

Anthony Presto

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California air board approves plan to reduce shipping pollution

The Associated Press

In the Fresno Bee, S.F. Chronicle and other papers, Friday, April 21, 2006

Long Beach, Calif. (AP) - California's smog-fighting agency on Thursday approved a sweeping plan to reduce air pollution caused by the ports, rail lines and roadways that move goods around the state.

The Air Resources Board's plan sets out long-term goals and strategies to roll back air pollution levels from cargo movement to what they were five years ago. Diesel-related pollution alone would be reduced 85 percent.

With the amount of goods entering California ports expected to triple in 15 years, "now is the time to take action," board Chairman Robert F. Sawyer said during a public meeting.

"This problem did not occur overnight and it won't be resolved overnight, either," Sawyer said. "The emission reduction plan represents a starting point and a vision of where we need to be." The board is under pressure to meet federal and state smog standards.

The plan suggests using a combination of new anti-pollution regulations and business incentives to get shipping companies, railroads and trucking companies to adopt cleaner fuel, engines and procedures.

Reducing pollution could eliminate 1,500 premature deaths statewide each year by 2020 along with thousands of cases of asthma and other health problems, ARB staff told the panel.

It will cost an estimated \$6 billion to \$10 billion to achieve the goals. To work, the plan will need guaranteed funding and approval of new federal regulations to govern pollution by oceangoing ships and interstate train traffic.

T. L. Garrett, vice president of the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, urged the ARB to concentrate on market-based incentives to reduce ship pollution.

"The plan's approval was completely expected, and we'll continue to deal with it," Garrett said. "We do support the (ARB's) goals and acknowledge the need to reduce emission."

With Pacific Rim economies and imports growing, California's ports and cargo corridors are seeing increasing use and that has prompted concerns from nearby communities about the soot and smog spewed by container ships, locomotives and heavy diesel trucks.

Dr. John Miller, an emergency room physician who lives in San Pedro near the Long Beach and Los Angeles harbors, the nation's busiest port complex, called his area a "diesel death zone."

"This problem is right now," he said.

The adjacent ports are the main hub for cargo to and from the Far East and handled more than \$200 billion in trade last year.

Ships, which use high-sulfur fuel, have received little in the way of pollution regulation but by 2020 are expected to contribute 80 percent of the diesel pollution in the state, according to ARB staff.

The ARB plan is "a launch pad for action" to deal with that issue but only if the regulators follow through, said Martin Schlageter, campaign director for the California Coalition for Clean Air.

"Today is just about a document," he said. "Tomorrow will be about what regulations are they going to put on an industry that has been unregulated and has gotten a free ride on the backs of the health of Californians."

Cleanup strategies include convincing operators of ships to use onshore electrical power rather than running their engines to keep the lights burning in port. However, it would cost \$500,000 to \$1.5 million to convert each ship to have plug-in abilities, ARB staff said

Cargo target of smog board

Major pollution reduction sought in 'diesel death zone'

Associated Press

LA Daily News, Friday, April 21, 2006

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Coming: shuttles to the big trees

National parks, city to offer shuttle services

By Jed Chernabaeff, Staff writer
Visalia Times-Delta, Friday, April 21, 2006

Sequoia National Park Service officials announced Thursday that next summer they will begin providing a free shuttle service to park visitors.

The three-year pilot program will connect overnight and food service facilities at Wuksachi Lodge and Lodgepole Village and campground, with popular park features at the Giant Forest Museum, General Sherman Tree, Crescent Meadow and Moro Rock.

It was approved April 14, said Alex Picavet, a spokeswoman for Sequoia and Kings Canyon national parks.

"It's going to be a great benefit to the visitors because they will be able to park their car once and get around," she said. "For some, [driving in the park] is not a comfortable experience."

Picavet said the shuttles will help alleviate park congestion and [pollution](#).

"The whole idea is to help alleviate the issues with people trying to find parking and avoid people who are walking on trails along the side of the road," she said.

The announcement was good news for the city of Visalia, which has its sights set on establishing a "gateway" shuttle by next summer from Visalia to the national park.

"The fact that they will be implementing the internal shuttle at Sequoia paves the way for us to begin a gateway shuttle," said Leslie Caviglia, Visalia's deputy city manager. "[The city] has been working with park officials for two years and are pleased with the outcome."

Caviglia said the city already has drafts of schedules and routes for the service. She added that the city will begin to market to local travel groups and let them know the service will be available.

"The shuttle will be integral for vacation plans," Caviglia said.

Caviglia also said the first fleet of shuttle buses should include four running buses and one for "back up."

Details not clear yet

Picavet said during the next several months park officials will prepare plans that include how big the park's fleet will be, what type of buses will be used, along with other logistical components.

While logistics for the Sequoia National Park shuttle service aren't ready, other park officials in California say their shuttle services have been beneficial.

Kenneth Karst, a spokesman for Yosemite National Park, said a shuttle bus service has been available there for the past 13 years.

Karst said the park's shuttle fleet was converted last April to hybrid-electric buses.

"The hybrid-electric buses have reduced emissions over the previous fleet by 90 percent," Karst said. "A shuttle service is great for visitors and the park."

County holds lawnmower trade-in

North County Times, Thursday, April 20, 2006

SAN DIEGO ---- Hoping to entice homeowners to cut down on air pollution, county officials plan to hold their 7th annual lawnmower trade-in May 6. The event is a chance for people to get brand-new electric mowers in exchange for their old gas-powered machines.

The county event will start at 8 a.m. Saturday, May 6, in the north parking lot of the County Administration Center at 1600 Pacific Highway in San Diego. However, officials urged people to arrive by at least 7 a.m. if they want to get one of the 400 Black & Decker cordless, rechargeable lawnmowers scheduled to be given away.

County officials said this week that people can trade in their old gas-powered lawnmowers, along with \$150, to get one of the Black & Decker machines, which retail for \$449.

According to the California Air Resources Board, a single standard gas mower will create the same amount of pollution in one hour as 40 cars.

[Modesto Bee, Commentary, Friday, April 21, 2006](#)

Tilting at Windmills

By Anne Applebaum - The Washington Post

"Look there, friend Sancho Panza, where thirty or more monstrous giants rise up, all of whom I mean to engage in battle and slay, and with whose spoils we shall begin to make our fortunes."
-- from "Don Quixote" by Miguel de Cervantes

To my eye, they are lovely: Graceful, delicate, white against green grass and a blue sky. Last summer my children and I stopped specially to watch a group of them, wheels turning in the breeze.

But to those who dislike them, the modern wind turbine is worse than ugly. It is an aesthetic blight, a source of noise pollution, a murderer of birds and bats. As for the still-young wind industry, it is "an environmental plunderer, with its hirelings and parasites using a few truths and the politics of wishful thinking to frame a house of lies." Far from being clean and green, "corporate wind is yet another extraction industry relying on false promises," a "poster child for irresponsible development."

Such attacks -- those come from <http://www.stopillwind.org/>, the Web site of Maryland anti-wind activist Jon Boone -- are not atypical. Similar language turns up on <http://www.windwatch.org/>, on <http://www.windstop.org/>, and on a dozen other anti-wind sites, most started by local groups opposed to a particular project. Their recent, rapid proliferation is not an accident: After languishing for years on the eco-fringe, wind energy has suddenly become mainstream. High oil prices, natural gas shortages, better technology, fear of global warming, state renewable-energy mandates and, yes, tax breaks have finally made wind farms commercially viable as well as clean. Traditional utility companies want to build them -- and thus the traditional environmental movement (which supports wind energy) has produced a handful of untraditional splinter groups that are trying to stop them.

They may succeed. Already, activists and real estate developers have stalled projects across Pennsylvania, West Virginia and New York. In Western Maryland, a proposal to build wind

turbines alongside a coal mine, on a heavily logged mountaintop next to a transmission line, has just been nixed by state officials who called it too environmentally damaging. Along the coast of Nantucket, Mass. -- the only sufficiently shallow spot on the New England coast -- a coalition of anti-wind groups and summer homeowners, among them the Kennedy family, also seems set to block Cape Wind, a planned offshore wind farm. Their well-funded lobbying last month won them the attentions of Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), who, though normally an advocate of a state's right to its own resources, has made an exception for Massachusetts and helped pass an amendment designed to kill the project altogether.

The groups do have some arguments, ranging from the aesthetic -- if you are bothered by the sight of wind turbines on a mountaintop, which I am not (or, anyway, not when compared with the sight of a strip mine) -- to the economic. They are right to note that wind will not soon replace coal or gas, that wind isn't always as effective as supporters claim, and that some people are going to make a lot of money out of it (though some people make a lot of money out of coal, and indeed Nantucket summer homes as well).

But they also reflect a deeper American malady. The problem plaguing new energy developments is no longer NIMBYism, the "Not-In-My-Back-Yard" movement. The problem now, as one wind-power executive puts it, is BANANAism: "Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything." The anti-wind brigade, fierce though it is, pales beside the opposition to liquid natural gas terminals, and would fade entirely beside the mass movement that will oppose a new nuclear power plant. Indeed, the founders of Cape Wind say they embarked on the project in part because public antipathy prevents most other utility investments in New England.

Still, energy projects don't even have to be viable to spark opposition: Already, there are activists gearing up to fight the nascent biofuel industry, on the grounds that fields of switch grass or cornstalks needed to produce ethanol will replace rainforests and bucolic country landscapes. Soon the nonexistent "hydrogen economy" will doubtless be under attack as well. There's a lot of earnest, even bipartisan talk nowadays about the need for clean, [emissions-free energy](#). But are we really ready, politically, to build any new energy sources at all?

[Madera Tribune, Guest Commentary, Friday, April 21, 2006](#)

Some environmentalists a danger to humanity

By Michael S. Berliner

Earth Day approaches, and with it a grave danger faces mankind. The danger is not from acid rain, global warming, smog, or the logging of rain forests, as environmentalists would have us believe. The danger to mankind is from environmentalism.

The fundamental goal of environmentalism is not clean air and clean water; rather, it is the demolition of technological/industrial civilization. Environmentalism's goal is not the advancement of human health, human happiness, and human life; rather, it is a subhuman world where "nature" is worshipped like the totem of some primitive religion.

In a nation founded on the pioneer spirit, environmentalists have made "development" an evil word. They inhibit or prohibit the development of Alaskan oil, offshore drilling, nuclear power--and every other practical form of energy. Housing, commerce, and jobs are sacrificed to spotted owls and snail darters. Medical research is sacrificed to the "rights" of mice. Logging is sacrificed to the "rights" of trees. No instance of the progress that brought man out of the cave is safe from the onslaught of those "protecting" the environment from man, whom they consider a rapist and despoiler by his very essence.

Nature, they insist, has "intrinsic value," to be revered for its own sake, irrespective of any benefit to man. As a consequence, man is to be prohibited from using nature for his own ends. Since

nature supposedly has value and goodness in itself, any human action that changes the environment is necessarily immoral. Of course, environmentalists invoke the doctrine of intrinsic value not against wolves that eat sheep or beavers that gnaw trees; they invoke it only against man, only when man wants something.

The ideal world of environmentalism is not twenty-first-century Western civilization; it is the Garden of Eden, a world with no human intervention in nature, a world without innovation or change, a world without effort, a world where survival is somehow guaranteed, a world where man has mystically merged with the "environment." Had the environmentalist mentality prevailed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, we would have had no Industrial Revolution, a situation that consistent environmentalists would cheer--at least those few who might have managed to survive without the life-saving benefits of modern science and technology.

The expressed goal of environmentalism is to prevent man from changing his environment, from intruding on nature. That is why environmentalism is fundamentally anti-man. Intrusion is necessary for human survival. Only by intrusion can man avoid pestilence and famine. Only by intrusion can man control his life and project long-range goals. Intrusion improves the environment, if by "environment" one means the surroundings of man--the external material conditions of human life. Intrusion is a requirement of human nature. But in the environmentalists' paean to "Nature," human nature is omitted. For environmentalism, the "natural" world is a world without man. Man has no legitimate needs, but trees, ponds, and bacteria somehow do.

They don't mean it? Heed the words of the consistent environmentalists. "The ending of the human epoch on Earth," writes philosopher Paul Taylor in *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*, "would most likely be greeted with a hearty 'Good riddance!'" In a glowing review of Bill McKibben's *The End of Nature*, biologist David M. Graber writes (*Los Angeles Times*, October 29, 1989): "Human happiness [is] not as important as a wild and healthy planet. ... Until such time as *Homo sapiens* should decide to rejoin nature, some of us can only hope for the right virus to come along." Such is the naked essence of environmentalism: it mourns the death of one whale or tree but actually welcomes the death of billions of people. A more malevolent, man-hating philosophy is unimaginable.

The guiding principle of environmentalism is self-sacrifice, the sacrifice of longer lives, healthier lives, more prosperous lives, more enjoyable lives, i.e., the sacrifice of human lives. But an individual is not born in servitude. He has a moral right to live his own life for his own sake. He has no duty to sacrifice it to the needs of others and certainly not to the "needs" of the nonhuman.

To save mankind from environmentalism, what's needed is not the appeasing, compromising approach of those who urge a "balance" between the needs of man and the "needs" of the environment. To save mankind requires the wholesale rejection of environmentalism as hatred of science, technology, progress, and human life. To save mankind requires the return to a philosophy of reason and individualism, which makes life possible.

Dr. Michael S. Berliner is a member of the board of directors of the Ayn Rand Institute in Irvine, Calif.

[Los Angeles Times, Letter to the Editor, Friday, April 21, 2006](#)
Inland Empire's growing pains and quality of life

A dream? I lived in the Inland Empire for 31 years and finally got tired of what is now among the worst air in the nation and more than likely the worst traffic in the nation.

Say all you want about new atmosphere with L.A.-type attractions. If I live in Riverside and want to go to the Ontario Mills shopping mall, I should count on an hour's (or longer) drive for what was a 25-minute drive just a few years ago. During rush hour, it takes an hour to get from the north end of San Bernardino to the heart of Riverside, just a 15- to 20-minute drive two years ago.

Why people would pay \$400,000-plus for a basic home and this type of lifestyle is beyond me.

In the 1980s and '90s, we would avoid L.A. and Orange counties because the traffic was a nightmare; welcome to the Inland Empire dream.

ADRIAN FRISTENSKY - Pismo Beach

[San Francisco Chronicle, Guest Commentary, Wednesday, April 19, 2006](#)

As We Approach Earth Day

Art Harwood, Chris Kelly

Among one of the many objections that ended the California Legislature's attempt to put an infrastructure bond measure on the June ballot was the claim that proposed funding for parks, farmland and open space would not be used to support "infrastructure." This view reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of how previously authorized bond funds have been used to protect California's natural capital -- our green infrastructure -- and efficiently ensure clean air, clean water and sustainable local economies.

California's forests are the very essence of green infrastructure. They provide a rich array of resources essential to our quality of life and the vitality of California's economy. Forests capture greenhouse gases, provide habitat for fish and other wildlife, recreational opportunities, high quality forest products and good jobs. Yet, it is broadly recognized that California's forests are threatened by rural residential and agricultural development. If these threats are left unchecked, forests' role in green infrastructure will surely be diminished.

In 2004, the Conservation Fund, in partnership with the Nature Conservancy and two state agencies, the Coastal Conservancy and the Wildlife Conservation Board, acquired 24,000 acres of timberland along the Garcia River in Sonoma County for \$18 million. The state agencies contributed \$10 million from funds secured through previous natural-resource bond measures. The fund and the conservancy contributed the remainder from private donations, foundation grants and loans. Purchase of the Garcia River Forest established California's largest nonprofit owned "working forest" -- a permanently protected landscape that will generate revenue from sustainable timber harvests to support restoration activities that will increase clean air, clean water and good jobs.

The California Climate Action Team issued its report earlier this month to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the Legislature on how to reduce the production of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. In addition to programs affecting transportation and land use, the report recommends "forest management, conservation and reforestation" programs that encourage the capture of carbon dioxide in growing trees.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board and the state Department of Fish and Game are encouraging the adoption of certain management practices to reduce sedimentation and water temperature. These practices include protecting forests from development, increasing streamside forest "buffers" and reconfiguring forest roads and drainage culverts. On the Garcia River Forest, we have set aside almost 8,000 acres as a permanent reserve, including streamside buffers. We also have begun an ambitious program to identify sediment sources and adopt the necessary practices to reduce erosion over the entire forest.

Timber is California's ninth most valuable crop. Every year, nearly half of the value of all timber harvested in California comes from privately owned forests in Humboldt and Mendocino counties.

Consequently, employment in the forest products industry continues to play a vital role in these communities. Though the Conservation Fund is a nonprofit organization, we continue to pay property taxes and hire local heavy-equipment operators, foresters, biologists and others to assist with the management, operation and restoration of the Garcia River Forest. We expect to conduct our first timber harvest this summer, and will employ local loggers, truckers and foresters -- generating funds necessary to achieve the project's ambitious water quality and habitat restoration goals.

Notwithstanding the debate in the Legislature, nothing can be more foundational or basic to the future health of California than clean water, clean air and sustainable local economies. Investing in "green infrastructure" projects such as the Garcia River Forest through future resource bond measures just makes sense.

Art Harwood is president of Harwood Products, a family-owned lumber mill and the third-largest private employer in Mendocino County. Chris Kelly is California Program Director of the Conservation Fund, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting America's land and water legacy through a balanced approach that integrates economic and environmental objectives.