like New York City. I would love to spend time there. I have never been to Seattle, either.

**Q: What is something about you that would surprise someone?**

**A:** I love gardening and stuff. I am not the best gardener, but I like to go out there. I usually pull things I shouldn't be pulling, though. But I love it, just being out there. Even mowing the yard.

**Q: Have you always liked to do yardwork, or did you warm up to it as you got older?**

**A:** When I lived with my parents or lived in an apartment, I didn't want to do any yardwork. But now, there is something soothing about it. It is like you accomplished something in your little space.

**Q: Do you have a pet peeve?**

**A:** I would say cell phones. We travel, and if we are on the road traveling or something and we need directions, there are really no pay phones anymore. But with cell phones, people are always checking them all the time. Not to sound mean, but how important are you? Especially kids — they are always on their phones. Is it that important? Can't it wait? Or people who in the middle of a conversation just pop it open.

**Q: What is your favorite thing about Modesto?**

**A:** My family and my wife. And it sounds like a cliché, but you are two hours from everything. And also, the people. I think it gets a bad rap, but you can go everywhere and you know someone. It still feels very small town, especially in this downtown community. You see a lot of the same faces. It is a big city, and it is getting bigger, but it still has quaintness to it.

**Q: What is your least favorite thing about it?**

**A:** [Pollution. Sometimes we have beautiful days, but sometimes the air is filthy.](#) I remember growing up here, and on most days, you could see the foothills and you could see out toward the hills in the East Bay. Now, on a really good day, you can see it. You come over the Altamont Pass, you just see this brown haze. Something needs to be done.

Opinion Column in Orange County Register, April 9, 2007

## **Ben Lieberman: \$6 gas not enough vs. global warming**

By BEN LIEBERMAN, Heritage Foundation analyst

It's hard to say which is scarier – apocalyptic global warming scenarios or the economic impact of some of the proposals designed to prevent them.

A recent European Environment Agency study reported that greenhouse-gas emissions from motor vehicles continue to rise due to increased driving, despite heavy fuel taxes that boost prices in Europe above \$6 per gallon. Even with gas prices about twice what we have in the U.S., Europe is falling short of its global-warming goals.

If \$6 a gallon gas isn't high enough to discourage European drivers, then what would it take to make U.S. drivers cut back? Those who support legislative efforts such as increased gasoline taxes to combat global warming should come clean about their proposals' likely impacts on Americans' wallets.

The nations comprising the European Union signed on to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the multilateral treaty to combat global warming by reducing carbon-dioxide emissions. Under this agreement, they're required to reduce their emissions 8 percent below 1990 levels by 2008. The U.S. hasn't ratified the treaty, due to concerns over compliance costs and the exemptions granted to China, India and other developing nations.

Gasoline taxes were higher in Europe than the U.S. even before Kyoto and currently average nearly \$4 per gallon, bringing the pump price well above \$6. In comparison, gas in the U.S. is subject to federal taxes of 18.4 cents per gallon and varying state and local taxes, for a total of 42 cents per gallon on average – putting the price for regular in the U.S. last week at around \$2.70 per gallon, with California at about \$3.22.

The British, Germans, French, Belgians, Dutch and Italians are now shelling out \$6.55, \$6.45, \$6.21, \$6.44, \$7.09 and \$6.24 per gallon, respectively, for premium gas. Yet they are driving more, not less. According to the EEA, miles driven and driving-related carbon emissions are on the rise.

Why? Joel Schwartz of the American Enterprise Institute believes that "despite the costs of owning and operating an automobile, people choose automobiles the world over because no other form of transportation comes anywhere close to providing comparable speed, flexibility, privacy and convenience." Even at \$6 per gallon, many Europeans – whose per capita incomes are lower than in the U.S. – are willing to cut back on other things rather than cut back on driving.

Most EU nations aren't on track to meet their Kyoto targets because of increasing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and "the main reason for increases between 1990 and 2004 was growing road transport demand," notes the EEA. It expects the upward trend in driving to continue.

But sharp declines would be needed for the Europeans to have any chance of coming into compliance with Kyoto. In other words, the taxes that have pushed the price up above \$6 a gallon are still not nearly enough to comply with Europe's global-warming agenda.

Although the U.S. isn't party to the Kyoto Protocol, several bills introduced in Congress seek to replicate Europe's strategy of setting limits on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Proponents of these bills are big on bluster about saving the Earth but are sketchy as to the cost, especially the price per gallon it would take to get vehicle emissions in line with their emissions targets. But in order to meet their stringent targets, gasoline usage will have to decline substantially, and if \$6 per gallon isn't high enough to accomplish that in Europe, what would it take in the U.S.?

Supporters of congressional efforts to restrict CO<sub>2</sub> emissions should come clean with the American public about the price tag. Given the failure of \$6 gas to help Europe's global-warming agenda, that price tag is likely to be astronomical.

Opinion in Washington Post, April 9, 2007

## **Carbon Ruling: A Welcome First Step**

By Christine Todd Whitman

Last week's Supreme Court decision concerning carbon dioxide emissions from cars was welcomed by all who regret that the United States has lagged far behind in addressing this serious environmental challenge.

The decision gives the Environmental Protection Agency two choices. It could develop, implement and enforce rules to regulate carbon dioxide emissions as a pollutant under the Clean Air Act. Or, it can seek to demonstrate, using science (real science, not political science) why carbon emissions do not contribute to climate change or bad air quality.

This ruling should herald the beginning of a carbon-constrained U.S. economy. For a moment last Tuesday I thought President Bush might agree. When he said that "whatever we do must be in concert with what happens internationally," I thought the administration might adopt a position on carbon emissions that would bring us closer to the regulation efforts being made by the rest of the developed world.

Then the president continued, "Unless there is an accord with China, China will produce greenhouse gases that will offset anything we do in a brief period of time." True, China will outpace our emissions level, but there was a time when the United States led the world in environmental protection. I hope we are not following China when it comes to environmental policymaking.

Of course, the president is right that we must find a way to reduce our carbon emissions without cutting back on economic prosperity. However, environmental protection and economic prosperity are not mutually exclusive. Over the past 10 years, for example, United Technologies, on whose board I serve, has reduced its absolute energy use by 19 percent while its revenue has grown more than 80 percent.

For guidance on which to base a policy, we can look to the results from the last time the Clean Air Act was amended, in 1990. Those amendments required substantial reductions in the emissions of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), the primary component of acid rain. There was broad agreement that acid rain was seriously damaging our environment. There was less unanimity about the method to be used to achieve the reduction in emissions -- a market-based cap-and-trade system.

Controversial among environmentalists and businesses, the trading program had government-set standards for safe concentrations of SO<sub>2</sub>, a clear timetable for achievement and strict penalties for non-attainment. In a break from previous approaches, the government said it didn't care how businesses reached the goals, only that they do it on time.

In addition, if a company lowered its emissions below the required level, it could keep the difference for future development or sell the credits to others that hadn't met the standards. The government cared only that the air was cleaned to required levels. If the profit motive spurred private-sector actions, fine.

Before I left the EPA, we checked how effective that program had been. The results were startling. Not only had there been nearly universal compliance across all emitters, the levels of SO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere were lower than the regulation had required, and the feat had been achieved in about half the time called for at much lower cost than anticipated.

This program was a success because there was a national standard set by the government, certainty on timelines and penalties, and flexibility in how the targets were achieved. While voluntary programs are good, they are not good enough, and we need national caps on greenhouse gases.

In January, the leaders of 10 of America's largest energy, manufacturing and financial services companies -- including Duke Power, DuPont and Lehman Brothers -- held a news conference

with leaders of several environmental groups. They called for government-required action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, using a market-based system similar to that employed in fighting acid rain. Their call has increasingly been echoed.

Back when he was governor of Texas, President Bush enacted mandatory caps on carbon emissions in his state. During the 2000 presidential campaign, he promised to regulate carbon emissions nationwide. Shortly after taking office, though, he backed away from that pledge. There were good domestic reasons at the time, but those reasons are no longer valid.

Neither the American people nor the rest of the world want this debate to be delayed until the 2008 elections. The temptation to preserve the issue will be great but must be resisted.

Over the past several years, calls for mandatory caps on carbon emissions -- from environmentalists, scientists, business leaders, evangelical Christians -- have grown. Now the Supreme Court has joined in. Delay is no longer an option. The president and Congress must act.

*The writer was administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency from 2001 to 2003.*

[Sacramento Bee, Commentary, Sunday, April 8, 2007](#)

### **The Blog Watch: Supreme Court Rules In Favor of Global Warming**

For years under the Bush administration, the Environmental Protection Agency has argued that it has no authority to regulate carbon emissions. Imagine that, the one government office in charge of -- what other than protecting the environment -- hasn't been doing its job? Well, five Supreme Court justices ruled (Monday) that carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases DO count as "air pollutants," and are thus within EPA regulatory jurisdiction under the authority of the 1990 Clean Air Act. ...

What will this mean? It means the EPA is getting a slap on the wrist and will have to reexamine and limit the greenhouse gas pollution from new motor vehicles. While all the rest of the developing world has been working together to cooperate under Kyoto and producing cars with twice the mileage as U.S. automakers, the wealthiest and most powerful nation in the world (with the most resources to concentrate on the problem) has not been held responsible for its contributions to global warming, and once and for all, we finally WILL be responsible for our vehicle emissions. The ruling should please California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, as it will empower him to enforce a law ... that will require car manufacturers to produce lower-emission vehicles by 2009.

Environmental Defense President Fred Krupp said after the Supreme Court verdict, "Today, the highest court in the land decided that the Clean Air Act clearly empowers the EPA to address the pressing problem of global warming pollution. Unfortunately, the EPA has refused to act and swift congressional action will be critical to ensure real progress. The court did all it can, but if we're really going to fix climate change, Congress has to pass a cap on global warming pollution, and soon."

The high court also wrapped up an old Clinton-era lawsuit on Monday, *Environmental Defense et al v. Duke Energy Corporation*, in favor of ED, and in unanimous support of a federal initiative to install pollution controls at older coal power plants.

[Hanford Sentinel, Editorial, Friday, April 6, 2007](#)

### **We can't wait to clean up our air**

So, now that the U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that there should be a federal response to global warming, where does that leave California's efforts to control emissions?

Experts are divided on this one. Some think the court's position strengthens California's hand legally. Others believe Congress will soon approve emissions rules that will supersede state laws, essentially making California's efforts a moot point.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger last year sent a request to President Bush and the EPA for a waiver that would allow California to forge ahead with separate - and much tougher - emissions regulations.

The governor wants to have the California plan go into effect in the 2009 car model year, with the goal of reducing tailpipe emissions by nearly a third by 2016. It's an ambitious effort and one that 10 other states have decided to copy.

This groundswell of support for tougher emissions laws is like a stick poking the sides of the Bush administration and federal regulators, saying you're not doing enough to help clean the air, so we're going to do it for you.

But the states can't do it without that waiver from the EPA.

Lawsuits to force the waiver will only add years to the process of cleaning up air pollution. And heaven knows we've waited long enough.

The optimal government response would be federal, and a national law that would be at least as stringent as the one written for California. We can't wait until we're gasping for air, especially here in the Valley, to recognize the need for action.