

[Fresno Bee editorials, Tuesday, February 6, 2007 :](#)

## **Spend some here**

### **The Valley deserves a fair share of money from Prop. 1B to clean air.**

The Valley's air district is trying to secure a big chunk of money from Proposition 1B, passed by state voters in November, to support efforts to clean the Valley's skies of pollution. It's a chance for everyone in the Valley to get involved in the crucial struggle for better lives and health for ourselves and our children.

It is also an opportunity for the Valley's delegation in the Legislature to work together in a bipartisan way to advance the prospects of one day breathing clean air again.

Proposition 1B sets aside \$1 billion for clean air efforts. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District thinks we should get \$250 million of that funding. We should indeed. The money is intended to be spent in efforts to reduce pollution along the state's trade corridors.

Few such corridors can compete with the Valley's Highway 99 and Interstate 5, both in terms of traffic volume and in the amount of smog - and particulate-producing emissions.

The air district would use the money to provide incentives for removing older vehicles from the highways. Vehicles account for at least 60% of the overall pollution problem in the Valley, and older ones — the so-called "gross polluters" — produce emissions all out of proportion to their numbers on the road. One old clunker can spew as much pollution as 20 newer cars.

It's a wise plan, but it may not get anywhere if coastal regions, with their larger political clout on the Legislature, have their way. The Valley is routinely shortchanged when it comes to funding from state sources, and that's why a full-court press by Valley legislators is essential. The public should back that effort fully.

Our air quality woes should trump historical neglect. Adjusted figures from the state Air Resources Board show that the Valley has pulled even with the Los Angeles area in terms of having the worst air quality in the state. That's not a contest we want to win.

Both fairness and the size of the Valley's problem argue for a large share of Proposition 1B money to be spent hereabouts. Now the task — as always — is to convince the Legislature and the governor to do the right thing.

## **Major momentum**

### **Global warming fight requires resolve on a worldwide scale.**

Scientists, by nature and tradition, are a cautious bunch. That caution is reflected in the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which was prepared by more than 1,250 researchers from 130 countries.

The report, released Friday, concludes that global warming is "unequivocal" and that it is a near-certainty that human activity — mainly the burning of fossil fuels which pumps carbon dioxide to the atmosphere — is the main driver of this trend over the last half-century.

Put aside the smoothed-over consensus language, and the message is clear: We're headed for big problems.

According to the IPCC, average temperatures could rise up to 7.2 degrees by 2100, and as seawater expands and ice sheets melt, ocean levels are projected to rise 7 to 23 inches. Such a rise could flood the airports of San Francisco and Oakland during storms, eliminate coastal beaches and deliveries of fresh water from the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta.

But wait: It could be worse. According to the IPCC, there is a 1-in-10 chance of warming that is much greater than its general projections. That is an enormous risk.

If the climate warms according to scientific consensus, the flood threat will increase, because more Sierra precipitation will fall in the form of rain instead of snow. On top of that, there is a 10% chance of even greater warming, which would doom nearly all of the low-lying areas of the world, where 300 million people live.

It will take a monumental effort — comparable to the Manhattan Project, but on a global scale — to provide a long-term insurance policy. Worldwide emissions of carbon dioxide will need to be slashed far beyond the 25% that California hopes to achieve on its own, through Assembly Bill 32.

As expected, the Bush administration and others aren't taking the report seriously. The American Enterprise Institute, which gets its funding from Exxon-Mobil and other industries, is offering \$10,000 to scientists willing to publicly debunk the IPCC's report. U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman accepted the findings but said the United States is a "small contributor" to the problem.

Whatever its faults with the Kyoto treaty, the United States is shirking its responsibility by refusing to join with other countries in an enforceable program to reduce greenhouse emissions.

### **Incentives for cleaner burning Vouchers offered for stove and fireplace upgrades**

By [Alex Breitler](#) - Record Staff Writer  
Stockton Record, Tuesday, February 06, 2007

Air quality and industry officials are trying harder than ever to convince the public to upgrade to federally-certified stoves and fireplace inserts. They burn cleaner and may ultimately help you breathe easier.

Two new programs beginning this month offer from \$250 to \$800 in vouchers for those willing to take this step. You could still end up paying thousands out of pocket; but with more than 9 million of the older wood stoves still in use nationwide, and with serious particulate matter pollution in the San Joaquin Valley each winter, officials say it's time to take the plunge.

Here's how it works:

1. Stove and fireplace owners can download vouchers from the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org). Or write to, or stop by, the district's Modesto office, 4800 Enterprise Way.
2. Mail in the completed voucher with proof of residency, like a copy of a utility bill or mortgage statement.
3. A voucher will be mailed back that can be used only at certain retailers, including three in San Joaquin County.
4. Stove or fireplace insert workers will install the new device and confirm that the old one is destroyed.

Facts:

\$198,000 is available to fund 500 to 900 projects for San Joaquin Valley residents; other incentives are available from the Hearth, Patio & Barbecue Association to make up the potential \$800 total.

The deadline to apply is March 15, or until the money runs out.

60 to 80 percent less smoke is released up the chimney of an Environmental Protection Agency-certified wood stove. They heat homes more effectively and require less wood.

According to the EPA, typical costs for upgrades — not counting the voucher money — are:  
\$3,000-\$4,200 Freestanding wood stove with new chimney  
\$3,500-\$4,000 Pellet stove  
\$3,000-\$4,000 Gas stove  
\$3,000-\$4,000 Fireplace inserts

### **Valley air imperils women's hearts Study of older group finds risks in winter haze.**

By Barbara Anderson / The Fresno Bee

Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Winter in the central San Joaquin Valley could be bad for your heart — especially if you're an older woman.

The sooty haze that hangs over the Valley this time of year contains tiny, gritty particles that researchers last week said increase the risk of heart disease in older women.

The study is one more piece of evidence tying dirty specks of air to heart attacks and strokes.

And Valley doctors said it's a risk factor that shouldn't be ignored.

"Even without lighting a cigarette, you can get a lot of toxins in your airways by simply living in the Valley," said Dr. John Gasman, a pulmonologist at Kaiser Permanente Medical Center in Fresno.

Air pollution forecasters predict unhealthy air today in Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Madera and Stanislaus counties and the air in San Joaquin County will be unhealthy for sensitive people, including those with lung and heart conditions. Valley residents should not use their wood-burning fireplaces and stoves today.

Previous studies have shown a connection between fine particle pollution and heart attacks and premature deaths.

Scientists speculate the tiny pieces of soot and vapors not only lodge deep inside the lungs, but may be small enough to get into the bloodstream, causing an inflammatory response that leads to heart problems and stroke.

The latest study, published Thursday in The New England Journal of Medicine, looked at the cardiovascular impact of fine particle pollution on postmenopausal women between the ages of 50 and 79.

It found breathing the particles that are many times smaller than the diameter of a human hair to be more harmful than previously thought.

According to the study, for every increase of 10 micrograms per cubic meter of particles breathed, there was an overall 76% increase in the risk for a fatal heart attack or stroke; and there was a 24% increase in the risk of having some type of heart problem.

And in addition to heart disease, they found an association between long-term exposure to air pollution and the incidence of stroke. For each 10-point increase in particles, there was a 35% increase in the risk of stroke and an 83% increase in the risk of death from a stroke.

The particles, called PM 2.5, are in abundance in the Valley in the fall and winter. And pressed close to the ground by layers of fog, they are easily inhaled.

So far this fall and winter, Fresno County has had 12 days that were declared unhealthy for everyone to breathe and 46 days that were dangerous for people with heart conditions and lung problems, such as asthma and emphysema.

The Valley generates tons of the pollution from fireplaces, tail pipes and an unhealthy chemical stew of gases created from dairies and vehicles.

And the more pollution spewed into the air, the busier doctors' offices become.

This winter, Saint Agnes Medical Center's cardiology beds have been full, said Dr. John Telles, a Fresno cardiologist. But that is not atypical, he said. "We always notice this in the winter here."

Air pollution's effects on the lungs also fill hospitals. A study of 500,000 Kaiser Permanente patients in Fresno and Sacramento between 1996 and 2000 found an increase in hospital admissions and emergency room visits for people with asthma, bronchitis and other respiratory problems as levels of particles spiked.

Kaiser's Gasman moved to Fresno six years ago from the Bay Area. He coined a term for many of the lung problems he treats: "Valley air lung."

Telles said Valley doctors are concerned about the impact of air pollution on their patients, and a group is working with the Central Valley Health Policy Institute at California State University, Fresno, to find funding for pollution studies that would focus on the Valley.

The latest study, which looked at 65,893 postmenopausal women in 36 metropolitan areas, jangled nerves in the Valley, especially among women with a history of heart disease.

Alice Fowler, 75, of Sanger had triple bypass surgery to unblock arteries in her heart in July 2005.

If dirty air can cause heart problems, "wow," she said. "It makes me uneasy about the air."

Dr. John Ambrose, chief of cardiology at the University of California at San Francisco-Fresno Medical Education program, hadn't reviewed the latest study, but said the results sound "kind of ominous for the Valley."

There is little question air pollution carries some risk, he said. And anyone with heart disease should take precautions to avoid doing physical activity outside on bad air days, he said.

Wanda Gardner, 67, of Fresno, wonders about the air she breathes on her daily early-morning walks. Air pollution levels often are the highest in the morning hours in winter, when the fog puts a blanket over the Valley.

Six years ago, after surgery to replace an aortic valve, doctors advised her to walk.

"What do you do?" Gardner asked. "You can't be a hermit and you have to live. So what do you do — I guess pray, that's all."

People should avoid exercising on unhealthy air days and especially at times of the day when air pollution levels are the highest, Telles said.

But he offers this additional advice for reducing the risk of heart disease, despite the inescapable Valley pollution: "Control your other risk factors [high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes] because this one you can't control."

## **Lawmakers promote fee hike to support alternative fuels**

By SAMANTHA YOUNG | The Associated Press  
In the Bakersfield Californian, Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2007

A group of Assembly Democrats proposed legislation Monday to boost funding for alternative fuel programs by raising fees paid by owners of new vehicles.

The bill would generate an estimated \$45 million a year to reduce air pollution and wean California from foreign oil by promoting research and development of alternative fuels.

The revenue would come from raising the smog fee motorists pay when they register cars that are six years old or newer. The annual fee would increase from \$12 to \$16.

"In California, air pollution is a major public health epidemic," said the bill's chief author, Assistant Majority Leader Kevin De Leon, whose Los Angeles district is crisscrossed by six freeways. "Residents living near freeways are literally being poisoned."

The bill comes a week after researchers at the University of Southern California released a 13-year study that found that children living near busy highways can develop long-term respiratory problems.

It also follows an executive order by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to reduce the carbon content of passenger vehicle fuels 10 percent by 2020.

Both the executive order and the De Leon bill are being described as a way for the state to wean itself from foreign oil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the landmark global warming law Schwarzenegger signed last year. The law mandates a 25 percent reduction of emissions over the next 13 years.

"This has been a crying need in California for a long time," said Bill Magavern, senior legislative representative for the Sierra Club.

While the De Leon bill was embraced by environmental and health advocates, it was criticized by Republicans and taxpayer groups as a tax hike that would generate a small amount of money that pales in comparison to efforts already under way in the private sector. British Petroleum last week committed \$500 million to alternative fuel research.

Assemblyman Chuck DeVore, R-Irvine, the ranking Republican on the Assembly Revenue and Taxation Committee, said lawmakers should tread carefully before raising fees to support alternative fuels.

"Many of these alternative fuels actually cause more smog," DeVore said. "To raise a fee that encourages the production of fuels that create more smog is political idiocy."

In addition, alternative fuels generate less tax revenue than traditional gasoline, DeVore said.

Ron Roach, a spokesman for the California Taxpayers' Association, said new car owners shouldn't have to pay a smog fee nor should their cars be required to undergo a pollution check.

"It sounds like a tax to me, not a fee," said Roach. "A fee is supposed to cover a service for you, not for someone else."

Voters last November rejected Proposition 87, an initiative that would have imposed a \$4 billion tax on oil production to promote alternative fuels and energy-efficient vehicles.

De Leon said his measure raises an existing fee but still saves car owners money in the long run. New car owners who pay the fee are exempt from having to have their vehicles go through the biennial smog check program, which costs car owners an average of \$50.

Schwarzenegger has not taken a position on the bill. However, in 2004, his budget increased the annual smog fee from \$6 to the current \$12 and allowed new car owners to avoid the smog checks for six years instead of four.

A spokesman for the governor, Bill Maile, said the administration looks forward to working with the Legislature "in finding innovative ways to diversify our fuel options and fight climate change."

### **Lawmakers promote fee hike to support alternative fuels**

By SAMANTHA YOUNG, Associated Press Writer  
In the S.F. Chronicle, Monday, February 5, 2007

SACRAMENTO, (AP) -- A group of Assembly Democrats proposed legislation Monday to boost funding for alternative fuel programs by raising fees paid by owners of new vehicles.

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### **Bill would increase smog fee on newer cars to \$16**

Chronicle Sacramento Bureau

S.F. Chronicle, Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Sacramento -- A bill seeking to raise \$45 million each year to help curb carbon emissions by increasing a portion of the automobile registration fee for owners of cars that are 6 years old or newer has been introduced.

AB255 by Assembly members Kevin de León, D-Los Angeles, Jared Huffman, D-San Rafael, and Mark DeSaulnier, D-Concord, would raise the annual Smog Abatement Fee from \$12 to \$16.

Currently, owners of newer automobiles pay the fee because they are not required to get a smog check as part of renewing vehicle registration, the authors say.

The new money would be given to the California Air Resources Board, which would dole out the funds to spur research and development of alternative fuels as well as grants to startup companies such as those that build vehicles that don't rely on petroleum fuels, DeSaulnier said.

### **O.C. carpool rule change more likely**

**Caltrans will allow its local director to decide whether to let solo drivers use the lanes outside rush hour.**

By David Reyes, Times Staff Writer

February 6, 2007

Whether to allow solo Orange County freeway motorists to drive in carpool lanes during off-peak hours will be decided by local Caltrans officials rather than those in Sacramento.

That increases the possibility that solo drivers will be able to use the carpool lanes, as they can in parts of the Bay Area and Sacramento, Carolyn Cavecche, chairwoman of the Orange County Transportation Authority, said Monday. County Supervisor Bill Campbell first made the request about a year ago.

In December, new carpool lanes on the Garden Grove Freeway became the first "continuous access" lanes in Southern California, enabling drivers to go in and out of the lanes regardless of how they are striped. The same access could be applied on other freeways in the county if the Caltrans policy is changed.

Cindy Quon, Caltrans director for Orange County, said it will take some time before she reaches

a decision. Caltrans plans to meet with OCTA to discuss the safety risks and other consequences of allowing more vehicles in the carpool lanes.

Carpool lanes were added to encourage commuters to share rides, reducing traffic and vehicle exhaust. But allowing solo drivers the same access could have disadvantages, Quon said, such as further clogging traffic and adding to air pollution.

"That's one of the things we need to study," she said.

Cars and trucks with at least two occupants are allowed to use the lanes, as are motorcyclists and solo drivers in certain hybrid vehicles.

Campbell, a former assemblyman, got the idea for the policy change while commuting in Sacramento County. Caltrans restricts carpool lane access there only during morning and evening rush hours.

From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and again after 7 p.m., the lanes are open to all vehicles. During those times, drivers can also go in and out of the lanes regardless of how they're striped.

In Southern California, a few routes, among them the Antelope Valley Freeway, allow off-peak use by all drivers.

But there are safety factors to consider, Caltrans officials said. Some freeways have bridge pillars close to carpool lanes that could pose a danger if drivers were allowed to enter and exit the lanes at any time. In addition, freeway signs would have to adequately warn drivers because the policy would presumably remain unchanged in neighboring counties.

In other business, OCTA board members who are part of a regional highway planning committee held a closed session to hear from the contractor on the \$500-million Garden Grove Freeway renovation.

Bad weather, project additions and other factors have caused delays in the project, which was supposed to have been completed Nov. 30. Work is continuing.

Although the contractor, Granite-Myers-Rados, is liable for penalties for not completing the work on time, a company spokesman has emphasized that project changes, including major bridge work, delayed completion through no fault of the company's.

The board, which could have imposed penalties on the contractor, took no action for now. After the meeting, Cavecche said she was satisfied that the contractor and OCTA were trying to work out a solution.

"But, personally, I'm not happy with what GMR brought to us today," she said.

## **Electric vehicles generate buzz**

**High-performance models planned include an SUV and sports cars. Enthusiasts are excited and skeptical.**

By John O'Dell, Times Staff Writer  
L.A. Times, Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Environmentally friendly cars don't have to be slow and stodgy.

ZAP, a Santa Rosa, Calif.-based importer of electric scooters and a small, short-distance electric car, aims to launch a 155-mph all-wheel-drive electric sport utility vehicle next year.

If it comes to market, the \$60,000 ZAP-X would join a select group of high-performance electric

vehicles led by a two-seat sports car from Tesla Motors Inc. of San Carlos, Calif. The \$92,000 Tesla Roadster is capable of accelerating from a dead stop to 60 mph in four seconds and has a top speed of more than 130 mph.

A third Northern California start-up, Wrightspeed Inc. of Burlingame, has announced plans for a \$120,000 electric roadster that boasts a zero-to-60 time of 3.8 seconds.

Tesla and Wrightspeed have shown drivable prototypes of their vehicles. ZAP, which says its five-passenger electric SUV could accelerate from zero to 60 mph in 4.8 seconds, has not.

The company — its name stands for "zero air pollution" — unveiled a concept version Saturday at the National Automobile Dealers Assn.'s annual convention in Las Vegas.

Although all the parts were on display, the vehicle shown there to prospective dealers was not a working model — that's still somewhere down the road, ZAP Chief Executive Steven Schneider said.

The company's announcement has generated excitement and skepticism among enthusiasts, who are passing around details online at websites devoted to electric vehicles.

"They've described an awesome car, but until it's in the showrooms, I'll be doubtful," said Paul Scott, a spokesman for Plug in America, a Santa Monica-based group that promotes development of hybrid-electric vehicles that use rechargeable batteries.

"It would be great if this comes out, but I wouldn't hold my breath," said Kevin Riddell, a Troy, Mich.-based analyst who covers alternative powertrain systems for J.D. Power & Associates.

"I'd be surprised if they could do all they say they want to do and bring it in at \$60,000."

Still, "the idea has legs," said Dan Hall, an analyst with market research firm AutoPacific Inc. in Tustin.

Although his firm's research shows there is little public awareness of electric vehicles, Hall said, those motorists who have shown interest are attracted by the technology, and many would be willing to spend \$60,000 "to have something like that to show off to the neighbors."

ZAP, Tesla and Wrightspeed are counting on sales of their high-priced, high-performance models to help create enough interest in electric vehicles and generate sufficient cash to enable them to build lower-cost, mainstream models.

ZAP already sells electric vehicles, but the publicly traded company has never tackled a project as ambitious as the SUV.

The company last made a splash with its aggressive promotion in 2005 of plans to import the two-seat Smart car from Europe. But that effort was dashed when Smart owner DaimlerChrysler first would not sell cars to ZAP and then said it would bring the Smart to the U.S. itself next year.

But CEO Schneider said his company was committed to delivering on its promises for the ZAP -X.

The vehicle would use the all-aluminum Lotus APX concept body designed by Lotus Engineering of Britain. Electric motors would be mounted on each wheel in place of the conventional centrally mounted motor that other electric vehicles use.

Schneider, accompanied by Lotus Engineering executives when he announced plans for the ZAP-X late last month, said eliminating the APX's internal-combustion powertrain and fuel system would create space to install an array of three battery packs for the car.

"It will give the ZAP-X a 350-mile range on one charge," Schneider said. That would be tops for a high-performance electric production car. The Tesla Roadster claims a 250-mile range, the Wrightspeed a maximum of 100 miles.

### **Bill aims to be carrot for clean-fuel ventures**

#### **State lawmakers hope a \$45 million fund can entice companies such as San Carlos' Tesla Motors to make their products here**

By Steven Harmon, MEDIANEWS SACRAMENTO BUREAU  
Contra Costa Times, Tuesday, February 6, 2007

SACRAMENTO - A group of California lawmakers hopes that a bill to create a \$45 million clean fuel technology fund will be just the thing for California to keep -- and attract -- companies such as San Carlos' Tesla Motors.

The electric car maker founded by Silicon Valley entrepreneurs Martin Eberhard and Marc Tarpenning, wants to expand and is considering building an electric car plant in Pittsburg. But, it's also weighing offers out of state.

Assemblyman Mark DeSaulnier, D-Martinez, who is one of the co-authors on the bill, said he held meetings with company and city officials Monday at his Capitol office and hopes such a fund would encourage Tesla to stay.

"If they want to grow to the scale they're talking about, the government will be very supportive of them," DeSaulnier said. "If we can put thousands of electric cars on the road, the government will want to support the subsidies."

The bill would create a fund supported by tacking on \$4 to the smog abatement fee paid at the time of vehicle registration by owners of vehicles that are six years older and less, and thus exempt from smog checks. That would put the abatement fee at \$16, still far less than the \$50 or more it costs to get a smog check.

"I think that's a pretty good deal in comparison to getting your car smogged," said Assemblyman Kevin de Leon, D-Los Angeles, the main sponsor of AB255. "This is a health, environmental and economic issue and we need to act now."

Republicans call it a tax increase, though they won't be able to force a two-thirds vote.

"It's the responsibility of energy companies to pay for research and development," said Sen. Tom McClintock, R-Thousand Oaks. "That's not the taxpayers' responsibility."

Tesla Motors -- whose brand motto is "Burn Rubber, Not Gasoline" -- is seeking to carve a niche in the electric car market and would be well positioned to use grants to help build an assembly plant, DeSaulnier said.

A spokesman for Tesla Motors seemed caught off guard when contacted by a reporter. He said he would get back with a comment but never did.

The company has taken deposits on 270 two-seat electric roadsters to be built at the Lotus plant in England, and off the assembly line by fall, according to reports. At a cost of \$100,000 apiece, they're powered by lithium-ion batteries, can go 250 miles for each charge, go from zero to 60 mph in four seconds and get the equivalent of 135 miles per gallon. It was named by Forbes magazine as the "new car that best lives up to its hype."

Hopeful of beginning production of more affordable cars over the next couple of years, DeSaulnier said Tesla is looking for \$20 million -- \$2 million a year over 10 years -- from California. The company is considering Pittsburg and Albuquerque, N.M., where city officials are offering their own incentives. Michigan is also making a pitch for Tesla to build a \$100 million plant on top of an engineering center it's establishing near Detroit.

"The exciting thing," DeSaulnier said, "is these funds are directed at getting the product out on the road."

The revenues raised from the smog abatement fee would go into the Clean Air and Energy Independence Fund and be administered by the California Air Resources Board. It's one of many clean fuel proposals in the Legislature.

"What's important about this measure that sets it apart is it has a funding source," said Bill Magavern, a lobbyist for the Sierra Club. "It's been a crying need in California for a long time -- an ongoing source of revenue to break our oil habit."

The bill would piggyback on a one-time \$25 million program from last year that funded clean air programs. But, it's unlikely that money will continue under this year's budget, lawmakers said, so a permanent source of funding is needed.

"While it's a good start," de Leon said, "the \$25 million would be meaningless if we don't follow up ... with a sustained effort to provide real alternatives to fossil fuels."

The measure, de Leon said, will help the state reduce the public health impacts caused by air pollution, increased environmental threats caused by the greenhouse gases, and lessen national security risks posed by dependence on foreign oil.

The fund is one of several proposals -- legislative and through private-public partnerships -- to provide millions of dollars to research and develop alternative fuels. Just last week, BP announced it would shell out \$500 million to a clean energy development partnership led by UC Berkeley researchers.

The issue also has received strong support from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

## **Pumping biofuel**

### ***Market analyst: Feedlots may send wheat prices soaring***

By Scott Yates, Capital Press Staff Writer

Capital Press Weekly Friday, February 2, 2007

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Joe Sowers, market analyst for U.S. Wheat Associates, has been watching the rise in corn prices with one question in mind: When is the nation going to wake up from its corn-based ethanol champagne buzz?

Sowers, 34, is the guy who watches world wheat supply and consumption data for the export-oriented USW, but there's just no ignoring the corn market, even for a wheatie. Among other things, the rising price of corn is expected to reduce spring wheat acres, and it's pressuring the feedlot industry to include more wheat in cattle rations.

Although he expected the rise in wheat acreage and world competition to weaken wheat prices from their recent high levels, Sowers said, he isn't so sure now.

"If we start to feed (wheat) massively, maybe the market will go higher than we thought," he said.

Although he doesn't believe the current ethanol boom can be sustained over the long term, for the next two to five years it will be "the largest single factor to influence the U.S. agricultural landscape." In a market report submitted to the USW board meeting in Washington, D.C., Sowers said the political support for energy produced from renewable fuels is monolithic.

And yet, if all the nation's corn went to alternative -fuel production it would only be enough to replace about 7 percent of the nation's gasoline use.

"It is clear that the mandated 7.5 billion gallons of ethanol production by 2012 will not go far against the 140 billion gallons of gasoline used in America," he wrote in his USW board report.

In an interview, he said the current mood surrounding the crop and its energy potential is irrational and illogical. He has more faith, however, in what he calls the holy grail of alternative fuels: cellulosic ethanol made from the stalks and straw left over from harvesting crops like corn and wheat. The federal government is pouring money into research to make the fuel source economically viable.

"If and when the industry is successful in producing ethanol from cellulose, the implications for acreage alignment will be dramatic," he said. He anticipated the time line for such a breakthrough at four to six years.

On other issues facing the wheat industry, Sowers said:

- Don't expect Australia to bounce back from its 11 million metric ton crop with a record crop next year. "You won't get another 24 million tons - maybe another 20 million tons."
- The only major exporter to have even an average production year was Canada, and U.S. imports from the north are forecast to reach an all-time record this year. "They had a heck of a lot of luck this year," Sowers said.

### **Wood burning banned today**

Modesto Bee, Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Lighting fireplaces is banned today in Stanislaus and Merced counties. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District predicts unhealthy air in those counties. That means wood-burning fireplaces, fireplace inserts, heating stoves and pellet stoves cannot be used unless they are the only means of heating a house. It's the third straight day of burn bans in Stanislaus County. Burning is allowed, but discouraged, today in San Joaquin County. On the Net: [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).

### **Clean-air plan would hike fees for late-model vehicles \$4 increase would support steps to cut greenhouse gases.**

By Jim Sanders - Bee Capitol Bureau  
Sacramento Bee, Tuesday, February 6, 2007

California's late-model vehicles would receive a \$4 annual fee increase under legislation unveiled Monday to bankroll clean air and alternative fuel efforts.

The measure is designed to provide an ongoing funding source for battling pollution, lowering greenhouse gas emissions and reducing dependence on foreign oil.

"This is a health, environmental and economic issue," said Assemblyman Kevin de León, a Los Angeles Democrat who proposed the measure, Assembly Bill 255. "We need to act now."

The legislation is designed as part of a much larger strategy, currently being developed, to meet commitments in a new state law to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent by 2020.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger took no position Monday on AB 255.

De León's bill would hike an existing fee that is charged to cars less than 7 years old in return for excusing them from the state's smog-check program.

The late-model vehicles would see their annual fee rise by 33 percent -- from \$12 to \$16.

Passage of AB 255 would provide about \$45 million annually to the California Air Resources Board each year to spearhead air pollution-related programs.

Bonnie Holmes Gen of the American Lung Association said cracking down on pollution would "reduce asthma attacks, heart and lung illnesses, abnormal lung development in children and premature deaths."

But critics challenged the need for a fee increase and questioned why owners of new cars, with arguably the cleanest engines, should bankroll pollution efforts.

"It's another example of government taking money out of people's wallets and transferring them to government," said Jon Coupal, president of the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association. "If this is truly a priority, why not fund it out of the general fund?"

State Sen. Tom McClintock, R-Thousand Oaks, criticized the notion of letting the Air Resources Board oversee the funds.

"I've never believed in giving a blank check to CARB -- or any other state agency," he said.

Brian Maas of the California Motor Car Dealers Association said targeting late-model vehicles would mean that even hybrid or alternative-fuel models would be slapped with the fee.

De León counters that the proposed increase, to \$16 per year, remains a bargain because late-model owners are excused from biennial smog-check requirements costing more than \$50.

AB 255 "is not a panacea," de Leon said. "But it is a down payment toward a cleaner future."

## **Workshops seek transportation views**

### BEE STAFF REPORTS

Modesto Bee, Tuesday, February 6, 2007

Calling all would-be transportation planners and/or Stanislaus County drivers, bus riders, commuter train riders, bicyclists and pedestrians — stressed or not:

Your time has arrived.

Beginning tonight, you can bring your ideas, opinions and complaints to three workshops seeking advice on the Regional Transportation Plan.

The 20-year blueprint serves as a master plan of transportation improvements, including:

- ? Air quality
- ? Highways
- ? Public transit
- ? Bike trails
- ? Walkways

The workshops, sponsored by the Stanislaus Council of Governments, are designed to solicit the community's ideas and opinions on what transportation improvements are needed.

## **Bay Area air regulators consider ban on wood fires**

The Associated Press

Sacramento Bee, Friday, February 2, 2007

San Francisco Bay area air quality regulators are proposing a mandatory ban on wood fires in fireplaces and stoves when the air is bad.

Under the proposed rules, wood fires would be prohibited in the nine-county Bay Area on "Spare the Air" days - when air quality is expected to reach unhealthy levels.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District Board has asked its staff to draft rule options so it can hold hearings on a proposed ban this summer.

Southern California is weighing a similar ban, and one already is enforced in the San Joaquin Valley, where regulators say the rules have improved air quality.

The Bay Area air district issued voluntary no-burn advisory on 26 Spare the Air nights this winter, but many people lit fires those nights anyway, officials said.

On many nights this winter, Bay Area air quality failed to meet new federal health standards for tiny particles that can lodge deep in the lungs and trigger respiratory and heart problems.

"When your activity in the home is poisoning the air in your neighborhood for a long distance around, that's when the air district says, 'Enough is enough,'" said Mark Ross, a Martinez city councilman who chairs the air district board.

### **SUV GOES ELECTRIC, AND FAST:**

Modesto Bee, Tuesday, February 6, 2007

This could be the start of one heck of a drag race. ZAP, a Santa Rosa-based importer of electric scooters and a small, short-distance electric car, aims to launch a 155-mph, all-wheel-drive electric sport utility vehicle next year. If it comes to market, the \$60,000 ZAP -X would join a select group of high-performance electric vehicles led by a two-seat sports car from Tesla Motors Inc. of San Carlos. The \$92,000 Tesla Roadster is capable of accelerating from a dead stop to 60 mph in four seconds and has a top speed of more than 130 mph. A third northern California startup, Wrightspeed Inc. of Burlingame, has announced plans for a \$120,000 electric roadster that boasts a zero-to-60 time of 3.8 seconds. ZAP — its name stands for "zero air pollution" — unveiled a concept version Saturday at the National Automobile Dealers Association's annual convention in Las Vegas.

### **Clean fuel bill could boost San Carlos' Tesla Motors**

**'This is a health, environmental and economic issue, and we need to act now'**

By Steven Harmon, MEDIANEWS SACRAMENTO BUREAU

Tri-Valley Herald, Tuesday, February 6, 2007

SACRAMENTO — A group of California lawmakers hope that a bill to create a \$45 million clean fuel technology fund will be just the thing for California to keep — and attract — companies like San Carlos' Tesla Motors.

The electric carmaker founded by Silicon Valley entrepreneurs Martin Eberhard and Marc Tarpenning, wants to expand and is considering building an electric car plant in Pittsburg. But, it's also weighing offers out of state.

Assemblyman Mark DeSaulnier, D-Martinez, who is one of the co-authors on the bill, said he held meetings with company and city officials Monday at his Capitol office and hopes such a fund would encourage Tesla to stay.

"If they want to grow to the scale they're talking about, the government will be very supportive of them," DeSaulnier said. "If we can put thousands of electric cars on the road, the government will want to support the subsidies."

The bill would create a fund supported by tacking on \$4 to the smog abatement fee paid at the time of vehicle registration by owners of vehicles that are six years older and less, and thus exempt from smog checks. That would put the abatement fee at \$16, still far less than the \$50 or more it costs to get a smog check.

"I think that's a pretty good deal in comparison to getting your car smogged," said Assemblyman Kevin deLeon, D-Los Angeles, the main sponsor of the bill, AB 255. "This is a health, environmental and economic issue, and we need to act now."

Republicans call it a tax increase, though they won't be able to force a two-thirds vote.

"It's the responsibility of energy companies to pay for research and development," said Sen. Tom McClintock, R-Thousand Oaks. "That's not the taxpayers' responsibility."

Tesla Motors — whose brand motto is "Burn Rubber, Not Gasoline" — is seeking to carve a niche in the electric car market and would be well positioned to use grants to help build an assembly plant, DeSaulnier said.

A spokesman for Tesla Motors seemed caught off guard when contacted by a reporter. He said he would get back with a comment but never did.

The company has taken deposits on 270 two-seat electric roadsters to be built at the Lotus plant in England, and off the assembly line by fall, according to reports. At a cost of \$100,000 apiece, they're powered by lithium-ion batteries, can go 250 miles for each charge, can get from zero to

60 mph in four seconds, and get the equivalent of 135 mpg. It was named by Forbes Magazine as the "new car that best lives up to its hype."

Hopeful of beginning production of more affordable cars over the next couple years, DeSaulnier said Tesla is looking for \$20 million — \$2 million a year over 10 years — from California. The company is considering Pittsburg and Albuquerque, N.M., where city officials are offering their own incentives. Michigan is also making a pitch for Tesla to build a \$100 million plant on top of an engineering center it's establishing near Detroit.

"The exciting thing," DeSaulnier said, "is these funds are directed at getting the product out on the road."

The revenues raised from the smog abatement fee would go into the Clean Air and Energy Independence Fund and be administered by the California Air Resources Board. It's one of many clean fuel proposals in the Legislature.

"What's important about this measure that sets it apart is it has a funding source," said Bill Magavern, a lobbyist for the Sierra Club. "It's been a crying need in California for a long time — an ongoing source of revenue to break our oil habit."

The bill would piggyback on a one-time \$25 million program from last year that funded clean air programs. But, it's unlikely that money will continue under this year's budget, lawmakers said, so a permanent source of funding is needed.

"While it's a good start," DeLeon said, "the \$25 million would be meaningless if we don't follow up ... with a sustained effort to provide real alternatives to fossil fuels."

The measure, DeLeon said, will help the state reduce the public health impacts caused by air pollution, increased environmental threats caused by the greenhouse gases, and lessen national security risks posed by dependence on foreign oil.

The fund is one of several proposals — legislative and through private-public partnerships — to provide millions of dollars to research and develop alternative fuels. Just last week, BP announced it would shell out \$500 million to a clean energy development partnership led by University of California, Berkeley researchers.

The issue also has received strong support from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

## **Critics dumping on landfill merger**

## **Some concerned move will draw tons of outside waste**

BY KERRY CAVANAUGH, Staff Writer  
LA Daily News, February 6, 2007

ILLS - Neighborhood activists worry the merger of two Sunshine Canyon Landfills into a megadump could draw tons of unwanted trash from outside the region if county officials agree to a last-minute request by dump operators.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the merger on a 3 -2 vote in June, allowing Browning Ferris Industries to operate two side -by-side landfills - one in county unincorporated land, one in city land - as a single operation.

Today the board will vote on details of a new land -use permit.

But landfill owner, Browning Ferris Industries, has been pushing county officials to remove a condition in the permit that prohibits the company from taking trash originating outside Los Angeles County.

City officials added that prohibition in 1999, when they approved an expansion and cleared the way for the joint city-county dump.

Activists worry that if BFI gets its way, the landfill could become a magnet for trash companies that are located outside Southern California - and even the state - that don't have as strict air pollution controls on their trucks.

Councilman Greig Smith said he does not want the county to overrule the city's hard -fought rule.

But BFI District Manager Greg Loughnane said the policy doesn't make sense, especially because Los Angeles County now sends 8,000 tons per day of garbage to Orange and Riverside counties and plans to rail -haul its garbage to Imperial County starting in 2013.

"When counties start imposing restrictions on things when in fact their waste streams go to other counties. it's inconsistent," BFI District Manager Greg Loughnane said.

The County Counsel's Office has also questioned whether the county can legally stop BFI from taking trash from outside the county, but the supervisors have so far said they want the new permit to match the city's strict standards.

The proposed land-use permit has been in the works for more than two years as BFI and opponents fought over rules and regulations at what will be one of the nation's largest landfills.

[OpEd in LA Daily News, Updated February 5, 2007](#)

## **A greener world**

### **Reducing energy use is the right thing to do even if global warming is a myth**

THE report by scientists from around the world last week provided confirmation of what an increasing amount of Americans had already come to believe - that global warming is real and it is almost certainly largely caused by humans.

This report wasn't the work of one mad scientist communing with the grebes in the wild. This was a sober, evidence-backed assessment from an international network of hundreds of leading climate researchers and scientists that has been documenting climate change for years.

Still, there are those who are suspicious of political motivations, and who raise objections to global warming's threat. And to those people we ask, does it even matter if global warming is myth or reality?

The counter-measures for halting global warming - using cleaner vehicles and driving less, reducing waste and consumption - are ones that would do us all a bit of good, regardless of what you believe about climate change.

For instance, who could honestly argue that reducing dependence on oil from the war-torn Middle East and making smart purchasing choices that result in cleaner air are bad things? We could all breathe easier, and oil money would stop flowing into some of our enemies' hands.

Maybe some can't buy the argument that widespread use of fossil fuels is causing polar ice to melt, thus drowning polar bears and causing seas to rise. But they must at least admit that without all that lovely revenue from oil production, terrorists would have a lot less money to spend buying bombs, training killers and blowing up civilians.

Maybe some can't swallow the idea that people could possibly trash this enormous planet. We urge them to talk to residents of Granada Hills who live in the shadow of Sunshine Canyon Landfill and know we are at least trashing some of it.

If they don't want to recycle for the planet, then do it for the people who live in neighborhoods that have fume-belching trash trucks rumbling through their streets every day.

Is it even in dispute that telecommuting means better quality of family life? And if it helps the environment, what's the loss?

In the end, it doesn't matter if you believe in global warming. We all would benefit personally and collectively by making smarter choices about using natural resources.

That's not just good for the environment, it's good for us.

[Merced Sun Star Editorial, February 6, 2007](#)

### **Our View: Cleaner air a public necessity**

#### **Studies show that living near pollution sources cuts performance of lungs dramatically**

Two recent studies make clear that controlling air pollution is more than just a good idea. It's a public health necessity. Both strongly suggest that clean air standards are not stringent enough to protect the most vulnerable populations.

In one study, researchers measured lung capacity -- the ability of airways to absorb oxygen and deliver it to the bloodstream -- for thousands of children living in smoggy and not so smoggy areas of Southern California.

Researchers tested the lungs of 3,677 children annually for 8 years as the children grew from 10 to 18, the years when lung development is most rapid. The youngsters tested lived in 12 different cities, from relatively clean Santa Maria and Lompoc to smoggier Long Beach and Riverside.

Scientists found significant differences in lung function, the ability of youngsters to take in a breath and expel it, between those who grew up near a freeway and those who didn't. By the time they reached 18, when lungs are fully developed, children who grew up within approximately a third of a mile of a freeway had 3 percent to 7 percent less lung capacity than those who were raised a mile or more away. Less lung function at 18 puts them at greater risk for heart attack, emphysema and other respiratory ailments when they reach 50. It means a less robust and shorter life.

In the second study, scientists followed 58,600 post-menopausal women from some 200 metropolitan areas across the country for seven years. They found that older women living in communities with high levels of fine particulate matter -- tiny bits of soot from cars, coal-fired power plants and diesel trucks, among other sources -- had a 150 percent greater risk of dying from heart disease and stroke than women who lived in areas with low levels of soot pollution.

Older women breathing air with the highest concentrations of soot, in places such as Riverside, faced the risk of dying from heart attack or stroke similar to that of an active cigarette smoker.

The current federal standard for soot pollution is 15 micrograms. This new study should help persuade federal regulators to tighten that standard as a number of environmentalists and public health experts have long urged. The World Health Organization has recommended a long-term standard of 10 micrograms.

Riverside, one of the dirtiest air basins tested, had an average annual level of 21 micrograms of particulate matter per cubic meter of air compared with Honolulu, the cleanest city surveyed, which had 5 micrograms per cubic meter. The Sacramento metropolitan area had 11.5.

The findings in both studies should prompt renewed urgency in our nation's effort to clean the air. Federal and state regulators need to tighten clean air standards. The nation needs more restrictions on coal and dirty diesel and greater investment in cleaner fuels and better transit.

Local officials have an obligation to make changes as well. In particular, local land-use planners should be careful not to site schools, playgrounds, day-care centers, housing and facilities for the elderly close to high-traffic roadways.

Such efforts will improve everyone's health. As these new studies show, though, older women and children may have the most to gain.

[Letter to the Fresno Bee, Tuesday, February 6, 2007:](#)

### **'Pledge to take action'**

Let's face it, people don't usually think "cool" when they think of Fresno. Recently, Fresno's name has been spotted on the list of "Cool Cities," those cities whose mayor has signed the U.S. Mayor's Protection Agreement to reduce global warming carbon dioxide pollution in their cities to 7% below 1990 levels by 2012.

Fresno resident Franz Weinschenk noticed that Fresno, once on the list, had slipped off, and he tracked down Bee journalist Bill McEwen to find out what happened. Thanks to the persistence in following up with the mayor, Fresno is again "good to go" on the list.

Let's hope we stay there this time, not because it's cool and trendy, and not because it's a political pot shot at the president, but because it's responsible stewardship of our environment. It is not symbolic. It is a pledge to take action.

*Karen Hammer, Clovis*

[Letters to the S.F. Chronicle, Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2007:](#)

### **Our top priority**

Editor -- The evidence is in, and it is incontrovertible. If we don't stop burning fossil fuels we will destroy our habitat. Even if we manage to suppress all coal and gas emissions tomorrow, it will only slow, not halt, the damage.

If the Earth is to survive, human beings must summon the collective will to stop doing what they have been doing and start doing something else. For starters, all municipal regions with mass transit need to phase out and ban the use of gasoline-powered automobiles.

After reading this story, the thought of turning my key in the ignition makes me physically ill. Global warming deserves top priority from this day on. Our globe is now in everyone's court.

*Carol Haskill, San Francisco*

Editor -- The logic of those opposed to the growing scientific consensus of human-influenced global warming strongly suggests that either the great majority of working scientists in all

countries, who daily find further proof of the truth of this proposition, are either deaf, dumb, blind, greedy, stupid, foolish, crazy, unethical herd-running corrupt incompetents, or they're not. Duh.

Have you noticed that the science deniers have assumed a fall-back position? They used to say global warming was an illusion. Now they say it is not primarily caused by human activity. When that becomes untenable, they will say it's too late to do anything. If it ever does become too late, it will be because of those who do nothing now, when there is still time.

*Michael Steinberg, Berkeley*

[Editorial in Orange County Register, February 6, 2007](#)

### **Cato Institute: Real action on warming too painful**

By JERRY TAYLOR and PETER VAN DOREN

Cato Institute scholars

The new Democratic majority in the Senate has wasted no time getting down to business concerning global warming. With at least four bills in the hopper as of Monday and hearings already under way, conservatives are worried that the Congress will finally produce real legislation to restrict greenhouse-gas emissions. But the odds that global warming hysteria will transform the modern industrial economy in any significant fashion are zero.

Putting a stop to global warming would require Herculean social and economic change, and the economic costs associated with those changes are steep – an annual \$1,154 per household in the United States, according to the recently released Stern Review. While the public increasingly thinks that something must be done about global warming, most people don't want to spend anywhere near that much money to turn wish into reality.

Environmentalists have four ways out of their box, none of which is very attractive.

First, they could argue that the costs associated with stabilizing global temperatures are less than the costs associated with doing nothing. But when was the last time that a majority of voters anywhere agreed to incur major economic costs today in order to reduce the chance of incurring even larger economic costs later? A glance at America's lavish commitments to Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security should disabuse everyone of the notion that the voting public will willingly make major sacrifices for future generations.

Second, environmentalists could curtail their policy ambitions in order to reduce the price tag of action, which means accepting more warming than they prefer. But many in the environmental movement are unwilling to accept any warming at all.

Third, environmentalists could try to find ways to bury the costs associated with change in hopes that the public wouldn't notice how much is being spent to stabilize global temperatures. In the context of global warming, however, this is difficult to pull off because there is no way to hide the cost of effective greenhouse gas emission controls.

Fourth and finally, environmentalists could argue that putting a halt to global warming will cost your average voter nothing at all and that relatively modest programs will get the job done. This represents abject surrender, however, because nothing short of fairly radical – and costly – economic change is likely to have much impact on future warming. On this point, the Stern Report – like all other serious economic investigations of the matter – is clear.

Environmentalists have chosen a combination of political options Nos. 2 and 4. And what do they have to show for it? Not much. Signatories to the Kyoto Protocol are finding that their low cost, free-lunch compliance strategies are yielding squat.

While "free lunch" compliance strategies aren't really free they do not represent the existential threat to capitalism that some fear might be on the political horizon. The worry that free-lunch policy failures will give birth to emissions controls with teeth, however, runs into the problems

noted above. If a President Hillary Clinton or John McCain were ever to try such a thing, we'd likely see a replay of the Clinton health care fiasco of 1993.

In short, no matter how events play out, there's a limit to how much damage a global warming control policy might wreak on the economy: the point at which voters begin to notice significant costs. While promises to do something about global warming may well become more popular, it's unlikely that policies that would actually do anything consequential about it ever will.

[Editorial in Orange County Register, February 6, 2007](#)

## **Dennis Avery: Is new U.N. climate report to be believed?**

By DENNIS AVERY

Author, former State Department senior policy analyst

The United Nations panel on climate change is asserting, again, that humans are overheating the planet. Again, they have no evidence to support their claim – but they want the United States to cut its energy use by perhaps 80 percent, just in case. Stabilizing greenhouse gases means no personal cars, no air conditioning, no vacation travel. Nancy Pelosi says one-third of the Senate wants this, too.

It's a remarkably sweeping demand, given that the Earth has warmed less than 1 degree Celsius over the past 150 years. This on a planet where the ice cores and seabed sediments tell us the climate has been either warming abruptly or cooling suddenly for a million years.

The first long ice cores from Greenland and the Antarctic were brought up in the 1980s. The ice layers showed the Earth warming 1–2 degrees roughly every 1,500 years – usually suddenly. The natural warmings often gained half their total strength in a few decades, then waffled erratically for centuries – rather like our planet's temperature pattern since 1850.

History tells us the coolings, not the warmings, have been the bad part. After the Medieval Warming ended about 1300, Europe was hit by huge storms, gigantic sea floods, crop failures and plagues.

My big gripe with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is that they're still keeping this climate cycle a virtual secret from the public.

What does the IPCC say about hundreds of long-dead trees on California's Whiting Mountain that tell us the Earth was 3.2 degrees Celsius warmer in the year 1350 than today? In that year, seven different tree species were killed – while growing above today's tree line – by a volcanic explosion. The trees' growth rings, species and location confirm that the climate was much warmer than today's, says C. I. Millar of the U.S. Forest Service, reporting in *Quaternary Research*, Nov. 27, 2006.

The new IPCC report warns us it can't explain the recent surge of warming from 1976-98. Therefore, it claims the surge must have been caused by human-emitted CO<sub>2</sub>. But the IPCC also can't explain why more than half of the current warming occurred before 1940, before the Industrial Revolution improved global living standards and increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Look at this interesting coincidence: The "inexplicable" 1976-98 surge in global temperature looks very much like the warming surge from 1916-40. After 1940, we had a 35-year cooling – which the IPCC also can't explain. But in 1996, researchers discovered a 50-60 year Pacific-wide climate cycle they call the Pacific Decadal Oscillation. This cycle caused the salmon decline in the Columbia River after 1977. It also causes shifts in sardine and anchovy catches all around the Pacific.

This oscillation shifted into a cool phase in 1940, with lots of salmon in the Columbia, until 1977. That's almost exactly the period of the 1940-76 global cooling. Then the pendulum swung back warmer, and the Columbia salmon declined – until about 1999. That closely matches the 1976-98 surge in global temperatures.

Does the Pacific climate cycle explain the two most-recent short-term blips on the world's temperature chart better than humanity's small contribution to the CO<sub>2</sub> that makes up only 0.03 percent of the atmosphere? It is certainly worth exploring more carefully before we make huge changes in our standards of living worldwide.

Past climate warmings haven't correlated with CO<sub>2</sub> changes. The Antarctic ice cores show that after the past four Ice Ages, the temperatures warmed 800 years before the CO<sub>2</sub> levels increased in the atmosphere. The warming produced more CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, not the other way around.

It's worth noting that the environmental movement and politicians also blamed human activity for the salmon decline. Farming, fishing, and logging were reined in, sending the Pacific Northwest's rural economies into despair. Now we've found the Pacific Decadal Oscillation. Is a natural cycle also the answer for the U.N. climate change panel?