

# COLAB

San Luis Obispo County



The Coalition of Labor Agriculture and Business

**WEEKLY UPDATE SEPTEMBER 17-23, 2023**

# COLAB

San Luis Obispo County



# FALL FORUM

**Wednesday, October 4th**  
**5:30—7:30 PM**  
**Thousand Hills Ranch**  
**550 Thousand Hills Rd.**  
**Pismo Beach, CA**

Thousand Hills Rd. is off of Price Canyon. Please use caution, as the road is somewhat hidden around a bend in the road and it comes up on you suddenly. Once on Thousand Hills Road, follow the road for approximately one mile to the red roofed barn on right!

**BEER, LOCAL FINE WINES, AND HOT & COLD APPETIZERS WILL BE SERVED**

## Featuring:

**TRUCKS, HOMES, AND FOOD**  
**— HOW WE CAN DEFEND THESE VITAL ESSENTIALS IN AN AGE OF REGRESSIVE SUPPRESSION.**

**HEAR FROM OUR INDUSTRY EXPERTS, BRENT BURCHETT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SLO COUNTY FARM BUREAU, LINDY HATCHER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HOME BUILDERS ASSOC OF THE CENTRAL COAST AND JOEL DE LA CERDA FROM CENTRAL COAST TRUCK CENTER**



**Kindly RSVP by September 27th — there is no charge for this informative event!**

**Email: [colabslo@gmail.com](mailto:colabslo@gmail.com) or call (805) 548-0340**

**THIS WEEK**  
**SEE PAGE 4**

**NO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**  
**LAFCO CANCELLED**  
**OTHER AGENCIES DORMANT**

**LAST WEEK**  
**SEE PAGE 4**

**BOARD MAJORITY INTELLECTUALLY**  
**DISHONEST ON PROP 13**  
*THEY ARE SCAVENGERS OF THE MIDDLECLASS CARCASS*  
**SEE PAGE 8**



**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**

**NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT DENIED 3/2**  
*IT WAS TO PROMOTE THE OFFSHORE WIND PROJECT*  
*ARNOLD & PESCHONG DEMANDED MORE FACTS AND NUMBERS*

**OCEANO FIRE DEPARTMENT DYING - COUNTY TAKEOVER OK'D**

**COUNTY BOS MAJORITY VOTED TO UNDERMINE PROP. 13**

***THEY SAID THEY SUPPORT IT BUT NOT THE 2/3 VOTE PROVISION***

**SUPERVISORIAL REDISTRICTING COMMISSION  
BIG PROCESS TO DESIGN & AND ADOPT ONE IS APPROVED 3/2  
ARNOLD AND PESCHONG QUESTION ACCOUNTABILITY/OPPOSE**

**STATUS OF BIG REACH ECON DEV PROJECT  
BOARD SEEMED DAZED – NOW WHAT? – MORE PLANS?**

**SUPERVISOR REQUESTS FOR NEW POLICY  
WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING  
STANDING ITEM AT END OF MEETING**

**EMERGENT ISSUES**

**SEE PAGE 20**

**KATY GRIME’S (CALIFORNIA GLOBE) CHECKLIST  
OF NEWSOM-LED DESTRUCTIVE POLICIES AND  
GARBAGE OUTCOMES**

**THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA WILL HAVE TO BUY  
ALL THE ENERGY GENERATED FROM THE  
OFFSHORE WINDMILLS  
*THE ELECTRICITY IS SO EXPENSIVE & THE PROJECT SO  
RISKY THAT THE INVESTOR-OWNED UTILITIES WILL NOT  
SIGN UP***

**ENVIRONMENTALISTS CALL FOR SHUTDOWN OF  
DIABLO NUCLEAR REACTOR, CITING  
CATASTROPHIC RISK**

**COMBUSTIBLE CALIFORNIA  
*CAN THE GOLDEN STATE’S FORESTS SURVIVE  
ENVIRONMENTALISM?***

**COLAB IN DEPTH  
SEE PAGE 29**

**REVENGE OF THE BUMS**

*What kind of government can there be that produces such diseased leadership?*

**BY MATHEW BOOSE**

**PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE EXTREMISM**

*There's a remote chance that catastrophic climate change is imminent, and an even more remote possibility we can do something about it*

**BY EWARD RING**

**POST-POSTMODERN AMERICA**

***WOKE REVOLUTION DEPENDS ON ITS ADVOCATES NEVER  
HAVING TO EXPERIENCE FIRSTHAND ANY OF THE  
NONSENSE THEY INFLICT ON OTHERS***

**BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON**

**THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS**

**ALL MEETINGS ARE AT 9:00 AM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**

**No Board of Supervisors Meeting on Tuesday, September 20, 2023 (Not Scheduled)**

**Local Agency Formation Commission of Thursday, September 21, 2023 (Cancelled)**

**LAST WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS**

**Board of Supervisors Meeting of Tuesday, September 12, 2023 (Completed)**

**Item 4 - Amendment to Item # 4 - Request to 1) approve a resolution amending the Position Allocation List (PAL) to add a 1.00 FTE Principal Administrative Analyst to the Administrative Office focused on offshore wind energy development; and**

**2) approve a corresponding budget adjustment in the amount (of \$XX was missing) from state grant funding to FC 104 - Administrative Office to provide salary appropriation for this position, by 4/5 vote. Staff is amending the corresponding budget adjustment amount to \$135,000, replacing the staff report to reflect those changes.** This was a major policy consideration that should have been taken off the consent calendar. It is the first step in creating a more comprehensive economic development program within the County structure. It is not clear how it will complement the County's current economic development program run by the regional not-for-profit REACH.

Instead, it should have been moved to the afternoon and considered prior to or after **Item 36**.

In the end both Supervisors Arnold and Peschong voted no, especially on the grounds that the first priority of the new unit will be to assist development of the large off-shore windfarm. The County has not actually studied the windfarm issue in terms of its economic feasibility, how it will impact the cost of energy, long term employment, or environmental impacts on the coastline, where support facilities may be located.

**A Major Policy Question:** Do the people of San Luis Obispo County and its Board of Supervisors support the development of the windfarm in the first place? We don't recall the Board actually having staff prepare an analysis and holding a public hearing on the matter.

One fundamental question is – all in, just how much will a kilowatt hour of electricity cost, including government subsidies from the project.

The initial purpose of the item was to establish a principal analyst position in the CAO's office to push the offshore wind energy project.

*This appropriation was in response to a request from the County of San Luis Obispo to State legislators to provide funding for staff time and resources dedicated to supporting the State in meeting its offshore wind (OSW) deployment goals. Since 2021, County involvement in offshore wind has been supported primarily from the Administrative Office and Public Works, with additional expertise provided by County Counsel and Planning and Building.*

*These activities have included the following (with more details provided in section 3 of this discussion):*

- *Participating in intergovernmental taskforces and serving on technical advisory committees related waterfront infrastructure;*

- *Engaging with offshore wind developers and industry representatives;*
- *Representing the community's interests in the federal lease process;*
- *Representing the community's interests in state legislative and regulatory processes, including the AB 525 strategic planning process;*
- *Representing the County at various offshore wind industry conferences and forums;*
- *Coordinating with counterparts in other potential offshore wind host communities on common areas of common interest; and*
- *Collaborating with local, state, regional, and federal stakeholders on issues such as waterfront infrastructure siting opportunities, environmental and cultural concerns, community benefits, permitting, and economic development and workforce development opportunities*



The balance of the item covers the expansion of the unit, which would ostensibly be dedicated to wind energy development and other economic development issues.

*The forthcoming proposal is expected to include elevating the Economic Development Manager position and tightening the connection with the County’s workforce development team and activities. The Economic Development Manager will continue to take the lead on legislative and regulatory efforts regarding offshore wind. The Principal Administrative Analyst – Offshore Wind position under consideration by your Board today would be reporting into this division upon its creation and would be closely connected to economic development activities. County staff is also identifying opportunities to further strengthen economic development at the County through additional grant funding opportunities to support an Administrative Analyst position dedicated to expanding broadband infrastructure and access, traditional economic development activities (business attraction, retention and expansion), and other identified economic development priority areas and grant management opportunities.*

In fact, the newly proposed unit could become the policy development think tank/staff for expanding the leftist Board agenda.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The recommended PAL change will result in an annual cost of the position at top step estimated at \$229,668. It requested to allocate \$123,467 for salaries and benefits and \$11,533 for services and supplies related to the position for a total of \$135,000 in FY 2023-24. The additional increases in salary and benefits are shown in the table below.

Principal Administrative Analyst

FY 2023-24 Estimated Annual Expense						
Action	Classification	FTE	Salary	Benefits	Total	Step Estimate
Add	Principal Admin Analyst (FC 104)	1.00	\$74,610	\$ 48,857	\$123,467	Step 1 for 6 months Step 2 for 2 months
	<b>Net Change FY 2023-24</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>\$74,610</b>	<b>\$48,857</b>	<b>\$123,467</b>	
FY 2024-25 Estimated Annual Expense						
Action	Classification	FTE	Salary	Benefits	Total	Step Estimate
Add	Principal Admin Analyst (FC 104)	1.00	\$117,031	\$76,597	\$193,628	Step 2 for 10 months Step 3 for 2 months
	<b>Net Change FY 2024-25</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>\$117,031</b>	<b>\$76,597</b>	<b>\$193,628</b>	
Estimated Annual Expense at Maximum Step (Step 6 of 6)						
Action	Classification	FTE	Salary	Benefits	Total	Step Estimate
Add	Principal Admin Analyst (FC 104)	1.00	\$ 141,086	\$88,582	\$229,668	Step 6 for 12 months
	<b>Net Change FY 2024-25</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>\$141,086</b>	<b>\$88,582</b>	<b>\$229,668</b>	

Go to **Item 36** on page 12, below, to see a related item on economic development.

**Item 31 - Request to receive a report and provide direction regarding: 1) the County’s option to assume fire responsibility as named in Oceano Community Service District’s application of divestiture of fire authority to the Local Agency Formation Commission; and 2) the level of fire service the County, as the successor agency, would provide to the community of Oceano if responsibility is directed to be assumed.** The Board voted 5/0 to

approve the County absorption of the small Fire Department. Even though there is a previous County policy not to increase County general fund expenses when entities collapse, the Board clearly thought that the fact that it is a public safety issue overshadowed the policy.

**Background:** The Oceano Community Service District has requested that the County assume responsibility for its fire and all hazard protection. The costs of operating the fire service have outstripped the District’s revenue growth, due to increasing salary and benefit growth, especially pension cost. The District citizens have rejected a ballot measure to impose a tax increase. The Board is asked to give further direction. There does not seem to be a professional recommendation from staff on which of several paths the Board should take.

As we have forecast over the years, this will be a growing trend as weaker districts and some cities begin to collapse under the unsustainable structure of California State and local government costs and financing mechanisms. Several years ago, the Cayucos Fire District went through the same process and wound up costing the County an additional million dollars per year.

Several different levels of service and corresponding levels of cost are detailed in the tables below.

By comparing the level of service in the first table to the new costs in the second table, the reader can ascertain the choices.

**Summary of Service Level Options for the County**

Option	Responding Station	Increased Resources to Responding Station	Estimated One Time Cost	Estimated Annual Ongoing Cost	Response Time	Service Level Impact to Oceano and Surrounding Area Compared to Current Service Level
<b>County Fire/CAL FIRE</b>						
1	Nipomo 22	None	\$0	\$0*	11-12 minutes as available	Significant Decrease
2	Nipomo 22	Increase from 2-0 to 3-0 staffing	\$360,000	\$1.4M*	11-12 minutes as available	Significant Decrease
3	Nipomo 22	Add 2-0 engine company	\$1.9M	\$2.1M*	11-12 minutes (dedicated engine)	Slight Decrease
4	Oceano	Add 2-0 engine company	\$3.5M min	\$2.1M	3-7 minutes	Significant Increase
<b>Five Cities Fire Authority</b>						
5	FCFA AG/GB	Contract for 2-0 staffing	\$0	\$1.8M	AG 7-11 minutes GB 7-9 minutes	Equivalent

\*Assuming no change to Automatic and/or mutual aid agreements (potential to increase)

Pending Board direction, and assuming the majority, if not all, property tax and other assets are transferred to the County, there may be a significant General Fund impact. The following table outlines the Summary of Costs for Options 1-5.

**Summary of Annual Cost Options for the County**

Option	Responding Station	Estimated Funding Available for Operations	Estimated Annual Ongoing Cost	Estimated Annual Operational Funding Gap	Estimated One-Time Costs for Equipment and Infrastructure
1	Nipomo 22	\$1,337,044	\$0*	\$0	\$0
2	Nipomo 22	\$1,337,044	\$1.4M*	\$(62,956)	\$(360,000)
3	Nipomo 22	\$1,337,044	\$2.1M*	\$(762,956)	\$(1.9) M
4	Oceano	\$1,337,044	\$2.1M	\$(762,956)	\$(3.5) M min
5	FCFA AG/GB	\$1,337,044	\$1.8M	\$(498,783)	\$0

\*Assuming no change to Automatic and/or mutual aid agreements (potential to increase)

Supervisor Paulding will want to deliver the bacon on this one.

**Item 32 - Request that the Board consider amending the San Luis Obispo County 2023 State Legislative Platform.** The Board voted 3/2, (Arnold and Peschong dissenting) to amend the County’s adopted Legislative Program to undercut the County’s heretofore support for the Constitutional provisions which to protect property owners from uncontrolled property tax increases, property assessment increases, sales tax increases, and new taxes.

The Legislative program adopted last February contained two related provisions:

*13. Oppose any measures or legislation that reduces the super-majority vote required to raise taxes from 2/3rd to 55%*

*14. Oppose any legislation or initiative that proposes to modify Proposition 13. Specifically, oppose any legislation or proposal that would establish a so-called “Split Roll” for property tax, which would thereby reduce protections for commercial property owners. Oppose any legislation that would further the effort to modify Proposition 13 in lieu of the ballot proposition.*

The leftist Board majority, on September 12, 2023, removed Provision 13 entirely, thereby endorsing the dropping of the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote requirement.

Paulding proposed a new Item 14, which “purports” to support Proposition 13. The intellectually dishonest bait-and-switch states that the County would support the 2% cap on annual property increases, but deliberately neglects to include the maintenance of the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote requirement on State and local measures to override the protection. Without the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote protection, the 2% cap itself could be at risk. Moreover, the scores of tax override measures that are proposed throughout the State each year would become much easier to pass.

The larger issue is that scavenger government officials and leftist special interest groups, like jackals and vultures, are ripping the flesh and entrails off what’s left of the dying carcass of the State’s remaining middle class.







The Platform was updated hours after the Board met and republished. You can't get an ambulance as fast.

## 2023 State Legislative/Regulatory Platform

Approved February 7, 2023

Revised September 12, 2023

Page 1 of 40

**Background:** The full text of the item is presented below. The public should be outraged and should show up to oppose removing these planks from the Program. Removal would constitute a serious attack on homeownership, small business, the aging, and suburban and country living.

The proponents of the destruction of Proposition 13 argue that it would be more democratic for people to exercise a purely majority vote on authorizing millions and even billions of dollars of tax increases and assessments. In the end, and given the insatiable government demand for money and the current matassing collapse of California society, the taxes and assessments would accumulate to the point that for-profit businesses, creative enterprises (like entertainment), and investors would be driven out of California. It would become another post Soviet socialist oligarchy run by the current alliance of subsidized state capitalist oligarchs and government unions.

Supervisor Gibson has been a consistent advocate for its elimination. Both Supervisors Ortiz-Legg and Paulding have stated that they support Proposition 13. Supervisors Arnold and Peschong have consistently voted to protect Proposition 13. The vote's result revealed the sad truth: In the big picture, weakening the protection is a major attack on the middle class, private property, and our heritage.



## COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / John Nilon / (805) 781-5011

DATE: 9/12/2023

SUBJECT: Request that the Board consider amending the San Luis Obispo County 2023 State Legislative Platform.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board consider amending the San Luis Obispo County 2023 State Legislative Platform.

### **DISCUSSION**

On August 22, 2023, the Board of Supervisors approved a staff referral, "Direct staff to return with an item revising the County's 2023 Legislative Platform by removing items 14 and 15 in Platform, and that were referenced in public comment. The first comment having to do with the voter thresholds and the second one, a more general one, regarding Prop 13 and split rolls. Further direct staff to refrain from advancing any opinions of the County of San Luis Obispo to agencies or individuals or anyone outside, on this matter, until such time as our Legislative Platform has been considered for revision."

On February 7, 2023, the Board of Supervisors approved the 2023 State Legislative Platform. The platform is a statement of priority and establishes the basis for advocacy efforts with the Executive and Legislative branches of the State of California.

Within the 2023 State Legislative Platform are general principles and they are presented in pertinent part:

14. Oppose any measures or legislation that reduces the super-majority vote required to raise taxes from 2/3rd to 55%.

15. Oppose any legislation or initiative that proposes to modify Proposition 13. Specifically, oppose any legislation or proposal that would establish a so-called "Split Roll" for property tax, which would thereby reduce protections for commercial property owners. Oppose any legislation that would further the effort to modify Proposition 13 in lieu of the ballot proposition.

As requested in the Board referral, these items are listed for consideration in your deliberations.

**Continued on the next page:**



During the August 22, 2023, Board's deliberation on the motion to refer, the concept of the voters' right to place matters on the ballot was discussed. Accordingly, the Board may want to consider the following addition to the 2023 State Legislative Platform:

"In general, the County supports the right of its residents to qualify measures for the electorate's consideration. However, the County's position on individual qualified measures must be consistent with the general principles listed within the legislative platform or by other actions taken by the Board."

The Board may also wish to make additional amendments to the 2023 State Legislative Platform and if so, may want to consider such amendments during discussion of this item.

It is, therefore, recommended that your Board consider amending the 2023 State Legislative Platform.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT**

The Administration will communicate any changes to the County's State lobbyist, delegates, and advocacy organizations.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

No financial impact to the General Fund with this action. ←

**Actually, elimination of Prop.13. will lead to vast private sector disinvestment, accelerated flight from the state, and ultimately reduction in State and local revenues.**

**RESULTS**

Action from the Board will result in removing items 14 and 15 from the Legislative Platform, where no opinion on tax measure thresholds or changes will be stated.



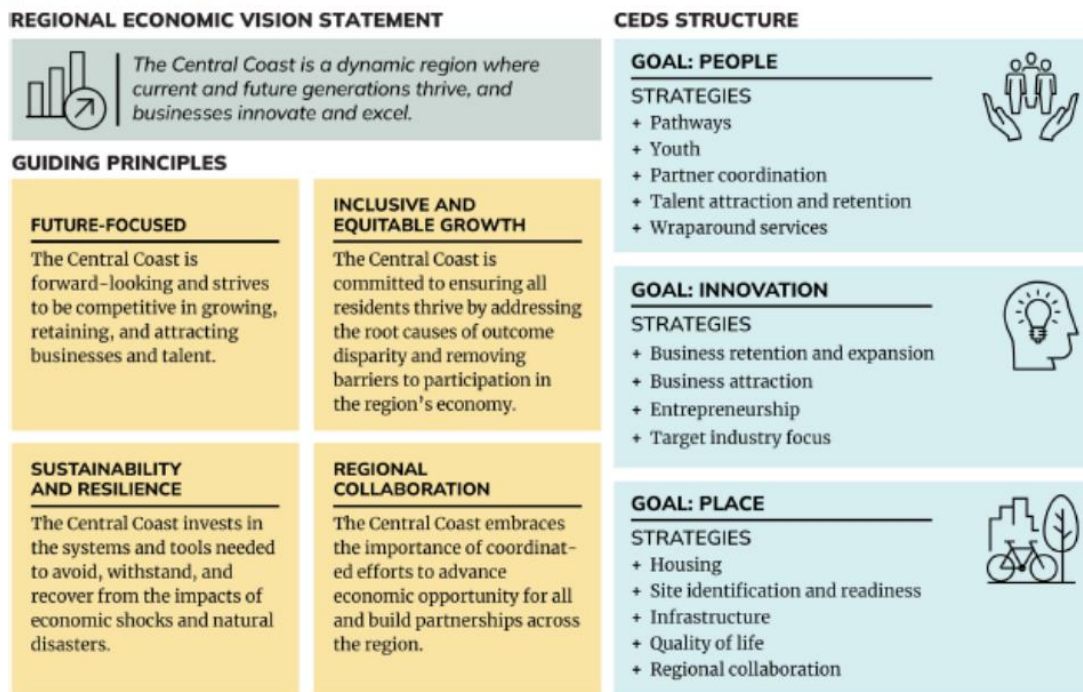
**In the end it's all about dispossessing the middle class.**

**Item 36 - Surprise Item - Added Board Business. Request to receive and file the draft, “Resilience Roadmap: A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Counties of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara.”** This item will be heard before **Item 34**, below. The item updated how San Luis Obispo County and Santa Barbara County will work together under the REACH umbrella. The Board listened to the presentation and displayed little reaction. They seemed a little dazed. REACH has produced several plans over the years. It appears that this new effort is yet another plan.

*The purpose of the agenda item and presentation to your Board is to receive and file the draft Resilience Roadmap: A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the Counties of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara. The draft report (Attachment 2) is being released for a 30-day public comment period on September 12, 2023, and therefore is being presented at both the County of San Luis Obispo and County of Santa Barbara’s Board of Supervisors meetings on the*

same day. The discussion in the staff report is divided into five sections: 1) a background of the report; 2) an overview of the stakeholder engagement and data gathering process; 3) highlights of the CEDS report; 4) instructions for public comment; and 5) next steps.

Figure 1. CEDS Framework



Sources: TIP Strategies, Inc.

The project seems to focus on working with the educational institutions in the area to prepare for actual jobs in the region. This serves as an attractant for business retention and in-location. If the Board majority rejects protection of Prop 13 and it is eventually terminated or watered down, none of this will mean a thing.

The REACH Project Manager in charge is Quinn Brady, of leftist organizing fame. REACH swears that she is the best CEDS Director in the entire State of California.

**Item 34 - Overview of options for creating an independent redistricting commission.** The Board on a 3/2 vote (Arnold and Peschong dissenting) received a report describing alternative versions of these commissions. In the end, the majority voted to direct staff to develop a process, with citizen participation, to design a commission structure which would ultimately be submitted to the voters as an ordinance.

**Background:** There is no such thing as a truly independent redistricting commission. No matter how hard the designers try to make it independent of politics, it is impossible. This is because, ultimately, the members must be appointed within the confines of the creating jurisdiction, in this case, the County. The fact that the members must have some fundamental knowledge of public affairs and how governments work means that truly independent people will not be selected. In fact, our observation of other jurisdictions' commissions suggests that in the end, the current societal ideological split between conservatives and socialists always infects the process and



ultimately members of these commissions. Moreover, the staff people assigned to assist the commissions, usually lawyers, are most often socialist hacks from government or from law firms that are heavy government contractors. Would the County contract with Chuck Bell (a Constitutionalist) to assist this process? Fat chance!!!

Perhaps artificial intelligence could solve the problem. After all, it is now writing student term papers, doing surgery, and landing airliners.

None the less, you can expect a long and complicated process to figure out what type of commission should be created. It will also be commensurately expensive for the consultants and staff. The Santa Barbara County Board version was so corrupt that they selected a leftist croney law firm that had sued the County on an election matter in previous years.

The write-up states in part:

*In the 2020 redistricting cycle, twenty-two cities and counties had independent redistricting commissions redraw their boundaries.*

### ***Types of Redistricting Commissions***

*1. Advisory Redistricting Commission: An “advisory redistricting commission” is defined as a body that recommends to the legislative body placement of district boundaries for that legislative body. (Elections Code, section 23000(a)). If the legislative body desires to create an advisory redistricting commission, they may do so by proscribing the manner in which members are appointed. The only limitation is that an elected official of the local jurisdiction or a family member, staff member or paid campaign staff of an elected official shall not be appointed to serve on the commission. The legislative body may, if they so choose, impose additional requirements or restrictions on commission members or applicants.*

*2. Hybrid Redistricting Commission: A “hybrid redistricting commission” is defined as a body that recommends to a legislative body two or more maps and the legislative body is required to adopt one of those maps without modification, except as may be required to comply with state or federal law. (Elections Code, section 23000(c)).*

*3. Independent Redistricting Commission: An “independent redistricting commission” is defined as a body, other than a legislative body, that is empowered to adopt the district boundaries of a legislative body. (Election Codes, section 23000(d))*

Details are included in the link to the Board letter. It is fairly hefty, so it may need a control click and then takes a few seconds to open.

[155427 \(ca.gov\)](#)

**Item 35 - Any Supervisor may ask a question for clarification, make an announcement, or report briefly on his or her activities. In addition, Supervisors may request staff to report back to the Board at a subsequent meeting concerning any matter or may request that staff place a matter of business on a future agenda. Any request to place a matter of business for consideration on a future agenda requires the majority vote of the Board.**

The Board considered four proposals:

1. Arnold requested that staff retrain with a business item covering the large offshore wind energy project and related economic costs and benefits. **Approved 5/0**
- 2 . Peschong requested that the staff return with a report on the County’s nearly \$1 billion unfunded pension liability. **Approved 5/0**
3. Peschong requested that the staff return with a report on the status and issues involving the Sanctuary State and sanctuary counties. **Rejected 3/2 – Gibson, Ortiz-Legg, and Paulding dissenting**
4. Peschong requested that the staff return with a report on ACA-1 and ACA-13, the attacks on Proposition 13. **Rejected 3/2- Gibson, Ortiz Legg, and Paulding dissenting.**

**Central Coast Community Energy Authority Joint Meeting of the Policy Board and the Operations Board of Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 1:00 PM - Paso Robles Inn, 1103 Spring Street, Paso Robles, CA 93446 (Completed)**

As noted, the meeting was held in Paso Robles instead of Monterrey at their headquarters. This was cast as an annual meeting. They celebrated the fact that the 3 members of the new SLO Board of Supervisors majority caused SLO County to join the agency. SLO County’s representative, Supervisor Ortiz-Legg was seated right next to the Chairman.

The meeting itself contained no business items, but instead a series of presentations hyping the 3CE model and an all-electric society. There were no regular business items or decisions.

Of course, no one is invited to present any other point of view, e.g., fake workshop.

**Central Coast Community Energy Authority (3CE) Operations Board Meeting of Wednesday, September 13, 2023 - 4:30 PM Paso Robles Inn, 1103 Spring Street Paso Robles, Ca. 93446 (Completed)**

**Item 3 - Authorize the CEO to sign a contract for additional EV charging stations.** The item was approved on the consent calendar without discussion or questions.

*On January 11, 2023, the Operations Board authorized the CEO to execute Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement with Frontier Energy Inc. to add \$150,000 to the initial agreement to support additional customer segments with technical assistance services. The current Agreement has a total not to exceed amount of \$389,378 and a term ending September 30, 2023.*

*The lack of availability of abundant and reliable EV charging infrastructure remains a key barrier to the widespread adoption of EVs throughout the Central Coast, particularly in publicly accessible areas and at multifamily building properties*

The report does not indicate how many they already have in service, how many are working, how many this contract will add, for how long the network will be provided, the unit cost per station, or where they will be located.

**Item 7 - Adopt Resolution No. OB-2023-02 attesting to the Veracity of 3CE's 2022 Power Content Label.** This item was also approved on the consent calendar without discussion or questions.

**Background:** The CPUC requires all load serving entities (utilities and CCAs) to disclose the mix of their power in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> power content. The Board must certify it by Resolution. Note that for 58% of its power, 3CE has no idea of the CO<sub>2</sub> content.

2022 POWER CONTENT LABEL						
(Central Coast Community Energy)						
<a href="https://3cenenergy.org">https://3cenenergy.org</a>						
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity (lbs CO <sub>2</sub> e/MWh)			Energy Resources			
3Choice	3Cprime	2022 CA Utility Average	3Choice	3Cprime	2022 CA Power Mix	
637	0	422	Eligible Renewable <sup>1</sup>	35.8%	100.0%	35.8%
			Biomass & Biowaste	1.4%	0.0%	2.1%
			Geothermal	12.0%	0.0%	4.7%
			Eligible Hydroelectric	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%
			Solar	12.5%	50.0%	17.0%
			Wind	9.8%	50.0%	10.8%
			Coal	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%
			Large Hydroelectric	5.9%	0.0%	9.2%
			Natural Gas	0.0%	0.0%	36.4%
			Nuclear	0.0%	0.0%	9.2%
			Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
			Unspecified Power <sup>2</sup>	58.3%	0.0%	7.1%
			TOTAL	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Percentage of Retail Sales Covered by Retired Unbundled RECs <sup>3</sup> :			0%	0%		
<sup>1</sup> The eligible renewable percentage above does not reflect RPS compliance, which is determined using a different methodology. <sup>2</sup> Unspecified power is electricity that has been purchased through open market transactions and is not traceable to a specific generation source. <sup>3</sup> Renewable energy credits (RECs) are tracking instruments issued for renewable generation. Unbundled renewable energy credits (RECs) represent renewable generation that was not delivered to serve retail sales. Unbundled RECs are not reflected in the power mix or GHG emissions intensities above.						
For specific information about this electricity portfolio, contact:			Central Coast Community Energy (831) 641-7222			
For general information about the Power Content Label, visit:			<a href="https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/power-source-disclosure-program">https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/power-source-disclosure-program</a>			

Per the table below, note that even when nuclear and large hydro are not counted, PG&E contains more eligible renewables, 47% more than 3CE, at 38.5% for the base plan. If the State allowed PG&E to count nuclear and large hydro (which are CO<sub>2</sub> free), it would be 91.1 % CO<sub>2</sub> free. A small amount of natural gas (8.9%) would be the only non-renewable.

2021 POWER CONTENT LABEL									
Pacific Gas and Electric Company									
<a href="http://www.pge.com/billinserts">www.pge.com/billinserts</a>									
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity (lbs CO <sub>2</sub> e/MWh)			Energy Resources						
Base Plan	50% Solar Choice	100% Solar Choice	Green Saver	2021 CA Utility Average					
98	78	58	95	456	Eligible Renewable <sup>1</sup>				
					47.7%				
					Biomass & Biowaste	4.2%	2.1%	0.0%	2.3%
					Geothermal	5.2%	2.6%	0.0%	4.8%
					Eligible Hydroelectric	1.8%	0.9%	0.0%	1.0%
					Solar	25.7%	59.8%	93.9%	14.2%
					Wind	10.9%	5.5%	0.0%	11.4%
					Coal	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
					Large Hydroelectric	4.0%	2.0%	0.0%	9.2%
					Natural Gas	8.9%	7.4%	0.0%	37.9%
					Nuclear	39.3%	19.7%	0.0%	9.3%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%					
					Unspecified Power <sup>2</sup>				
					6.1%				
					TOTAL				
					100.0%				
Percentage of Retail Sales Covered by Retired Unbundled RECs <sup>3</sup> :					4%				
					0%				
					0%				
					0%				
					100.0%				

What a sad ideological racket is being foisted on the people by their State and local governments.

**Staff Report Item 2.3: Delegate Authority to the CEO to Participate in Pacific Gas & Electric's and Southern California Edison's Spring 2023 PCIA Market Offer for Long-Term Renewable Energy Credit Products; and to Execute Agreements for up to the Awarded Volumes in Amounts Not-to-Exceed a total of \$177,000,000 with terms of at Least 10 Years.** Two Board members, including Santa Barbara County CEO Mona Miyasato, had some questions on this one. Miyasato actually bored in on the cost and reliability issues. One of the City managers attempted to have 3CE staff assure the Board that the project would come online as scheduled. The staff was a little tentative on this one.

**Background:** As we have previously reported, 3CE is having trouble finding enough renewable energy credits to comply with State mandated power source mix requirements for CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. Staff seeks authorization to spend up to \$177 million to attempt to acquire such credits from PG&E, which are actually generated by its use of nuclear power. Huh?

The state will not allow PG&E to count nuclear power as part of its CO<sub>2</sub> free portfolio, but once it is laundered through a CCA, it's OK?

**DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:**

On March 7, 2023, the IOUs each issued a Long-Term Market Offer for PCIA-eligible RPS energy. These Solicitations allow load serving entities (LSEs) to offer to purchase the unallocated portion of each IOUs PCIA renewable energy portfolio. The projects being sold off by the IOUs have contract end dates out through 2043. If awarded, and if 3CE accepts the award, 3CE is required to enter a contract with a term equal to the IOUs contract end dates out through 2043, or up to a 20-year term.

The REC products offered through the IOUs' Solicitations are critical to 3CE's strategy for compliance with its SB 350 obligation, which requires 40% of 3CE's retail load be met with RPS eligible resources over the next compliance period of 2021 through 2024 ("Compliance Period Four"). PPA project delays caused by supply chain constraints and inflationary pressures are impacting 3CE's compliance strategy which relied on aggressively pursuing new incremental RPS projects. Current project delays may result in 3CE being as much as 22% short of its RPS requirements instead of the planned 31% long in Compliance Period 4. Penalties for Compliance Period 4 deficiencies are significant at \$50/MWh. The IOUs Spring 2023 PCIA Long-Term Market Offer provides 3CE an opportunity to pick up additional RECs to avoid penalties while hedging against further project delays and reducing the PCIA obligation of its customers. Trouble is accumulating in the CCA business model.

**Item 14 - Support seeking the Policy Board's approval to adopt the Fiscal Year 2023-24 Recommended Budget for Central Coast Community Energy (3CE) including updated Financial Policies and cost-based rate adjustments.** The Board approved the Budget and did have some questions and concerns. A key issue is whether the 3CE will be able to maintain its rates lower than PG&E. They stated that they will; however, as noted below in the background, it will require that they stop contributing to their reserves. They feel they have enough.

**Background:** The proposed 3CE Budget is interesting in that it shows that circumstances are tightening up as regulatory pressure and the cost of energy, combined with lack renewable energy credits on in the marketplace, will compel rate increases. The write-up states in part.

*The increase in COE and other expenditures is financed by a recommended adjustment to electricity generation rates as follows: **increases by an average of \$0.025 per kilowatt-hour (kWh)** in the PG&E service area and maintaining the 2%-minus per kWh rate in the Southern California Edison (SCE) service area, resulting in a \$101 million increase in revenue collection. The COS rate increases will be effective October 1, 2023, and January 1, 2024, to provide a phased in approach to minimize overall increases to customers.*

*To keep rates as low as possible for our customers, this year's Recommended Budget does not anticipate adding to the agency's Net Position given that reserves are within an acceptable range as defined by the Recommended Financial Policies.*

*While 3CE has demonstrated success bringing new clean and renewable resources online, the electricity generation sector, including 3CE, faces several challenges that could impact 3CE's aggressive renewable goals.*

***Project Delays*** *Developers continue to claim impacts to contractual online dates from supply chain disruptions, inflation, the Russian War in Ukraine, and mounting interconnection issues. Delays to 3CE's new generation projects jeopardize our ability to meet compliance obligations, and to stabilize the cost of energy with fixed low-cost contracts. 3CE is working with developers to help address these impacts, ensure value for customers, and bring resources online as fast and cost-effectively as possible.*

***Wholesale Market Volatility*** *Natural gas storage and distribution constraints, a colder-than-usual winter, prolonged summer heat events throughout California and the western United States, and many of the same macroeconomic conditions impacting developers, continue to fuel unprecedented wholesale market volatility. A strategic and layered procurement approach in accordance with 3CE's Energy Risk Management Policy, maintenance of a strong credit rating, and disciplined fiscal management by our Boards has enabled 3CE to minimize the cost impacts to date.*

***Resource Adequacy*** ***Resource Adequacy (RA)*** *is not energy and does not create additional capacity for the grid. Rather, RA is a compliance product that commits generators to be available to dispatch when needed. Regulatory changes have increased the amount of RA that Load Serving Entities (LSEs) are required to purchase, while the retirement of fossil-burning generators and limitations on qualifying imports have decreased the supply of available RA resources. The imbalance of supply and demand has spiked RA prices by over 200% year over year to levels that exceed price caps set by many regulatory commissions across the country. While California has no resource adequacy price cap, states that do generally set the cap below what officials deem excessive.*



The chart below provides a summary of the FY 2023-24 Recommended Budget:

FY 2023-24 Budget Summary					
	FY 22-23 Final Adopted	FY 23-24 Baseline	FY 23-24 Recommended Augmentation	FY 23-24 Recommended Budget	FY 23-24 Variance Prior Year Budget
<b>REVENUE</b>					
Total	\$461,797,031	\$455,128,399	\$107,705,049	\$562,833,447	\$101,036,416
<b>COST OF ENERGY SOLD</b>					
Subtotal	\$403,427,380	\$520,297,514		\$520,297,514	\$116,870,134
<b>SALARIES &amp; BENEFITS</b>					
Subtotal	\$9,190,535	\$9,537,076		\$9,537,076	\$346,541
<b>SERVICES &amp; SUPPLIES</b>					
Subtotal	\$30,416,173	\$29,968,253	\$3,030,605	\$32,998,858	\$2,582,685
<b>CAPITAL</b>					
Subtotal	\$202,779				(\$202,779)
Total Appropriations	\$443,236,867	\$559,802,843	\$3,030,605	\$562,833,448	\$119,596,581
Total Financing Sources	\$461,797,031	\$455,128,399	\$107,705,049	\$562,833,448	\$101,036,416
Total Budgeted Change to Net Position	\$18,560,164	(\$104,674,444)	\$104,674,444	(\$0)	(\$18,560,164)

It appears that in the current FY 22-23 fiscal year and FY 23-24, projected base line energy costs are exceeding revenue from sales. This is why they need to raise rates by more than \$100 million. They say they are raising the rates by **an average of \$0.025 per kilowatt-hour**. How does this generate a new \$107 million, which is about a 21% increase?

**They claim that their rate structure is lower than that of PG&E, per the tables below.**

Customer Classes	Average Difference 3Cchoice to PG&E Rates
Residential	-16%
Small Commercial	-17%
Medium Commercial	-22%
Large Commercial	-21%
Agricultural	-18%
Streetlights	-3%

3Cchoice Rate Comparison to PG&E	
PG&E Average \$/kWh	\$0.138
3Cchoice (PG&E Territory) \$/kWh	\$0.116

Then, why has everyone's bill gone up so much in the last year? Are they subsidizing medium and large commercial at the expense of residential?

## EMERGENT ISSUES

**Item - 1 Katy Grimes' (California Globe) checklist of Newsom-led destructive policies and garbage outcomes:** The article below contains excerpts from Ms. Grimes tremendous analysis:

Gavin Newsom owns it – all of it – and remember, he wanted so desperately to be Governor of California that he challenged Jerry Brown in 2010, but had to settle for Lt. Governor. Newsom just wasn't interested in having to deal with all of the state's baggage.

Here's a taste of the "garbage" under Newsom:

- California's highest-in-the-country gas prices
- California is home to nearly 1/2 of the country's homeless drug addicted vagrants
- California is home to 1/3 of the country's welfare recipients
- California public school children are exposed and indoctrinated to dangerous sexualized curriculum
- [Water rationing](#)
- ever growing [homeless](#) population
- [reparations](#) for descendants of slaves
- [\\$7.00-per-gallon-gas](#)
- [Newsom signed AB 5, killing gig economy](#)
- [COVID mandatory vaccine bills](#)
- [Single Payer](#) health coverage
- [public school teachers strikes](#)
- [Government created energy shortage, rolling blackouts](#)
- [Huge crime wave, thanks to Proposition 47](#)
- Gov. Newsom [allocated \\$200M for abortion travel and care, and legalized infanticide](#)
- [Newsom's COVID State of Emergency](#) order from March 2020 until the end of February 2023
- [Newsom's Vaccine mandates](#) for school children, days after opposing one for prison guards
- Gov. [Newsom's shakedown of the oil and gas industry, blaming "Big Oil" for California's highest-in-the-nation gas prices, ignoring the package of "sweeping legislation" signed](#) last September to achieve statewide carbon neutrality as soon as possible, and no later than 2045, by establishing an 85% emissions reduction target, capping oil wells, slowing oil and gas permitting, making it impossible to increase refining capacity, and entirely phasing out oil and gas starting in two years. So really, it's California Democrat politicians and Gov. Newsom fleecing Californians at the pump. In March, lawmakers jammed **SBX1-2**, Gov. Gavin Newsom's Gas Tax, through an expedited hearing, pretending that was enough exposure to the public, then debated the bill in the Assembly and voted on it.
- Gavin Newsom and his family [vacationed in Montana](#) – one of the 22 states on California's list of state-banned travel. Two months later [he flew to Texas](#) (also on California's state-banned travel list) to speak at the Texas Tribune Festival in Austin. He traveled to Cabo and Costa Rica, all while his state lockdown orders were in place.
- The Globe [reported in November 2021](#) that Gov. Gavin Newsom was [missing in action](#) for nearly [two weeks](#) – then the Globe was provided photos by a source as the Newsom family were seen in [Cabo San Lucas vacationing at a \\$29,000/night dacha of a Russian oligarch](#).
- Gov. Gavin Newsom [left the state](#) in early March as thousands of desperate residents were trapped in snow-bound mountain communities where the National Guard failed to arrive as promised, Breitbart [reported](#). People died trapped in their homes. It's either just bad timing, or arrogant timing for the governor to take time off outside of the state. If he was on state business, then why not say so? If it was beach time, he's even more contemptible than previously thought. San Bernardino County residents were told National Guard troops would

arrive with food and supplies, but that did not occur, and mountain residents died. As [the Globe reported](#), “Gov. Newsom Vacays in Baja as Snowed-In Californians Freeze.”

The Governor, who claims to run a “California for All,” says “the California Dream — the idea that every person can achieve a better life, regardless of where they start out — is central to who we are as Californians.”

Who are we as Californians? We are fed up with this narcissistic governor who has failed up his entire career, never having been properly vetted or challenged because of the state Democrat supermajority. And now Newsom is trying to distance himself from his own and his party’s policies destroying our state.

The grossly tone deaf Newsom thinks Tweets and soundbites are meaningful:

Rather than face California’s very serious problems, Gov. Newsom just announced “on Sunday, as part of his trip to New York for Climate Week, Governor Gavin Newsom will participate in the Climate Week NYC Opening Ceremony. Speaking with David Gelles of The New York Times for a discussion entitled, “Approaching the Climate Crisis Differently,” the Governor will announce new climate efforts the state is taking.”

Because the “new climate efforts the state is taking” will mitigate the filth, drugs, homeless, crime, crumbling infrastructure, gang-on-gang murders, and rampant corruption in California’s shithole cities.

Gavin is running away from California after participating in its demise since 1997. And it appears he can’t get away fast enough.

Katy Grimes, the Editor in Chief of the California Globe, is a long-time Investigative Journalist covering the California State Capitol, and the co-author of California's War Against Donald Trump: Who Wins? Who Loses? *Excerpted from The California Globe of September 15, 2023.*

**Item 2 - The State of California will have to buy all the energy generated from the offshore windmills because the electricity from the mills is so expensive and the project so risky that the investor owned utilities will not sign up.** Your electric bill will go up if and when the power actually starts flowing. Meanwhile, the State will incur a multi-billion-dollar long term liability.

## California Legislature approves plan allowing the state to buy power



*FILE - Guests tour the five turbines of America's first offshore wind farm, owned by the Danish company, Orsted, off the coast of Block Island, R.I., as part of a wind power conference on Oct. 17, 2022. California lawmakers were scheduled to vote Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023, on whether to give Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration permission to buy massive amounts of electricity. (AP Photo/David Goldman, File)*

BY ADAM BEAM

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — The California Legislature voted Thursday to give Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom's administration permission to buy massive amounts of electricity, a move aimed at [avoiding blackouts](#) by shoring up the state's power supply while jumpstarting the West Coast's fledgling offshore wind industry.

Five companies paid roughly [\\$750 million](#) last year to lease areas off the California coast to build wind turbines. Collectively, those projects could generate enough electricity to power 3.5 million homes, helping the state avoid blackouts during extreme heat waves that have routinely strained the electrical grid of the nation's most populous state.

But so far, the state's largest utility companies have not been willing to commit to buying power from projects like those because it would cost too much money and take too long to build. In addition to building the wind turbines, the projects will require improvements at the state's ports and new power lines to transport the energy from the ocean to the land.

"This is a major, generational series of investments that need to happen, and there's a real risk it won't if we can't provide more certainty," said Alex Jackson, director of American Clean Power Association, which represents the companies trying to build the wind projects.

The bill would [let the state buy the power](#). The money would come from a surcharge imposed on Californians' electricity bills. State regulators would decide how much this charge would be. Consumers would not pay it until the wind projects are up and running, likely several years from now.

California already has among the highest electricity rates in the country.

“This legislation ... means that every single ratepayer in California, no matter where you live, is going to pay for this,” said Republican state Sen. Brian Dahle, who opposes the bill.

Supporters argue the bill will save people money in the long run on their electric bills. California has a law requiring all of its electricity to come from renewable or non-carbon sources by 2045. To do that, supporters say the state will have to invest in offshore wind projects, which typically generate the most power at night when solar energy is not as abundant.

Supporters say it would be more efficient for these offshore wind projects to sell all of their electricity to the state instead of a selling pieces of it to multiple utility companies, helping to control costs and keep rates lower.

“The biggest threat to us meeting our climate goals between now and 2045 are rate impacts to rate payers,” Scott Wetch, a lobbyist representing various construction trade associations, told lawmakers in a recent public hearing. “(This bill) is the only way to bring down those costs on these large, complex, long lead time projects in order to minimize the rate impacts.”

The bill gives the Department of Water Resources the authority to purchase the power — but not forever. Their authority would expire in 2035. Lawmakers would have to vote again to extend it.

California has moved quickly to end its reliance on fossil fuels in recent years. State regulators have OK'd rules banning the sale of most new gas-powered cars by 2035. But the state has struggled maintaining its clean energy values amid that transition.

An extreme heat wave in 2020 overwhelmed the state's power grid, leaving hundreds of thousands of homes in the dark for a few hours over two days. Similar heat waves in the following summers prompted regulators to ask consumers to use less energy when demand was at its peak in the early evenings.

Newsom and the state Legislature have since spent \$3.3 billion to build a “strategic reliability reserve” that included purchasing diesel-powered generators and extending the life of some gas-fired power plants that were scheduled to retire.

“There are things happening right now in energy policy that give me some pause about the efficacy of our strategy,” Democratic state Sen. Henry Stern lamented during a public hearing on the bill last week.

State law requires utility companies to have enough energy to meet demand. If they don't, the bill would require those companies to pay a penalty. The Newsom administration has said this will prevent utilities from relying too much on the strategic reliability reserve, which uses gas-powered generators that pollute the air.

Alice Reynolds, president of the California Public Utilities Commission, said the state has completed more than 100 projects that have added 9,000 megawatts of new clean energy in the past three years. The bill lawmakers approved on Wednesday also includes provisions to fast-track new electric transmission projects.



“We need to act quickly and we need to really have all hands on deck,” Reynolds said.

*Adam covers California government and politics. This article was syndicated by the Associated Press on September 15, 2023.*

### **Item 3 - Environmentalists call for shutdown of Diablo nuclear reactor, citing catastrophe risk, by Breanne Deppisch.**

September 14, 2023

Two environmental groups called on federal authorities Thursday to immediately shut down one of two reactors at California’s last remaining nuclear power plant, citing safety concerns that they say warrant additional testing at the Diablo Canyon facility.

In a filing submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Friends of the Earth and Mothers for Peace cited concerns with a pressure vessel located in Diablo Canyon’s Unit 1 reactor, which they said had not been tested in nearly 20 years and risks catastrophe.

Pacific Gas & Electric “has repeatedly postponed essential metallurgical tests and ultrasound inspections over the past two decades” on the vessel, the groups argued, risking deterioration or other damage that could make the vessel susceptible to cracking,

“We will not sit idly by while PG&E cuts corners on Unit 1’s safety,” the Friends of the Earth’s legal director, Hallie Templeton, said in a statement.

Along with the filing, the groups submitted to NRC a lengthy report by University of California, Berkeley professor Digby Macdonald, who wrote that continuing to operate the Unit 1 reactor “poses an unreasonable risk to public health and safety due to serious indications of an unacceptable degree of embrittlement.”

“The reactor should be closed until PG&E obtains and analyzes additional data regarding its condition,” he said.

In response, PG&E spokeswoman Suzanne Hosn said Diablo has an “excellent” and safe operating record and noted that it is ranked among the highest-performing plants in the nation, according to the NRC’s latest assessment.

“Analysis has demonstrated that the reactor vessels for both Units 1 and 2 currently meet the NRC’s acceptance criteria,” Hosn said. “We are in full compliance with industry guidance and regulatory standards regarding our program to monitor, evaluate and ensure reactor vessel safety.”

The filing from the environmental groups is the latest salvo in a yearslong fight between environmental groups and PG&E, the utility that operates the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant.

Diablo had been slated to close in 2025, but lawmakers, including Gov. Gavin Newsom (D-CA), reconsidered the plan and opted to extend its life as wildfires and drought placed the state’s grid under extreme strain, including triggering rolling blackouts in 2020.

The NRC granted PG&E approval in March to continue operating the Diablo Canyon plant past its 2025 planned closure date, so long as the utility completes a lengthy relicensing process, including a plan to address matters related to the safety and integrity of its reactors, before the end of the year.

Still, the extension of Diablo has sparked intense opposition from dozens of environmental and anti-nuclear groups, including the San Luis Obispo Mothers for Peace, the Oregon Conservancy Foundation, the Snake River Alliance, and the Ohio Nuclear Free Network, which have cited concerns over the plant's age and its proximity to earthquake faults.

Diablo Canyon, located on the coast in San Luis Obispo County, is a major power source in the state, supplying roughly 17% of California's greenhouse-gas-free electricity supply and 8.6% of the state's total electricity.

A study published by the Brattle Group found that by keeping Diablo online, California could decarbonize "more quickly, more reliably, and at a lower cost," approximately \$5 billion less, than if the plant shut down in 2025.

PG&E said additional testing at Diablo is planned, though the utility did not offer specific dates for when it would occur.

*This article first appeared in the Washington Examiner of September 14, 2023.*

#### **Item 4 - Combustible California: Can the Golden State's forests survive environmentalism? - By Edward Ring**

Earlier this summer, an environmentalist group that calls itself the John Muir Project, joined by a few other like-minded state and local organizations, sued the U.S. Forest Service. The transgression: a proposal to thin 13,000 acres of forest near Big Bear Lake, in the heart of California's San Bernardino Mountains.

You would think they'd learn. One of the most devastating fires in California history raged through the San Bernardino Mountains nearly 20 years ago. The Old Fire, as it is now known, burned over 90,000 acres, destroyed nearly 1,000 homes and businesses, and forced the evacuation of more than 70,000 people.

Time passes. Forests regenerate. And if you choose to suppress natural fires, you either reduce forests through logging, grazing, controlled burns, and mechanical thinning, or you wait until they're overgrown tinderboxes and then watch them burn to the ground in catastrophic "superfires." And that is the apparent preference of California's environmentalist lobby.

Critics opposing the forest-thinning project around Big Bear Lake contend the introduction of big machines to remove excess trees and understorage is harmful to the forest ecosystems, and less effective than simply creating defensible 100-foot perimeters around homes in the forest. They even contend that removing trees makes wildfires burn and spread faster.

This assertion, contradicting the experience of professional forest managers, should be debunked in court. Notwithstanding the problem of property owners in California's forests themselves having difficulty obtaining permits to thin trees and understorage around their homes, ample evidence exists that mechanical thinning is effective. We also have ample evidence that a superfire can hop a 100-foot "safety perimeter" as if it isn't even there.

Southern California Edison (SCE) owns 20,000 acres of forest around Shaver Lake, located in the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains. SCE practices what is known as total ecosystem management—and it works. In the summer of 2021, when the Creek Fire burned an almost-unthinkable 550 square miles in those mountains, the 30-square-mile island of SCE-managed forest around Shaver Lake emerged unscathed. The reason: for decades, SCE has engaged in timber operations that it defines as “uneven age management, single-tree selection,” whereby the trees to be harvested are designated in advance, in what remains a profitable logging enterprise. Controlled burns are also a key part of SCE’s total ecosystem management, but these burns are safe only when the areas to be burned are well-managed with logging and thinning.

The practice of uneven age management could be used in riparian canyons, or in areas where valuable stands of old-growth trees merit preservation. The alternative, a policy of hands-off preservation, has been disastrous. Tree density in the Sierra Nevada is currently around 300 per acre, whereas historically, a healthy forest would have had only around 60 trees per acre. Clearly, this number varies depending on forest type, altitude, and other factors, but overall, California’s forests, especially on federal lands, contain about five times the normal tree density. The result is trees that cannot compete for adequate moisture and nutrients, far less rain percolating into springs and aquifers, disease and infestation of the weakened trees—and fire.

This alternative—manage the forest or suffer fires that destroy the forest entirely—cannot be emphasized enough. East-west topography turned the Feather River Canyon, along with many other canyons along the Sierra Nevada, into wind tunnels that drove fires rapidly up and down the watershed. Yet these riparian areas have been among the most fiercely defended against any logging, and these efforts made those fires all the worse. The choice going forward should not be difficult. Logging and forest thinning cannot possibly harm a watershed as much as parched forests burning down to the soil, wiping out everything.

Even clear-cutting, now done on a 60- to 100-year cycle, does more good than harm to forests. Converting 1 percent or 2 percent of forest back into meadow each year can open up areas where it is easier for owls to hunt prey. Also, during a clear cut, the needles and branches are stripped off the trees and left to rejuvenate the soil. The runoff is managed as well, via contour-tilling that follows the topography of the hillsides. Rain percolates into the furrows, which is also where the replacement trees are planted. In forests managed by Sierra Pacific Industries, California’s largest logging company, owl counts are higher than in California’s federally managed forests.

Now more than ever, responsible, large-scale logging operations are a prerequisite to competent wildfire and wildlife management. Forests in California today are too overgrown to be safely returned to their historical tree densities merely by allowing natural fires to burn. In an overgrown forest, natural fires turn into superfires, decimating the ecosystem and the wildlife and requiring much more time to recover.

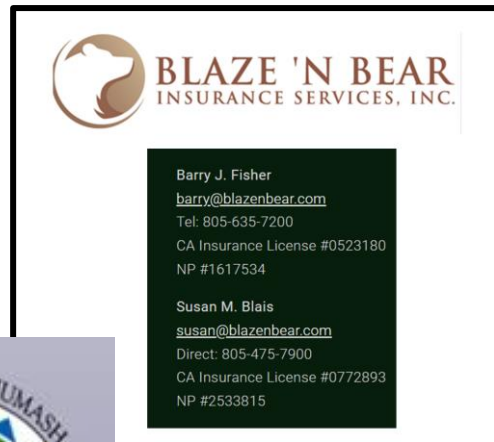
California's 33 million acres of forests generate about 8 billion board feet of natural growth per year. Up until 100 years ago, natural fires were started by lightning, or natives would burn off an equivalent amount. Up until the 1980s, California's timber industry removed 5 billion board feet per year (down from nearly 6 billion board feet through the 1960s), but starting around that time regulations increasingly hostile to the industry have reduced the annual harvest to 1.5 billion board feet. At the same time, overregulation has made it almost impossible for property owners or even state and federal land managers to do any controlled burns or mechanical thinning. Grazing of cattle, goats, and sheep also helped keep undergrowth down, but this, too, has been regulated nearly out of existence.

Tree density in California's forests is on average about five times what it was for the last 20 million years. Trees are stressed because there isn't enough space, soil nutrients, light, or water for so many. That's why they are less healthy and, in many cases, prey to bark beetle infestations and other diseases. This is also why our forests are tinderboxes and our wildfires so intense.

Excessive tree density is an objective fact. But instead of rewriting all these counterproductive regulations, our politicians and the special interests backing them bloviate about "climate change," while doing little or nothing that might actually help the forests. Abetting them at every turn are "environmentalists," whose well-intentioned but misguided lobbying and litigation have done more to decimate California's forests than nature and the changing climate ever could.

*Edward Ring co-founded the California Policy Center in 2013 and served as its first president. He is the author of two books, Fixing California (2021) and The Abundance Choice (2022). This article first appeared on the California Policy Center website on September 11, 2023.*

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**REVENGE OF THE BUMS**

*What kind of government can there be that produces such diseased leadership?*

**BY MATHEW BOOSE**

The overzealous persecution of Donald Trump and his supporters is an act of bitterest revenge. It is the bums, the government parasites who have never created a single dollar of value, who depend for their living on graft and extortionate taxation, saying in one voice, “No, you can’t have dynamic leaders who prioritize you. You’re stuck with us.”

The worst excesses of the bums are to be seen in the cities where they have total sway. New York City, the cultural and financial capital of the world, has been reduced to a dirty, makeshift shantytown, filled with the sights, sounds, and smells of the Third World. The dopey mayor, Eric Adams, is pleading for someone to save the city from itself, as it shells out billions in taxpayer dollars in the deranged suicidal race to provide food, shelter, and clothing for the indigent masses endlessly pouring across the border, who have doubled the homeless population in a single year. There is an element of poetic justice to it all, and yet, the city is running out of space, and the arrivals won’t stop coming. There are only so many luxury hotels and sidewalks with which to fill the sorry, suckling orphans of the uncivilized world.

No; sooner or later America must do its part. No town is beyond the reach of the ever-expanding trash heap; seated at the top of which is Biden, the chief bum, who flung open the gates, and bid the rest of the world to come. Biden has lined his family’s pockets; he and his fellow bums will endure the “transition” of America into a foreign dumpster just fine. For those without political connections, it’s a desperate scramble for higher ground, to escape the general dilapidation wrought by Biden and his real constituents, the rapists, murderers, looters, vagrants, anti-white terrorists, gender-bending, pedophile freaks, and endless, weltering, noisy, entitled stream of humanity relentlessly hammering at the gates, bringing violence, disorder, and commotion to the communities that have the misfortune of receiving them.

What were formerly known as the “citizens” of America are under immense strain, having become, without their knowledge, the adopted parents of every poor waif in the southern hemisphere. The proletarianized “middle class” is imploding under the pressure of inflation; the basic necessities of life, food, energy, and shelter, have all shot up in price; most are working multiple jobs to cover the bills, while competing with their foreign replacements, their unwanted, adopted children, for a shrinking pie of wealth and property. The fake “media” trumpet the bogus miracles of “Bidenomics” while passing over the venal dealing of Biden’s family in uncanny

silence. Biden and the criminal bums pour billions of tax dollars into Ukraine, the great hope of democracy.

The stakes of this war could not be higher; victory means the preservation of America's own system of government, which is to say, the welfare of the welfare classes, of the rioters and looters and deranged vagrants who threaten to smash and steal at any moment, and the leeches in power, their patrons; of the constant waves of suckling orphans, which must go on forever; it means the preservation of a government that takes half the wealth of the productive classes; and desperately desires to disarm them; of a government that forces its people to constantly flee the dangers and depredations it creates, and live in constant fear of disruption and anarchy; that protects and rewards criminals like Biden, his decadent family, and the racial fanatics who terrorized the country three summers ago; that crushes its political enemies, even daring to jail an American president, under color of law; a government full of cant and wind, a showy, hectoring, oppressive, sham, embodied in that bilious, screaming wraith, Joe Biden.

What kind of government can there be, that produces such diseased leadership, such rotting fruit as are cropping up everywhere? It must be a very late government, a degenerate and distant offspring of its just original. When all is said and done, Biden's legacy will be the final destruction of the legitimacy of America's government, of the very law, which has been perverted from its good purpose, to establish peace and justice and liberty, toward the singular end of destroying the enemies of the governing classes. This government exists, not to represent the people, but to engorge itself on the decayed remnants of what their ancestors built; it is a thing to be resented and patiently endured, if it cannot be overcome.

*American Greatness. Sept 13, 2023 Matthew Boose is a Mt. Vernon fellow of the Center for American Greatness and a staff writer and weekly columnist at the Conservative Institute. His writing has also appeared in the Daily Caller. Follow him on Twitter @matt\_boose.*

## **PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE EXTREMISM**

***There's a remote chance that catastrophic climate change is imminent,  
and an even more remote possibility we can do something about it***

**BY EDWARD RING**

Most people with any understanding of risk are familiar with the precautionary principle. It is defined as "the precept that an action should not be taken if the consequences are uncertain and potentially dangerous."

The precautionary principle is an important governing concept when applied to climate change mitigation. The possibility of human CO2 emissions causing a catastrophic climate outcome is used to justify major policy shifts designed to lower or even eliminate these emissions. The

impracticality of this endeavor is considered insignificant in the face of potentially terrifying consequences of doing nothing.

A [recent post on X](#) by a prominent Englishman, Ben Goldsmith, offers an excellent example of this mentality at work. Goldsmith writes:

“Climate change ‘doubters’ share one thing in common: they lack any understanding of risk. There is a not-insubstantial risk that the world’s climate scientists (and pretty much the entire scientific community) are right, and we are now facing a civilisation-ending threat. Any reasonable risk management strategy would be to do whatever it takes to mitigate that risk. Ask one of these nutters this, if they knew that there was a 10% probability of a particular aircraft crashing on its next flight, would they board it? I doubt they would, even if the risk was 1%. And how about if all the engineers responsible for that aircraft said it was \*going\* to crash? These people are today’s equivalent to the appeasers of the 1930s, only stupider and far more dangerous. They must be discredited and defeated.”

There’s a lot to unpack here, as there is in Goldsmith’s sarcastic response to a critical reply accusing climate alarmists of being motivated by money and power. Goldsmith writes:

“The climate scientists are the ones making the money. Right. Not the giant global fossil fuel companies and their executives, paid lobbyists and shareholders.”

Apart from his social media remarks presenting a useful summary of “whatever it takes” alarmist thinking, something that deserves far more analysis and criticism than it gets: why Goldsmith? Why else highlight his opinions? Because Goldsmith, along with his alarmist certainty and propensity to verbally abuse his critics, was [born into fabulous wealth](#), and his words exemplify the elitist arrogance that currently threatens the freedom of the world.

Goldsmith accuses giant global fossil fuel companies of still having a vested interest in climate denial, but ignores the fact that fossil fuel interests, all of them, have a vested interest in making sure supplies of the fuel they control never quite catch up to exploding global demand, because that increases their profits. A politically contrived, managed cutback of their production suddenly becomes climate virtue, instead of price fixing. And it’s fair to wonder if Goldsmith’s apparent preference for non-fossil fuel solutions has anything to do with his position as CEO of [Menhaden Resource Efficiency PLC](#), an investment company that “seeks to generate long-term shareholder returns, by investing in businesses and opportunities, delivering or benefitting from the efficient use of energy and resources.” Would that include any “renewables?”

When you’ve lived in an environment of fabulous wealth, it’s easy to sit back and call people who question your precautionary principle extremism “nutters,” “stupid,” “dangerous,” and “freaks.” But as someone invested in “energy and resources,” Goldsmith is certainly aware of the [BP Statistical Review of Global Energy](#), one of the most authoritative sources available on what fuels power the world. And with only a rudimentary aptitude for basic arithmetic, Goldsmith must know that for everyone on earth to consume only half the energy that Americans consume, per capita, global energy production will have to double. And, also reported in BP’s

annual digest, “renewables” only provided 6.7 percent of total energy consumed worldwide in 2021, the most recent year for which we have data.

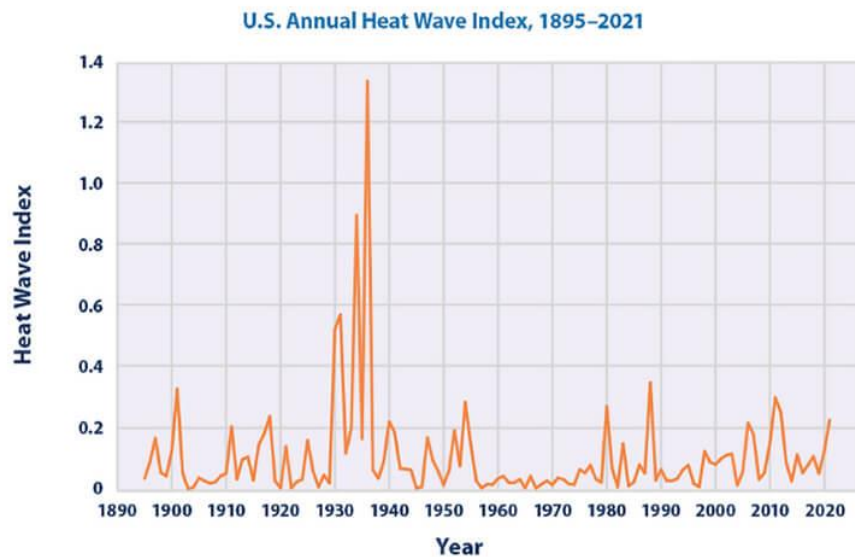
Goldsmith also is savvy enough to know that abundant, affordable energy is a prerequisite for prosperity, and that without it, upward mobility for low-income communities in the developed world, along with entire nations in the developing world, is impossible. Goldsmith knows that barring unforeseen breakthroughs in energy technologies, achieving “net zero” by 2050 is impossible. But nonetheless, he claims we must all do “whatever it takes” to mitigate that risk,” the risk, that is, of a climate catastrophe. But how much risk are we really talking about?

A few years ago, Ph.D geophysicist Judith Curry, current chair of the School of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at the Georgia Institute of Technology, published a report on sea level rise in which she evaluated the most recent IPCC analysis along with several other international and national assessment reports. Her conclusions, which she maintains are consistent with the evidence, include this: “In many of the most vulnerable coastal locations, the dominant causes of local sea level rise are natural oceanic and geologic processes and land use practices. Land use and engineering in the major coastal cities have brought on many of the worst problems, notably landfilling in coastal wetland areas and groundwater extraction.”

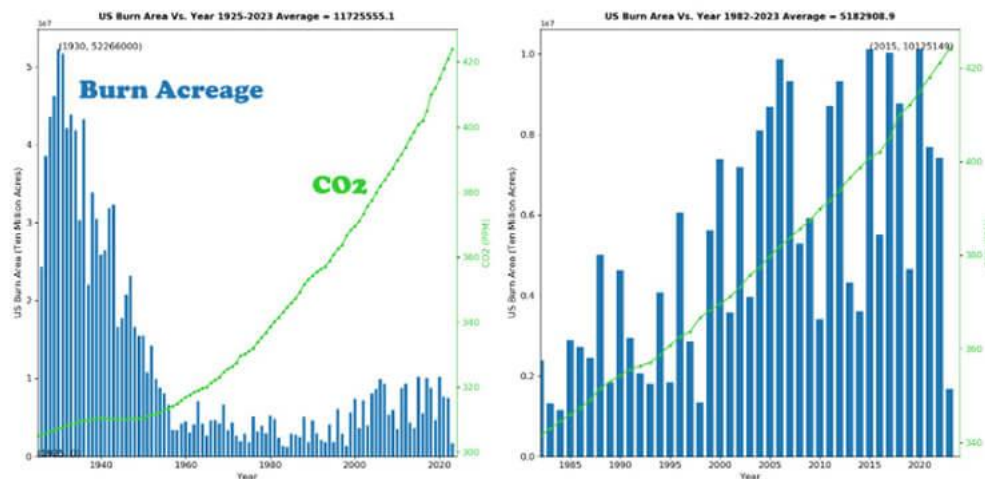
She follows up to conclude that “the appropriate range of sea level rise scenarios to consider for 2100 is 0.2–1.6 m. Values exceeding 2 feet are increasingly weakly justified. Values exceeding 1.6 m require a cascade of extremely unlikely to impossible events, the joint likelihood of which is arguably impossible.”

Arguably impossible. Does an event that is “arguably impossible” justify “any means necessary” to avoid it? What about the other possible consequences of this alleged climate crisis we face? The following series of graphs present data that contradicts the climate panic narrative. They are just a small sampling of what is known and available. In virtually every type of climate trend, the data does not back up the nonstop alarm.

To begin with, “global warming,” which has morphed into “climate change,” along with the more recent “global boiling,” is itself questionable. Using data from the U.S. EPA’s “Climate Change Indicators in the United States,” the prolific fossil fuel champion Alex Epstein has produced a chart that clearly shows far more alarming incidences of heat waves in the 1930s. Imagine what ABC’s eminent thespian masquerading as a journalist, nightly news anchor David Muir, would have said about the 1930s dust bowl. Most climate scientists agree there is a gradual worldwide warming trend that began around 1850 when earth emerged from the so-called Little Ice Age. But there is ample data indicating warming in recent decades is not accelerating or unprecedented. Yet the hype is unceasing.



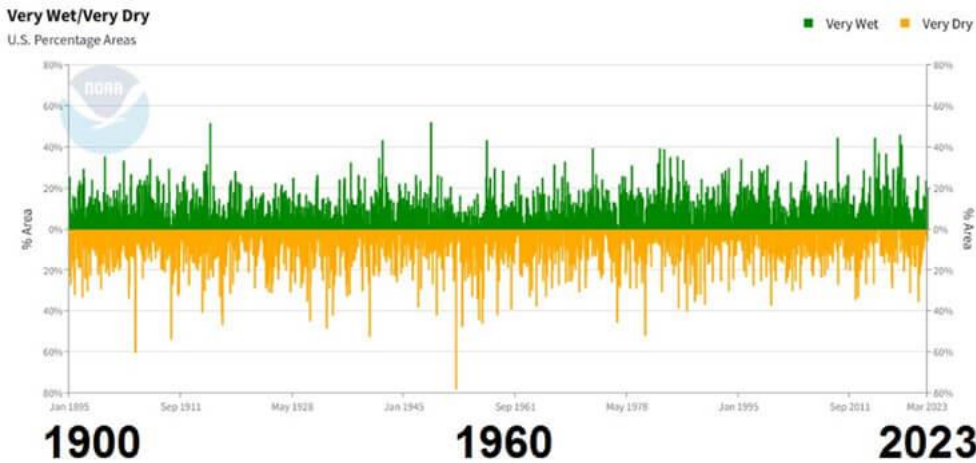
For wildfires, the graph on the right shows what alarmists depict as a terrifying trend. But the graph on the left widens the timescale to put recent years into perspective. Yes, acres burned has risen since the 1980s. But if you go back to the 1930s, it is clear that the extent of fires today is a mere fraction of what burned nearly a century ago. This graph was [posted on X by Tony Heller](#), and it corroborates with data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, [National Report on Sustainable Forests](#) – 2010, pages II-48. By any reasonable historical standard, America’s forests are not burning up.



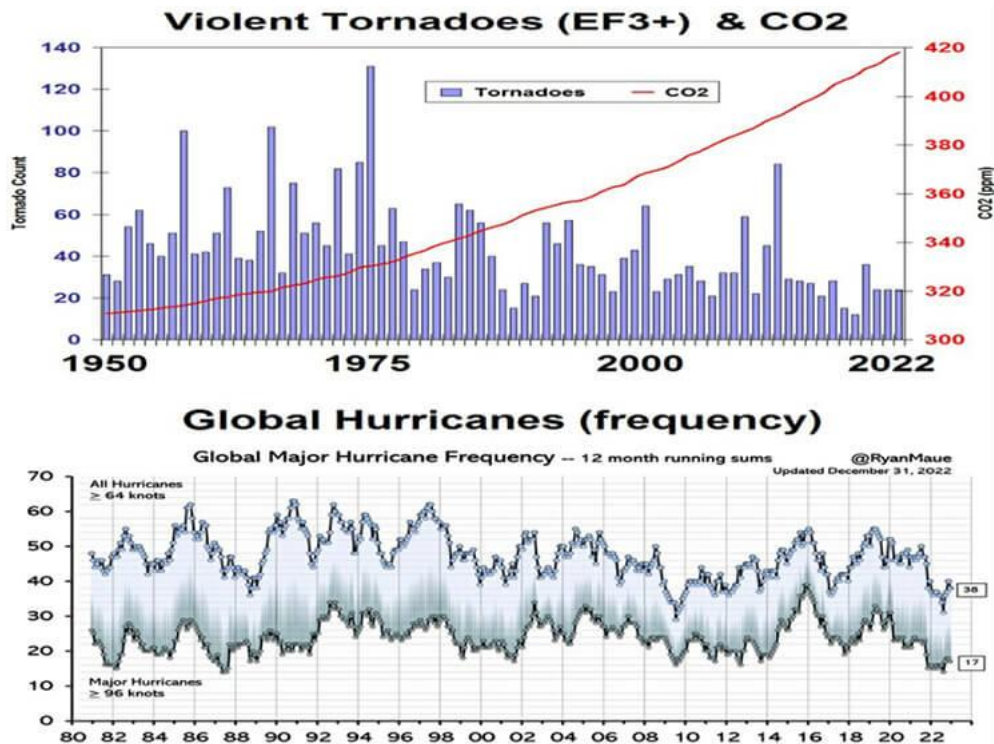
This next chart, [posted on X by John Shewchuk](#), and [originally posted](#) by the U.S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, shows over a century of data indicating the percent of area in the U.S. that was either “very wet” or “very dry.” It is clear from this chart that if anything, precipitation is generally increasing in the U.S., and since water is life, that is a very good thing. America has not entered an era of excessive droughts.



# NOAA: WET .vs. DRY



What about tornadoes? For this, again using [data from NOAA](#), the incidence of strong to violent tornadoes in the U.S. has trended down over the past 70 years. Global “[major](#)” hurricane frequency is also flat if not slightly down. The next graphic depicts both of these trends. America is not experiencing an epidemic of tornadoes, and the world is not experiencing an epidemic of major hurricanes.



This rendering was [created by John Shewchuck](#), but its origins are traced to compilations by [Wei Zhang](#), using data from NOAA, the National Weather Service, and reputable studies. Wei, a [climate scientist at Princeton University](#) and research scientist with NOAA, has the following quotes [pinned to the top](#) of his profile on X:

“I call it the “climate industrial complex”. So many people now make a living off of the #ClimateCrisis that there is no way they will let the narrative die, regardless of what the data shows.”

On August 29, Wei noted that “Censorship is everywhere now. I’ve made perhaps three edits in my life to Wikipedia. I don’t remember doing anything on climate. I think I edited LPGA golf page once. But somehow, I’m on Wikipedia master censorship list for my dangerous views.”

Which brings us back to Ben Goldsmith, who, in another comment he recently posted on X, said that “Quite a few nutters on here claiming there is in fact \*zero\* risk of the scientific community being right on the climate threat. Zero, they say, with tremendous confidence. Climate doubter Twitter is a whole new level of stupid.”

Goldsmith’s annoyance over links and observations on X belatedly allowing us to find scientifically valid evidence that most scientists and government institutions don’t themselves acknowledge is because it refutes the entire climate alarm paradigm. When examining the evidence, instead of biased models, all we are left with is a remote chance that catastrophic climate change is imminent, and if so, an even more remote possibility we can actually do something about it. And on that dubious basis, instead of adapting and thriving, we are told to dismantle our civilization, consigning ourselves to poverty and tyranny.

This is an extremist application of the precautionary principle, and it violates any genuine understanding of risk, for the simple reason it exchanges one very likely catastrophe – an energy starved civilization descending into mass poverty, oppression and war – for one very unlikely catastrophe, a global climate meltdown so severe it defies any attempts by humans to adapt.

Perhaps, Mr. Goldsmith, you are the one who lacks any understanding of risk.

*Edward Ring is a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness. He is also a contributing editor and senior fellow with the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. Ring is the author of Fixing California: Abundance, Pragmatism, Optimism (2021) and The Abundance Choice: Our Fight for More Water in California (2022). This article first appeared in the American Greatness of September 13, 2023.*

**POST-POSTMODERN AMERICA**  
**WOKE REVOLUTION DEPENDS ON ITS ADVOCATES NEVER**  
**HAVING TO EXPERIENCE FIRSTHAND ANY OF THE**  
**NONSENSE THEY INFLICT ON OTHERS**  
**BY VICTOR DAVIS HANSON**

When the progressive woke revolution took over traditional America, matters soon reached the level of the ridiculous.

Take the following examples of woke craziness and hypocrisy, perhaps last best witnessed during Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution.

The Biden administration from its outset wished to neuter immigration law. It sought to alter radically the demography of the U.S. by stopping the border wall and allowing into the United States anyone who could walk across the southern border.

Over seven million did just that. Meanwhile, Biden ignored the role of the Mexican cartels in causing nearly 100,000 ANNUAL American fentanyl deaths.

Do This Every Evening And Fungus Will Be Gone In A Week

Cardiologist: Too Much Belly Fat? Do This Before Bed

Then border states finally wised up.

They grasped that the entire open-borders, "new Democratic majority" leftwing braggadocio was predicated on its hypocritical architects staying as far away as possible from their new constituents.

So cash strapped border states started busing their illegal aliens to sanctuary blue-state jurisdictions.

Almost immediately, once magnanimous liberals, whether in Martha's Vineyard, Chicago, or Manhattan, stopped virtue-signaling their support for open borders.

Instead, soon they went berserk over the influx.

So now an embarrassed Biden administration still wishes illegal aliens to keep coming but to stay far away from their advocates—by forcing them to remain in Texas.

That means the president has redefined the US. border. It rests now apparently north of Texas, as Biden cedes sovereignty to Mexico.

Precivilizational greens in California prefer blowing up dams to building them.

They couldn't care less that their targeted reservoirs help store water in drought, prevent flooding, enhance irrigation, offer recreation, and generate clean hydroelectric power.

Now an absurd green California is currently destroying four dams on the Klamath River. In adding insult to injury, it is paying the half-billion dollar demolition cost in part through a water bond that state voters once thought would build new—not explode existing—dams.

The Biden administration is mandating new dates when electric vehicles will be all but mandatory.

To prove their current viability, Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm led a performance art EV caravan on a long road trip.

When she found insufficient charging stations to continue her media stunt, she sent a gas-powered car ahead to block open charging stations and deny them to other EVs ahead in line.

Only that way could Granholm ensure that her arriving energy-starved motorcade might find rare empty charger stalls.

In some California charging stations, diesel generators are needed to produce enough “clean” electricity to power the stalls.

The state has steadily dismantled many of its nuclear, oil, and coal power plants. It refuses to build new natural gas generation plants.

Naturally, California’s heavily subsidized solar and wind plants now produce too much energy during the day and almost nothing at night.

So the state now begs residents to charge their EVs only during the day. Then at night, Californians may soon be asked to plug them in again to transfer what is left in their batteries into the state grid.

Apparently only that way will there be enough expropriated “green” electricity for 41 million state residents after dark.

One of the loudest leftist voices to defund the police, and decriminalize violent crimes in the post-George Floyd era, was Shivanthi Sathanandan, the 2nd Vice Chairwoman of the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party.

She was recently not shy about defunding: “We are going to dismantle the Minneapolis Police Department. Say it with me. DISMANTLE.”

But recently the loud Sathanandan was a victim of the very crime wave she helped to spawn.

Four armed thugs carjacked her automobile. They beat her up in front of her children at her own home, and sped off without fear of arrest.

The reaction of the arch police dismantler and decriminalizer on her road to Damascus?

The now bruised and bleeding activist for the first time became livid that criminals had taken over her Minneapolis: “Look at my face. REMEMBER ME when you are thinking about supporting letting juveniles and young people out of custody to roam our streets instead of HOLDING THEM ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR ACTIONS.”

Andrea Smith was an ethnic studies professor at the University of California, Riverside. But now she has been forced out after getting caught lying that she was Native American.

Prior to her outing, she was well known for damning “white women” (like herself) who opted to “become Indians” out of guilt, and (like her) for careerist advantage.

The common theme of these absurdities is how contrary to human nature, impractical, and destructive is utopian wokism, whether in matters of energy, race, crime, or illegal immigration.

There are two other characteristics of the Woke Revolution.

One, it depends solely on its advocates never having to experience firsthand any of the nonsense they inflict on others.

And two, dangerous zealots with titles before, and letters after, their names prove to be quite stupid—and dangerous.

*Victor Davis Hanson is a distinguished fellow of the Center for American Greatness and the Martin and Illie Anderson Senior Fellow at Stanford University’s Hoover Institution. He is an American military historian, columnist, a former classics professor, and scholar of ancient warfare. He has been a visiting professor at Hillsdale College since 2004. Hanson was awarded the National Humanities Medal in 2007 by President George W. Bush. Hanson is also a farmer (growing raisin grapes on a family farm in Selma, California) and a critic of social trends related to farming and agrarianism. He is the author most recently of *The Second World Wars: How the First Global Conflict Was Fought and Won*, *The Case for Trump* and the recently released *The Dying Citizen*. This article first appeared in the *American Greatness* of September 14, 2023*





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